

# Children's Ministry Manual and Lessons

For Oral Cultures in  
Third World Countries

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## Important Instructions

The following lessons are designed to help teach the Bible stories listed to a simple oral culture. They follow the sequence of stories given in the picture book, JESUS - Lord and Savior, from the Look, Listen, and Live series by Global Recordings. These pictures can aid in the story telling, but are not essential. A detailed explanation of a complete children's program is given in the Manual section, preceding the lessons. This manual will give you a suggested format for a simple children's program suitable for any oral culture. It is designed to be fun and effective without any supplies other than what can be found in a natural setting. The lessons do not include explanations of the following elements in the program: Greetings, Songs, Memory Verse, and the Wordless Book. These are merely mentioned to help you understand the order of the program, should you choose to follow it. Please refer to the Children's Ministry Manual for instructions on how to carry out and teach those parts. They are the same for each lesson, so to avoid repetition, they are explained only once in the Manual. Please note that each lesson only gives one game. This one game relates to the main point of the lesson. But please add more of your own games as well - as many as you have time for. Be open to the Holy Spirit and let Him lead you. If you use these lessons and have any helpful or encouraging feedback, I would love to hear from you. God bless you as you minister to the children in your life!

In His Grace,

Lorena Wood

# Manual

A suggested format for a simple  
children's program

## Preparing Your Environment

**Stage Area:** Rope off an area where you and your team will be teaching. If you don't have any rope, use whatever you can find – sticks, bamboo, branches, etc. Have one or two helpers ready to enforce these boundaries (pleasantly).

**Audience:** Divide the area in front of the stage in half, with an isle in-between. The girls will be sitting on one side and the boys on the other. The isle needs to be big enough for people to walk down. Again, use whatever you have – rope, sticks, bamboo, etc.

**Seating Arrangement:** Seat the children in a culturally appropriate way that will keep them the quietest and most peaceful. In Mozambique, we have found the best way is to seat each child in front of the other with straddled legs. The child in front sits inside the V shape of the child behind them. This forms natural lines, enabling control of hundreds of children. Other cultures find it best if they sit “Indian style” with their legs crossed.

**Monitors:** Have a team ready to help control the children. They should address any problem fights that break out, assist children with crying babies (escort them out till they are calmed down), or simply tap the shoulders of children talking excessively to the neighbors. **With hand motions only**, the monitors can remind the children who are disturbing the teaching to stop talking, look up front, and listen. They should not scold the children out loud, or they will disturb the lesson being given as well. (The children should be reminded what the rules are with their corresponding hand motions before you begin the teaching.)

## Greeting

Greet the children warmly before starting your program. Introduce yourself and your team members. Smile. Show them you are happy they came and you are happy to be there with them. Interact with them – ask how they are feeling, etc.

## Worship and Praise

- Try to choose some songs that reflect the theme of your lesson.
  - Try to put scripture into melodies. Verses from Psalms are especially good for helping children focus on worship and the character of God.
  - If introducing a new song, explain the meaning of the words first.
  - Worship songs using personal pronouns are helpful in teaching children how to commune intimately with God as they sing to Him, vs. singing about Him. Example: Instead of singing, “God is so good,” sing, “God, You’re so good.”
  - Understand and appreciate the value of music in oral cultures. This is one of their best forms of education!
  - Try to make songs about the stories being taught.
1. Use these songs to teach and review the facts of the stories being taught.
  2. Include in these songs the character of God reflected in the bible stories.
- The goal should be to bring these children into a closer relationship with Jesus, not just know the events in the stories. By seeing God's character reflected in the stories, they can better enter into meaningful worship.
  - Use gestures for some songs. All the helpers should know the songs and gestures, singing along wherever they are positioned among the children. You can call on a few children to the front to help lead.
  - Make simple instruments and shakers for selected children to use. These can be cans or plastic bottles with pebbles, rice, or beans inside. Bamboo or wood sticks of varying sizes will have different tones when hit together. Drums can be made with upside down cans of varying sizes. Use whatever instruments you can find. Scripture simply says, “Make a joyful noise unto the Lord!”

## Wordless Book

**Purpose:** to present the gospel in a very simple, visually memorable way.

**Preparation:** Make a book out of paper or cloth with the following 5 colors: yellow, black, red, white, and green. The colors must be in that order. Another option is to just call forward children who are wearing these colors. Have them stand in front of the other children in a row while you explain what the colors mean. Have each child step forward when you talk about their color. One more option is to use balloons with these colors, calling up 5 children to the front to hold one balloon each.

### Explanation of colors

**Yellow** – represents heaven. Read John 14:2. Explain how wonderful heaven is, the good things that are there, such as streets of gold, happiness, light, beauty, God, angels, other Christians. Explain the bad things that are not there, such as pain, sickness, death. Ask the children, “Who wants to go there? Yes, we all do. But there is a problem. We can’t get in! Why?”

**Black** – We can’t get into heaven because of our sin. God is perfect and holy, and cannot be with sinners. Long ago God created Adam and Eve. They were perfect and had a wonderful friendship with God. But one day they chose to disobey Him. After that, Adam and Eve were no longer perfect. They became sinners, along with all of mankind that were born after them. Sickness and death now entered the world. Man was separated from God’s presence. The bible says in Romans 3:23, “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”

**Red** - God wanted to restore man’s friendship to Him. So He made a plan that would allow sinful man to be able to come into His holy presence. He sent his son Jesus to the earth to offer himself as a sacrifice for mankind’s sin. Because Jesus is holy and perfect, his blood was good enough to satisfy God’s holiness. Read John 3:16.

**White** - If we believe that Jesus is the Son of God and that He died for our sins, we can be forgiven for all our sins – past, present, and future. Read I John 1:9. We just need to repent and ask for forgiveness. Now we are washed clean, like the color white!

**Green** – What does this color remind you of? Look around you. Do you notice all the trees and plants that are green? They are all alive and growing! God wants us to keep growing too. He wants us to grow closer and closer to Him each day. How do we do this? We can get closer to God by spending time with Him, just like you do with a friend. How do we spend time with Him? We read the Bible. These are God’s words, even though many different people wrote the different books in it. The Holy Spirit inspired the writers. So really, they are God’s words. When we read them, it is like God talking to us. Other ways we can grow closer to God is by praying, worshipping Him, and going to church. Explain these as much as you like, but if the children start thinking these are the ways one is saved, stop doing this color until they understand that salvation is a gift from God only (Eph. 2:8,9) and not a result of our works.

## Games

### Why play them?

- Games can reinforce your lesson. It’s easy to make a teaching point out of a game, or design a game that has a teaching point. All of the lessons in this manual have one game that relates to the main point of the lesson. You will probably want to play more than one game, but they don’t all need to signify a point. Just having fun is good in itself!

- Games can be a motivation for good behavior by selecting only the well-behaved children to participate.
- Games are a good tool for asking review questions from previous lessons or memory verses. After asking a question, ask for raised hands if they think they know the answer. Those you call on that answered correctly get to come forward to play the game.
- Competition is fun for kids. Divide the children in half, like discussed in the “Preparation” section, between the girls and the boys. Select a boy and a girl to cheer their team. They stand in front of their team and shout their team name or their word for “girls” or “boys” in their language, clapping and getting their teammates to chant with them. This goes on excitedly during the game, encouraging their teammates to win! Keep track of the points and cheer for the winners. An option, if possible, is to give one candy to the losers and 2 candies to the winners as you play each game. At the end of the whole program, if possible, you can give all the children some kind of treat. If this is not possible, the children will still be happy to just play and cheer!

### **Teaching a Memory Verse**

1. For younger children, do not teach a long verse. Sometimes you can just teach part of a verse.
2. Pick out difficult words and explain their meanings before teaching the whole verse.
3. Explain the meaning of the entire verse after any difficult individual words are understood. Give practical applications.
4. Teach the verse any way you wish, but remember, repetition is the key to memorizing.
5. Use as many senses as you can – sight, sound, smell, touch, taste. The more you use, the easier they will remember.
6. Use games to teach memory verses and have fun!

### **Memory Verse Game Ideas**

1. Lead the children in saying the verse by repeating after you. Each time you say it, imitate the actions of a different animal. The children repeat it with the new animal actions. After a while they won't need to repeat it. They will do it simultaneously with you.

Suggested animals: frog (hop in place on the ground), kangaroo, elephant, monkey, fish, snake, bird, chimpanzee, chicken, butterfly (Wrap two thumbs around each other and flap your hands like wings).

2. Again, lead the children in saying the verse by repeating after you. Each time you say the verse, do a different action. The children imitate your action and say the verse. After they learn it a little, they will start saying the verse with you, not after you.

Example actions: rub your stomach in circles, pat your head, tap your shoulders repeatedly with your fingers, raise your hands to the sky and wiggle your fingers, spin in circles, twist at your waist with your hands on your hips, etc.

3. Even though this game involves words, it still works for non-readers. Separate and write every word from the verse on different pieces of paper. Have one child per word, holding the paper in front of him/her. Line the kids up with the words in order in front of the rest of the children so they can read the verse. Read the verse with the children, pointing to each word as you read it. The second time you read it, turn one of the words over so it is blank. Repeat the verse together, including the missing word. Do this again, turning over a second word, etc. Each time you say the verse, turn one more word over until the entire verse has no words showing – just blank pieces of paper. Make sure you include a paper for the scripture reference.

This game can also be played with a whiteboard or chalkboard. Underline each word and erase one word at a time. Leave the underline in place for the missing word.

4. Put the verse to a chant. You can add drums or homemade shakers.
5. Put the verse to a tune. You can make up a new tune or use an easy familiar tune the children already know.
6. Put gestures to the verse. Don't use a gesture for every word. Limit the gestures to just a few key words in the verse. Always be doing something while you say the verse, continuing the gesture until the next one starts.
7. Have a competition between the boys and the girls. Who can say it the loudest? The fastest? The highest? The lowest? The softest?
8. Do the above without making it a competition – just have the children follow your lead.

## **Rules**

Review these rules with the children before beginning your lesson, which includes the introduction, dramatized bible story, and application. Tell the children these rules one by one and have them repeat after you. Make up simple gestures for each rule as you say them. During story time, your monitors can just motion these gestures to the children who are acting up, rather than scolding the child out loud and disrupting the teaching.

1. Fold your hands and put them in your lap.
2. Eyes up front
3. Sit down
4. Listen and don't talk

## **Introduction to the Story**

Why is an introduction important? The main reason we do an introduction is to stir an interest in the audience to listen to what you are going to say. Introductions should only stir a curiosity to hear more. Don't give the main point or conclusion yet. A good way to do an introduction is to ask a question that you are sure the children will want answered. But don't give the answer! Just say, "In the story today, we will hear about how the Bible answers this question..." For example, if my story will be about Jesus calming the storm, ask the children if they are ever afraid. Interact with the children, getting a few stories (from raised hands). Keep it brief. Then say, "In our story today, we will learn about a time that the disciples were also very afraid. They were in a big storm out at sea. Do you think Jesus helped them when they were afraid? Let's see what happened!" You can make introductions many ways, using short skits, puppets, or just talking to the children.

## **Bible Story**

- You can tell a Bible story with pictures, puppets, or acting it out. Always use some sort of visual aid. You will keep their attention better and they will remember it. If you don't have any supplies, just act it out. If you are able to make some simple costumes, it will help. Even just large pieces of material can be draped on the actors to be robes and clothing. Crowns can be made with paper and tape, or vines tied to form a circle.
- Practice your drama ahead of time, making sure you dramatize your main point well. Always keep your main point in mind throughout every section of the program.
- Speak loudly, slow, and clear, so all the children can understand. Always face the audience, at least partially.
- Never have your back to the audience.
- Read the scriptures carefully. Pray about what it means and dramatize the events accurately with feeling.

## **Application**

Pray about the main point you think God wants you to bring out from the story and how this point applies to the lives of the children. Review the events of the story briefly. Talk about why this story is important to them. Some questions to ask yourself to help you with an application: What do I learn about the character of God or Jesus through this story? How is my relationship with God affected after hearing this story? Is there something I need to obey? Spend plenty of time waiting on the Holy Spirit, letting Him teach and guide you in this most important part of the entire program. Allow time for the children to respond in prayer with you.

# Lessons

# Birth of Jesus

John 1:1-14, Luke 2, Colossians 1:16

Main Point: Jesus, the Son of God, came to this earth as a baby

## Greeting

## Open in Prayer

## Songs

**Game:** Play a relay game with the children crawling on the ground. Afterwards talk about how babies crawl too. Our story today will be about a very special baby. You'll hear about it later.

Rachael, since the kids are on the cement, let's think of another game or relay that represents something a baby would do.

## Wordless Book

**Memory Verse:** John 3:16 Explain the meaning of the verse first. God gave His only son, as a gift to mankind. If we believe in Him, we can have eternal life. Choose a method to teach the verse.

The following discourse can take place between puppets or people.

**Object lesson #1:** A gift is presented to someone – choose something that will change his or her life in a good way. The recipient is very happy and talks about how this present is so appreciated and will benefit their life (perhaps food or clothing). Likewise, when God sent Jesus to earth as a newborn baby to live among man, he was sending mankind a gift. Jesus was an important gift for all people. He would grow up and tell them about His father in heaven, how to get there, and how their sins could be forgiven.

**Object lesson #2:** Show a papaya seed and a grown papaya. "Look at this papaya seed. Do you understand how this little seed turns into a papaya tree and produces yummy papayas? We just put it into the ground with some good dirt, water it, give it some sunshine, and then watch the seed grow into a tree! Even though we don't understand how this seed does this, we believe it will grow.

Jesus came to earth as a baby. But there are many mysteries behind this baby. He is a very special baby. The Bible is true, and it teaches us that Jesus was with His Father in heaven when the world was created. They created the world together, along with the Holy Spirit. These three are all parts of one God. It's hard for us to understand that. But it's like this seed - we don't understand how it grows into a tree. Yet, we believe it and enjoy the fruit. This baby Jesus was a very special baby. He was with His father from the beginning, and now He came to earth to live among mankind. The angels know how special He is, so they sing in the fields when they tell the shepherds that He has been born. How Jesus came to earth as a baby, but already existed from the beginning, is a mystery. Like the seed, we don't understand this mystery, but we believe it out of faith. We believe baby Jesus was the Son of God and came to earth to live among man.

## Rules

**Introduction to Story:** A puppet starts singing "Happy Birthday" by himself. Another puppet asks him, "Why are you singing, 'Happy Birthday'?" He replies, "Because today's story is about the day a very special baby was born!" "Oh, I can't wait to hear the story!"

Rachael, if we don't have puppets, we can just have someone start singing happy birthday up front.

**Story:** Dramatize the birth of Jesus in Luke 2:1-11

Rachael, let's just use the picture this time. A drama won't work without helpers and time to practice.

**Application:** Let's thank Him for coming to this earth long ago so we could learn more about whom His heavenly Father is. Let's also thank Him for coming to this earth to tell us how we can go to heaven.

**Close in prayer,** recognizing how Jesus was God's special gift to us when He sent his son to be born on earth 2,000 years ago. He is still a gift to us today, if we believe in Him. He existed with God when the world was created, he exists today, and He will live forever. Thank you Jesus, for coming to this earth!

## Jesus Turns Water into Wine

John 2:1-11

Main Point: Jesus cares about your problems.

### Greeting

### Open in Prayer

### Songs

**Object Lesson/ Game:** Have two buckets, one for the girls' team and one for the boys. Choose a few for each team, asking them to throw 3 rocks each into the bucket from a distance. Tell them that the rocks they are throwing are like their problems. (Choose rough, sharp edged ones if possible.) "One of these rocks could hurt if it is thrown at you, if someone scratches you with it, or if you step on it. It can be painful and make you sad or upset. Let's cast them in to the bucket. Let's get rid of them! The Bible says, 'Cast your anxieties (worries) on Him, because He cares for you'" I Peter 5:7.

### Wordless Book

**Memory Verse:** I Peter 5:7, "Cast all your anxieties on Him, because He cares about you."

### Rules

**Introduction to Story:** Skit

Choose a problem a child in your area might have. He/she is very upset and worried. She finds her friend and talks to her about the problem. Her friend says, "We can tell Jesus about this problem. The Bible says He cares about all our troubles, and He wants us to give them to Him. He will take care of us." "How do we do that?" "We just pray! It's just talking to Him, like I'm talking to you. Let's pray about your problem now." "O.K." The two kids pray together, giving the problem to Jesus and trusting Him to take care of it. The child who new about how to talk to Jesus says, "Hey this reminds me of a Bible story where Jesus' mother had a big problem! Do you want to hear about it?" "Yes!"

**Story:** Act out the story of John 2:1-11 or play the story from Book 7, Jesus – Lord and Savior, page 2.

**Application:** Even Jesus' mother had problems! But she knew that Jesus was powerful and loving. She knew Jesus could take care of her. We all have problems too. That's O.K. Everyone has problems. We just need to remember that we can take our problems to Him in prayer. He cares and doesn't want us to worry. We need to believe that He is powerful and loving enough to take care of us, like Mary did.

**Close in prayer,** asking the children to think of a problem they currently have. Ask them to pray quietly to themselves, asking Jesus to take care of their problem. Challenge them to believe that Jesus is powerful and loving enough to do this. "Cast your cares on Him, for He cares for you."

# Jesus and Nicodemus

John 3:1-36

Main Point: We must be born again.

## Greeting

## Open in Prayer

## Songs

**Game:** Have two teams, girls and boys, line up. They do a relay as they jump like frogs to the finish line and back.

After the game, talk about how tadpoles change into frogs. When we become Christians, we change too. If we believe in Jesus, that He took the punishment for our sin by dying on the cross for us, then we can ask Him to forgive us for our sins. We can then invite the Holy Spirit to come into us. After He comes, He will make us new inside! He will change our desires, and we will become more like Jesus. We'll start liking what God likes, and disliking what God dislikes. It's like we're born again into a new creature!

## Wordless Book

**Memory Verse:** II Corinthians 5:17

## Rules

**Introduction to Story:** Skit

A butterfly (puppet or person in a butterfly costume) is flying around the stage. A caterpillar (puppet or person) sees the butterfly and says,

"Wow, I wish I could fly and be as beautiful as a butterfly. I don't want to just crawl on the ground my whole life!"

The friendly butterfly greets the caterpillar. "Hello, Mr. Butterfly. How are you?"

"Oh, hello. I'm sad, actually. I wish I could be as beautiful and fly like you. I'm tired of being a caterpillar!"

The butterfly replied, "Well you can. But you have to do something first."

"What?" asked the caterpillar.

"You need to make a cocoon and wait a long time. It almost looks like you're dead, but you're actually changing into something beautiful. After about two weeks, you'll break out of your cocoons, like being reborn! But you won't be a caterpillar anymore. You'll be a butterfly!"

"Wow, that's amazing! I can't wait to do that!"

The butterfly continued, "People who want to become Christians need to do something similar."

"They make cocoons too?"

"No, but they need to be born again if they want to go to heaven."

The caterpillar answered, "I don't understand."

"Well an important man in the Bible didn't understand either. Do you want to hear the story?" said the butterfly.

"Yes!"

"O.K."

**Story:** Dramatize John 3:1-36

**Application:** Jesus told Nicodemus that in order for him to enter heaven, he had to be born again. Jesus tells us the same thing. If we want to go to heaven, we also must also be born again. The second time we are born, we are born through the Spirit. We ask the Holy Spirit to come live inside of us and change us to become more like Jesus. He can now give you the power to do what pleases God. Remember how the caterpillar changed into a beautiful butterfly? The Holy Spirit can change you too, on the inside. Just ask Jesus to forgive you for your sins and thank Him for taking the punishment for your sins by dying on the cross for you long ago. When your sins are forgiven, you are washed clean inside, and the Holy Spirit can now live inside you. He will change you into a new creature, like being born again with a new heart and mind. If nothing changes on the inside of us, then we really don't know God yet. That's why Jesus said we must be born again in order to go to heaven. A changed life is the true sign that we understand His love and forgiveness and have chosen to follow Him.

Who wants to be born again?

**Close in prayer**

## **Jesus Heals the Official's Son**

John 4:46-54

Main Point: You can take Jesus at His word.

**Greeting**

**Open in Prayer**

**Songs**

**Game:** Put a blindfold on a child. Place him/her in the middle of about 10 other children. The child in the middle shouts, "Jesus". The other children all say, "Loves me." When the other children speak, the blindfolded child tries to tag them. This goes back and forth until the blindfolded child tags someone. Then the tagged child goes in the middle and gets blindfolded. Repeat as long as you want.

After the game, explain how faith means believing in something you can't see. The child in the middle couldn't see the other children. But he/she still believed they were there and tried to tag them. God wants us to have faith in Him too. We can't see Him, but He wants us to believe He is there and willing to help us when we ask. In our story today we will learn about a time Jesus happily helped a man who had faith in Him.

**Object Lesson:** Choose a trustworthy adult. Choose a child to come to the front and ask if he/she trusts this adult. If he says yes, put a blindfold around the child's eyes and ask him to fall backwards into the adult's arms. Tell him the adult will catch him. (The adult must catch him!) If the child says he doesn't trust the adult, choose another child... Afterwards ask the adult if he felt good that the child trusted him. Explain how this is an example of how we put faith in something. This child had faith that the adult would catch him. He couldn't see him, but he still had faith that he would be safe. The adult was happy that the child had faith in him. God wants us to have faith in Him too. We can't

see him, but He wants us to trust Him with our lives. He wants us to believe His promises. When we pray, we must really believe He is listening and loves us. This pleases God when we have faith in Him.

### **Wordless Book**

**Memory Verse:** Hebrews 11:6, "Without faith, it is impossible to please God."

### **Rules**

**Introduction to Story:** Have you ever been desperate for someone's help? Maybe your little brother or sister or friend got hurt, and you run to your mom for help. Will you trust her words when she tells you what to do in this emergency? Maybe she will tell you your sister or brother needs to go to the hospital. Will you believe her? I think you will, because you trust her. In our story today, a very important man came to Jesus, desperate for help. Like you trust your Mom, this man trusted Jesus. Let's see what happens in the story.

**Story:** Jesus heals the official's son. Dramatize John 4:46-54.

**Application:** The royal official took Jesus at his word. He believed Him when He said, "You may go. Your son will live." Later the official realized that was the exact time his son was healed. Jesus was pleased with this man's faith, and healed his son the minute he asked. We can see God answer our prayers too, if we believe His words. He tells us many things in the Bible and speaks to us personally too, in our thoughts. If we believe His words, He will be pleased and answer our prayers too.

### **Close in prayer**

## **Pool of Bethesda**

**John 5:1-47**

Main Point: Jesus can satisfy our greatest need, which is forgiving us of our sins.

### **Greeting**

### **Open in Prayer**

### **Songs**

**Game:** (Relay) Form three groups of three for both the boys and the girls. Then form two lines. At two ends of the room, have two buckets of water. Each group of three will choose one person to be the "invalid" who can't walk. The other two will carry him to the bucket and put him/her inside. The "invalid" is then "cured" and runs back (alone) to the starting point and tags the next group of three. The first line to finish wins.

After the game, explain how in today's story, there is also a pool of water where an invalid wants to get to. It is a very special pool of water where an angel visits. But he can't get to it because no one will help him. He needs help, like in your game. We'll find what happens when we do our story.

### **Wordless Book**

**Memory Verse:** John 5:24, "I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life."

### **Introduction to Lesson/ Object Lesson:** Skit

A teenager is very hungry and is begging for food. A man comes along and talks to him with love and compassion. He gives him some food. He says, "Here is some food for you, but what you really need is some land and seeds so you can plant your own food that will keep on reproducing. Go to my village. I will give you some land and here is some seeds for you to get started." He hands the beggar some seeds, and the beggar is very happy, not just for the food, but also for the seeds and land given to him.

After the skit, explain to the children the following:

The teenager in this skit you just saw had a great need. What was it? (hunger) Then a man came and met his need, unexpectedly. What did he do? (gave him food and seeds) Yes, he gave the beggar some food. But more importantly, he understood his greater need – seeds and land to grow more food. Now you are going to hear a story from the Bible where Jesus meets the needs of a desperate poor man, but he also meets his greatest need, which he didn't even ask for. What do you think his greater need was? Let's find out.

**Story:** Dramatize John 5:1-47

**Application:** What happened to this paralytic? Why do you think Jesus healed him? (compassion, love...) What did Jesus say to the man after he healed him? (Your sins are forgiven. Now go and sin no more, or something worse will happen to you.) Jesus knew that the greatest need of this paralytic was to have his sins forgiven. When Jesus was on this earth, he didn't heal everyone. The others around the pool were not healed that day. It's not that Jesus didn't care about them, but He knew and cared more about their greater need – forgiveness of sins. He came to earth to die for their sins so they could once again have a relationship with their heavenly Father and spend eternity with Him in heaven.

Jesus knows your needs too. He also knows your greatest need. He wants to help you and take care of you, but he also wants to forgive you for your sins so you can have a relationship with Him and spend eternity with Him in heaven.

**Close in prayer**

## **Feeding of the 5,000**

John 6:1-15

Main Point: Jesus can take care of our physical needs, but more importantly, He wants us to come to Him and believe in Him so He can satisfy our spiritual needs forever. (John 6:35)

**Greeting**

**Open in Prayer**

**Songs**

**Games**

#1 Have two teams, 4 boys, and 4 girls. One boy and one girl each have a roll (bread). Another boy and girl lie on the ground with their mouths open. The boy and girl with the bread breaks off 5 pieces and tries to drop it in their team-mate's mouth. After they use all 5 pieces, the next boy and girl lie down in front of their teammates, until all three boys and girls have tried to catch the bread in their mouths. The boy and girl with the bread must extend their arms straight in front of them (shoulder height) when they drop the bread into their teammates' mouths. The team which got the most bread pieces in their team's mouths wins.

#2 Have two teams, 4 boys and 4 girls. Each team has a cup of water and a spoon. Form two lines and place a cup of water in front of each team. Select one team member to stand at the other end of the stage with an empty cup. When the race begins, one from each team dips their spoon into the cup of water and carries it to their teammate at the other end of the stage. After putting the water into the empty cup which the other team member is holding, he runs back to his team, gives the spoon to the next team mate in line, and they repeat this until all the team mates have gone. When one of the teams is finished, the game ends. Compare the cups that the teams filled with water from their spoons. The team with the most water in their cup wins.

## Wordless Book

**Memory Verse:** John 6:35, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst."

## Rules

### Object Lesson/ Introduction to Story: skit

A child is hungry and asks her mother for some bread and water. The mother gives it to her. A narrator tells the audience it is the next day. The child comes to the mother again and asks for food. She gives her some bread again, then says, "You will keep getting hungry and need food every day of your life. But the Bible tells us that Jesus offers us something that will last forever. Let's listen to the story and find out what that is."

**Story:** Dramatize the Feeding of the 5,000 in John 6:1-35. Act out two scenes – one with Jesus feeding the 5,000 (John 6:1-15) and the second with Jesus and the people the next day (John 6:22-35).

### Conclusion / Application - John 6:22-35

The next day the people were looking for Jesus again. When they found him, He told them they were not seeking Him because they believed in Him, but only because he fed them and they wanted to be fed again. He tells them it's more important to believe in Him and have eternal life, than to just seek after bread, which is perishable. Jesus is the Bread of Life and He is offering Himself to you. Do you want Him? Do you believe in Him?

## Close in Prayer

## Jesus Walks on the Sea

John 6:15-21

Main Point: We don't need to be fearful when we know Jesus.

## Greeting

## Open in Prayer

## Songs

**Game:** Choose 3 boys and 3 girls. Have them all stand on one side of a long rope or bamboo stick on the ground. Explain that one side of the stick is the land. The other side is the water. Call out "Land!" "Water!" back and forth, mixing it up. The kids jump back on forth to whatever side of the stick you call out. If they jump on the wrong side, they are out. The last person standing gives their team a point. Choose more kids and play again. After playing the game, say "Just like the kids in our game were one second on the land, and the next second on water, our story today talks about how the disciples were one second in their boat on the sea, and the next, on the land! You'll hear more about this when we do our story later."

## Wordless Book

**Memory Verse:** Is. 41:10, "Do not fear, for I am with you."

**Introduction to the Lesson:** Have you ever been afraid, like when you had a bad dream? And then your mom or dad came to you and comforted you? How did you feel? Did you feel more at peace because your mom or dad was with you? In our story today, Jesus' disciples were very afraid one day. Let's see why they were afraid and what Jesus did about it. (An option is to dramatize this scene with puppets or do a short skit with a parent and child before asking these questions.)

**Story:** Dramatize John 6:15-21

**Application:** All of us have times when we are afraid, like these disciples were afraid in the middle of the sea when the winds grew fierce. The disciples saw Jesus walking on the water and were terrified! But He said, "Don't be afraid. It is I." When they knew it was Jesus, they were O.K. and welcomed Him into their boat. Why did Jesus go to the disciples? Because He loved them deeply and saw they were afraid. At first they were terrified by His great power – who walks on water? No one! But they knew Jesus' love for them and that cast out their fear. Immediately after Jesus got into the boat, they were transported to where they were going. Jesus took care of their problem. He showed them great love and power. When we understand Jesus' love for us, fear disappears. When Jesus was with the disciples, they were not afraid. When we know Jesus' love and understand He is always with us, our fear will also disappear. (Matt. 28:20, "I will be with you always, even to the end of the age.") Jesus can handle any problem. No fear is too big for Him. He can bring peace into any situation. He is the ruler over all creation, powers, and authorities. Give your fears to Him and welcome Him into your life like the disciples welcomed Him into their boat. When you're afraid, remember He's there with you! He can give you peace and security. Just pray; talk to Him. He can hear you. He wants to show you His love and give you His peace.

**Close in Prayer**

## **Jesus Heals the Blind Man**

John 9:1-41

Main Point: Jesus reveals His glory in us. When we are weak, He can glorify Himself by showing His strength in us.

**Greeting**

**Open in Prayer**

**Songs**

**Game:** Have 2 slingshots and a few pebbles ready. Show the children the slingshot without a pebble in it. Demonstrate how it doesn't have much purpose and can't do much. Then put a pebble in it and shoot it. Now it is made strong and has purpose! Without God, we are weak like this slingshot without a rock. But with the Holy Spirit living inside us, we are made strong like this slingshot with a rock!

Choose 4 girls and 4 boys. Let one girl and one boy compete against each other at a time. They both shoot their slingshots. The child who shoots his rock the farthest gets a point for his/her team. Repeat for the remaining 3 pairs of girls and boys. The team with the most points wins.

**Wordless Book**

**Memory Verse:** II Corinthians 12:9, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness."

**Object Lesson #1:** Show a piece of fruit with a seed in it. Take the seed out. Explain how this fruit looks fragile and the seed is small. But if you plant this seed, something glorious will happen! A tree will grow from it! The fruit looks insignificant and small, but it is actually very powerful and can produce much fruit. Likewise, we may feel weak and small, but with the Holy Spirit living in us, God's glory can be demonstrated in our lives.

**Object Lesson #2:** Show a rubber band. Explain how it just a simple circle with not much power. Then explain how if a person came along and stretched the rubber band and then let go, it would fly across the room with a lot of force, like in our game. Demonstrate. "This is how it is with God. We are simple people. But when we give our life to God, and His spirit comes and lives inside us, all things are possible! (Mark 10:27)

## Rules

### Introduction to the Lesson:

Have you ever felt weak, untalented, or useless? Maybe you don't think you're good at anything, or you have a physical problem and feel like you're not as strong as other people. Do you ever feel bad about your weaknesses? Well in our story today, there was a man who also felt weak. In fact, he was blind. The religious leaders thought he was blind because he sinned or his parents sinned. But Jesus said this was not true. He said his weakness was given for a good purpose. Let's see what this purpose could possibly be.

**Story:** Dramatize John 9:1-41

**Application:** What weakness do you have? We all have weaknesses, but this is not bad. It is good. God wants to use your weaknesses for His glory. Give your weakness to Him – pray and ask for help. He wants to show His strength in your weakness. That way He will receive all the glory. God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble. (James 4:6) Let's pray now and ask our Heavenly Father to show His strength in our weakness.

### Close in Prayer

## Lazarus

John 11:1-46

Main Point: In discouraging situations, don't give up. There's hope in God.

### Greeting

### Open in Prayer

### Songs

**Game:** Have ready plenty of material for two teams to each wrap up one person like a mummy. Choose 3 boys and 3 girls. Two boys will wrap up one girl on their opposing team. Two girls will wrap up one boy on their opposing team. Make sure the nose and eyes are left open. After wrapping them up as good as possible (without hurting them!), lay the "mummies" on the ground next to each other. When you say, "Rise up!", the mummies try to get up and race to the other side of the stage and back. (Make sure you have two helpers at the other end making sure they go all the way to the other side.) The first mummy back gets a point for their team. Repeat as much as you have time for.

Afterwards, explain that in today's story, they will hear about a man that was also wrapped up like a mummy. He was already buried, but then someone told him to rise up too! You'll find out what happened to him later.

### Wordless Book

**Memory Verse:** Psalm 27:14, "Wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart."

## Rules

### Introduction to the Lesson / Object lesson:

Show a piece of rotten fruit. Describe how it smells bad, looks bad, and no one wants it. Next show the seed of the fruit. (Either clean off the rotten fruit till you come to the seed, or use a new seed.)

"What's left of this fruit? (Just the seed.) The fruit is 'dead' – there's nothing left of it. But what will happen if I plant this seed in some good dirt, water it, and put it in some sunlight? It will grow into a new tree and produce more fruit! Like this piece of fruit, we sometimes feel bad, maybe we think we look bad, or think people don't like us. But if we

have Jesus in our hearts, we have hope. Jesus is like the seed. Jesus gives us hope and purpose for our sufferings. When we believe this, we are not discouraged. Jesus can take our sufferings and bring good out of it. Let this hope grow in you, like the seed. Trust in Jesus, that he will produce good things out of all your suffering. He demonstrated this to two ladies named Martha and Mary when he was here on the earth. Let's listen to the story and see what happened...."

**Lesson:** Dramatize John 11:1-46

**Application:** Jesus took his time getting back to Bethany where Mary and Martha were. They greeted him with tears, saying if he had only come a few days earlier, Lazarus could have been healed. But Jesus took his time on purpose, so he could show his power and glory. When Jesus finally arrived, Lazarus had already been dead for 4 days. He called Lazarus forth from the tomb and he walked out! Do you have a situation that you are sad about or a huge problem you have no hope for? Jesus sometimes lets us go through hard times so he can show his glory and power in you or your situation. Know that he loves you. He wants what's best for you. (Romans 8:28) "Wait on him, be of good courage, and he will strengthen your heart" Psalm 27:14.

Practice the memory verse again.

**Close in prayer**

## Crucifixion

John 18:1-19:42

Main Point: Jesus took the punishment for our sins by dying on a cross for us.

**Greeting**

**Open in Prayer**

**Songs**

**Game:** Choose any game using the color red. Explain later that red is the color of blood. Today's story is about how Jesus shed his blood for our sins.

**Suggestion:** Choose 10-20 kids to sit in a circle. Have another child run around them with a red piece of material in his/her hand. The child drops the cloth behind one of the children, but keeps running. The child who got the cloth dropped behind him gets up and starts to chase the other child. They both need to run around the circle twice. The second time around, the first child must make it back to the spot that the second child left vacant before getting tagged. But if he gets tagged before sitting down, he must sit in the middle of the circle. He stays there until another child gets caught and takes his place. If the second child does not catch the first one before he/she sits down, he repeats the game, dropping the cloth behind the back of another child...

**Wordless Book**

**Memory Verse:** John 3:16

**Introduction to the Lesson:** When was the last time you were punished for doing something wrong? Maybe you didn't help with the baby, or fetch the water when your mother asked you to. Or maybe you didn't clean the yard or spoke disrespectfully to your parents. Often we are punished for doing something wrong. The Bible tells us about how Jesus was severely punished, but didn't do anything wrong. Our story starts when Jesus was with his friends one night in a quiet garden. Suddenly, they heard the approach of soldiers!

**Story:** Dramatize John 18 and 19

**Application:** What does the death of Jesus mean to you? Has anyone ever taken a punishment for you? That's what Jesus did for you. He took the punishment for your sin so that you could go to heaven and be with God. God is perfect and we are sinful. The Bible says the punishment for sin is death. And sin cannot enter into heaven where God is because He is perfect and holy. But if you believe that Jesus is the Son of God and He took the punishment for you by dying on the cross for your sins, you can receive forgiveness and live forever with God. We just need to ask for forgiveness and repent of our sins. Jesus took our punishment for us so we can have a relationship with God now until forever!

**Close in Prayer**

## **Resurrection**

John 19:42-20:18

**Main Point:** Because Jesus rose from the dead, we can receive forgiveness for our sins and have a relationship with God forever.

**Greeting**

**Open in Prayer**

**Songs**

**Game:** Choose 6 boys and 6 girls. Pick one girl and one boy from this group. Tell the rest of them to turn around and not look, as you hide these two among the crowd of children, in different places. Cover each child with a cloth. Then choose one girl and one boy from the 10 remaining children. At the same time, tell them to go try to find their team mate who is hidden in the crowd. When they find their teammate, they both run back to the stage together. The first team back to the stage gets a point. Repeat 5 times. Team with the most points wins.

After the game, explain how when people die, we often cover them up with a cloth, like in our game. Later, in today's story, we will learn about someone who died, but didn't stay under the burial cloth, just like in our game.

**Wordless Book**

**Memory Verse:** Romans 6:4 "...just as Christ was raised from the dead, we too may live a new life."

**Introduction to the Lesson/Object lesson:**

Show a flower, which is alive and pretty - perhaps a zinnia. Talk about how pretty and alive it is. Then show a dead flower (same kind). Say, "Oh, this flower has died. How sad... But wait. There are seeds in it! What will happen if I plant the seeds in this dead flower?" Wait for response. "Yes, it will grow pretty new flowers. But before the first flower could produce more flowers, it first had to die." Our story today is about how Jesus is like this flower. He first had to die. Let's listen to the story and see what happened after he died.

**Story:** Dramatize John 19:42-20:18

**Application:** What does Christ's resurrection mean to you? Why do we care that Jesus rose from the dead? We care because his resurrection means that He conquered death! His death played the punishment for our sin, so now we can go to heaven and never die! Because Jesus, who was sacrificed for our sins, now lives, we also live! We just need to believe in Him and repent of our sins. That means that we are sorry for our sins and want to change from

doing what's wrong to doing what's right. We choose to follow God and His ways. Now that we have forgiveness for our sins, we can be friends with God. He wants us to know His love. We can get to know Him by praying to him and reading or listening to His words in the Bible. You can be still and listen for His voice too. As you get to know Him, you will learn to recognize His voice. So let's rejoice that because Jesus rose from the dead, we can now live in a loving relationship with God – now and forever. We will never die because Jesus died for us and rose again!

## **Breakfast by the Sea**

John 20:30-21:19

Main Point: If you love Jesus, feed His sheep.

### **Greeting**

### **Songs**

**Game:** Have two teams – boys and girls, each with 5 players. One from each team stands at one end of the stage. The others form two lines, 4 in each line, at the other end of the stage. Play a relay. Each child crawls on hands and knees, like a sheep, making sheep noises, to the other side where their teammate is waiting. Their teammate then gives them something to eat. The sheep then goes back to their line and the next player from their team heads out – like a relay. The first team to finish wins. After the game is over, explain how in our story today, we will talk about how Jesus told Peter to feed his sheep.

### **Wordless Book**

**Memory Verse:** John 21:17, "Jesus said to him, 'Feed my sheep'."

### **Rules**

**Introduction to the Lesson:** When Jesus was on this earth, He lived here for 33 years. Then He gave himself as a sacrifice for our sins by dying on a cross so we could receive forgiveness for our sins. After three days, He rose again! He then appeared to over 500 people before going back up to heaven. One of these times was when he saw his disciples fishing. They hadn't caught anything all night. Jesus called out to them from the shore. Do you think Jesus helped them? Would you be surprised to see Jesus after you saw him die on a cross? Let's see what happens in our story.

**Story:** Dramatize John 20:30-21:19

**Application:** Jesus cared about the needs of the disciples and helped them even when they didn't ask for help or even recognize Him! After the disciples fished all night without catching anything, Jesus saw them from the shore and told them to cast their nets on the other side of the boat. What happened? They caught so many fish; their nets were completely full! Jesus cares about you too, and wants to help you with your needs. He also has something important for you to do. Jesus told Peter, "If you love Me, feed My sheep." This food is the words of God and the good news that you can have forgiveness from your sins if you believe in Jesus. Jesus wants us to feed others this food too. Do you love Jesus? If you do, Jesus wants you to feed His sheep. That means He wants you to tell others who follow Him the words of God. His words are found in the Bible. So let's show our love for Jesus by telling others His stories from the Bible.

### **Close in Prayer**

## **On the Road to Emmaus**

Luke 24:13-35

Main Point: Jesus explains the mystery in the plan of salvation starting with Moses and the Prophets.

## Greeting

## Open in Prayer

## Songs

**Game:** Choose a group of children – enough to sit and make a circle. (There will be no points or winners between the boys and the girls.) One child has a piece of cloth. He skips around the outside of the children and drops the cloth behind a child of his choice. He should drop it in a way that is not too obvious. The second child now gets up and runs after the first child, trying to tag him. The first child must run around the circle of children twice and sit down in his spot before the second child tags him. If he is tagged before sitting down, he must sit in the middle of the circle. The game continues again in the same way. Whenever a child is tagged, he must sit in the middle until another child is tagged to take his place. If no one is tagged, the new child skips around the circle and drops the cloth behind another child of his choice. Continue the game as long as you like, perhaps 5-10 minutes.

Afterwards, explain how when the child with the cloth was skipping around the circle, it was a mystery which child he would choose to drop it behind. Everyone watched, but no one knew when he would drop it. Likewise, Moses and the Prophets all spoke of Jesus, but no one knew He was coming. They also thought He would come to be their king and deliver them from the Romans who were ruling over them. When Jesus finally did come, He only lived till he was 33 years old. Then he was killed! He never became their earthly king to deliver them from their oppressors! The disciples were confused, upset, and doubted everything they believed about their Messiah. This is where our story begins today. We'll learn about this soon.

## Wordless Book

**Memory Verse:** "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me" John 14:6.

## Rules

### Introduction to Lesson/Object lesson

**Option #1:** If you have some compost, have some ready to show the children. First, show them what goes into the compost before you start - some fresh food garbage scraps, dried leaves, dried grass, manure, fresh grass cuttings, etc. "This looks like a bunch of worthless trash, doesn't it? Does it look valuable or important?" Wait for responses. "But if we put all these things together, mix it up with a little of water and leave it in the sun for 3 months, it will turn into this rich dirt (show compost), filled with nutrients that our plants need to grow beautiful fruits and vegetables. The trash makes a mysterious transformation. It needs to get hot and cook. It's like it dies. It all breaks down (decomposes). What seemed to be bad, turned out to be good. In our story today, the disciples were upset that Jesus died! They expected Him to save them from the Romans who were ruling over them. But this bad thing turned out to be good. Let's watch and see how this happens.

### Option #2:

1. Make a puzzle. Draw and color a picture with bright colors, or use one you already have. Rip it into four large pieces of unusual shapes. If you can't do this, just rip up any paper or cardboard you have into four large pieces. To be more interesting, make a shape of a cross before ripping is up. Prepare this ahead of time.
2. Make a cross shape out of a piece of paper. Fold it up and have it ready.

Tell the children, "Sometimes we don't understand why things happen the way they do. Have you ever been confused why something bad happened? When Jesus was on earth, the Jews thought He came to be their king and save them from the Romans who were ruling over them. They didn't like the Romans and wanted to be free from them. Jesus was very powerful, but he didn't set them free from the Romans. In fact, he got killed at the age of 33 on a cross! Jesus' disciples were confused and sad when He died. They didn't understand why Jesus had to die!

But God had it all planned out perfectly. In fact, this plan started thousands of years before Jesus even came to this earth. God's plan for our salvation was not understood completely for a long time."

Hold up your folded up cross for the children to see. Unfold it slowly in front of them while you say, "God's plan of salvation unfolded over many thousands of years."

"God's plan could also be seen as a puzzle."

Fit your pieces together in front of the kids. If you have four pieces, have a helper hold two pieces and you hold two pieces. Do this as you say the following:

"Moses and the prophets all talked about Jesus, but no one understood the plan of salvation until after Jesus rose from the dead and explained it. The Old Testament is like pieces to a puzzle with stories about the nation of Israel that give pictures of what Jesus is like and what He would do in the future.

**Story:** Dramatize Luke 24:13-25

**Application:** Do you understand the plan of salvation that Jesus explained to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus? Beginning with Moses a few thousand years ago, God gave the 10 commandments and a lot of other rules for people to obey. He promised blessings and forgiveness of sins if the people obeyed his rules, and curses if they didn't. There were so many difficult rules, however, no one could follow them all. But that was the point. God is holy, and wanted people to realize that they couldn't keep all the rules. He wanted people to realize they are sinful and need a savior. They needed to be saved from the power of sin in their lives and the punishment of sin, which is eternal separation from God. So that's exactly what God did. He sent a savior – his son, Jesus Christ! Jesus is also Holy and perfect. So God sent Jesus to earth, live among mankind, and offer himself as a sacrifice on a cross to pay the penalty for everyone's sins. Because Jesus is holy and perfect, his blood was good enough to satisfy the punishment for all of mankind's sins – past, present, and future. We can now have a close friendship with Holy God if we believe Jesus is His Son and He died for our sins. If we repent of our sins, He will forgive us of our sins (1 John 1:9), and choose to follow him, obeying His words found in the Bible. (The Bible is written by many people, but the Holy Spirit told them what to write. So they are really God's words.) Let's pray and thank God for this wonderful plan of salvation....

**Close in Prayer**

## The Prodigal Son

Luke 15:20-32

Main Point: God the Father is happy to receive anyone who comes to Him.

**Greeting**

**Open in Prayer**

**Songs**

**Game:** If you have paper, a marker and tape, you can play this game. Otherwise, play any game you wish. If you can think of a game with pigs, you can tell the children, "Our story today also has pigs in it."

"Pin the nose on the pig." Like the game, "Pin the tale on the donkey", draw a large simple picture of a pig on some paper or a piece of cardboard, but without the nose. Attach it to something or have someone hold it in front of the kids. Choose 3 boys and 3 girls. Give each of them a pig's nose made out of paper and with their name on it. Blindfold them one by one, spin them about 2 meters away from the pig, and then head them in the direction of the pig. When the child touches the paper with the pig on it, he must attach his nose wherever he touched. The child who gets his nose closest to the correct spot on the pig wins. After the game is over, tell the children that in today's story they will hear about some other pigs.

**Wordless Book**

**Memory Verse:** John 6:37b, "The one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out."

### Rules

**Introduction:** Ask the children, "Have you ever done something that displeased your father or uncle so much that you thought he wouldn't receive you back? Maybe you stole something from him or lied to him, and he found out the truth? I don't know how he responded to you, but in today's story, you will learn how your loving heavenly Father would respond to you."

**Story:** Dramatize Luke 15:11-32

**Application:** Your heavenly Father wants you to know that His arms are open to you. He is ready to receive you, no matter what you've done. He's ready to forgive you, wrap His arms around you, and make you His son or daughter. All you need to do is come to Him with a repentant heart. Your heavenly Father loves you deeply.

### Close in Prayer

## Parable of the Rich Fool

Luke 12:13-24

Main Point: Don't spend your life worrying about what you need and trying to get more things. Instead, trust God to take care of you and store up treasures in heaven.

### Greeting

### Open in Prayer

### Songs

**Game:** Play any games you wish. If you can, play a game using feathers and/or flowers. Afterwards explain how today we will be talking about how God takes care of birds and makes beautiful flowers.

**Suggestion:** Try to find two very light weight feathers – preferably from a baby chick or bird. Choose a boy and a girl. At the same time, let go of both the feathers in front of each child at a height above their heads. The children try to keep the feathers in the air as long as possible, but may not touch the feathers. They may only blow on them.

### Wordless Book

**Memory Verse:** Matt. 6:33, "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."

### Rules

#### Introduction to Story/Object Lesson:

Show a feather of a bird, or a nest to the children. Talk about how birds don't worry about their food or their homes. Their heavenly Father takes care of them. Likewise, we too should not worry. We should trust our Heavenly Father to take care of us.

Show a flower to the children. Talk about how God has "clothed" it beautifully. This flower is not worrying about how pretty it is. God has made it beautiful. We too should not spend too much time worrying about our clothes. Instead, trust God to provide for our needs and spend our time storing up treasures in heaven. If our treasures are in heaven, they will last forever and no one can take them away.

**Story:** Dramatize Luke 12:13-24

**Application:** The rich fool spent all his time trying to get more things. He worked hard, but he spent his time foolishly. God says it's not wise to spend all your energy just trying to get rich. Instead, trust God to provide for your needs and focus on pleasing Him. Store up your treasures in heaven, where they will last forever.

How do we do this? Learn what God says in the Bible to see what is important to Him. He says the most important thing is to love Him and love others. We can love others in many ways, but most importantly, we can show them love by leading them to Jesus. If you lead someone to Jesus, they will be in heaven forever. That is a treasure that will last forever! This is much more important than a treasure on earth that will get rusty, lost, or stolen. Even if it doesn't, you can't take it to heaven with you when you die. So let's don't be like the rich fool wasting our time trying to get rich. Instead let's focus our time on pleasing God and trust Him to take care of us like he takes care of the birds and flowers.

**Close in Prayer**

## **The Beggar and the Rich Man**

Luke 16:19-31

**Main Point:** One day many rich, selfish people will find themselves in torment and separated from God. At the same time, many that are poor in this life will find themselves in luxury, with God in paradise forever.

**Greeting**

**Open in Prayer**

**Songs**

Before playing the following games, tell the children that today we will be playing two games that have opposite objectives. In one game, you will want to jump higher and higher. In the second game, you will want to bend lower and lower.

**Game #1:** Choose 5 girls and 5 boys of similar height. Have two people hold a long stick near the ground. Line the kids up and into one big line. Let them all jump over the stick and circle around again. Each time they come around, have the two helpers raise the stick a little higher. If a child touches the stick, he/she must sit down. The last remaining child wins a point for their team (boys or girls).

**Game #2:** In this game (Limbo), have two people hold the long stick at about one meter high. Again, have the kids line up, but this time they must go under it without touching the stick on any part of their body. They must face the stick and bend their head and body backwards. They may not turn their bodies or heads to the side, straight up and down, or forwards. Their heads must lean back behind their necks, facing up. If they make it without touching the stick, they go again. The helpers lower the stick each time. The last child who is able to go under the stick without touching it wins.

After the game, explain how in today's story we will hear about some people that received something opposite after they died from what you might expect.

**Wordless Book**

**Memory Verse:** Matthew 19:30, "Many who are first will be last, and many who are last will be first."

**Rules**

Choose one of the two following Introductions, depending on what supplies you have.

**Introduction to Story/Object Lesson Choice #1:**

Beforehand, prepare a cup with one tablespoon (15ml) of baking soda, and one tablespoon (15ml) of liquid soap in it. Also have ready ½ cup (60ml) of white vinegar on the side, and another cup ½ filled with water. (The vinegar needs to look like water – not cider vinegar.) All the cups should be clear so the children can see what's inside. Have a table on the stage with the three cups on top.

Have a child enter the stage area. As he walks towards the cups, a mother's voice is heard from a distance. She calls out, "Son, don't forget to wash the dishes on the table!" He answers, "O.K. Mom."

The child sees the cup with soap already in it, and grabs the cup with vinegar. "Oh, this cup already has soap in it! I'll just mix this water with it and I'll be done cleaning in no time!" He grabs the vinegar, thinking it is water. He pours it into the cup and mixes it all together. It starts bubbling up and he is shocked! "What's happening! It looks like my cup is erupting like a volcano! I thought I was cleaning this cup, not making a bigger mess! Maybe this wasn't water I used, even though it looked like water! Oh, I'll just clean these later." He walks off the stage.

Afterwards, explain that the boy thought he was using water to clean his dishes. Instead, he got vinegar and made a mess! In our story today, we will meet two people who also experience something surprisingly different from what they expected.

**Object Lesson/Introduction Choice #2:**

Have a bottle with an opening slightly smaller than an egg. Prepare a hard boiled egg and peel it. Show the bottle to the children with the egg on top. Ask the kids, "This egg is too big to fit inside this bottle, isn't it?" Try to fit it in without breaking it up. "How can I do this...? It's impossible." Enter a friend. (He needs to have some paper and some matches in his pocket.) He greets you and says, "Hey, what are you doing?" You explain. Then the friend lights some paper, throws it into the bottle and quickly places the egg on top. Wait a few moments and watch the egg shrink and slip into the bottle! He says, "I bet you didn't expect that!" They both laugh and leave the stage.

Afterwards explain that just as you didn't expect the egg to fit inside the bottle, in our story today you will learn something surprising and unexpected. Let's watch.

If you don't have materials for either object lesson, think of a situation where something happened that you didn't expect. Ask the children if they have any stories where something very different happened than what they expected. Choose one or two children to share. Then say, "In our story today, we will learn about two people that also experienced something very surprising and opposite of what many would expect."

**Story:** Dramatize Luke 16:19-31

**Application:** This story shows that the way you see people on earth now will one day look surprisingly different. Many of the selfish, rich people who only live for themselves, will be separated from God in torment. The poor, who give their lives to Jesus, you will see clothed in purple robes sitting with Jesus in paradise! Riches or fame cannot get you into heaven. And being poor does not keep you out of heaven. What matters is, do you know Jesus? Do you have faith that he is the Son of God and died on the cross for your sin? If you ask him to forgive you for your sins and follow him, you will be saved. You will live with Jesus forever in paradise!

**Close in Prayer**

## **Jesus Teaches on Prayer**

Luke 11:5-13

Main Point: Earnestly as your heavenly Father for the gift of the Holy Spirit, and he will give you this gift.

### **Greeting**

### **Open in Prayer**

### **Songs**

**Game:** Choose 5 boys and 5 girls. Each group of children will talk among themselves and decide how they can best ask their “neighbor” (designated helper) for some food. They will explain that a visitor has come and they have no food to give them. They will each go to the “neighbor” one by one and ask in the most convincing, pleading way they can. Form two lines, one for boys and one for girls. Have an adult helper in front of them. First a girl will go to the helper (neighbor) and ask for food. Then a boy will go ask for food. The adults watching the program will vote as to which one asks with more force. The one who wins gets a point. The adult can act uninterested in helping until the child asks very pleadingly. All the children take a try and the team with the most points wins.

After the game, explain how in our story today, Jesus talks about a man who went to his neighbor asking for food when a visitor showed up at his house and he had nothing to give him. We'll learn more about what this neighbor did later and why Jesus told us this story.

### **Wordless Book**

**Memory Verse:** Luke 11:9 “Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and it will be opened to you.”

Explain how this verse is talking about asking God for things in an earnest way. Because He is a loving father, he will answer our prayers.

### **Rules**

**Introduction to Story:** Talk in front of a puppet stage (stretched out material) to the audience about the setting of today's story. Based on Luke 11:5-13, describe a place and time period, etc. While you're talking, a puppet appears and interrupts you, begging for some water. You try to ignore the puppet (give him/her a name) and keep talking about the setting of today's story. The puppet continues begging, being very annoying. Finally, you stop talking to the audience and tell the puppet, “Fine! I'll get you some water!” You exit the stage. The puppet starts singing about how happy he is that his friend finally listened to him and is getting him some water. You come back with a cup of water and give it to the puppet. He's happy...

Tell the children, “Oh, Fred (or whatever name you gave your puppet) reminds me of our story today! Just like he wouldn't give up asking me for water, the character in our story wouldn't give up asking his neighbor for something he needed. Let's see what happened.

**Story:** Dramatize Luke 11:5-13

**Application:** Have you ever wanted something from God? The best thing you could ask for is His Holy Spirit. Have you ever asked him for that? What do you think He will say? Jesus told this story you just heard to teach you that if you ask earnestly, He would surely give you His Holy Spirit. Your heavenly Father is more generous and kind than your earthly Father, no matter how good he is. Don't be afraid to ask Him. And ask Him earnestly!

Ask your audience who wants to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Pray with them to receive Him.

### **Close in Prayer**

## **The Pharisee and the Tax Collector**

Luke 18:9-14

Main Point: Everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.

## Greeting

## Open in Prayer

## Songs

**Games:** Select one short boy and one tall girl. Have ready two long sticks with something attached to the top of it. Two adults/leaders must each hold one. The object of the game is to see who can get the object down from the top of the stick first. The leaders must hold them upright and not allow them to be moved. Tell them they can throw things at it, shake the stick, or whatever way they can think of to get it down, besides moving the stick. Before beginning the game, have the girls cheer the selected girl and encourage them to make fun of the boy a little, because he is so short and will probably lose the game. Help the boys cheer on the short boy even though he is short. Now tell them that Jesus told a story about a proud Pharisee and a humble tax collector. "You will learn about this story in a few minutes, but what you need to know now is that Jesus likes it when we're humble and really doesn't like it when we act proud. He says everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

Now surprise the players and allow the short boy to go on the shoulders of the game director before the game begins. (Make sure the boy you pick will be able to reach the top of the stick easily.) Play the game. Afterwards explain how God surprises us too, just like how I surprised you. You thought the short boy would have a harder time because he is short. But he didn't because I helped him. I lifted him up. God says he will lift up and exalt those who are humble and bring down those who are proud.

## Wordless Book

**Memory Verse:** Luke 18:14, "... everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

**Introduction to the Story:** Have you ever known anyone who liked to boast a lot? Maybe they are always bragging about how nice they look, or how strong they are, or how smart they are. Did you like that person? Have you ever known someone who really was smart or strong or pretty, but they didn't brag about it? Which person did you like to be around more? (Allow the children to respond to you.) In our story today, we will also meet a very proud person and a humble person. Jesus wanted to teach his disciples how to pray, so he told them a story about a Pharisee and a tax collector. The Pharisees in Jesus' time were the important religious leaders, and the tax collectors collected money from everyone. They were often dishonest and hated by everyone. Let's see what Jesus says about these two men and what it has to do with prayer.

**Story:** Dramatize Luke 18:9-14

**Application:** Which person are you like? The humble tax collector or the proud Pharisee? Jesus wants us to be humble, especially when we pray to Him. He doesn't want us to show off how good we are at praying in front of other people. He can hear us anywhere. It doesn't help our prayers if we pray them really loud, or do a dance, or wave our hands... Jesus cares more about our hearts. He knows what's in our mind even before we speak it out. He also knows the real you - how you feel inside. So you don't need to act different when you talk to Him. Let's pray and ask God to help us stay humble, and remember, "everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted".

## Close in Prayer

## Parable of the Sower

Luke 8:4-15

Main Point: Let's be careful to receive God's Word with a good heart.

## **Greeting**

## **Open in Prayer**

## **Songs**

**Game:** Have two cans on the floor and 10 large seeds (corn or beans work well). Choose 4 boys and 4 girls. Place the boys and girls at a distance appropriate to their age and ability in front of the cans. Let each team take turns casting their seeds into the can, taking turns from boys to girls. The team that got the most seeds into their can wins.

Afterwards say that in today's story, we will hear about a sower that sows seeds. He doesn't cast them into a can like you did, but instead he casts them on to 4 different kinds of soil. We'll learn more about this later.

## **Wordless Book**

**Memory Verse:** Psalm 119:16, "I delight in your decrees; I will not neglect your word."

Before teaching this verse, make sure you first explain that "word," means God's words in the bible. People wrote the books, but the Holy Spirit told them what to write. So they were actually writing God's words.

## **Rules**

**Introduction to the Lesson:** Do this following skit with people or puppets.

**Scene 1:** Two siblings are with their mom. She is preparing some food, and calls her children to her. She puts the food in two containers and tells her children that they have two neighbors that are very sick. She gives each child a container of food and tells them to go deliver the food, each to a different neighbor. She warns them to go directly there and not stop and play on the way. She also warns them to be careful with the food – don't set it down or spill it.

**Scene 2:** One child happily takes the food very carefully to his neighbor's house. The neighbor is lying down, and receives the food with great joy.

**Scene 3:** The second child sets out to the neighbor's house. He smells the food and sees how good it is. He takes a few bites. He then starts skipping down the path and some of the food spills. He notices, but doesn't care. He then sees some of his friends playing under a tree. He sets the food down and goes to play with them.

(He exits the stage, leaving the food on the ground.)

Choose a small child to play the role of a dog or cat. He enters like an animal and sees the food greedily. Off stage the boy yells because he sees the dog eating the food. He comes running onto the stage and sees there is only one bite left in the bowl. As he picks up the bowl, he looks up and sees his Dad coming down the path on his way home from work. The Dad comes to him and asks why he is holding a bowl with only one bite of food in it. The child explains what happens.

After the skit is over, talk to the children about how good things happened to the child who had a good heart and listened to his mother. The sick neighbor received the food and everyone was happy. Bad things happened to the child whose heart was not good. He didn't care what his mother said and didn't deliver the food safely and carefully. When we listen to our parents with a good heart and do what they say, good things will happen. We also need to have good hearts to receive the words of God and do what He says.

Jesus also talks about good hearts and bad hearts when he tells a story about a sower. We can find this story in the Bible, in the book of Luke. Let's watch.

**Story:** Dramatize Luke 8:4-15

**Application:** Review the 4 kinds of soils and what they mean. Offer candy or small prizes for correct answers if you can.

If we want God's blessing in our lives, we need to receive his words with a good heart. This means we hear His words, remember them, and obey them. Then we will produce a good crop. We will see good things happen in our lives.

### **Close in Prayer**

## **The Good Samaritan**

Luke 10:25-37

Main Point: Jesus wants us to show love to our neighbor, who is anyone in our path.

### **Greeting**

### **Open in Prayer**

### **Songs**

**Game:** Choose 8 boys and 8 girls. Pair them off into two's. Each pair will need to wrap one of their legs to the others, preparing for a 3-legged race. Do a relay between the boys and the girls. Repeat again or pick new children. Do 3 races. The team with the most points wins.

Afterwards, explain how in today's story they will meet a man who also gets bandaged up! We'll learn about him later.

### **Wordless Book**

**Memory Verse:** Luke 10:27, "Love your neighbor as yourself."

### **Rules**

**Introduction to the Story:** A boy enters the stage where his "mother" is cooking. She welcomes him home from school and asks him about his day. He talks about it and then recounts how on the way home, he saw a boy being beat up by some bullies. "They stole his money and threw his books on the ground, laughing! Should I have stopped and helped this boy, Mother?" "Yes," his mother replied. "Jesus told a similar story. We are to show love to our neighbors and help them. That means we are to help anyone he puts in our path." "Oh, tell me the story, Mother!" "O.K. Let's watch the drama."

**Story:** Dramatize Luke 10:25-37

**Application:** Who has God put in your path? Open your eyes and be willing to help those in need around you. Let's pray that you will be aware of who God wants you to help and show love towards. When you help those in need around you, they will see God's love in you. Then you can tell them about Jesus and they can have His love in them too!

### **Close in Prayer**

## **Faithful Servants**

Luke 12:35-48

Main Point: Always be ready for Jesus' return by continuing faithfully in the work He has given you to do.

## **Greeting**

## **Open in Prayer**

## **Songs**

**Game:** Choose one girl and one boy. Have prepared two pieces of scrap wood, two hammers or large rocks, and two nails. On the count of three, the boy and girl pound the nail into the wood as fast as they can. The first one to get the nail all the way into the wood gets a point. Repeat with two more children, then two more, etc. until you want to stop.

Afterwards explain how this game was building. When people build houses, they pound nails into wood to hold it together. It takes a lot of work, doing the same thing over and over until the house is finished. Jesus talked about how we need to keep working and doing the things he has told us to do until He returns.

## **Wordless Book**

**Memory Verse:** Luke 12:48, "Much will be required of everyone who has been given much. Even more will be asked of the person who is supposed to take care of much."

## **Rules**

**Introduction to the Story:** Do any of you have family members that live far away? Have they ever given you a surprise visit? How did you feel when you first saw them? Was your family ready to receive company? Maybe your mother had to quickly clean the house, or cook some more food? In our story today, we will hear about a very important visitor who will be coming to all of our houses! We must all be ready to receive Him. But who is it? Let's see...

**Story:** Dramatize Luke 12:35-48

**Application:** What has God given you to do? What gifts and talents has He given you? What responsibilities has He given you? What are you doing with these gifts, talents, and responsibilities? We need to be faithful with what He has given us. The more we have, the more is expected of us. We don't know when He will come back, so it's important we are always watchful and ready.

## **Close in Prayer**

# **Zacchaeus the Tax Collector**

Luke 19:1-10

Main Point: Jesus came to look for the lost and save them.

## **Greeting**

## **Open in Prayer**

## **Songs**

**Game:** Choose 5 girls and 5 boys. Have them line up in front, facing the rest of the children. Choose two of these boys to the side. Give him something small and thin, like a coin. All the children put their hands together (like they're praying) and hold them directly in front of them. One of the boys you pulled aside cups his hands also. He then goes to each child and pretends to drop the coin into each child's hands. But he does put it in one child's hands. The second boy you pulled aside now tries to guess which boy has the coin. If he guesses correctly, the boys get a point. Next choose two girls and repeat. Repeat until everyone gets a chance to guess who has the coin or until you want to quit.

Afterwards, explain how in this game something was “lost” and needed to be found. In our story today, we will hear about how Jesus also came to look for something lost. But it wasn’t a coin like in our game. He came to look for lost sinners – even the worst sinners that no one likes. We’ll learn more about one of these hated sinners later.

### **Wordless Book**

**Memory Verse:** Luke 19:10, “The Son of Man came to look for the lost and save them.”

### **Rules**

**Introduction to the Story:** (Allow time for a few kids to respond to your questions.) Do you know anyone who is really bad – so bad that you wouldn’t want to talk to him about Jesus or invite him to church? Do you know anyone that everyone hates? How would you feel about talking to him about Jesus’ love and forgiveness? Sometimes people don’t like to be with bad sinners and tell them about God. One day Jesus was teaching a big crowd and saw a bad sinner named Zacchaues. Everyone hated him! Let’s watch and see what Jesus does when he sees Zacchaues.

**Story:** Dramatize Luke 19:1-10

**Application:** What did Zacchaues do when Jesus asked to come to his house? (He was happy to have Him for dinner.) Did Zacchaues repent? (Yes, he even offered to give ½ of what he owned to the poor and pay back anyone he cheated 4x the amount he took!) The crowd was shocked and looked down on Jesus for going to such a bad sinner’s house for dinner. But Jesus didn’t care what the people thought. He cares about sinners and wants to save them! We should care too. Sinners need to hear about God’s love and forgiveness. Are you willing to spend time with them, show them love, and tell them about Jesus? What’s important is that you have God’s heart for people. Don’t worry about what other people think. Care more about what Jesus thinks and love them like Jesus loves them.

### **Close in Prayer**