How To Use These Lessons

WALK WITH JESUS is divided into seven units that deal with different aspects of a child's personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Love Him
Serve Him
Bring An Offering to Him
Share Him With Others
Worship Him
Trust in Him
Grow With Him

Each lesson in **WALK WITH JESUS** follows a format that includes five components. The ***FOCUS*** time is to introduce the theme for the lesson and focus the minds of the children on the Bible truth. The activities for ***SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION*** are not only focused on memorizing but also on the explanation and application of the verse. The ***INSTRUCT*** segment provides the teacher with creative methods to use when presenting the Bible story. The ***APPLICATION*** activities allow children to get involved in the process of learning through games, creative writing, skits, conflict-solutions, and other creative experiences.These learning activities will challenge the student to put into practice the Bible truth. Finally, each lesson ends with a ***MINISTRY TIME*** that allows the teacher to lead children through a prayer activity designed to help them pray about specific ways to apply the Bible truth to their lives.

Each lesson component contains a materials list and a preparation segment. This is where you will find all the materials needed to present the activity. At the beginning of each week, read the lesson for the following week. Gather the materials you will need and begin preparing your supplies to avoid having to do everything on the same day as the teaching of the lesson. Prepare yourself daily by studying the lesson and praying for the children that they may hear and obey the Word of God.

For the Children's Sake,

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Editors

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Scope and Sequence

Walk with Jesus is a seven unit discipleship program. Each unit builds upon the previous unit. Each lesson in the unit also builds upon previous lessons. It is highly recommended that you teach the entire curriculum in the order the lessons are written. Children will greatly benefit from this approach rather than by simply teaching individual lessons.

Unit 1 **Love Him**	**Lesson Title**	**Bible Truth**	**Bible Story**	**Bible Verse**
Lesson 1	The Greatest Commandment	I will love God with ALL my heart.	The Greatest Commandment Matthew 22:37-40	"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength." (Deut. 6:5, NIV)
Lesson 2	Jesus Loved Me First	I love Jesus because He loved me first.	Jesus Died for Me Matthew 27	"We love because He first loved us." (1 John 4:19, NIV)
Lesson 3	Love and Obedience	Because I love Jesus, I will obey His commands.	The Rich, Young Ruler Matthew 19:16-22	"Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him." (John 14:21, NIV 1984)
Lesson 4	Loving my Friends	I will show love to my friends.	David's Best Friend I Samuel 18:1-4, 19:1-20; 20:1-42	"A friend loves at all times…"(Proverbs 17:17a, NIV)
Lesson 5	Loving my Neighbor	I will love my neighbor.	The Good Samaritan Luke 10:25-37	"He answered: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength, and with all your mind'; and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" (Luke 10:27, NIV)

Unit 2 Serve Him	Lesson Title	Bible Truth	Bible Story	Bible Verse
Lesson 1	Resist Temptation	I can say "no" to temptation.	Jesus Is Tempted Matthew 4:1-11	Jesus said to him, “Away from me, Satan! For it is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.’” (Matthew 4:10, NIV)
Lesson 2	Choose to Serve God	I will choose to serve God.	The People Choose Joshua 24:1-2	“Choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve.” “And the people said to Joshua, ‘We will serve the Lord our God and obey him.’” (Joshua 24:15b and 24, NIV)
Lesson 3	God’s Way, Not My Way	I will serve the Lord the way He wants, not my way.	David Moves the Ark 2 Samuel 6:1-15	“Show me your ways, Lord, teach me your paths. Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long.” (Psalm 25:4-5, NIV)
Lesson 4	Watch Your Attitude	I will serve the Lord with a good attitude.	Rebuilding the Walls Nehemiah 2:11-18	“And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men.” (Colossians 3:23, NKJV)

Unit 3 **Bring an Offering to Him**	**Lesson Title**	**Bible Truth**	**Bible Story**	**Bible Verse**
Lesson 1	Honoring God Through Giving	I will honor God with all that I have.	The Widow Gave All She Had Mark 12:41-44	“Honor the Lord with your wealth, with the first fruits of all your crops.” (Proverbs 3:9, NIV)
Lesson 2	Giving My Tithes	I will give my tithe to God.	Abraham Paid His Tithes Genesis 14:1-20	“Will a mere mortal rob God? Yet you rob me. But you ask, ‘How are we robbing you?’ In tithes and offerings.” (Malachi 3:8, NIV)
Lesson 3	Giving My All, Big or Small	I will give what I have.	A Boy Willing to Share John 6:5-15, Matthew 14:13-21	“Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the Lord thy God which he hath given thee.” (Deuteronomy 16:17, KJV)
Lesson 4	Giving to Help Others	I will give to help others.	A Woman Willing to Give 1 Kings 17:8-24	“Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you.” (Matthew 5:42, NIV)
Lesson 5	Giving Cheerfully	I will give to God cheerfully.	Giving for the House of God Exodus 35:4-29; 36:1-7	“Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.” (2 Corinthians 9:7, NIV)

Unit 4 Share With Others	Lesson Title	Bible Truth	Bible Story	Bible Verse
Lesson 1	Share the Good News	I will share the good news about Jesus.	Peter Shares the Good News Acts 2:1-47	"He said to them, 'Go into all the world. Preach the good news to everyone.'" (Mark 16:15, NIrV)
Lesson 2	Doing Good to Others	I will do good things for others.	Elisha and the Shunammite Woman 2 Kings 4:8-17	"Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers." (Galatians 6:10, NIV)
Lesson 3	But…He's Not Like Me	I will treat everyone with love and kindness.	Peter and Cornelius Acts 10:1-35	"…God does not show favoritism but accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right." (Acts 10:34b-35, NIV)
Lesson 4	Praying for Others	I will pray for others.	Abraham Prays for Lot Genesis 18:1	"Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ." (Galatians 6:2, NIV)

Unit 5 Worship Him	Lesson Title	Bible Truth	Bible Story	Bible Verse
Lesson 1	What is Worship?	We worship God.	God Saves His People Exodus 14:1-31; 15:1-21	“Praise him for his acts of power; praise him for his surpassing greatness.” (Psalm 150:2, NIV)
Lesson 2	Children Can Worship	Children can worship.	Children Praising Jesus Matthew 21:1-11, 14-16	“From the lips of children and infants you, Lord, have called forth your praise.” (Matthew 21:16b, NIV)
Lesson 3	We Worship God When…We Sing Praises	I can worship God by singing.	God Brings Victory Through Praise 2 Chronicles 20:1-28	“Worship the Lord with gladness; come before him with joyful songs.” (Psalm 100:2, NIV)
Lesson 4	We Worship God When…We Speak Words of Praise	I can worship God when I speak words of praise.	The Disciples Speak Praises Luke 19:29-40	“All you have made will praise you, O Lord; your saints will extol you. They will tell of the glory of your kingdom and speak of your might.” (Psalm 145:10-11, NIV 1984)
Lesson 5	We Worship God When…We Go To Church	I can worship God by going to church.	Solomon and Israel Go to the New Temple 2 Chronicles 5:1-14	“Give thanks as you enter the gates of his temple. Give praise as you enter its courtyards. Give thanks to him and praise his name.” (Psalm 100:4, NIrV)
Lesson 6	We Worship God When…We Pray	I can worship God by praying.	Daniel in the Lion’s Den Daniel 6	“In the morning, Lord, you hear my voice; in the morning I lay my requests before you and wait expectantly.” (Psalm 5:3, NIV)
Lesson 7	We Worship God When…We Read His Word	I can worship God by reading His Word.	Ezra Reads the Law of God to the People Nehemiah 8:1-12	“I rejoice in Your Word as one who finds a great treasure.” (Psalm 119:162, NKJV)
Lesson 8	We Worship God When…We Obey Him	I can worship God by being obedient.	King Saul Disobeys 1 Samuel 15:1-28	“Love the Lord your God. Do what he requires. Always obey his rules, laws and commands.”(Deuteronomy 11:1,NIrV)
Lesson 9	Praise in the Prison	I will worship God in difficult times.	Paul and Silas Praise in the Prison Acts 16:19-32	“I will extol the Lord at all times; his praise will always be on my lips.” (Psalm 34:1, NIV)

Unit 6 Trust Him	Lesson Title	Bible Truth	Bible Story	Bible Verse
Lesson 1	What is Trust?	I will trust God.	Jesus Calms the Storm Luke 8:22-25	“Trust in the Lord with all your heart. Do not depend on your own understanding. (Proverbs 3:5, NIrV)
Lesson 2	Trusting God for Protection	I will trust God to protect me.	David Trusted God 1 Samuel 17	“You are my hiding place; you will protect me from trouble…” (Psalm 32:7a, NIV)
Lesson 3	Trusting God for Provision	I will trust God to provide for me.	God Provides for the Israelites Exodus 15:22-27 and 16:1-36	“And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4:19, NIV)
Lesson 4	Trusting God for Guidance	I will trust God to guide me.	David Asks God 1 Samuel 23:1-4	“He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them his way.” (Psalm 25:9, NIV)
Lesson 5	Trusting God When I Am Afraid	I will trust God when I am afraid.	Hezekiah Trusts God, 2 Chronicles 32:1-23, 2 Kings 18:17-19:36	“When I am afraid, I put my trust in you.” (Psalm 56:3, NIV)
Lesson 6	Trusting God in the Midst of Trouble	I will trust God when I am in trouble.	Paul Trusts in God Even When His Ship Wrecks Acts 27	“God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.” (Psalm 46:1, NIV)
Lesson 7	Trusting God To Help Me Do The Right Thing	I will trust God to help me do what is right.	Three Young Men Refuse to Worship Daniel 3	“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” (Philippians 4:13, NKJV)
Lesson 8	Trusting God At All Times	I will trust God at all times.	Joseph Trusts God at All Times Genesis 37, 39-46	“Trust in him at all times, you people; pour out your hearts to him, for God is our refuge.” (Psalm 62:8, NIV)

Unit 7 Grow With Him	Lesson Title	Bible Truth	Bible Story	Bible Verse
Lesson 1	Growing as a Christian	I can live a life full of the fruit of the Spirit.	A Good Tree Bears Good Fruit Luke 6:43-45; Matthew 7:16-18, 20; Galatians 5:19-23	But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law. (Galatians 5:22-23, NIV, 1984)
Lesson 2	Growing in Love	My love can grow.	Jesus Loved Everyone Luke 23:26-46; John 19:25-27	“Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God.” (I John 4:7, NIV)
Lesson 3	Growing in Joy	My joy can grow.	Jesus’ Birth Brings Joy Luke 2:4-20	“You make known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.” (Psalm 16:11, NIV)
Lesson 4	Growing in Peace	My peace can grow.	Jesus Brings Peace Matthew 14:22-330	“You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You.” (Isaiah 26:3, NKJV)
Lesson 5	Growing in Patience	My patience can grow.	Saul Is Impatient I Samuel 10:8 and 13:1-15	“Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.” (Ephesians 4:2, NIV)
Lesson 6	Growing in Kindness	My kindness can grow.	The Parable of the Unforgiving and Unkind Servant Matthew 18:21-35	“Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.” (Ephesians 4:32, NIV)
Lesson 7	Growing in Goodness	My goodness can grow.	Abigail Helps David I Samuel 25	“But I tell you who hear me: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you.” (Luke 6:27, NIV)
Lesson 8	Growing in Faithfulness	My faithfulness can grow.	Ruth Is Faithful; God Is Faithful Ruth 1-4	“Let love and faithfulness never leave you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart. Then you will win favor and a good name in the sight of God and man.” (Proverbs 3:3-4, NIV)
Lesson 9	Growing in Gentleness	My gentleness and humbleness can grow.	David Demonstrates Humility I Samuel 24	“Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility, value others above yourselves.” (Philippians 2:3, NIV)
Lesson 10	Growing in Self-Control	My self-control can grow.	Daniel Uses Self-Control Daniel 1:1-21	“Like a city whose walls are broken through is a person who lacks self-control.” (Proverbs 25:28, NIV)

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The Greatest Commandment

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Bible Truth: I will love God with ALL my heart.

Bible Story: Matthew 22:37-40

Bible Verse: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength." (Deuteronomy 6:5, NIV)

FOCUS

Learning Activity: "God Doesn't Like Fractions"

Preparation

Write several fractions on a piece of poster board. Prepare the following objects or visual aids: half of a cookie, a whole cookie, half of an umbrella (or any other useful object), and half of a catcher's glove, a ball or any other sport object that children are familiar with. Make a giant heart out of a red poster board. Cut it in half. Draw a happy face on one half of the heart and a sad face on the other half.

Materials
white poster board
red poster board
markers
cookies
umbrella
sports ball or catcher's glove

Presentation

As you show the fractions say: **Can anyone tell me what these numbers are called? Yes, they are fractions. Fractions are numbers that represent a part or parts of a whole.**

How many of you have begun to learn about fractions in school? Do you enjoy learning about fractions? Many children do not enjoy learning about fractions because it is a bit harder to add and subtract fractions than whole numbers. Give an example of adding two whole numbers and another example of adding two fractions.

Show children the whole cookie and half of a cookie. Say: **If someone offered you half of a cookie or a whole cookie, which one would you choose? I'm sure you would choose the whole cookie. Half (or a fraction) of a cookie is never as good as a whole cookie, isn't that right?**

Fractions (or parts of a whole) are often much harder to use. How could I use only half of an umbrella on a rainy day? What could you do with half of a catcher's glove when your team is

playing? Mention the objects or visuals you have prepared if you did not use the suggested ones. Say: **Do you know that God doesn't like fractions either? He says in Deuteronomy 6:5, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength."** (Show the half of the heart with a happy face.) **It's very hard for God to only use half of a child. He can't send you where He wants you to go because your other half doesn't want to go.** (Show the half of the heart with a sad face.) **He cannot teach you His Word because only part of you wants to learn. God doesn't want us to give Him only part of our lives. He doesn't like fractions! He wants us to surrender completely to Him.**

Our Bible truth today reminds us of this. "I will love God with ALL my heart."

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: Deuteronomy 6:5

Preparation

Write the words WHOLE=ALL on a poster board or on the whiteboard.

Cut an apple into pieces or peel an orange and divide it into pieces. (Candy will also work, as long as it can be divided into many pieces.)

Write Deuteronomy 6:5 on the back of the poster board and underline the word ALL every time it appears in this verse.

Materials
poster board
markers
apple, orange, or candy
paper (red if possible)
scissors
small prize

Prepare a red heart for every two children in your class. Write Deuteronomy 6:5 on each heart. Cut each heart into two pieces like a puzzle. Be sure that each heart is cut differently, so each half only has one match.

Explanation

Ask**: Do you like** _____(mention the fruit or candy that you have prepared)? Pick a child that raised his/her hand. Say: **Would you like a small piece of** _____(fruit or candy) **or would you prefer the whole thing**. (Most children will choose the whole thing.) Say: **Just like you wanted the whole thing, God also wants all of us instead of just a part.**

Read Deuteronomy 6:5 with the children. Explain that this verse tells us how we need to love God. Ask a child to circle what part of us should love God—heart, soul, and strength.

Memorization Activity

Give each child half of a prepared heart. Instruct the children to wait for the signal and then look for the person that has the other half of their heart. When they have found their partner, they

should study the verse together. When both children can quote Deuteronomy 6:5, they should raise their hands. The first pair who can quote Deuteronomy 6:5 will receive a small reward.

INSTRUCT

Bible Story: "The Greatest Commandment," Matthew 22:37-40

Preparation

Read and study Matthew 22:37-40.

Materials
Bible
poster board
marker

Draw two large tablets that look similar to the Ten Commandments on a piece of poster board. Write Matthew 22:37 on the left side of the tablet. Write Matthew 22:39 on the right side of the tablet. Write the Ten Commandments on the back. **Save this visual for use in Lesson 4.*

Presentation

Say: **Jesus was in the bustling city of Jerusalem. Many people crowded around Him to listen to what He was saying about His Father in heaven. Some people believed He was the Son of God. But there were some people that hated Jesus. They were the religious leaders, ministers, and rulers of the temple.**

Every time religious leaders were among the crowd, they would ask difficult questions. They thought Jesus wouldn't be able to answer their questions. They hoped Jesus would say something that would make people doubt that He was really the Son of God.

One day, one of these leaders asked Jesus, "What is the most important commandment in the law of Moses?"

The religious leaders knew that Moses had been given these ten laws known as the Ten Commandments. Each one of these was important and needed to be obeyed. What would Jesus say?

(Show the side of the tablets where the Matthew verses are written.) ***"Jesus replied: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'"***

Jesus was right! If we love God and our neighbors (the people around us), can we disobey the rest of the commandments? NO! If we love Jesus with ALL our heart, we will treat those around us the same way Jesus would treat them. (Show the Ten Commandments side of the poster board. Discuss with children how each of the Ten Commandments can be followed by loving God and our neighbors.)

APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Creative Writing, "Showing My Love"

Materials
paper
scissors
pencils, markers, or crayons

Preparation
Cut enough hearts out of paper for each child to have one. Fold each heart in half.

Presentation
Give every child a heart-shaped piece of paper and a pencil. Ask the children to write or draw in one half of the heart ways they can show love to Jesus. On the other half of the heart ask them to write or draw ways they can show love to their neighbors (those around us).

MINISTRY TIME

Materials
none

Preparation
None

Presentation
Form a circle. (If the group is large, form several small groups with a leader for each group.) Ask every child to share one way he wants to show his love to Jesus. Then ask everyone in the group to pray for each other that they will love God with all their hearts.

Jesus Loved Me First

Lesson Scripture: Matthew 27

Bible Truth: I love Jesus because He loved me first.

Bible Story Matthew 26-27

Bible Verse: "We love because He first loved us." (1 John 4:19, NIV)

FOCUS

Learning Activity: "Love Is a Reaction"

Preparation

Write the word "REACTION" on a poster board.

Materials
poster board
markers

Presentation

Start this activity by smiling at the children. Do it in a very obvious way! Most of the children will respond with a smile. Begin asking the children why they are smiling at you until someone replies, "I am smiling because you smiled first." Say: **I smiled at you and then you smiled back at me. That's called a reaction.** (Show the word REACTION written on the poster board.)

When it is time for a child to go to school, his mother usually says, "I'll miss you" or "I love you." How does the child respond? Allow children to answer. **Right, he usually says, "I'll miss you too," or "I love you too." The child is giving a reaction to his mother's words.** (Show the word REACTION again.) **The word reaction means to respond to something. You smiled because I smiled at you first. The child told his mom he would miss her because she told him she'd miss him first.**

In the Bible, Jesus showed His love for us in a special way. Let's see what our reaction should be to His love by learning today's scripture.

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: I John 4:19

Preparation

Write 1 John 4:19 on a piece of poster board.

Materials
markers
poster board
one small ball for each group of six children

Explanation

Read the verse and say: **To whom is the word "He" referring?** (Jesus) **Does anyone know how Jesus showed us His love?** (He died on the cross for us.) **If you have never heard the story about Jesus dying on the cross for us, I am going to tell it to you today. What does the Bible verse say our reaction should be to Jesus' love?** (We love Him in return.)

Memorization Activity

Show 1 John 4:19. Read the verse together. Divide the students into small groups, no more than six in a group. Have children sit on the floor in a circle. The first child says the first word of the verse and rolls a ball to anyone in the circle. The child receiving the ball says the second word of the verse and so on. Allow the children to look at the verse the first few times they play. Then, remove the verse and see if they can do it on their own. Continue playing until each group can say the verse quickly.

INSTRUCT

Bible Story: "Jesus Died for Me," Matthew 26-27

Preparation

Read and study Matthew 26-27.

Write Romans 5:8 on a piece of poster board.

Materials
Bible
poster board
markers
30 silver coins (or a picture of 30 coins)
bowl filled with water
towel
crown of thorns (made out of a plant or paper)
hammer
nails
wooden cross

Presentation

Tell the following story showing the items from the materials list when directed.

Say: **Judas, one of Jesus' disciples, was a very greedy man. For a long time, he had been robbing the money that Jesus and His disciples used for food and lodging. Now he needed more money. He knew there was a way to obtain it. He had to turn Jesus in to His enemies.**

Judas went to the high priest and asked him, "How much would you pay me to put Jesus in your hands?" The high priest agreed to give him thirty silver coins after Jesus was arrested. (Show 30 silver coins) **From that moment on, Judas started to look for a way to turn Jesus over to His enemies.**

Finally, the time came when Judas knew that Jesus would be alone with His disciples in the Gethsemane garden. "Arrest the man whom I kiss," said Judas to the soldiers. As they were approaching Jesus and His disciples, Judas ran to Jesus and kissed Him. "Hello, Master!" Immediately the soldiers seized Jesus and took Him to be judged.

Jesus was taken before Pilate, the Roman governor. The religious leaders were presenting many accusations against Him, but Jesus didn't even say a word.

Pilate asked the angry crowd what to do with Jesus.

"Crucify Him!" they shouted.

Pilate didn't believe Jesus was guilty. He didn't want to kill an innocent person, but the multitude kept shouting, "Crucify Him!"

Finally, Pilate asked for a bowl filled with water, and washed his hands before the multitude. (Wash your hands in the bowl of water) **"I'm innocent of the death of this good man. You are all guilty."** (dry your hands with the towel)

The Roman soldiers lashed Jesus. They tore His clothes and put a purple robe on Him. After this, they made a crown of thorns and set it on His head (show the crown of thorns)**, and mocked Him by yelling, "Hail, king of the Jews."**

At the end, in the early hours of the morning, they took Jesus to a hill called Golgotha. There they nailed His hands and feet to a cross. (Hammer the nails into the wooden cross.) **Jesus died after many hours of suffering. But before He died, He prayed to God, "Father, forgive them because they don't know that they have crucified Your only Son."**

We learned in our Bible verse today that Jesus loved us first. There is another verse that reminds us of how Jesus showed us His love. (Show Romans 5:8). **How did Jesus show His love for us? Yes, He died on the cross. Why did He do that? Our Bible verse helps us understand. It says that we are sinners. Sin is when we disobey God, and sin must be punished. The Bible tells us in Romans 3:23 that everyone has sinned. God can't let sin into heaven, so if we have sin in our life we can't get into heaven. The big problem is that we can't take away our own sin.**

When Jesus died on the cross, he took the punishment for the sin of the entire world, even your sin. Even though Jesus took your punishment, in order to have him take away your sin, you must ask Him to forgive you of your sins. When you do this, Jesus takes away your sin and gives you eternal life! Eternal life means that when your life on earth is finished, you will go to heaven and live with God forever! The most awesome news is that Jesus did not stay dead. Three days after dying, he came out of the tomb where they had buried him. He is alive! You can meet Him in heaven one day.

What will your reaction be to the love of Jesus? He loved you first. Now will you ask for His forgiveness from sin and love Him? (Invite children who have not accepted Jesus as their Savior from sin to do so at this time. You can share with them I John 1:9 or Romans 6:23 to help them understand God's forgiveness and eternal life.)

APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Creative Writing, "Thank-You Notes"

Preparation
Give a pencil and a piece of paper to each child.

Materials
paper
pencils
crayons

Presentation
Ask each child to write a thank you note to Jesus. The note can include words or drawings that express the gratitude of the child. For example:

> Dear Jesus,
> Thank you so much for loving me enough to die for me and for loving me even before I loved you.
> Love,
> (Name)

MINISTRY TIME

Preparation
None

Materials
wooden cross used during the Bible lesson
thank you notes from the learning activity

Presentation
Ask the children to place their thank you notes at the foot of the wooden cross used during the Bible lesson and say a prayer to Jesus. Keep the cross in the classroom until this unit is complete as a reminder of the love Jesus has for every child.

Love and Obedience

Lesson Scripture: Matthew 19:16-22

Bible Truth: Because I love Jesus, I will obey His commands.

Bible Story: Matthew 19:16-22

Bible Verse: "Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him." (John 14:21, NIV 1984)

FOCUS

Learning Activity: "Obedience," a puppet play or skit

Preparation

Write the word "OBEDIENCE" in big, red letters on a poster board. Display it where it can be easily seen in the room. Practice the skit with a volunteer using a puppet or ask the volunteer to dress up in a funny costume.

Materials
poster board
red marker
puppet or a person dressed up in a funny costume

Presentation

Teacher: **Joseph, where are you? I know you are here today!**

Joseph: (Comes out from the back of the stage) **Hello! It's good to be here!**

(Joseph looks at the poster with the word "OBEDIENCE" on it and points at it while talking.) **What does it say there?**

Teacher: (Looks at the word.) **Oh! You mean the word O-B-E-D-I-E-N-C-E.**

Joseph: **Yes! That word! What does it mean?**

Teacher: **OBEDIENCE**

Joseph: **I heard you say it, but what does it mean?**

Teacher: **Well, it means that you obey or do what someone asks you to do.**

Joseph: **Oh! So obedience means to listen. Right?**

Teacher: **Obedience means much more than listening with your ears to what someone else is saying. In order to obey, you need to listen and do.**

Joseph: **What?**

Teacher: **It's like when your parents ask you to make your bed or to brush your teeth. If you don't do it, then you DISOBEY your parents. Do you understand?**

Joseph: **Of course I do! My mom always tells me that when I obey or do what she asks me to do…**(Joseph starts to act timidly.)

Teacher: **Yes…**

Joseph: **Well, she says that when I obey, I show that I love her.** (Joseph covers his face with his hands.)

Teacher: **Joseph, why do you think she feels that way?**

Joseph: **Well, when I do what she asks me to do, she knows that I'm listening to her and that I think what she's saying is very important.**

Teacher: **Joseph, I'm glad that you've said that, because Jesus said the same thing.**

Joseph: **Awesome! Now I talk like Jesus did! You will have to start listening to me!**

Teacher: **Don't take it that far, Joseph! I have a Bible verse and story to share with you. Ok?**

Joseph: (Joseph walks towards the back of the stage. He turns around and says,) **Ok! I'll be right here listening.**

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: John 14:21

Preparation

Write John 14:21 on a piece of poster board.

For the memorization activity, cover white sheets of paper with waxed paper. Trace John14:21 on the waxed paper, pressing hard with a good sharpened pencil. Prepare a sheet for each child in your class. (Instead of using the wax paper, you can also write the verse on each piece of paper with a white crayon.)

Materials
poster board
markers
pencil
white paper
wax paper or white crayon
watercolor paints or colored water
small paint brush

Explanation

Read John 14:21 and explain that this Bible verse tells us two things we must do to love Jesus. Ask: **Who can read the verse carefully and find the two things we must do to**

love Jesus. Choose a child to come and circle the two phrases, "has my commands" and "obeys them." Ask: **Now, who can find in this verse the three things that show what happens to each one of us who loves God?** Choose a child to go to the front and underline the three phrases, "loved by my Father," "I too will love them," and "will show myself to them."

Say: **What are some ways Jesus might show Himself to you when you obey Him?** If the children aren't able to answer this question, give them some suggestions such as, "He helps me when I ask Him."

Memorization Activity

Give each child watercolor paints or a cup of colored water, a paint brush, and a sheet of paper on which you wrote John 14:21, according to the instructions under the preparation section. Say: **Today's verse has been written on the sheet of paper I just gave you, but you will not be able to see it unless you obey my directions.**

Give specific instructions for the children to follow:

1. Dip your brush into the watercolor paint or colored water.
2. Brush across the paper several times until words show up.
3. Put your paper in a place where it can dry.

When all of the children have finished, read the verse together.

INSTRUCT

Bible Story: "The Young Man Who Didn't Love Enough," Matthew 19:16-22

Preparation

Read and study Matthew 19:16-22.

Materials
Bible
poster board
markers
2 Bible costumes

On a poster board, write the commandments that the young man in today's Bible story obeyed:

You shall not murder.
Love your husband or wife.
You shall not steal.
You shall not lie.
Honor your father and mother.
Love your neighbor as yourself.

A week prior to this session, ask two young people to prepare the following skit. Dress them in Bible costumes. Have one person act as Jesus and the other person as the young man. Using the commandments written on the poster board, the young man should mark off the ones he has obeyed as they are mentioned.

Presentation

Say: **Many of us claim to love Jesus. But, do we love Him enough to do everything He asks of us? Our Bible story today is about a young man who loved Jesus, but…did he love Him enough?**

Young man: **Jesus, I've tried all day to get close enough to you to ask you a question.**

Jesus: **Yes, what is your question?**

Young man: **What do I need to do to have eternal life, to live with God forever?**

Jesus: **If you want to have eternal life, you need to keep the commandments.**

Young man: **What commandments?**

Jesus: **Don't murder; love your wife; don't steal; don't lie; honor your father and mother; love your neighbor…**

Young man: **Jesus, I have obeyed each one of these commandments. Is there anything else I need to do?**

Jesus: **Yes. If you desire to obey me completely and perfectly, sell all you have and give the money to the poor. By doing this, you will have treasures in heaven. After you do this, come and follow me.**

Young man: **But Jesus…Jesus…**(He starts to walk away and speak to the crowd) **I really would like to follow Jesus. I would love to have eternal life. But…I have so many things. There's no way that I could sell everything I have. Where would I live? What would I eat? What clothes would I wear? Jesus and His followers don't have a place to call home. I just can't sell everything.**

Say: **The young man thought he loved Jesus, but He didn't love Jesus enough to obey. He loved his money and his possessions more than he loved Jesus. He couldn't trust Jesus to take care of him. He only wanted to obey Jesus when it was easy for him, not when it was hard. When we love Jesus, we will obey what He asks us to do, even if it is hard.**

APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Game, "Obedience: Easy or Hard?"

Preparation

Make two signs, one that says "easy" and one that says "hard." Attach the signs to opposite sides of the room.

Materials
paper
markers

Presentation

Explain to the children that we need to obey Jesus even when it is hard. Read aloud the scenarios listed below, asking the children to decide if it would be easy or hard to obey in these situations. They should stand by the sign that indicates their choice.

1. Your mom asks you to turn off the television and go clean your room. Is it easy or hard to obey?

2. Your dad has given you 10 minutes to read before bed. You know you should read your Bible, but you really want to finish your story book. Is your choice easy or hard?

3. Your little brother just wrote all over your math homework with a black marker, and now you have to re-do it. Your parents remind you that God wants you to forgive him. Is this easy or hard to forgive?

4. You are spending the night at a friend's house. Your friend wants you to watch a movie that you know your parents have said you are not allowed to watch. You know you should say no. Is this choice easy or hard?

5. You received $10 as a birthday present. You know that the Bible teaches you to give $1 of the money back to God as a tithe. Is it easy or hard to give God some of your money?

Say: **Some of these things were easy for you and others were hard. Each of these situations illustrates a way that you can be obedient to Jesus. He has asked you to obey your parents, love those who treat you badly, spend time reading your Bible, and tithe your money. When you do each of these things, you are showing Jesus that you love Him.**

MINISTRY TIME

Preparation

None

Materials
paper
pencils
crayons

Presentation

Ask the children to write or draw one way that they are going to be obedient to Jesus this week. Say a prayer asking God to help the children be obedient to His Word.

Loving my Friends

Lesson Scripture: 1 Samuel 18:1-4; 19:1-20; 20:1-42

Bible Truth: I will show love to my friends.

Bible Story: 1 Samuel 18:1-4; 19:1-20; 20:1-42

Bible Verse: "A friend loves at all times…"(Proverbs 17:17a, NIV)

FOCUS

Learning Activity: "A Friend Loves at All Times"

Preparation

Use construction paper or a poster board to cut 9" circles or use circled-shaped disposable plates. On each circle draw a face that illustrates feelings expressed by children, such as happiness, sadness, anger, fear, loneliness, shyness, etc.

Materials
poster board, construction paper, or paper plates
markers

Presentation

Show the children the emotion circles you prepared and say: **Each one of these faces shows some kind of feeling or emotion. Can you mention the emotion shown on each one of these faces?** Allow different children to choose faces. Discuss the following questions:

Have you ever had this feeling?
Have any of your friends ever had this feeling?
What can you do to help your friend when he feels this way?
Would you rather be with your friend when she is happy or sad?
Do you continue the friendship with your friend when he is feeling bad or is having a bad day?

Even when your friends are having a bad day or feeling sad, they need you to care about them.

Conclude the discussion with a prayer and ask each child to pray silently for a friend who might be sad or having a bad day.

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: Proverbs 17:17a

Preparation

Write Proverbs 17:17a on a poster board.

Materials
poster board
markers

Explanation

Say: **This verse tells us that we should love our friends at all times. I am going to read the Bible verse. Listen carefully to see if you hear any mistakes.** Read the following phrases to the children. At the end of each one, ask them to correct the mistake.

A friend loves only during happy times.

A friend loves only when someone is being nice.

A friend loves when it is easy.

A friend loves when someone gives them a present .

Say: **God wants us to show love to our friends ALL OF THE TIME.**

Memorization Activity

Divide the children into two groups. One group will say the phrase, "A friend loves." The other group will say the phrase, "at all times." Ask the groups to face each other and say their phrases to each other while jumping on one foot, with their eyes closed, whispering, shouting, etc.

INSTRUCT

Bible Story: "David's Best Friend," I Samuel 18:1-4, 19:1-20; 20:1-42

Preparation

Read and study 1 Samuel 18:1-4; 19:1-20, 20:1-42.

Ask two young people, at least a week prior to this lesson, to learn the dialogue below and to be ready to present it to the children during your class. Provide them with clothes similar to those used during biblical times.

Materials
Bible
2 Bible costumes

Presentation

David: **Hello. I'm David. Do you remember me? I'm the little shepherd who wrote several songs. I'm the little warrior who killed the giant Goliath! You remember. I'm here because there is someone special I want you to meet. This is …** (starts looking around for Jonathan) **Jonathan?**

(Jonathan enters hesitantly, looking timidly around the classroom.)

This is Jonathan, son of Saul. Saul was chosen by God to be the first king in Israel. Jonathan is the best friend I've ever had. (Jonathan smiles, and timidly greets the audience.)

He's a little shy. He would never tell you this, but he's a war hero.

Jonathan: **That's not true.**

David: (Speaking to the audience): **You see what I mean?** (Speaking to Jonathan): **You won the victory against the Philistines in Mishmash, all by yourself.**

Jonathan: **David, it was God who worked that victory. Besides, I was not alone. My armor-bearer was with me.**

David: **The rest of Israel's mighty army was hiding in caves when you decided to attack.**

Jonathan: **They were afraid because the enemy had a lot of soldiers. We only had a few.**

David: **But you were not afraid!**

Jonathan: **Numbers are meaningless when you have God on your side. But if we are going to talk about heroes—**(Turns to speak to the audience): **The first time I saw this young man was when he was fighting against a giant with a slingshot…and he won.**

David: (Jokingly) **Jonathan was so impressed that he gave me his shirt.**

Jonathan: (Speaking to the audience): **My father was very impressed with him, too. He took David to the palace and made him part of the family.**

David: **Until Saul disobeyed God, and I was chosen to become the next king.**

Jonathan: **My dad didn't like that very much.**

David: **He hated it. And because of that, he hated me.**

Jonathan: **I don't think he hated you. I think that he was just afraid of you, and he was very jealous.** (Speaking to the audience): **People started to sing: "Saul has slain his thousands, and David his tens of thousands." Every time my father heard this, it made him very angry.**

David: **The truth is that he became crazy and wanted to kill me.**

Jonathan: **David, on one occasion, I convinced him not to kill you. I reminded him of all the things you had done for him, and he changed his mind. He allowed you to marry his daughter, didn't he?**

David: **Yes, I married Michal, and she warned me the next time Saul decided to kill me.** (Speaking to the audience): **She took me out of the house and went to Jonathan for help.**

Jonathan: (Speaking to the audience): **I couldn't believe it. Usually, my father would tell me everything. I thought I would know if he planned to kill David.**

David: **He wouldn't have told you that. He knew how close we were as friends.**

Jonathan: (Speaking to the audience): **Well, we needed to know the truth, so David came up with a plan.**

David: (Speaking to the audience): **It was almost time for a big celebration at the palace, and I knew that Saul was expecting to see me there. I felt sure that instead of welcoming me to the celebration, he was going to try to kill me. My plan was to hide out in the woods instead of going to the party. Jonathan would signal to me if there was any danger by shooting arrows into the woods.**

Jonathan: (Continuing to speak to the audience) **If my father asked about David, I was going to tell him that I had given David permission to miss the celebration.**

David: (Speaking to the audience): **If I was wrong about Saul, he wouldn't be upset that I wasn't at the celebration. But if he was planning to kill me, my absence would make him very mad.**

Jonathan: **And that's what happened.**

David: (Still speaking to the audience): **Saul got mad and accused Jonathan of plotting some sort of evil with me. Then Saul threw a sword at Jonathan, his own son!**

Jonathan: (Speaking to the audience): **He ordered me to take David to the castle and kill him. But instead, I warned David by shooting arrows into the woods, and then I helped him escape.**

David: (Speaking to Jonathan): **You disobeyed your father in order to save my life.**

Jonathan: **He was wrong.**

David: **But still, it must have been difficult to choose between us.**

Jonathan: **Not really. I did what God wanted me to do.**

David: **What do you mean?**

Jonathan: **Well, I love you David because you are my best friend. However, the reason I helped you was because I knew that was what God wanted me to do.**

David: (Speaking to the audience): **Didn't I tell you he is a great man? He was the prince of Israel. He could have let Saul kill me, and he would have been the next king.**

Jonathan: **God chose you to become king. Besides, we had made a promise to each other.**

David: **That is true.** (Speaking to the audience): **We promised to be friends forever.**

Jonathan: **And we always were.**

David. **And we always will be.**
(David puts his arm around Jonathan, and they both leave.)

APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Game, "Shooting the Arrow"

Materials
poster board
markers
small balls

Preparation
Use a poster board to make a big target. Give a numeric value to each circle inside the target.

Presentation
Say: **Today we are going to play a game. We'll pretend that these balls are arrows, just like the ones Jonathan used to warm David.** Divide the children into two teams. Take turns asking each team the questions listed below from the Bible story. Each time a team gives the correct answer to a question, one team member can throw a ball and try to hit the target. The team receives the points marked on the circle that was hit. The winning team is the one with the highest score after all questions have been answered. Be sure each child has an opportunity to throw the ball at least once during the game.

- How were David and Jonathan similar?
- Mention one way Jonathan showed his friendship to David.
- Mention one way David showed his friendship to Jonathan.
- How did Jonathan's friendship show true kindness towards David?
- What things did Saul do that demonstrated his hatred towards David?
- What other member in Saul's family saved the life of David?

MINISTRY TIME

Preparation

Draw the outline of a person on a sheet of paper. Prepare enough for each child in the class to have one.

Materials
paper
pencils

Presentation

Say: **We have learned today that God wants us to show love to our friends. I want you to think of one of your friends who might be having a hard time in their life right now. Maybe they are dealing with bullies at school or the divorce of their parents. Write their name on the top of your paper. Inside the person outline, write or draw ways that you can show love to your friend and help them through this difficult time.** When the children have finished, pray with them for their friends. Also, ask God to help the children show love by doing the things they wrote on the paper.

Loving My Neighbor

Lesson Scripture: Luke 10:25-37

Bible Truth: I will love my neighbor.

Bible Story: Luke 10:25-37

Bible Verse: "He answered: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength, and with all your mind'; and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" (Luke 10:27, NIV)

FOCUS

Learning Activity: "Who Is my Neighbor?"

Preparation

Look for pictures of people in magazines and old newspapers: people of different ages, races, expressions, etc. Cut them out and paste them on a poster board. If you do not have access to magazines or newspapers, draw pictures of different people on a piece of paper or poster board.

Materials
magazines or old newspapers
scissors
glue
poster board
markers

Write the following rhyme on the poster board:

Helping others is the way
To show God's love each day
Having Jesus in me helps me
To be good to all I see
Show love to others
Show love to others
Show love to others
No matter who they are.

Presentation

Say: **The Bible tells us to love our neighbors. Who is your neighbor?** After allowing each child to answer the question, show them the visual aid. By asking some questions, guide the children to understand that their neighbors are not only the people living next door. Since we love Jesus, we need to love and help everyone. Read the rhyme together several times. End with a prayer.

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: Luke 10:27

Preparation

Write Luke 10:27 on a poster board or the whiteboard. Next, divide the verse up into several short phrases and write each phrase of the verse on a separate card. Be sure to include the reference on a card as well. Hide the cards throughout the classroom.

Materials
poster board
markers
small cards

Explanation

Read Luke 10:27 to the children. Say: **In this Bible verse, Jesus gives us two commands. Can anyone tell me the first command?** Allow children to answer. **Yes, we are to love God with our whole selves. We learned about this in lesson one.** Ask a child to underline this command on the poster board.

Say: **In the next part of this verse, Jesus gives us a second command. Can anyone tell me the second command?** Allow children to answer. **Yes! Jesus wants us to love our neighbors. We will learn in our Bible story today that our neighbors aren't just the people who live near us. Jesus told us that our neighbors are anyone we meet.** Ask a child to underline the second command on the poster board.

Memorization Activity

After discussing the meaning of the verse, explain to the children that the words of Luke 10:27 are scattered throughout the classroom. After you give them a signal, they should start looking for the words. Once they've found the cards with the words, they should bring them to the front of the classroom and work together to place the cards in the correct order. Say: **Jesus wants us to love everyone just as much as we love ourselves.**

INSTRUCT

Bible Story: "Who Was this Man's Neighbor?" Luke 10:25-37

Preparation

Read and study Luke 10:25-37.

The week before presenting this lesson, choose four children or teens to dramatize the Bible story. Practice and provide them with costumes.

Materials
Bible
costumes for the characters in the skit:

priest (Jewish minister)
Levite (a man who assisted in the temple)
Samaritan

bandages

Presentation

Read the following Bible story while the children dramatize it.

Once upon a time, there was a man who knew a lot about the law of Moses and asked Jesus a question. He didn't really ask the question because he wanted to know more about God. Instead he asked the question because he wanted to trick Jesus into speaking foolishly.

"What does a man need to do to obtain eternal life?" asked the man.

Jesus replied with another question: "What does the law of Moses say about this?"

The man knew the law very well, so he immediately answered: "Moses' law says that you should love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and mind. And that you should love your neighbor as yourself."

"Very good!" answered Jesus. "If you follow this commandment, you will live forever."

But the man had another question: "Jesus, who is my neighbor?"

Jesus went on to tell a story that would help this man understand who his neighbor was. Can you discover who your neighbor is as you hear this story?

> **"On a certain occasion, a Jewish man was traveling from Jerusalem to the city of Jericho. While traveling he was attacked by some robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, took his money, and hit him. Then they left him on the side of the road.**
>
> **A Jewish minister was also traveling to Jericho. As he approached the place where the man was lying down, he crossed the street and continued on his way. Then, another man passed by. He assisted in the temple. When he saw the man lying down on the road, he crossed over him, looked at him, and moved on.**
>
> **Last, a man from Samaria walked by. Now, the people from Samaria and the Jews hated each other and wanted nothing to do with one other. But when this Samaritan saw the man, he felt very sad for him. He cleaned the man's wounds and put bandages on them. Then, he put the man on his donkey and walked with him to an inn. The Samaritan stayed with the man throughout the night and took care of him. The next day, the Samaritan gave money to the innkeeper to take care of the injured man.**

After Jesus told the story, he asked the man, "Which one of these three men do you think was a neighbor to the man who was attacked by robbers?"

Quickly the man answered, "The one who took care of the man."

Jesus told him, "Go and be like the Samaritan."

End the story by asking:

In what ways can we say that the Samaritan behaved as a neighbor to the wounded man? He stopped to help; took the man to an inn; paid for his care; bandaged his wounds.

Why was it hard for a Samaritan to help a Jewish man? The Samaritan and Jewish people did not like each other because they were different from one another. Samaritans and Jews were often mean to each other.

Is it hard for you to help some people? Answers will vary. Discuss with children that it is sometimes easier to love our friends instead of those who are mean to us. However, Jesus says that we should show love to everyone.

Whom does Jesus want us to help? Anyone who needs it.

Who are some of the people you need to help? Family, friends, and even your enemies.

What can you do to help them? Be kind, pray for them, do chores for them, etc.

What will happen if we help those who need our help? We will be obeying Jesus' commands.

Does showing love to people demonstrate our love for God? Yes. When we obey Jesus' commands, we show that we love Him.

APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Art, "Helping My Neighbor"

Preparation

If you are teaching younger children, write "Who is my neighbor?" at the top of each sheet of paper.

Materials
paper for each child
crayons, pencils, or markers

Presentation

Ask older children to title their paper "Who is my neighbor?" Then instruct the children to draw pictures of as many people as they can. On the back of the paper, ask them to draw a picture of themselves helping someone. When the children are finished, discuss their projects. Emphasize that anyone who needs help is our neighbor.

MINISTRY TIME

Preparation

Cut out enough hearts for each child to have one. Write the following phrase on the heart, "I will show love to _____ by _____."

Materials
paper
scissors
crayons or pencils

Presentation

Give each child a heart. Ask them to fill in the first blank with the name of a person they can help this week. Then, in the second blank, ask them to list a specific way they can show love to that person. Encourage them to choose someone they might normally have trouble showing kindness toward. Pray together asking God to help the children show kindness to those people whose names are on the hearts. Encourage the children to display their hearts at home as a reminder of what God wants them to do.

Resist Temptation

Lesson Scripture: Matthew 4:1-10

Bible Truth: I can say "no" to temptation.

Bible Story: Matthew 4:1-10

Bible Verse: Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'" (Matthew 4:10, NIV)

FOCUS

Learning Activity: "That's Tempting"

Preparation

Write the word "temptation" on a sheet of paper large enough for the children to see it clearly. Gather a food item that the children in your class would like to eat (cake, candy bar, cookies, etc.) Talk to a child before class and ask him to help you with an illustration by eating the food item when you turn your back in class.

Materials
large sheet of paper
marker
food item popular with children in your area

Presentation

Show children the food item you brought. Make a big deal about how great it would taste or how great it smells. Ask the volunteer you talked to before class to hold the food for you. Turn your back for a moment to allow the child to take a bite of the item. When you turn around, notice that the child has "given in" to temptation.

Show the children the word "temptation." Say: **Do any of you know what this word means?** Pause to allow children to answer. **Temptation is when you have the opportunity to choose to do something that is wrong. You can either choose to say "yes" to temptation, or you can choose to say "no" to temptation. Today,** (insert volunteer's name) **gave us an example of saying "yes" to temptation. Instead of saying "yes" to temptation, Jesus wants us to say "no" to temptation and make the choice to do the right thing. However, sometimes it is really hard to make the right choice when faced with temptation. Today, we are going to learn from Jesus' example how we can say "no" to temptation.** Be sure to thank your volunteer and explain to the class that he didn't really eat the food without permission.

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: Matthew 4:10

Preparation

Write Matthew 4:10 on a poster board.

Write each word of Matthew 4:10 on a separate piece of paper. Remember to include the reference. Hide the papers around the room.

Materials
poster board
marker
paper
tape, clothespins, or paper clips

Explanation

Read Matthew 4:10 with the children. Say: **Today you are going to hear a story about a time when Jesus was tempted by Satan to worship him instead of God. Instead of saying "yes" to this temptation, Jesus said "no" by quoting a Bible verse to Satan.** Ask a child to underline the part of the verse that Jesus quoted to Satan.

Say: **In this verse, Jesus taught us a great way to say "no" to temptation. When you are faced with the temptation to disobey God's commandments and do something you know will not please Him, think about what the Bible tells you to do. Remembering a Bible verse can help you make the right choice.**

Memorization Activity

Explain to the children that you have hidden the words to Matthew 4:10 around the room on separate pieces of paper. They should find one word and then attach it to the front of their clothing using tape (or whatever you provide). Once each child is wearing a word, the children should try to arrange themselves in correct verse order.

INSTRUCT

Bible Story: "Jesus Is Tempted," Matthew 4:1-11

Preparation

Read and study Matthew 4:1-11.

Write each group of questions on a separate index card:

Group 1
How many days was Jesus in the desert?
Why do you think He went to the desert?
During those forty days, Jesus didn't eat. Why did He choose not to eat?

Materials
Bible
index cards or paper
pencils
pictures of the Bible story (You can find them online, in a picture Bible, or draw them yourself.)

Group 2
After the forty days, who went to Jesus in the desert?
Mention the first way Satan tried to make Jesus sin.
Why was that a difficult temptation for Jesus?
How did Jesus overcome the temptation?

Group 3
Why did Satan ask Jesus to jump off the temple?
The second time Satan tempted Jesus, Satan also quoted a Bible verse. How was Satan's use of scripture different from Jesus' use of scripture?

Group 4
How did Satan tempt Jesus a third time?
What happened after Jesus said: "Away from me Satan"?
What weapon did Jesus use each time Satan tempted Him? Why?
Why do you think God allowed His Son Jesus to be tempted?

Presentation

Divide the children into four teams of listeners. Give each team a prepared card with questions and let them read over the questions together for a few moments. Instruct each team to listen for the answers to their questions during the story. If the members in a team hear the answer to one of their questions, they shouldn't say it out loud. The questions can only be answered during discussion time after the Bible story. If one of the teams can't answer all their questions, the opportunity will be given to the other teams to answer those questions.

Tell the children the following story using the picture visuals you have prepared.

Say: **Jesus had been living in the desert for forty days. He hadn't eaten anything and was weak and very hungry when Satan approached Him. "Jesus, if you are truly the Son of God, tell these stones to turn into bread."**

Although Jesus was very hungry and had the power to turn the stones into bread, He didn't obey Satan's command. He responded to the enemy with the Word of God. He said, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

When this temptation failed, Satan tried a different one. He took Jesus to the temple. "If you want people to believe that you are truly the Son of God, you should show them a great sign. Throw yourself from the temple. God said in His Word that His angels will protect you from all harm."

Jesus did want people to believe that He was the Son of God, but obeying Satan was definitely not the way to show that He was God's Son. "Satan," He answered, "It is also written that you will not test the Lord your God." Once again, Satan failed at tempting Jesus.

Satan tried one last time. From a high mountain he showed Jesus all the kingdoms of the world. "All these kingdoms are mine. I can give them away to any person I choose. I will give them to you if you worship me."

Jesus spoke with power, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only."

Satan failed. Jesus chose to serve God, His Father. And immediately angels came to take care of Jesus.

Once the story is finished, give each group a moment to discuss the answers to their questions. When they are finished with discussion, have them share their answers. If they don't know an answer, allow the other teams to help.

APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Bible Study, "Help! I'm Being Tempted"

Preparation

Make five copies of the matching activity "Help! I'm Being Tempted" located at the end of this lesson. If you do not have access to a copy machine, copy the situations and Bible verses on poster board for the children to see.

Materials
pencils
copies of "Help! I'm Being Tempted" activity

Presentation

Say: **In Unit One, we learned that it can sometimes be hard to obey God. We discussed different situations in which children faced the temptation to disobey God's instructions. We are going to look at those situations again and find Bible verses that could help each child say "no" to temptation.**

Divide the children into five groups. Give each group a copy of the "Help! I'm Being Tempted" activity. Ask each group to match the temptation with the Bible verse that could help in that situation. When each group is finished, have them share their verses.

MINISTRY TIME

Preparation

None

Materials
Bible

Presentation

Ask children to hold a Bible in their hands. If you do not have a Bible for each child, they can stand in a circle around one Bible. Explain that to be able to use God's Word to say "no" to temptation, we need to read it. Pray with the children that they will spend time during the next week reading their Bibles. You might consider sending home a simple Bible reading schedule to help them. If Bibles are not available for each child in your area, give children a new scripture each week written on a piece of paper that they can commit to memory.

OPTIONAL REVIEW ACTIVITY

Learning Activity: Art, "Chronological Line of Jesus' Temptation"

Preparation

Write each of the following titles and accompanying scripture references on 5 index cards or pieces of paper:

Materials
paper
pencils
crayons or markers

"Jesus went to the desert"	Matthew 4:1, 2
"Turn the stones into bread"	Matthew 4:3, 4
"Throw yourself from the temple"	Matthew 4:5-7
"You can rule these kingdoms"	Matthew 4:8-10
"The angels took care of Jesus"	Matthew 4:11

Presentation

Allow the children to work with a partner or in small groups to draw one of the scenes depicted on the index cards. (Be sure every scene is drawn.) Instruct them to read the Scripture verses and to work together in drawing the scene. When the children finish, ask them to hang the story scenes on the wall in the correct order.

Help! I'm Being Tempted!

Each of the situations below lists a temptation you may face one day. Match the temptation with the Bible verse you could remember to help resist the temptation.

1. Your mom asks you to turn off the television and go clean your room.
2. Your dad has given you 10 minutes to read before bed. You know you should read your Bible, but you really want to finish reading a story in another book.
3. Your little brother just wrote all over your math homework with a black marker, and now you have to re-do it. Your parents remind you that God wants you to forgive him.
4. You are spending the night at a friend's house. Your friend wants you to watch a movie you know your parents have said you are not allowed to watch.
5. You received money as a birthday present. You know the Bible teaches you to give ten percent of the money back to God as a tithe.

A. Psalm 101:3a, "I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes…"

B. Colossians 3:13, "Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you."

C. Ephesians 6:1, "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right."

D. Luke 6:38, "Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you."

E. Psalm 119:11, "I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you."

Choose to Serve God

Lesson Scripture: Joshua 24:1-26

Bible Truth: I will choose to serve God.

Bible Story: Joshua 24:1-26

Bible Verse: "Choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve." "And the people said to Joshua, 'We will serve the Lord our God and obey him.'" (Joshua 24:15b and 24, NIV)

FOCUS

Learning Activity: "It's Your Decision"

Preparation

If you teach younger children, write "My Decisions" at the top of a piece of paper for each child.

Materials
paper
pencils
shirt
watch or clock
food item

Presentation

Give each child a sheet of paper and a pencil. Ask older children to write "My Decisions" at the top of the page.

Say: **Every day you make decisions, many more than you probably realize. From the moment you get out of bed until you go back to sleep at night, you are making decisions. Every day you have to choose what to wear.** (Show the shirt.) **You have to choose what to eat.** (Show the food.) **You have to choose how to spend your time.** (Show the watch or clock.)

Give the children three minutes to write or draw some of the decisions they make each day. When time is up, ask the children to circle three things they consider to be the most important.

Say: **What three options did you choose?** Allow children to answer. **Why do you think these options are the most important ones?** Allow children to answer. **In today's Bible lesson, a whole nation made a very important decision. We will discover what that decision was.**

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: Joshua 24:15b and 24

Preparation

Write Joshua 24:15b and 24 on a poster board or whiteboard.

Materials
poster board
marker

> "Choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve." [said Joshua].
>
> "And the people said to Joshua, 'We will serve the Lord our God and obey him.'"

Explanation

Read the scriptures written on the poster board to the children.

Say: **What was the decision Joshua asked the Israelites to make? Whom did they choose to serve?**

Memorization Activity

Divide the children into two groups. Allow one group to play the role of Joshua. They will say: "Choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve." The other group should play the role of the Israelites. They will respond: "We will serve the Lord our God and obey Him." Ask each group to say their part loudly, softly, in a whisper, while jumping, etc. until they have repeated the verses several times.

INSTRUCT

Bible Story: "The People Choose," Joshua 24:1-26

Preparation

Read and study Joshua 24:1-26.

Materials
Bible
Bible costume for Joshua
poster board
marker

The week before teaching this lesson, give the dialogue to two adults or teenagers. Ask them to learn the parts for Joshua and the narrator and be prepared to present it during this week's session. Joshua will need to wear a Bible costume.

Copy from the script the two lines the children need to say during the story onto a piece of poster board, one line on the front and one line on the back.

Presentation

Say: **You get to be part of today's Bible story. You will be the people of Israel. During the story, the people of Israel say two different lines. When it is your turn to say your line, I will hold up the poster board for you to read. Let's practice.** Help them to practice those lines before the story is presented. As the teacher, help the children say their lines at the appropriate time. Say: **And now we present, "The People Choose."**

NARRATOR: **The people of Israel had lived in Canaan for many years. They had built houses and cities. They had farmed the land and planted the crops. Joshua was a hundred and ten years old.**

JOSHUA: **Call the people to a meeting. I want to talk to them one last time before I die.**

NARRATOR: **When the people had gathered, Joshua talked to them.**

JOSHUA: **I want all of you to be a courageous people. I want you to obey the laws God has given you. There are still enemies in the land. You must drive them away. Don't have anything to do with them. Don't serve their gods. Don't marry their sons and daughters. If you obey God, He will bless you in everything you do. But if you disobey Him, you will have problems.**

NARRATOR: **Joshua reminded the people that God had been with them since Abraham arrived in Canaan. He had been with them while they were enslaved in the land of Egypt. He was with them and led them through the desert. As Joshua was speaking to the people, he reminded them of the things God had done for them.**

PEOPLE: **He has done great things for us. He has given us this land. He has helped us to fight our enemies.**

JOSHUA: **You must choose today if you will serve the Lord God or if you will worship other gods.**

PEOPLE: **We will serve the Lord our God. We will obey His commandments.**

Once the skit is over, discuss the following questions with the children:

What did Joshua ask the people to do?
What would happen if they obeyed God?
What would happen if they disobeyed?
Why did the people choose to serve God?
Why have you decided to serve God?

APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Art, "My Decision"

Preparation
Gather materials

Materials
Bible
poster board
paper
pencils

Presentation
Say: **The most important decision you can ever make is to choose to serve God. Many of you made that decision when you asked Jesus to be your Savior from sin. Each day you also make other decisions that show you serve God. Can anyone tell me a decision you make each day that shows you serve God?** Write children's responses on a piece of poster board, chalkboard, or whiteboard. There responses should include some of the following: obeying my parents, reading my Bible, forgiving others, praying, etc.

Do you want to know what Joshua did to help the people of Israel to remember the decision they had made? Let's read Joshua 24:26 so you can see it. Read the verse to the children. **Joshua wrote the decision the people made in a book of God's laws. After this, he laid a large stone under a tree as a memorial to help them remember the decision they had made.**

Today I want you to do what Joshua did. I want you to make a drawing that will help you remember the decisions you have made to serve God.

Ask the children to draw a picture of themselves when they asked Jesus to forgive them of their sins and chose to serve Him. Then they can also draw pictures of themselves choosing to serve God in the other ways discussed (obeying parents, reading the Bible, etc.)

This would also be a good time to pray with children who have not received Jesus as their Savior from sin.

MINISTRY TIME

Preparation
None

Materials
tape
pictures from application activity

Presentation
When children have finished their drawings, invite them to attach their pictures to the wall and say aloud, "I choose Jesus." Pray a prayer over each child asking God to help him live out his decision each day.

God's Way, Not My Way

Lesson Scripture: 2 Samuel 6:1-15

Bible Truth: I will serve the Lord the way He wants, not my way.

Bible Story: 2 Samuel 6:1-15

Bible Verse: "Show me your ways, Lord, teach me your paths. Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long." (Psalm 25:4-5, NIV)

FOCUS

Learning Activity: "Follow the Recipe"

Preparation

Find a simple recipe children can make and gather the necessary supplies to make it in class.

Materials
a simple food recipe children can make in class
food items needed for recipe
kitchen supplies to make recipe

Presentation

Say: **Have you ever prepared something to eat that wasn't good? Have you ever built something that didn't work? Why do these things happen?** Allow children to answer questions as you ask them. **Usually this happens because we don't follow instructions. Today you are going to make a special treat. Be sure to follow the instructions correctly.**

Allow the children to prepare something to eat by following a simple recipe. Then allow them to enjoy what they prepared.

As they eat, say: **Why was it important to follow the recipe?** Allow children to answer. **The Word of God is like a recipe. We can find God's words in the Bible. If we want our lives to be full of blessings, we need to obey His Word. We need to serve Him the way He wants. In today's Bible story, we'll discover what happened when David didn't follow God's instructions when bringing the ark of the Lord back to Jerusalem.**

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: Psalm 25:4-5

Preparation

Write Psalm 25:4-5 on a poster board or white board.

Write the following phrases on 10 sheets of paper. Be sure to leave the back side of each paper blank.

Materials
poster board
marker
10 pieces of construction paper

page 1: Show me your ways, Lord
page 2: teach me your paths.
page 3: Guide me in your truth
page 4: and teach me,
page 5: for you are
page 6: God my Savior,
page 7: and my hope
page 8: is in you
page 9: all day long.
page 10: Psalm 25:4-5

Create a path with these papers. Be sure to put the path in correct order.

Explanation

Show children the Bible verse and read it together. Say: **This Bible verse contains a prayer to God. Can anyone tell me something this verse asks God to do for us?** Allow children to respond. **Yes, the verse asks God to show, teach, and guide us.** Have three volunteers underline those words. **This verse asks God to show us His ways and teach us His paths.** Underline the words ways and paths. **God has a certain way He wants us to live our lives and certain places He wants us to go.**

Have you ever followed a path? Maybe you went on a hike with your family or friends and you had to follow a map to get to your destination. The Bible is God's map to tell us the path we should follow in life. If we do what God's Word tells us to do, then we will go the places God wants us to go and do the things God wants us to do.

Memorization Activity

Show the children the Bible verse path you created. Ask them to follow the path and say the words on each sheet of paper. Repeat this several times, turning over one or two papers to the blank side each time they start over.

INSTRUCT

Bible Story: "David Moves the Ark," 2 Samuel 6:1-15

Preparation

Read and study 2 Samuel 6:1-5.

Find pictures of this story online, in a picture Bible, or draw pictures to show to the children as you tell the story.

Materials
Bible
pictures of the Bible story

Presentation

Using pictures, tell the Bible story to the children.

Say: **The ark of the Lord was special for the people of Israel. It contained the laws of Moses. Many years before, the Philistine army had taken the ark of the Lord from Israel. Because David had been recognized as king of all Israel, he wanted to bring the ark of the Lord back to Jerusalem. He knew God's plans were to keep the ark inside the tabernacle, and for that reason he built a new tabernacle to place it in. Then, he sent word to the people to tell them that the ark was being taken back to Jerusalem.**

An army of 30,000 men went to move the ark. God had given specific instructions that the ark was only to be moved by priests who were to carry it on their shoulders. NO ONE but the priests were allowed to touch the ark. However, instead of moving the ark God's way, David had it placed on a cart pulled by oxen. David and a group of musicians walked in front of the ark. They played instruments and sang praises to God. They were all joyful because the ark of the Lord was being brought back to Jerusalem.

Suddenly, the music stopped. When the cart pulled by the oxen approached a bump in the road, the ark moved as if it would fall. One of the men walking next to the ark reached out his hand to steady the ark and keep it from falling. When his hand touched the ark, he fell dead. God had said that no one, with the exception of the priests, was to touch the ark. The people had forgotten His command.

"What does this mean?" the people were asking themselves. David was also astonished. He was afraid to take the ark to Jerusalem, so he left it at the home of Obed-edom, who lived nearby. Then David and the people returned to their homes.

For three months, the ark of the Lord was in the house of Obed-edom. During the time the ark was there, the Lord blessed Obed-edom and his household.

When King David heard of this, he wanted to return the ark to Jerusalem. On this occasion, he followed God's commands about how to move to the ark. He ordered the priests to carry the ark on their shoulders as the Lord had commanded in the law book. As the priests

walked towards Jerusalem, David danced before the Lord. The Israelites cheered and played their trumpets. Finally, the ark entered the city of Jerusalem. It was placed in the tabernacle that David had prepared for it. After this, David blessed the people and praised the Lord for everything He had done for Israel.

Say: **David learned that we always need to do things God's way. It is always best to follow God's commands and do things His way!**

APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Drama, "God's Way vs. My Way"

Preparation

Materials
poster board
marker

Write the following situations on a poster board or white board:

Your little brother keeps using your toys without asking permission.
Your best friend forgot to do her homework, and she wants to copy your answers.
A bully is picking on your friend.
You find out that someone at school has been gossiping about you to other kids.
You think your teacher is picking on you because she doesn't like you.

Presentation

Say: **We face many situations in life. There are two ways to handle things: God's way and our own way.** Divide children into groups and assign them one of situations listed above. They will develop two skits. One skit will solve the problem "God's way" and one will solve the problem "My way." Once the groups are ready, each group should act out their skits without telling the class which solution is "God's Way" and which one is "My Way." The class will try to guess which of the two skits represents "God's Way."

MINISTRY TIME

Preparation

None

Materials
2 small piece of paper for each child
pencils
trash can

Presentation

Give each child two small pieces of paper. Ask them to write "My Way" on one sheet of paper and "God's Way" on the other. Invite children to pray, asking God to help them respond to situations the way God wants. As a symbol that they want to follow God's way, ask children to crumple the "My way" paper and put it in the trash can. Have them take home the "God's Way" paper as a reminder to follow God this week.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITY

Learning Activity: Bible Study, "Tell Me About the Ark"

Preparation

Write the following questions and Scripture references on index cards:

Who built the ark? Exodus 37:1
What materials were used to build it? Exodus 37:1-2
How big was the ark? Exodus 37:1
How it was supposed to be carried? Exodus 37:2-5
What was in the ark? Deuteronomy 10:2; Exodus 16:33; Numbers 17:10

Materials
index cards
pencils, markers, crayons
paper
measuring stick (ruler)
artist drawing of the Ark of the Lord

Prepare a sheet of paper large enough to draw the ark according to its true measurements (3 ¾ feet long, 2 ¼ feet wide, 2 ¼ feet tall). You can use tape and attach several sheets of paper together.

Presentation

Say: **The Ark of the Lord was a trunk, similar to a suitcase you might use when you take a trip. The ark was very important to the people of Israel. You can learn more information about the ark by reading some Bible verses.**

Allow each child to work with a partner. Give a prepared index card to each team. Ask them to read the Scripture verse and to write their answers to the questions. Allow a few minutes for each team to complete the task, and then ask each team to share their answers.

Show the drawing of the ark to the children if you have it available. Allow them to draw the ark on the large paper using the exact measurements.

Watch Your Attitude

Lesson Scripture: Nehemiah 2:11-18

Bible Truth: I will serve the Lord with a good attitude.

Bible Story: Nehemiah 2:11-18

Bible Verse: "And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men." (Colossians 3:23, NKJV)

FOCUS

Learning Activity: "How Will You Serve the Lord?"

Preparation

On a piece of paper, write a task for each child to complete. Several children can receive the same task. Some suggested tasks include:

Write a get-well note to someone who is sick.
Write Colossians 3:23 on a piece of paper three times.
Draw a picture of one way you can serve the Lord.
Take out the trash and clean the room.

Materials
paper
pencil
supplies children will need to complete each task you assign

Gather the supplies children will need to complete their tasks. (paper, pencils, crayons, trash bags, etc.)

Presentation

As the children come into the classroom, hand each one of them a task. Listen to comments and notice the attitude of each child as she completes her task. When most of the children are finished, discuss the following questions:

How did you feel about the task I gave you? Why?
Did anyone have a task you liked more than yours? Which one was it? Why did you like it more than yours?
Did any task seem more important than others? Which one? Why?
Do you think you completed the task with a good attitude or not?
Would you say that you did your best with your task, or did you just rush through to get done?

Say: **Today, we will learn about a man named Nehemiah, to whom God assigned a very difficult task to accomplish. During the Bible story, listen to see if Nehemiah obeyed the memorization verse that we have for today: " And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men."** (Colossians 3:23, NKJV)

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: Colossians 3:23

Preparation

Write Colossians 3:23 on a poster board.

Materials
poster board
marker
paper
10 blocks

Explanation

Read Colossians 3:23 with the children. Say: **What does it mean to do something "heartily"?** Allow children to answer. **It means to do something "with your whole heart" and in a "cheerful" manner. When you do something "with your whole heart," you do your best with the task and don't just rush through to get it done. Sometimes it can be hard to do things we don't like with our whole heart and cheerfully. Do you obey this verse when you are doing chores or homework?** Allow children to answer. **Can you mention some other attitudes we might have when we do chores assigned to us?** Allow children to answer. **Yes, at times we complain.** Write "complaining" on a sheet of paper. Place it over the word "heartily" and ask the children to read the verse. Repeat this exercise by following other suggestions offered by the children, such as "sloppy," "in anger," and "quickly"

Is God pleased with these attitudes? No. How does He want us to do our work? Allow children to say "heartily or cheerfully."

Memorization Activity

Divide the children into two teams. Place five blocks opposite each team (ten total) on the other side of the classroom. When the signal is given, the first person on each team needs to run over to the blocks, place them one on top of the other, say the memorization verse, knock down the blocks, and return to his/her team. Each person in line will do the same thing when it is his turn. If the blocks fall down before the five of them have been placed satisfactorily, the child will have to place them again. The first team to finish the relay wins.

INSTRUCT

Bible Story: "Rebuilding the Walls," Nehemiah 2:11-18

Preparation

Read and study Nehemiah 2:11-18.

Materials
Bible

Chose one child to pretend to be Nehemiah. Divide the rest of the children into two groups, the Israelites and the enemies of the Israelites.

Presentation

Say: **Today we are going to act out our Bible story. Listen carefully as I read the story. You can go ahead and act out anything you hear, or you can wait for me to give you instructions.**

The city of Jerusalem was very important to God. He wanted His people to be able to live there safely. In Bible times, in order for a city to be safe, it needed to have strong walls built around it. God asked Nehemiah to be in charge of rebuilding the wall around Jerusalem because it was a mess. Let's travel with Nehemiah around Jerusalem. Encourage the Israelite children to imagine being on horses, rapidly galloping. **As he traveled around the city, Nehemiah examined the broken walls and the burned gates. "Something must be done," Nehemiah told himself.** Ask the child playing Nehemiah to examine the pretend walls.

The following day, Nehemiah gathered the people. Everyone wanted to help in rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem. Both men and women helped. Every family repaired the walls facing their houses. Have the Israelite children "build" the walls as you continue the story. **Some of the family members would take out huge stone parts. Strong men would gather the stones to shape the walls.**

The enemies living around Jerusalem couldn't believe what was happening. They didn't want the walls to be rebuilt because they wouldn't be able to enter the city and give its people a hard time, so they started to make fun of the walls. Have the enemies of the Israelites start making fun of those building the walls. **"The walls are so weak that they will fall down when a little fox climbs up on them."**

Nehemiah and the people in Jerusalem didn't pay attention to these insults. They were determined to rebuild the walls.

Then the enemies made plans to attack Jerusalem. Have the enemies huddle around like they are making a plan. **When Nehemiah heard about their plans, he positioned his men with swords. He also put guards to watch the walls during the day and at nighttime.**

Ask some of the Israelite children to stop working and to act as guards**. But the enemy continued with threats of attack. Nehemiah told his people to work with one hand and hold their weapon with the other.** Ask the Israelite children to pretend they are holding a weapon while they continue to build the wall.

The walls were completed after only fifty-two days. When the enemies heard that the walls had been completely rebuilt, they were afraid because they knew that God had helped Nehemiah and the people finish the work. Have the enemies shake with fear.

After the children finish building the pretend walls, ask them to sit inside the city while discussing the following questions:

Did Nehemiah obey today's memorization verse when he rebuilt the walls?
Did the people work with all their heart in rebuilding the walls?
How did God bless the people for their willingness to rebuild the walls?
How does God bless you when you do something with all your heart?

APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Art, "Building the Walls"

Preparation

Using construction paper, cut out three paper stones for each child in your class.

On a sheet of paper, write the following phrase: "We will serve the Lord with all of our hearts!" Attach the paper to a wall in the classroom.

Materials
construction paper
markers
scissors
pencils, pens, or crayons

Presentation

Say: **Let's read our Bible verse again.** Read Colossians 3:23. **Did Nehemiah and the people in Jerusalem obey this command when they were working on the walls?** Allow children to answer. **Yes, they worked heartily! Remember that heartily means with all of their heart and with a good attitude. They knew God wanted them to rebuilt the walls, so they worked very hard even when others tried to stop them. They never gave up or complained.**

There are many things God wants us to do for Him. Can you think of some? Allow children to answer. Help them list things such as be kind to others, obey my parents, give an offering in church, do my homework, etc. **Let's write some of these things on the stones I am going to give you.**

Give each of the children three small stones cut out of paper. Ask them to write one thing on each stone that they know God wants them to do, even if it is hard. When children have finished, attach the stones to the classroom wall in the shape of a "wall."

MINISTRY TIME

Preparation

None

Materials
the paper "wall" made during the learning activity

Presentation

Gather children around the stones they have placed on the wall. Say: **Just like the people in Jerusalem had enemies, we also have an enemy. Our enemy is Satan. He would like to keep you from doing the things God wants you to do. He wants you to be lazy and have a bad attitude, the opposite of working "heartily." Let's pray together and ask God to give us the strength and courage we need to do these things for Him with a good attitude.** Say a pray with the children and encourage them to ask God to help them do everything He asks with a cheerful attitude.

Honoring God Through Giving

Lesson Scripture: Mark 12:41-44

Bible Truth: I will honor God with all that I have.

Bible Story: Mark 12:41-44

Bible Verse: "Honor the Lord with your wealth, with the first fruits of all your crops." (Proverbs 3:9, NIV)

FOCUS

Learning Activity: "What Is Honor?"

Preparation

Write the words "Honor" and "No Honor" on separate pieces of paper and display them on opposite sides of the teaching area.

Materials
paper
markers

Presentation

Show the word "honor" and say: **Does anyone know what this word means?** Allow children to respond. **Instead of telling you the meaning of "honor," I need a few volunteers to help me demonstrate it.** Ask for several volunteers to act out the following roles as you read the text.

Soldier: **When an army soldier comes into a room what hand signal do people sometimes make?** (allow for response) **Let's all stand and salute this soldier. This salute is a way to show honor and means that we know that soldiers are people who risk their lives to keep us safe.**

Teacher: **What are you supposed to do in your classroom to answer a question your teacher asks?** (allow for response) **Let's all raise our hands together like we have an answer for this teacher. When children raise their hands this shows honor for the teacher because he has an important job helping you to learn.**

Judge: **What do people in a courtroom do when a judge walks into the room?** (allow for response) **Let's all rise to show respect to this judge. This standing up lets everyone know that judges do important work helping the world to be a fairer place.**

School Friend: **What do you do with your hand when you see your friend across the park.** (allow for response) **Let's all wave to our friend together. When we wave our hand it shows that we're happy to see our friend. It means our friend is important because we like to be around them.**

Say: **Honor means acting like someone else is important. It starts with an attitude but it's also something that comes out in the way we behave around toward that person. When we honor God, we show with our attitude and actions that He is important to us!**

I am going to read you a few sentences about some children. If you think they are honoring God, I want you to go stand by the sign that says "Honor". If you think they are not honoring God, go stand by the sign that says "No Honor."

A boy plays with toys in church while the pastor is preaching.
Another boy listens carefully to the pastor's sermon.
A girl stands and sings during worship time in church.
Another girl wiggles and whines when her mom asks her to participate in the service.
Two children close their eyes during prayer.
Two other children look around the room when people are praying in church.
You give some of your birthday money in the offering at church.
You spend all of your birthday money on candy.

Say: **The last two sentences remind us we should even honor God with our money.**

*adapted from a lesson from the Ministry to Children website. http://ministry-to-children.com/how-to-honor-your-father-lesson/

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: Proverbs 3:9

Preparation

Write Proverbs 3:9 on a poster board or whiteboard.

Materials
poster board
toys, books, clothes, money
one rotten fruit
one ripe fruit
small ball

Explanation

Say: **Today's memorization verse contains a few words that are difficult to understand. Read the verse and tell me which words you do not understand.** Underline each word the children mention. Be sure to include "wealth" and "first firsts."

We're already learned that honor is showing God that He is important to us with our attitude and actions. The verse tells us that we can honor or respect the Lord with our wealth.

What does the word "wealth" mean? Allow children to answer. **In this verse, the word "wealth" means the things that we possess. Children possess things like toys, clothes, books, and money.** Show these items as you talk. **How can we use these things to show our love and respect to God?** Allow children to answer. Some suggestions may be by taking good care of

them, sharing them with others, and giving them away to those who have much less than us. Say: **The second part of the verse tells you to honor the Lord with the "first fruits of all of your crops." Does anyone know what "crops" means?** Allow children to answer. Direct them to the understanding that crops are an agricultural product grown by farmers. **In Bible times, one of the main ways people gained wealth was through growing corps. They would have plenty of food to feed their family and could sell any extra they had to make money. The people were commanded to take the "first fruits" of their crops and give them to God. "First fruits" simply means the best crops. I have two fruits—one is almost rotten and the other one is ripe and delicious. Which one of the two would be a good gift for someone? Yes, the one that is ripe and delicious. This would be the "first fruit."**

So what does this have to do with you? I don't see too many farmers in the audience. Well, this verse reminds us that to honor God with our wealth, we need to give him our best. For example, if you are asked to donate toys to a homeless shelter, would God want you to give your broken toys or would He want you to give a good toy, maybe one you still enjoy? Allow children to answer. **By donating good toys, you would be giving God your "first fruits.**

Memorization Activity

Ask the children to make a circle. Throw the ball to a child. He/she will say the first word of the verse and then throw the ball to another child. That child will say the next word and will throw the ball to another child. This will continue until the verse has been recited completely. Repeat the activity until most children can say the verse with confidence.

INSTRUCT

Bible Story: "The Widow Gave All She Had," Mark 12:41-44

Preparation

Read and study Mark 12:41-44.

Prepare an offering box and cut an opening on the top part of it. Decorate the box and write the word "offering" on one side of the box.

Materials
Bible
small box
scissors
markers
2 small coins

Presentation

Invite the children to sit in a circle near the offering box. Choose one girl to be the poor woman. Give her two coins and ask her to stand away from the group. As you tell the story, instruct the girl to place her coins in the box.

Say: **When we give money to God, usually at church, it is called an offering. During Jesus' days, there was a box in the temple where people would place their offerings.**

One day, Jesus and His disciples were sitting at the temple. Jesus was observing as people were placing money in the offering box. He noticed that rich people would place many coins in it. Then he saw a poor woman arrive at the temple. She walked to the box and placed two small coins in it. Jesus knew that this woman didn't have a husband to care for her and that she didn't have any more money besides those two coins. However, she gave all she had!

Jesus wanted his disciples to notice what the woman had given. "Look!" He said. "This woman has given much more than rich people. They have given many coins in offering because they have them. But this woman gave all she had."

Do you think this woman honored God with her money? Allow children to answer. **Not only did she give God her best, the "first fruits," she gave Him all she had.**

APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Communication, "How Can I Honor the Lord with My Wealth?"

Preparation

Make copies of the handout "How Can I Honor the Lord with My Wealth?" located at the end of this lesson. If you do not have access to a copy machine, copy the situations on poster board for the children to see.

Materials
pencils
"Honoring God with my Wealth" handout

Presentation

Divide the children into small groups of two to four people. Give each group a copy of the "How Can I Honor the Lord with my Wealth?" handout. Give them four minutes to read the situations and respond to each question. Challenge them to think about as many appropriate ideas as possible in those four minutes. When they are finished, allow each group to share with the entire class.

MINISTRY TIME

Preparation

None

Materials
pencils
paper

Presentation

Give each child a piece of paper and a pencil. Ask them to write down (or draw) one way that they are going to honor God with their possessions this week. It could be with money, a toy, or another object. Pray with the children, asking God to help them always honor Him with their wealth.

How Can I Honor the Lord with My Wealth?

*Note: These questions may not be appropriate for the children in your ministry. If not, develop questions that will help your children recognize ways they can honor God with their possessions.

Directions: Read each of these situations and decide how the child could honor God.

1. Andrew receives $3.00 for his birthday. How can he use this money to honor God?
2. Every week, Cynthia takes her neighbor's trash can out and puts it back. The neighbor pays her $1.00 weekly. How can she use this money to honor God?
3. Michael received a new bicycle for Christmas. Though his older bike is too small for him, it's still in very good condition. What can Michael do to honor God with his possession?
4. Rachel likes to read. She is collecting some good books. How can she use these books to honor God?

Giving My Tithes

Lesson Scripture: Genesis 14:1-20

Bible Truth: I will give my tithe to God.

Bible Story: Genesis 14:1-20

Bible Verse: "Will a mere mortal rob God? Yet you rob me. But you ask, 'How are we robbing you?' In tithes and offerings." (Malachi 3:8, NIV)

FOCUS

Learning Activity: "Use My Money Wisely"

Preparation

Use the items from the materials list to help tell the story.

Materials
10 coins from your local currency
tithe envelope or offering bucket

Presentation

Say: **One day, a little boy helped his neighbor pick up the apples that had fallen out of his tree. The boy worked diligently and carefully to separate the good apples from the rotten apples. When he finished, the man gave him ten coins.**

The boy was very excited when he received the ten coins and ran to the market. He saw a bag of candy and used four of his coins to buy himself the candy. He also used the other six coins to buy himself a soft drink. Do you think this boy used his money wisely? Why or why not? Allow children to answer.

This boy wasn't very wise in the way he used his money because forgot to give God His part.

Show 10 coins. **The wisest way to use any amount of money that we earn or are given is by giving God His part, before anything else. The Bible tells us we should give God a tenth of everything we receive. This is called a tithe. A tenth just means that if you divide your money into ten parts, one part belongs to God. Since this little boy earned 10 coins, 1 coin belonged to God.** Put 1 coin in a tithe envelope or offering plate. **Remember, all that we have, earn, or receive comes from God. He gives us the opportunity to decide how to spend most of the money. The only thing He requires is that we return a small part, 10 percent, to Him. You give your tithe to your church. It is used to help your church tell others about Jesus. When you give the tithe of your money to God, you are helping to carry out the work of God.**

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: Malachi 3:8

Preparation

Write Malachi 3:8 on a poster board or the whiteboard.

On a poster board, write out the "thief" and "Bible" lines for children for the memorization activity.

Materials
poster board
markers

Explanation

Ask a child to let you borrow something that they brought to class. (purse, wallet, toy, etc.) Say: **I told** (insert child's name) **that I was just going to borrow this item. If I decided not to give it back, what would I be doing?** (stealing). **I won't keep this item because I'm not a thief. I don't steal from others.** Return the item to the child. **I don't think any of us would steal from others, but would we steal from God?** Allow children to respond. **Let's read Malachi 3:8. As we read, try to discover if there are ways we sometimes steal from God.** Read the scripture with children.

Choose a child to underline the words in the verse that show ways in which we can steal from God. Say: **Yes, we can steal from Him when we don't pay our tithes. Even though we don't steal from others, are we tempted at times to steal from God by keeping all of our money?** Allow children to respond.

Memorization Activity

Allow each child to choose a partner. One of them will be the thief. The other one will represent the Bible. Have children face each other and repeat the lines written on the poster board.

Bible: Will a mere mortal rob God? Yet you rob me.

Thief: How are we robbing you?

Bible: In tithes and offerings.

After saying the verse several times, allow the children to change their roles and to repeat the verse again.

INSTRUCT

Bible Story: "Abraham Paid His Tithes," Genesis 14:1-20

Preparation

Read and study Genesis 14:1-20.

Materials
10 pictures or objects of cows, sheep, food, jewelry, fabric, or tents
Bible

Presentation

Tell the Bible story using the items you have collected.

> **"Abram, Abram," said the unknown person as he ran through Abram's tents. "The enemy has defeated the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. Your nephew Lot and all his family have been taken captive."**
>
> **Abram called all his servants that were with him. There were 318 men with him that were able to fight. They followed the army and attacked them the next night. In the morning, Abram and his men had recovered all that had been stolen, including Lot, his family, and possessions.**
>
> **When Abram and his men were returning from the battle, the King of Salem went to meet him with supplies for his tired men. Abram knew that this king was a minister for God. He wanted to thank God for giving him the victory over all his enemies, so he gave the king a tenth part of everything he had captured.** Use the items you have gathered and give a "tenth" away. **This tenth part was called a tithe.**

God wants us to do the same thing Abram did so many centuries ago. We pay tithes for everything that God gives us. Why? It is God's command, (Read Malachi 3:8 and 10) **and because we want to give honor to God.**

APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Problems and Solutions, "How Much Do I Owe God?"

Preparation

Place several different amounts of money in three different envelopes. This money should be easy to divide up into a tithe. For example, 10 coins in one envelope, 20 in a second envelope, and 30 in a third envelope.

Materials
various amounts of money in your local currency
three envelopes

Presentation

Show children the different amounts of money. Work together to separate God's part (tenth) from my part. (You might also want to share with children that it is good to give more than just our tithe to God. When we give more than the tenth, it is called an offering.)

Once children have an understanding of what a "tenth" means, share with them this story:

> **Maria had been saving her money to buy a new dress at the store. It cost $10.** (Feel free to change the amount to match a reasonable amount for clothing in your culture.) **She had been saving her money, and she finally had enough to buy the dress. Maria's**

mom took her to the store to purchase the dress. As they were waiting to pay, Maria remembered her Sunday school teacher telling her about tithes. Maria looked at the $10 in her hand. She REALLY wanted the dress, but she knew she would be paying for part of it with money that belonged to God. What should Maria do?

Allow children to discuss the situation. Help them realize that Maria should pay her tithes and then continue saving her money until she has enough to buy the dress.

MINISTRY TIME

Preparation

None

Materials
tithe envelope for each child

Presentation

Give each child a tithe envelope, either one provided by your church or a plain envelope with "Tithe" written across the front. Ask the children to take the envelope home this week. If they receive any money, they should put their tithe in the envelope and bring it back to church. Pray with the children.

Giving My All, Big or Small

Lesson Scripture: John 6:5-15

Bible Truth: I will give what I have.

Bible Story: John 6:5-15

Bible Verse: "Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the Lord thy God which he hath given thee." (Deuteronomy 16:17, KJV)

FOCUS

Learning Activity: "Small Things Make a Big Difference"

Preparation

Place supplies on a table where you can easily access them.

Materials
baking soda
vinegar
measuring cup
measuring spoon
large container, clear if possible
2 cookies, one large and one small
2 amounts of money, one small and one larger

Presentation

Say: **Sometimes we think that bigger things are better than smaller things. Would you rather have a small cookie or a big cookie?** Show cookies and allow children to respond. **Would you rather have a small amount of money or a big amount of money?** Show money and allow children to respond. **Most of you would rather have the bigger cookie or the big amount of money. Even though we often want the biggest item or the largest amount, God isn't worried about the amount when He asks you to give to Him. God just wants you to give whatever you have.**

Show the container. Say: **In this container, I am going to pour a large amount of liquid.** Pour 1 cup or 240 ml vinegar into the container. **Now I am going to take this little spoon and get out a small amount of baking soda.** (1 tsp or 5ml) **Even though there is just a little bit, watch what happens when I add it to the liquid.** Add a small amount of baking soda to the vinegar and watch the "big" reaction. **Even though I only added a small amount of baking soda, something "big" happened. When we give God what we have, even if it is just a small amount, God can use it to do great things.**

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: Deuteronomy 16:17

Preparation

Write Deuteronomy 16:17 on poster board.

Give each child a different amount of a small item. You might use small rocks, small candies, etc.

Materials
small items to pass out to children such as rocks or candy
2 cups

Explanation

Say: I **have given you some rocks** (or name the item you gave children). **I would like each of you to place one of your rocks in my cup.** Allow children to place them in the cup. Continue asking children to place rocks in your cup. Several children will run out of rocks and won't be able to put any more in the cup.

Say: **Why did some of you stop putting rocks in the cup?** Allow children to answer. **You could only give what you had. Some of you had several rocks and some of you only had a few. Our Bible verse tells us that God wants us to give from what we have. Whether we have a lot of money or just a small amount, we can all give something to God.**

Memorization Activity

Play a game similar to "hot potato." Ask children to stand in a circle. Give one child a cup to hold. Explain that when you start the music, they are to pass the cup around the circle until the music stops. When the music stops, the child holding the cup will repeat Deuteronomy 16:17. Continue the game until each child has had the opportunity to repeat the Scripture verse or until the children are tired of the game.

INSTRUCT

Bible Story: "A Boy Willing to Share," John 6:5-15, Matthew 14:13-21

Preparation

Read and study John 6:5-15 and Matthew 14:13-21.

Fill a lunch bag with five pieces of bread and two fish. You can use pictures if bread and fish are not available.

Materials
Bible
lunch bag
five pieces of bread
2 fish

Presentation

Before sharing the Bible story, ask one child to hold the lunch bag and sit away from the group.

Say: **Today I am going to share with you a story from the Bible, but I will need some help. Every time I say "Jesus" I would like for you to point toward heaven. When I say "hungry," rub your stomach.**

> **One day a large group of people followed Jesus to a mountainside. They wanted to hear Jesus teach and see Him heal people. After a long day, Jesus realized the people were hungry. They were really hungry! He asked the disciples to feed the people. The disciples looked at Jesus in amazement because it was impossible for them to feed all of these people. There are over 5,000 men and even more women and children. Even if they had enough money to buy food for all of the people, there was no where to buy food. They were on a mountain.**
>
> **One of the disciples, Andrew, approached Jesus with a little boy.** (Have the child holding the lunch you prepared come forward.) **Andrew said, "Here is a boy with five small loaves of bread and two fish. But how far will they go among so many people?" Jesus said, "Have the people sit down." Jesus took the loaves, gave thanks, and began to break the bread and fish into small pieces. He had the disciples start passing it out. The entire time the disciples were passing out food, the bread and fish never ran out! When all of the people had eaten as much as they wanted, Jesus asked the disciples to collect the left over food. They disciples filled 12 baskets with the left overs. The people were no longer hungry. Jesus took the small lunch the little boy gave him and turned it into lunch for over 5,000 people.**

Say: **The little boy was willing to share his small lunch with Jesus, even though it didn't seem like much. Jesus was able to take the boy's small gift and make it something great! Jesus will do the same thing when you give your money, time, or possessions to Him. Even if you only have something small to give to Jesus, He can do big things with your gift!**

APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Art Activity, "A Gift for Jesus"

Preparation

Draw a large present on a piece of paper for each child. Be sure to leave the picture of the present empty.

Materials
one piece of paper with a present drawn on it for each child

Presentation

Say: **We all have something we can give to Jesus. Can you think of something a child could give to Jesus?** Allow children to respond. They should mention things such as their money, their time, a talent such as drawing or singing, and even some of their toys. **How do you think Jesus could use your gift?** Discuss with the children how each gift they mentioned could be used by/for God.

Give each child a prepared piece of paper. Ask them to draw something inside the present that they want to give to Jesus. They can draw more than one thing.

MINISTRY TIME

Preparation

None

Materials
none

Presentation

Ask children to hold the pictures that they drew during the art activity. Pray with the children as they talk to Jesus about giving this gift to Him. Encourage them to finish the activity during the week by actually giving Jesus the item they drew on the paper as an offering. Talk with parents as they pick up the children and explain the lesson. The parents may need to help children as they follow through with their commitment.

Giving to Help Others

Lesson Scripture: 1 Kings 17:8-24

Bible Truth: I will give to help others.

Bible Story: 1 Kings 17:8-24

Bible Verse: "Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you." (Matthew 5:42, NIV)

FOCUS

Learning Activity: "I'm Thirsty!"

Preparation

Write Matthew 5:42 on a poster board or whiteboard.

Before the lesson, ask one child to help you with the presentation. He or she will need to beg you continuously for something to drink.

Materials
poster board
markers
pitcher of water
cup for teacher and each child

Presentation

Say: **I'm very thirsty. My throat is so dry. I can hardly speak. I need a drink of cold water.** Pour yourself a cup of water and take a quick drink. **Now that I feel better, I can read today's Scripture.** Read Matthew 5:42. When you finish reading, drink the rest of the water and fill the cup again. Drink the water slowly. The child whom you asked to help should start asking for something to drink: "Can I drink some? I'm thirsty!"

Say (to the child): **Not now.** (Again speaking to audience): **Let's hear what the Bible verse says. It's very important. It talks about people asking us to help with their needs. Jesus said in this verse that we shouldn't turn them away.** Continue drinking your water. The child asks for a drink again.

Ignore the child and say: **When we don't help others, we aren't doing what Jesus asked us to do.** Keep drinking your water. The child keeps asking for a drink, and you keep ignoring him. **If someone is hungry or thirsty, we need to give them something to eat or drink. If they ask us to borrow something, we need to let them borrow it.** Drink water again. The child keeps asking.

Pretend to suddenly notice the child. Say: **What did you say?** The child will reply, "I asked for water." **Oh, I guess I should do what Jesus told me to do.** Give the child some water to drink. **When we hear others asking for help, the Bible tells us that we need to respond and give them what they need.** Offer all of the children a glass of water.

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: Matthew 5:42

Preparation

None

Materials
scripture verse poster from the FOCUS activity

Explanation

Say: **When somebody asks us for help we have two options. These options are found in the verse. Can you find them?** Ask one of the children to go to the front to underline the two options. Say: **Yes, we can give them what they need or we can turn away from them. What does Jesus want us to do?** Allow children to respond.

Memorization Activity

Allow the children to act out this verse with a partner while they memorize it. One child extends hands out to their partner and says: "Give to the one who asks you." The other child turns away from the one asking and says: "and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you." Repeat this exercise several times and ask the children to switch roles.

INSTRUCT

Bible Story: "A Woman Willing to Give," 1 Kings 17:8-24

Preparation

Read and study 1 Kings 17:8-24.

The week before this lesson, ask a woman to learn the following monologue to present to the children. Provide her with a Bible costume and some wooden logs to carry.

Materials
Bible
Bible costume for a woman
wooden logs

Presentation

Have the person presenting the monologue say: **My husband died some years ago. I was left alone with no one to help me take care of my child. Unfortunately, my country was in the middle of a drought. There was very little food or water. One day, I was at the city's gate picking up some wood when a stranger asked me, "Would you give me some water and a piece of bread?"**

I told him that it would be my pleasure to give him a cup of water but I didn't have bread. All I had left in the house was a little bit of flour and oil. I was thinking of preparing a loaf of bread for me and my son. I knew that after eating the bread we were going to die of hunger.

"Don't be afraid," said the man. "Go and prepare something for the three of us. The Lord will make sure that you have enough flour and oil until the day it starts to rain again and the harvest grows back."

I did as I was told. No matter how much oil or flour I used daily to prepare the bread, there was always enough left.

The name of the man was Elijah, and he was one of God's prophets in the land of Israel. He stayed with us for many days.

While he stayed in our house, my son became seriously ill and died. "Give me the boy," Elijah said. He carried my son in his arms and took him to his room, laid him in bed, and started to pray to God. He prayed over my son's body and asked God to give him life. Elijah did this three times. On the third time, my son was brought back to life. There's no doubt that Elijah is a man of God!

I'm so glad I gave water and bread to Elijah when he asked me for it. God multiplied my food because I gave it to someone in need. When my son died, God gave him back to me. God is good to me!

At the end of the monologue, discuss the following questions with the children:

Why was it difficult for the woman to share her bread with Elijah?
What great things happened to her because she shared?
If you were the woman, what would you have done when the stranger asked you for something to eat and drink?

APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Communication, "What Would Happen If…?"

Preparation

Make several copies of the "What Would Happen If…." handout located at the end of this lesson. If you do not have access to a copy machine, copy the situations on poster board for the children to see.

Materials
copies of the "What Would Happen If..." handout

Presentation

Divide the children into groups. Give each group a copy of the "What Would Happen If…" handout. Ask them to decide how they would respond and what blessings they might receive if they chose to give. Have each group share their answers.

MINISTRY TIME

Preparation

None

Materials
none

Presentation

Have a time of prayer with the children as they ask God to make them willing to help those that are in need. Encourage the children to find one person in need that they can help this week. Remember to give them an opportunity to share about how they helped in the next session.

What Would Happen If....

Directions: Read each of these situations and decide how you should respond.

1. What would happen if…someone at school asked you to borrow a pencil?

2. What would happen if…your brother or sister asked to borrow your bicycle?

3. What would happen if…a missionary visited your church and talked about the hungry children that are in his country?

4. What would happen if…your mom asked you to spend the afternoon cleaning the house?

5. What would happen if…your friend asked to borrow money for lunch?

6. What would happen if…you and your parents saw a homeless man as you walked out of a store?

Giving Cheerfully

Lesson Scripture: Exodus 35:4-29; 36:1-7

Bible Truth: I will give to God cheerfully.

Bible Story: Exodus 35:4-29; 36:1-7

Bible Verse: "Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." (2 Corinthians 9:7, NIV)

FOCUS

Learning Activity: "Sharing the Treat"

Preparation

Ask two children to help you pass out a small treat to the other children. One of the children should be excited about sharing the treat and cheerfully pass it out. The other child should whine, complain, and ask if they can just keep it all for themselves.

Materials
a small treat for each child in the class

Presentation

Say: **Today, I have asked _____ and _____** (insert names of your helpers) **to help me pass out a treat to you. Raise your hand if you would like one, and my helpers will bring it to you.**

Have the helpers pass out the treat. Be sure that your helpers over-emphasize their attitude about giving away the treats.

Once the treats have been passed out, say: **"Did you notice any difference in the way _____ and _____ gave you your treat?"** Allow children to answer. **Well, they were really just pretending. Both of them were happy to share with you. I asked** (child who had a bad attitude) **to complain about giving the treat away to help you understand today's lesson. Your attitude about giving is just as important as what you give. When we give to God, He wants us to do it cheerfully and without complaining!**

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: 2 Corinthians 9:7

Preparation

Write 2 Corinthians 9:7 on a poster board or whiteboard.

Write each of these phrases on four of the large pieces of paper:

- Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give
- not reluctantly
- or under compulsion
- for God loves a cheerful giver

Materials
poster board
markers
8 large pieces of paper

Explanation

Read 2 Corinthians 9:7 with the children.

Say: **What does the phrase *"decide in their hearts"* mean?** Allow children time to respond. **Yes, it means to decide how much to give. What phrases in this verse describe the attitude we should not have when giving to God?** Choose a child to underline those words or phrases.

What does it mean to give "reluctantly"? Allow the children to answer. **Yes, it means to give when you don't really feel like doing so. What does it mean to "give under compulsion?"** Allow the children to answer. **Yes, it means to give because you were forced to give, not because you want to give.**

Can you tell me of a time when you gave "reluctantly" to someone? Allow the children to answer. **Can you tell me of a time when you gave "under compulsion"?** Allow the children to answer.

How does this verse say God wants us to give? Allow children to answer. **Yes, God wants us to give cheerfully! Can you tell me of a time when you gave cheerfully from your heart?** Allow the children to answer.

Memorization Activity

Divide the class into four groups. Give each group one of the phrases you wrote on a piece of paper and a blank piece of paper. Tell the group they have five minutes to illustrate their phrases on the blank piece of paper. When their time is up, allow each group to share their illustration. Place the illustrations and phrases on the wall, in the correct order. Ask the children to read the verse several times. Then take out the phrases. Choose different children to repeat the verse using only the illustrations.

INSTRUCT

Bible Story: "Giving for the House of God," Exodus 35:4-29; 36:1-7

Preparation

Read and study Exodus 35:4-29; 36:1-7.

Materials
(actual items or pictures of these items)
gold
silver
bronze
blue, purple, red yarn
linen
goat hair
animal skins
wood
olive oil
spices
precious stones or gems
picture of the completed tabernacle
Bible

Presentation

Use the pictures or items from the materials list to tell the Bible story.

God told Moses that He wanted the people of Israel, His chosen people, to build a place for worship. They would bring their offerings and praises to God to that place of worship.

Since the people of Israel were camping in the desert, traveling from place to place, the place of worship was going to be similar to a tent. It was called a tabernacle. Each one of its parts was going to be made in such a way that it would be easy to take apart, pack, and take wherever they would be camping.

God gave Moses the instructions to build the tabernacle and all its interior furnishings. Then Moses told the people exactly what God wanted to use for the construction of the tabernacle and all the furnishings. Moses knew they were going to need a lot of costly materials—gold, silver, bronze, yarn, linen, goat skin, wood, oil, spices, and pretty stones. (Show these items or pictures of these items.) **He didn't order the people to bring a certain amount of each one of these materials. Instead, he told the people to give according to what they felt they were able to give to build the house of God.**

The people wanted to have a place where they could praise God. They all started to bring their gifts to the tabernacle. In a short amount of time they brought so much gold, silver, bronze, precious stones, and other materials that Moses had to ask them not to bring any more.

They not only gave materials for the building of the house of worship, but they also gave their time. Some of them built the tabernacle frame. Others knitted the curtains. Others molded the metals. Some others sewed the robes for the priests, while others carved wood and metal figures. There were also some people that embroidered beautiful designs in linen. For almost an entire year, the Israelites were busy building the tabernacle. When the tabernacle was completed and the last curtain was hung, the presence of the Lord filled the place. How happy the people must have been after giving all they had to build the house of God.

Show picture of the completed tabernacle.

APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Role Play, "How's My Attitude?"

Materials
none

Preparation
None

Presentation
Say: **We all have many opportunities to give to God. For example, you can give your tithes; you can give in the offering; and you can give to someone in need. You are going to work in groups to create a skit where a child has the opportunity to give away some money to God. I want you to first create a skit with someone giving cheerfully. Then show us the same skit with the person giving reluctantly, out of compulsion, or not at all.**

Divide children into groups and give them time to prepare their skits. When everyone is ready, allow them to share with the class. After each skit, discuss the difference between the cheerful and not cheerful way of giving to God.

MINISTRY TIME

Materials
paper
pencils
crayons or markers

Preparation
None

Presentation
Give each child a piece of paper. Ask them to fold their paper in half. On one side, they should draw a cheerful face. On the other side, they should draw a picture of something they can give to God (money, toys, a special talent, etc.) Once each child has prepared their paper, ask them to gather in a circle for prayer. Pray together that the children will always give to God with a cheerful attitude.

Share the Good News

Lesson Scripture: I John 1:3, Acts 2:41-47

Bible Truth: I will share the good news about Jesus.

Bible Story: Acts 2:41-47

Bible Verse: "He said to them, 'Go into all the world. Preach the good news to everyone.'" (Mark 16:15, NIrV)

FOCUS

Learning Activity: "Good News"

Preparation

Write "Good News or Bad News" on the front of six envelopes. Write the six phrases listed below on separate sheets of paper. Put one paper in each envelope. Before class, hide the first five envelopes around the room. Put the sixth one containing the good news about Jesus in your Bible.

Materials
six envelopes
six sheets of paper
marker or pen
Bible

1. Your parents want to give you some money.
2. Your friend is sick and can't come over to your house to play.
3. Your grandparents are coming for a visit.
4. Your mom just made your favorite dinner.
5. Your dad has to work and can't take you on the trip you had planned.
6. Jesus loves us so much that He died for our sins.

Presentation

Say: **"Has anyone ever told you some good news or bad news?"** Allow children to respond. **I would always rather hear good news than bad news. One time,** (share a time when you received some good news)**... It was so exciting.**

Say: **Let's play a game called Good News or Bad News. Around the room, I have hidden five envelopes. Let's see if you can find them.** Give children time to find the envelopes. Once the envelopes have been found, allow children to open them and read the statements (or you can read them to the class). Say: **If the envelope contains good news, put your thumb up. If it has bad news, put your thumb down.**

Say: **There was one more envelope. Let me see if I can find it.** Pretend to look around and find it in your Bible. **Here it is! Let's see if this is good news or bad news.** Read the statement to the children. **Wow! I think this is the best news ever! Jesus loves you and died for you. When we believe this good news, we are forgiven of our sins. We become children of God. We know we will go to heaven. That is the "best" good news anyone could ever hear. Since we already know this good news, Jesus wants us to share it with everyone we know.**

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: Mark 16:15

Preparation

Write Mark 16:15 on a piece of poster board.

Materials
poster board
markers
4 sheets of paper

Divide the verse into four different phrases. Write each phrase on a piece of paper.

1. He said to them
2. Go into all the world
3. Preach the good news
4. to everyone.

Explanation

Read Mark 16:15 with the children.

Say: **In this verse, Jesus tells us to do two things. Can anyone tell me what Jesus wants us to do?** Once children have responded, ask two children to underline the words "go" and "preach." **Jesus wants us to go into all the world. That means everywhere. "Everywhere" can be someplace far away or to the house next door to yours. What does Jesus ask us to do everywhere?** Allow children to respond. **Yes, he wants us to preach the good news to everyone. Sometimes we think only a pastor can preach, but preaching is simply telling others the good news about Jesus. When you tell your friends about Jesus, you are doing what Jesus said. Do you have a friend with whom you want to share the good news about Jesus?**

Memorization Activity

Divide the children into four groups. Give a prepared piece of paper with a phrase from Mark 16:15 to each group. Ask each group to practice their phrase. Once the groups have learned their phrase, have them line up in correct verse order. Say the entire verse. Repeat this exercise giving each group a new phrase until children have had the opportunity learn the entire verse.

INSTRUCT

Bible Story: "Peter Shares the Good News," Acts 2:1-47

Preparation

Read and study Acts 2:1-47.

Prepare 3 sheets of paper with one the following phrases written on each piece of paper:

120
3000
Share the Good News with everyone

Materials
Bible
poster board
3 sheets of paper
marker

Presentation

As you narrate the story, lift up the signs that you have prepared at the appropriate times in the story. Ask the children to read the words aloud every time you show one of the signs.

Say: **Ten days had gone by since Jesus had left. Many people, 120** (sign) **people to be exact, were gathered in a room to wait for a promise from Jesus. While they were waiting, the sound of something like the wind was heard. Tongues of fire rested on each of them. They all started to speak in a heavenly language; a language they didn't understand. The news about what was happening spread quickly throughout the city of Jerusalem. Soon, thousands of people gathered around the house with the 120** (sign) **followers of Jesus.**

Peter and the others disciples went outside the house to talk to the people. They were also excited. God had done great things for them! And now they had to share the good news with everyone (sign).

Peter spoke to them about Jesus, who had been crucified on a cross. Then he told them that Jesus was no longer dead. He was alive! He had gone to heaven to be with God, his Father.

Many of the people had watched as Jesus was crucified. They had laughed at Him while He was hanging on the cross. Now, they felt a deep feeling full of sadness and worry. "What shall we do?" they asked Peter.

"Repent," Peter answered. "Your sins will be forgiven. And God will give you the marvelous gift of the Holy Spirit."

On that day, 3000 (sign) **people heard the good news and asked Jesus to forgive them of their sins. Can you imagine how excited they must have felt! They desired to share this good news with everyone** (sign).

APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Preaching Tool, "The Wordless Book"

Preparation

Cut paper into 10 cm by 12 cm rectangles (4" by 5"). Each child will need one rectangle of each color.

Make three holes on the left side of each piece of paper.

Cut the string into 10 cm (4in) lengths. Each child will need three.

Materials
yellow, black, red, white, and green paper
string
scissors

Presentation

Pass out the paper to the children. Help them put the book together by placing the colored paper in the following order: yellow, black, red, white, and green. Help them tie the book together by putting strings through the holes.

After making this wordless book, teach the children how to use it as a preaching tool. This will help them share the good news about Jesus with their friends.

Say: **Ask your friends if they've ever seen a book without words. Show them this wordless book. Tell them that even though this book doesn't have any words, it tells us a wonderful story.** Teach children the meaning of each page, and have them practice reading it to each other.

Yellow page: This page is the most beautiful in this book. This color reminds us about God. God made the earth and all things. He created you. He loves you and is preparing a place in heaven for all of His children. Heaven is a wonderful place but there is one thing that will never enter heaven. That something is sin.

Black page: The black page reminds us of the darkness caused by sin. Sin is anything that we do that doesn't please God. The Bible, the Word of God, tells us that all have sinned. Sin separates us from God and from all the wonderful things He has for us.

Red page: Even though we are lost in the darkness caused by sin, God loves us. He doesn't want us to be lost. He prepared a way for us to get close to Him. He sent his Son Jesus to live on earth. Jesus never did anything wrong. But he was punished and died on the cross. Jesus died for our sins. But He didn't stay dead. He rose again.

White page: This page reminds me about what happens when I admit I am a sinner and believe that Jesus died for my sins. I am forgiven. My sins are taken away. Do you want to be forgiven and have your sins taken away? (If the child says "yes," then his friend can pray for him.)

Green page: The green page reminds us of things that grow. After believing in Jesus we need to grow as He did. What can we do to grow like Jesus? We pray, read and obey the Bible, attend church, and talk to others about Jesus.

MINISTRY TIME

Preparation

Give each child a small piece of paper and a pencil.

Materials
paper
pencils

Presentation

On their paper, ask the children to write down the name of one person they can share the good news of Jesus with this week. Pray with the children that they will have an opportunity to share with the person whose name they wrote on the paper. Ask the children to put the paper with the name written on it in their wordless book and take it home as a reminder to share the good news of Jesus!

Doing Good to Others

Lesson Scripture: 2 Kings 4:8-17

Bible Truth: I will do good things for others.

Bible Story: 2 Kings 4:8-17

Bible Verse: "Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers." (Galatians 6:10, NIV)

FOCUS

Learning Activity: "Being a Good Friend"

Preparation

A week prior to this lesson, ask two older children or teens to practice this skit and prepare to present it to the class.

Materials
2 copies of the skit

Presentation

Say: **John and Mary are in Sunday school class together. They both love Jesus and enjoy learning everything they can about the Bible. They also go to the same school. One day, John sees Mary crying on the playground.**

MARY: (She doesn't say anything, just sits on the floor crying.)

JOHN: Mary, what's wrong?

MARY: Lunch was awful today!

JOHN: You are crying over food? I could have shared my sandwich with you.

MARY: I'm not upset about the food. It's what the girls at my table said to me.

JOHN: What happened?

MARY: They asked what I did this weekend, so I told them all about church and our Sunday school lesson.

JOHN: Oh, cool! Mrs. Jones is a great teacher. I loved our class this week.

MARY: Me too! But the other girls started making fun of me because I go to church. They said that it was silly to believe in Jesus, and they didn't want to be with someone who did. Then they asked me to leave their table. I had to eat the rest of my lunch all alone.

JOHN: That's awful. I am so sorry. You can eat lunch with me tomorrow, and I will help you pray that those girls learn to love Jesus too. Maybe we will have a chance to share the story of Jesus' love with them one day.

MARY: Thanks John. You are a good friend.

Say: **John did something good for Mary by being a friend to her. We are going to learn today that God wants us to do good things for others, especially other Christians.**

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: Galatians 6:10

Preparation

Write Galatians 6:10 on the poster board.

Cut enough small pieces of paper that children will be able to use them to tape over the words of the verse.

Materials
poster board
marker
tape
4 sheets of paper
small pieces of paper cut to cover each word of the Bible verse

Explanation

Read Galatians 6:10 with the children.

Say: **This Bible verse says that we should "do good"** (underline the phrase). **The way we do good to others is by helping them or saying kind words to them. Each week, God gives us many opportunities to do good to others. To whom does this Bible verse tell us to do good?** Allow children to respond. **Yes, we should do good to "all people"** (underline this phrase). **It also tells us that we should especially help those who belong to the "family of believers"** (underline this phrase). **What does this phrase mean?** Allow children to respond. **Yes, Jesus wants us to always remember to do good for other Christians.**

Memorization Activity

Allow children to take turns taping small pieces of paper over the words of the Bible verse. If you have a small group of children, allow each child to cover more than one word. After each word is covered, read the verse together. This repetition will help the children to learn the verse.

INSTRUCT

Bible Story: "Elisha and the Shunammite Woman," 2 Kings 4:8-17

Preparation

Read and study 2 Kings 4:8-17.

Choose four children to help you tell this story. They will represent the characters of Elisha, his servant, the woman, and the woman's husband. Ask them to put on the costumes and use the props to act out the story as you tell it.

Materials
Bible
4 Bible costumes
small table and chairs
real or pretend food
tools, such as a hammer and screwdriver
small doll

Presentation

Tell the Bible story while your helpers act it out.

Say: **Elisha was a prophet of God. He traveled through different places teaching the people to love and serve the true God. One day, Elisha and his servant arrived in a town called Shunem. A rich woman and her husband lived in that town. They had many servants, but didn't have children. When the woman saw Elisha and his servant, she invited them to eat at her house. She knew that Elisha was a prophet of God.** Woman pretends to feed the three men.

From that moment on, Elisha would stop at her house every time he visited the city of Shunem. He and his servant would rest in that place, and the woman would prepare food for them.

One day when Elisha went to visit the woman, she told her husband, "Since the prophet Elisha comes here so frequently, we should build him a room. We can put a table, a candle holder, a bed, and a chair in it. That way, he can rest in that room every time he visits." Her husband liked the idea, and they built a special room for Elisha and his servant. Have the two children playing the man and the woman pretend to build a room with tools. Then they can put the small table and chairs in it.

The next time Elisha stopped by their place, he was surprised and pleased with the room that this woman and her husband had prepared for him. He wanted to repay them for their kindness and help. "You have been so good to us that we would like to do something for you," Elisha told the woman. "Is there anything you want me to tell the king or the army's captain?" "No," said the woman. "We have all we need because we live among our own people."

But Elisha wanted to do something for her to repay her for their help. He asked his servant, "What can I do for this woman?" The servant told him, "They are older people, but they don't have any children." Elisha knew what he needed to do. He prayed and asked God to give this woman a son as a reward for her kindness and help. Give the doll to the child pretending to be the woman.

How surprised this woman must have been when she heard the prophet telling her that she would soon have a son! How happy she must have been to have helped the prophet of God!

Discuss the following questions with the children:

How did the woman do something good for Elisha and his servant?

How did Elisha repay her?

APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Art, "Thank-You Cards"

Preparation

Gather supplies

Materials
paper
crayons or markers
any other card making supplies you have available

Presentation

Say: **I am going to give you an opportunity to do something good for another Christian, just like the woman in our story. We have several people in our church that work hard to teach us about Jesus.** Mention the pastor, Sunday school teachers, etc. **We are going to make thank you cards for them.**

Provide children with paper, crayons, and other supplies that they can use to make cards. If you teach younger children, you may need to write sample phrases on a whiteboard for them to copy onto their cards.

MINISTRY TIME

Preparation

Prepare a diagram to be used during the activity: divide a large piece of paper into two columns. Name each one of the columns: Who? and How?

Materials
large piece of paper
marker
small piece of paper for each child

Presentation

Say: **There are many ways that we can do good to others. Let's write down the names of some people who we can do good to this week and how we can help them.** Allow children to give suggestions and write them in the appropriate column. Some examples include: Mom, help

clean the house; brothers and sisters, play with them; lonely child at school, invite them to play with me, etc. Pass out paper and pencils and invite each child to write down the name of someone they will do good to this week and what they plan to do. Younger children can draw pictures instead of writing words. When they are finished, pray as a group that God will help each of them to remember this commitment.

BONUS: SERVICE PROJECT

Preparation

Plan a lunch for elderly church members. You can use some of the time in class to prepare the invitations and decorations.

Presentation

Say: **Do you remember what the memorization verse tells us to do? Yes, anytime there is an opportunity, we should be kind to everyone, but especially to those who are Christians. Do you want to show kindness towards the elderly members in our congregation by serving them lunch?**

Allow the children to prepare the invitations that list the day, time, and place for the lunch. Each child should have the responsibility to hand out the invitations he/she has made.

The children can also decorate the tablecloths and make table decorations, if time allows.

But…He's Not Like Me

Lesson Scripture: Acts 10:1-28

Bible Truth: I will treat everyone with love and kindness.

Bible Story: Acts 10:1-28

Bible Verse:"…God does not show favoritism but accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right." (Acts 10:34b-35, NIV)

FOCUS

Learning Activity: "Prejudice"

Preparation

Prepare a snack for the children.

Write the words "prejudice," "favoritism," "Jew," and "Gentile"on a piece of poster board. You will refer back to this poster throughout the lesson.

Materials
small snack for the children
poster board
marker

Presentation

Before starting the class, choose a particular group of children to ignore. You can choose all boys or all girls, all those who wear glasses, or those who are wearing a specific color, etc. (DO NOT use skin color or nationality as the group to ignore.) At the beginning of the class, allow the rest of the children to have certain special privileges and opportunities such as giving them certain materials, helping them to get organized, etc. At the same time, ignore the group of children you chose. Finally, offer the snack only to the other children, ignoring the one particular group of children. Those who you chose to ignore will probably start to protest about the unfair treatment they are receiving.

Say: **You are right. I have been treating some children better than others. I've been ignoring some of you. Can you tell me why?** Allow the children to guess the characteristics that the ignored children had in common. Then, give a snack to everyone.

Say: **Was I treating everyone fairly?** Allow children to respond. **No, I was showing prejudice. PREJUDICE is a word that describes what some of you experienced. Sometimes, people are ignored or even mistreated because of the color of their skin or because they come from a**

certain part of the country. Other people may be mistreated because they are disabled or because of their religious beliefs. In today's Bible story we will discover that some Christians were prejudiced against others. Do you think that God was pleased by that? We will learn what God did to teach them a lesson about letting go of their prejudice.

End with a prayer, asking God to help the children be kind to everyone.

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: Acts 10:34b-35

Preparation

Write Acts 10:34b-35 on the poster board.

Practice saying the verse six or seven times, but make a different mistake every time you do it. You may want to write down the different ways you will say the verse to help the memorization activity go smoothly.

Materials
poster board
marker
poster from the FOCUS activity

Explanation

Say: **We are learning some big words today.** Refer to the FOCUS activity poster as you talk. **PREJUDICE is treating people badly because they are different from you, just like I showed prejudice toward some of you during our snack time because you were wearing the color red** (or mention the group you chose to ignore). **I treated you unfairly.**

Does anyone know what the word favoritism means? Point to the word on the poster board and allow children to answer. **FAVORITISM is what I showed to the other group. I gave them a special treat just because they were not wearing the color red** (or mention the group you chose to ignore) **and ignored the rest of you. I showed favoritism toward them.**

God hates both PREJUDICE and FAVORITISM. He wants us to treat everyone with love and kindness, just as He does.

So what does God look at when he sees a person? Does he look at your hair color, your skin color, or your height? No! Can anyone underline the words in this verse that tell us what God is looking at when he sees us? Allow a child to underline the words "fears him" and "does what is right."

Memorization Activity

Explain to the children that you are going to read the verse several times. Ask them to jump up when they hear a mistake and allow them to correct the mistake. Then read the verse correctly all together. Do this several times until children can say the verse correctly.

INSTRUCT

Bible Story: "Peter and Cornelius," Acts 10:1-35

Preparation

Read and study Acts 10:1-35.

Materials
Bible
paper
sheet or blanket
stuffed animals or drawings of birds, reptiles, and other types of animals
2 Bible costumes

Presentation

Say: **In today's story you will hear two words that you might not understand—"Jews" and "Gentiles."** Show children the words written on the poster form the FOCUS activity. **Who are these people? What are their differences?**

In the Old Testament, God chose to give Abraham's family a special blessing because Abraham obeyed God. God turned Abraham's family into a powerful nation called Israel. Later on, they were known as the Jewish people. All other countries and peoples in the world were called the Gentiles.

The Jewish people were supposed to worship God. However, on many occasions they disobeyed God. But God still loved them and kept His promise to them.

The Gentiles didn't know that there was a true and only God. Most of them worshipped idols made out of wood or stone. Some would also worship the sun or moon. Even though they didn't know or worship God, He still loved them.

But the people of God, the Jews, were prejudiced against the Gentiles. And the Gentiles were prejudiced against the Jews. How would these two different groups of people understand the love of God? How would these two different groups of people believe in Jesus and share together?

God had a marvelous plan and it started with a Gentile soldier named Cornelius and a Jewish disciple named Peter.

Ask the children to help you act out the story you are about to tell. You will need two children to be Cornelius and Peter. Give them a costume to wear if you have one. Two children will need to hold the sheet/blanket. Two children can be the messengers from Cornelius. The other children can be Cornelius' family. While you narrate the story, the children can act it out.

Say: **Cornelius was a captain in the Roman army. He and his family were good people and believed in God. Cornelius gave a large portion of his possessions to the poor and prayed frequently. One afternoon, while Cornelius was praying, he saw an angel getting closer to him. "Cornelius!" said the angel. "God has heard your prayers and has seen the gifts you give to others. Send a few of your men to Joppa. There they will find a man named Peter. Ask him to come to visit you."**

As soon as the angel left, Cornelius sent three trusted men to Joppa to find Peter.

But Peter was a Jew. He didn't talk to Gentiles. He also would never eat with a Gentile because there were several types of meat the Gentiles ate that the Jews did not eat. What was God going to do to make sure that Peter went to visit Cornelius?

It was noon time when Peter was praying. But while he was praying he became very hungry. While someone was preparing a meal for him, Peter took a nap. During that nap, he had a dream. He saw a large cloth descend from heaven that was full of all types of living creatures: birds, animals, and reptiles. Place stuffed animals or pictures of animals in the sheet and have two children hold it near Peter.

The Lord spoke to Peter, "Rise up, Peter, and eat!"

"Lord, I cannot eat these things. Our laws say that meat from these animals is not clean, therefore, we can't eat them."

"Peter, don't argue with God," the voice said. "If I have made them clean, then they are clean."

This happened three times, and then Peter woke up. He wondered, "What is the meaning of this dream?"

It was at that moment the men coming on behalf of Cornelius knocked at the door. The Lord spoke to Peter, "There are three men looking for you. Go with them. Don't doubt doing so. I have sent them."

So Peter traveled to Cornelius's house.

As soon as he arrived, he said, "Cornelius, you know that the Jewish laws are against me being with someone like you. But God has shown me that I don't need to be prejudiced against any person. That's why I've come to your house."

Then, Peter talked to Cornelius about Jesus who was crucified on a cross, and that He rose from the dead three days later. While Peter was talking to Cornelius and all who were at the house, the Holy Spirit came upon them. They began to speak in heavenly tongues and worshiped God.

When Peter saw what God had done, he said, "I now understand that God loves everyone. He wants both the Jews and Gentiles to hear the good news about Jesus."

Thank the children for helping with the story. Discuss the following questions:

In what ways did the Jewish people show prejudice toward the Gentiles?
What types of food did Jewish law prohibit Peter from eating?
How did God use this food to teach Peter a lesson about prejudice?
What happened when Peter stopped being prejudiced and listened to God?

APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Art, "I Will Be Kind to Everyone"

Materials
paper
crayons

Preparation
Write "I Will Be Kind to Everyone!" at the top of a piece of paper for each child.

Presentation
Give each child a prepared sheet of paper. Ask them to draw pictures of several different people. The people should have different hair color, eye color, and skin color. They can also be different heights and wear different types of clothes.

Remind them that no matter the color of our skin, where we live, or what language we speak, God loves us all and wants us to be kind to one another.

Note: If magazines, newspapers, scissors, and glue are available, you can have children cut out pictures of different types of people and glue the pictures on their papers as an alternative to drawing.

MINISTRY TIME

Materials
globe or world map
paper
marker

Preparation
Write the name of several different countries on pieces of paper.

Presentation
Ask a child to choose one piece of paper and read the name of the country aloud. If you have a globe or map, show the children where the country is located. Pray for the people of that country. Continue with each country you have written on a piece of paper. End with a prayer for the people of your city or country.

Praying for Others

Lesson Scripture: Genesis 18:17-33, 19:1-3, 12-22

Bible Truth: I will pray for others.

Bible Story: Genesis 18:17-33, 19:1-3,12-22

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

FOCUS

Learning Activity: "Asking for Mercy"

Preparation

Materials
poster board
marker
small candies in different colors (M&M's if available)
jar

On a poster board, write the words "intercede" and "intercessor" with their definitions:

intercede: to speak up for something or someone
intercessor: a person that intercedes for others

Choose a type of candy that comes in different colors, preferably M&M's if they are available. (You can also use any size small item that comes in different colors.) Before starting the class, remove all of the yellow candies except one. Discard the rest of the yellow candy. Put the remaining colors of candy and the one yellow candy into a jar. Be sure the single yellow candy is hidden by the other colors.

Practice the skit with a helper the week before class.

Presentation

Begin the ministry time with this skit.

Teacher: (Calling to someone outside of the room.) **I need someone to bring me my candy!**

Helper: (Running into the room carrying the candy jar.) Here are the candies you asked me to bring to you.

Teacher: (Take the jar and observe it carefully.) **I don't see any yellow candy in here. Throw them away.** (Give the jar back to the helper.)

Helper: (Also looks at the jar carefully.) Would you keep the candy if there were at least 50 yellow candies in the jar?

Teacher: **Yes, I would keep them if there were at least 50 yellow candies.**

Helper: And if there were 45 yellow candies, would you keep them if there were only 45 in yellow?

Teacher: **Yes, I think I would keep them if there were at least 45 yellow candies.**

Helper: And if there were 30 yellow candies? Would you throw the jar away if there were 30 yellow?

Teacher: **No, I wouldn't throw away the jar if there were 30 yellow candies.**

Helper: (Carefully examines the contents in the jar.) Perhaps there are only 20 yellow candies. Would you throw the jar away if there are 20 candies in yellow?

Teacher: **No, I would keep them if there were 20.**

Helper: One more question. Would you keep the jar if there were only 10 yellow candies?

Teacher: **If there were 10 yellow candies I wouldn't throw away the candy jar.**

Helper: (Look carefully at the jar, shakes head, sets down the jar, and leaves the classroom.)

Say: **In this skit, my helper was an intercessor for the candy! I wanted to throw out the candy because the yellow ones were missing. He kept trying to get me to save the candy if just a small amount of yellow could be found. If you intercede for something or someone, you are speaking up for them. When you do this, you become an intercessor.** Read the definitions of *intercede* and *intercessor* to the children.

As Christians, we have a responsibility to intercede for others. How do we speak up for them? We do this through prayer. Intercession is a way to pray for others. When we pray for others, we pray for God to help them.

Later on today, I'll let you know what is going to happen to this jar of candy!

In today's Bible story, we will meet an intercessor and discover why he was praying. First, let's see what the Bible has to say about intercession.

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: Galatians 6:2

Preparation

Write Galatians 6:2 on a poster board.

Fill a jar with rocks. Be sure that the jar feels heavy.

Materials
poster board
markers
jar
rocks

Explanation

Read Galatians 6:2 to the children. Show children the jar full of rocks. Ask a small child to hold the jar of rocks and tell everyone how it feels. The child should respond that the jar is heavy.

Say: **This jar is a heavy burden to be carried around alone. How can we help** _____ (name the child holding the jar) **carry this burden?** Help children understand that if we all carry one rock, it will be much easier for one person to carry the jar. Give each child a rock from the jar to hold as you continue with the explanation.

Say: **These rocks are a real burden that we can see. However, sometimes our friends and family have problems or burdens that we can't see. What are some of the burdens our friends and family might carry?** (The children should suggest problems that occur at home, at school, with friends, sickness, etc.) **How can we help them with these burdens?** Allow children to respond. **The best way to help carry other people's burdens is to pray or intercede for them. When we pray for them, we are carrying their problem to Jesus. He knows the best way to help them.** Collect rocks and return all but one of them to the jar.

Memorization Activity

Have the children stand in a circle and pass around the one rock that you did not return to the jar. The first child holding the rock says the first word of the verse and the second child says the second, etc. Each child should say the next word in the Bible verse when they are holding the rock. Continue until the group can say the Bible verse quickly.

INSTRUCT

Bible Story: "Abraham Prays for Lot," Genesis 18:17-33, 19:1-3, 12-22

Preparation

Read and study Genesis 18:17-33, 19:1-3, 12-22.

Hold the jar of candy from the FOCUS activity as you tell the story.

Materials
Bible
candy jar from the FOCUS activity

Presentation

Tell the following story, referring to the jar of candy as indicated.

Say: **Abraham's nephew, Lot, lived in a city called Sodom. One day, the Lord told Abraham that the people living in the city of Sodom were doing bad things. Those things were so bad that God decided to destroy the city and everything in it. Abraham loved Lot and wanted to take him out the city of Sodom before it was destroyed.**

So Abraham asked God, "Would you destroy the bad and good people together? Suppose you find 50 innocent people in the city, would you still destroy it?"

What do you think God answered? (Hold up the jar.) **Just like I promised not to throw away the candy if there were 50 yellow ones inside of it, God also told Abraham that he wouldn't destroy the city if there were 50 innocent people in it.**

Then, Abraham asked God, "And if there were only 45 innocent people? Would you destroy the entire city?" What do you think God said? "No, I wouldn't destroy it." One more time, Abraham asked Him, "God, don't be angry at me. Let me ask you one more time. What would you do if there were only 30 innocent people?" And God said, "No, I wouldn't destroy it."

But Abraham asked again,"Suppose there were only 20." And God said, "No, I wouldn't destroy it." Finally, Abraham said, "Allow me to speak one more time. What would you do if there were only 10 innocent people in the city of Sodom?"

How do you think God answered? He said, "No, I wouldn't destroy it."

Empty the contents in the jar that has only one yellow candy in the middle of it. Look through the candy until you find the one yellow candy.

How many innocent people do you think that God found? Allow the children to answer this question, and then show them the yellow candy. **God only found one family that wasn't doing bad things. It was Lot's family. Because of Abraham's prayer and intercession, God sent two angels who helped get Lot's family out of Sodom before it was destroyed. God saved Lot's family because Abraham prayed for them.**

Who was the intercessor in our story?

What did he ask God to do?

APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Writing, "Prayer card reminders"

Preparation
Gather materials.

Materials
paper
pencils
markers or crayons in colors that match the candy in the jar from the FOCUS activity

Presentation
Say: **How did Abraham help to save Lot's life?** He interceded (prayed) for him. **What should we do for the people we love?** He should intercede for them.

Distribute the pencils, paper, and markers or crayons among the children. Ask them to write the word "PRAY" in big letters at the top of their paper. Say: **God listens to our prayers for others. We all know people who need God's help. We are going to make a prayer card to remind us to intercede for others.**

Show children how to color small circles on their paper. Ask them to write the names of people who need prayer inside the circles. You might consider coloring coding their prayers as follows:

Yellow circles: people who need to accept God's forgiveness
Green circles: people who need healing
Orange circles: people who need help at work or school
Red circles: people who are having a hard time (worry, bullies, divorce, etc.)

MINISTRY TIME

Preparation
None

Materials
none

Presentation
Make a circle and pray for the people the children wrote inside of the circles on their papers. Ask God to help the children be intercessors.

What is Worship?

Lesson Scripture: Exodus 14:1-31; 15:1-21

Bible Truth: We worship God.

Bible Story: Exodus 14:1-31; 15:1-21

Bible Verse: "Praise him for his acts of power; praise him for his surpassing greatness." (Psalm 150:2, NIV)

FOCUS

Learning Activity: "What Is Worship?"

Preparation

Make a large worship chart by writing the word "worship" at the top of the paper and including the following definition: Worship is what you do to show God that you know who He is and what He has done. Under the definition, divide the paper into two columns, "Who is God?" and "What has God done?"

Materials
large sheet of paper or poster board
markers

Presentation

Say: **For the next few weeks, we are going to be talking about worshipping God. Does anyone know what it means to worship God?** Allow children to answer. **Those are all great answers. I want to share with you another one.** Show the chart with the definition of worship, and read it with the children.

Say: **Let's make a list of who God is.** Allow the children to add words such as King of Kings, Savior, Friend, etc. to the correct side of the chart. **Now, let's make a list of some of the things God has done.** Allow children to add phrases such as made the world, died for me, comforts me when I'm sad, etc.

You can show God that you know who He is and what He has done with your words and your actions. When we worship God with our words, we say that we are praising God. Let's praise God right now by singing a song about His greatness. Lead children in a song of praise.

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: Psalm 150:2

Preparation

Write each word from Psalm 150:2 on a separate piece of paper and attach them to the wall.

Materials
paper
markers or crayons
tape or other adhesive to attach papers to the wall
Bible

Explanation

Read Psalm 150:2 with the children. Say: **Can you find in this verse two reasons why we should worship or praise the Lord?** Choose one child to circle each reason: acts of power and greatness. **Can you name an act of power** (something wonderful) **the Lord has done?** Allow children to answer. **Can you mention something great, something you really like, about God?** Allow children to answer. **When we worship Him for His greatness we are praising Him for who He is: a loving Father, powerful, faithful, etc. Therefore, we praise God for the things He has done and for who He is.**

Memorization Activity

Use the words in today's memorization verse that are attached to the wall. Ask each child to stand in front of one of the words. Then, each child should say the words in the correct order. After the verse has been repeated several times, say "Change." The children should find another word and stand in front of it. Continue this activity until all the children know the verse.

INSTRUCT

Bible Story: "God Saves His People," Exodus 14:1-31; 15:1-21

Preparation

Read and study Exodus 14:1-31 and 15:1-21.

Write the following phrases and questions on small pieces of paper. (Answers are printed below each question for teacher reference only.)

Materials
Bible
paper
pencil, pen, or marker

God is always present. How did He show the people of Israel that He was with them?
Answer: He led them with a cloud during the day and with a pillar of fire at night.

God is powerful. What kind of mighty act did He perform to show His power?
Answer: He parted the Red Sea.

God is faithful. What words from God to Moses became a reality?
Answer: God told Moses and the people to watch and see how God would save them. "The Egyptians you see today, you will never see again."

God has all authority. Was God surprised or worried when Pharaoh's army decided to chase the Israelites?
Answer: No. God is always in control.

How did the children of Israel react when they heard that Pharaoh and his army were getting closer to them? What did they need to do?
Answer: They began to panic and complain. Instead, they needed to trust God.

How did the children of Israel react after Pharaoh and his army were drowned?
Answer: They worshipped God by singing, dancing, and shouting for joy.

Presentation

Divide the children into three different groups. Give each group two pieces of paper with the prepared phrases/questions and allow them to read them together. Explain that you are going to tell the Bible story, and they should listen for the answers to their questions. Remind them not to say the answers aloud during the story. At the end of the Bible story, the groups will share their answers.

Say: **The Israelites had been slaves in the land of Egypt for many years. God had used several events to cause the king of Egypt, Pharaoh, to let the Israelites leave. God used Moses and Aaron to lead the people of Israel out Egypt, but they didn't choose the way they were to go. God was with them, and He showed them the way to go using a cloud and a pillar of fire. During the day, God was in the shape of a big cloud that would move slowly in front of the people. They followed the cloud. At night, that cloud would turn into a pillar of fire. Whether at night or day, people were able to look at the pillar of fire or the cloud and say, "Our God is with us. He's showing us the way."**

After the people of Israel left Egypt, God led them to the Red Sea. They camped in this place for one night, hoping to have some rest before marching on. But suddenly, someone alerted the camp by screaming, "Pharaoh's army is following us!" Pharaoh's army was coming after them, and the Red Sea was in front of them. There was no way to escape.

People began to tell Moses, "Why did you bring us out here to die? It would have been better to stay as slaves in Egypt than to die out in the desert." Moses asked God for help. "Speak to these people. Tell them to calm down." God said. "Don't be afraid. Watch how I will save you. The Egyptians you see today, you will never see again."

The cloud moved to the back of Israel's camp. And it stayed between Pharaoh's army and the people. Throughout the night, the people of Israel had light coming from the column of fire, but the Egyptians only saw a dense cloud of darkness. The following morning, God told Moses, "Tell the people to march on. Lift up your staff towards the Red Sea and part it."

Moses simply did what God told him to do. God sent a strong wind. The wind made a way in the middle of the waters and dried the sea ground. On each side of the dried path, the water stood like a wall until all the people had arrived to the other side.

When the cloud rose up, Pharaoh saw the Israelites walking on dry ground. He ordered his soldiers to follow them, but by then, the ground had turned into mud. The chariot wheels started to get stuck in the mud. Then, the walls of water fell on them. Pharaoh's army drowned.

The people of Israel were free. God had saved them from their enemies. Moses wrote a beautiful song to praise God for what He had done. Everybody danced, sang, and shouted for joy and happiness.

Allow each group to share the answers to their questions with the class.

APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Game, "Write It"

Preparation

Divide the two pieces of poster board into two columns. The first column on each cardboard should say, "What He has done" and the second column "Who He is."

Materials
two pieces of poster board
markers or crayons

Presentation

Divide the children into two teams. Ask each team to choose a reporter. Give each team a poster board and marker or crayon. The object of the game is to think of as many mighty acts of God and characteristics of God as possible. The reporter will write them in the appropriate column. Give each team at least three minutes to work on their posters. At the end of three minutes, one of the teams will read their list of mighty acts of God listed in the "What He has done" column. If the other team has written down the same acts, both will have to cross off what they have in common. If nobody else has it, circle that answer. Each circled act will count for one point. Once you have finished with the first column, allow the other team to read their list of characteristics of God listed in the "Who He is" column. Follow the same procedure for crossing off and circling characteristics. Add the points to see who has circled the most characteristics and mighty acts. The team with the most circled words wins.

Say: **God is amazing, and He has done amazing things for us. We worship God because of who He is and what He has done for us.**

MINISTRY TIME

Preparation

None

Materials
none

Presentation

Lead the children in a time of worship using sentence prayers. Ask everyone to stand in a circle. Go around the circle and invite children to worship God using one sentence. For example, "I worship you because you created me," or "I worship you because you healed my mom."

Children Can Worship

Lesson Scripture: Matthew 21:1-11, 14-16

Bible Truth: Children can worship.

Bible Story: Matthew 21:1-11, 14-16

Bible Verse: "From the lips of children and infants you, Lord, have called forth your praise." (Matthew 21:16b, NIV)

FOCUS

Learning Activity: "Who Can Praise the Lord?"

Materials
small piece of paper for each child
markers or crayons
poster board

Preparation

Write Psalm 150 on the poster board. Leave room around the edges for children to attach their pictures.

Presentation

Ask children to draw a picture of themselves on a small piece of paper. Attach each piece of paper to the poster board with Psalm 150 written on it. Say: **Some people think that children are too small to worship the Lord, but that is not true! God wants everyone to worship Him. Psalm 150 in the Bible is a psalm of worship and praise. Let's read it and praise the Lord together.** Read Psalm 150 with the children. **In today's lesson, you will learn how certain children praised Jesus and how that made Him very happy.**

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: Matthew 21:16b

Materials
poster board
markers

Preparation

Write Matthew 21:16b on a piece of poster board.

Explanation

Read Matthew 21:16b with the students. Say: **In today's Bible story, you will hear about a time when Jesus quoted this Bible verse to a group of people who wanted children to be quiet and not worship God. This made Jesus sad. He wants children to worship Him!**

What usually comes out of our mouths? Allow children to answer. **Right, words come out of our mouths. What does this Bible verse say God is calling to come out of your mouth?** Allow children to answer. **Yes, He wants words of praise to come out of your mouth!**

Memorization Activity

Say: **Let's try to call forth some praise from your lips! I will say the phrase, "From the lips of children and infants." You will respond with the phrase, "You, Lord, have called forth your praise."** Practice saying the verse in this way until the children have learned their part. Then, switch phrases until they can say the entire verse.

INSTRUCT

Bible Story: "Children Praising Jesus," Matthew 21:1-11, 14-16

Preparation

Read and study Matthew 21:1-11, 14-16.

Prepare small pieces of paper for today's lesson. Write one of the following words on each paper: donkey, disciple, people, children.

Provide children with pieces of cloth they can throw on the floor, and branches to wave around.

Materials
small pieces of paper
pencil, pen, or marker
pieces of cloth
tree branches
Bible

Presentation

Divide the children into four teams. Give each team a prepared piece of paper. Instruct them to listen to the way the person or animal praises the Lord. Also ask the children to find a group of people that refused to praise the Lord. Allow children to act out their parts as you tell the story.

Say: **Everybody in Jerusalem was excited. Many people came to Jerusalem for a great feast. They heard about a man named Jesus who healed the sick, opened the eyes of the blind and even resurrected a man who had been dead. They wanted to see Jesus.**

While Jesus and His disciples were walking towards Jerusalem, he told two of them, "Go to the village ahead of you. There you will find a donkey nobody has ever used. Bring it to me. If anyone asks why you are taking the donkey, say that the Lord needs it."

The disciples found the donkey just as Jesus had said. They put their coats on its back. Jesus rode through the streets in Jerusalem. He was riding the donkey. When He approached the city, the crowd of people laid their coats on the streets so Jesus would walk on them. Other people waved palm branches. They all sang praises, "Blessed be the King, Glory to God!"

When Jesus arrived in Jerusalem, He went to the temple. They brought Him many blind, crippled and sick people, and He healed them all. When the children saw the wonderful things Jesus was doing, they gathered around Him. Then they began to say in a loud voice, "Hosanna, Hosanna!"

The religious leaders were listening. The praises of the children were making them mad. "Do you hear what these children are saying?" they asked Jesus.

"Yes," Jesus said. "They are obeying the Word of God. Don't you remember that Scripture says, 'Even children worship me.'?"

Questions:

Ask each child to share his/her response to the following question:

How did this person or animal worship and praise the Lord?

Donkey (He willingly carried Jesus on his back. Worshiped with his actions.)
Disciples (They followed Jesus' instructions cheerfully. Worshipped with actions.)
People in the streets (They shouted praises to Jesus. Worshiped with their words.)
Children (They said praises to Jesus in the temple. Worshiped with their words.)

Also discuss the following:

What group of people was not willing to worship the Lord?
Why were the religious leaders not willing to worship the Lord?
What made the children worship the Lord?
Has Jesus done wonderful things for you? Will you respond to Him with worship?

APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Creative Scripture, "If I Had Been There"

Preparation

Prepare a sheet of paper for each student that says the following, "If I had been there in the Temple that day, I would say…"

Materials
paper
markers or crayons

Presentation

Speak to the children about worshipping God through words of praise, honor, and gratitude. Allow the children to elaborate on words they would have said to Jesus at the temple on that day. Then, give each child a prepared paper. Ask them to write praise words for Jesus. Teachers can assist younger children with this activity by writing the words that each child says.

MINISTRY TIME

Preparation

None

Materials
papers from the application activity

Presentation

Form a circle and ask each child to read what they wrote on their paper during the application activity. At the end of each child's turn, have all of the children say, "Children can worship Jesus!" At the end of the lesson, pray a closing prayer asking God to help the children remember to always give Him praise.

We Worship God When...We Sing Praises

Lesson Scripture: 2 Chronicles 20:1-28

Bible Truth: I can worship God by singing.

Bible Story: 2 Chronicles 20:1-28

Bible Verse: "Worship the Lord with gladness; come before him with joyful songs." (Psalm 100:2, NIV)

FOCUS

Learning Activity: "What Song Is This?"

Preparation

Locate an instrumental recording of several praise songs, or ask someone who knows how to play the piano to make a recording for this activity.

Draw and cut out some musical notes from cardboard.

Materials
instrumental recording of several praise songs
cardboard
marker
scissors

Presentation

Say: **We sing many songs in church. Let's play a game to see how many of them you can recognize.** Allow the children to carefully listen to each song. The first person recognizing it should raise a hand. After recognizing it, he should say its title. If the answer is right, he gets a musical note. If the answer was wrong, the song continues to be played until someone gives the right answer. The child that has the most musical notes wins.

After the game, say: **What was similar about these songs? Yes, they are all used to worship God. Remember that when we worship God with our words, we are praising Him. We find men and women in the Bible who praised God by singing to Him. In today's Bible story we'll see that something wonderful happened when God's people sang praises to Him.**

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: Psalm 100:2

Preparation

Write Psalm 100 on a poster board.

Materials
poster board
markers or crayons
Bible
ball

Explanation

Say: **King David loved to write and sing songs of praise to God. One of my favorites is Psalm 100. Let's read it together.** Read Psalm 100 with the children. **Which verse tells us that we should worship God by singing?** Allow children to answer. **Yes, verse 2 tells us to sing joyful songs to God.** Circle the phrase "come before him with joyful songs". **Let's see what the rest of the verses in this song say about worship.**

- **Verse 1 gives us a command. What is it?** (Shout joyfully to the Lord.) Choose a child to draw a circle around the command.
- **Verse 3 tells us who God is and who we are.** (He made us. We are His people and sheep.) Choose a child to place a checkmark next to the words that expresses who God is. Choose another child to draw a square around the words that tell us who we are.
- **Verse 4 tells us what we need to do when we worship God.** (Enter with thanksgiving; give thanks; praise His name.) Choose a child to circle the words that relate to worship.
- **Verse 5 gives us the reasons why we worship God.** (He is good; His love endures; He is faithful.) Ask a child to place a checkmark next to the three words that describe God.

Review the Psalm again. Say: **Tell me one way we worship God. Those words are circled.** Allow children to answer. **Tell me all the words that describe God. Those words have a checkmark.** Allow children to answer. **Tell me who we are. Those words are inside a square.** Allow children to answer. **God wants us to worship Him, and we can do this when we sing!**

Memorization Activity

Have the children stand in a circle and toss a ball to each other. Each time a child catches the ball, he should say the next word in the Bible verse. Practice until everyone can say Psalm 100:2 from memory.

INSTRUCT

Bible Story: "God Brings Victory Through Praise," 2 Chronicles 20:1-28

Preparation

Read and study 2 Chronicles 20:1-28.

Materials
Bible
poster board
marker

Presentation

Say: **We are going to pretend that one of you is the king of a small country. Your officials have informed you of a great army that is marching toward your country to attack it. What would you do to defend your country and its inhabitants?** Write down children's suggestions on a piece of poster board.

Say: **That's what happened in today's Bible story. A very good king named Jehoshaphat received news about a great army had that formed to fight against him. What are some things Jehoshaphat might have done to defend his country?** Review the list made by the children by asking, "Do you think he should…?"

Say: **Let me tell you what happened. After hearing the terrible news, Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah, was very afraid. As a matter of fact, he asked himself what he needed to do, and then he made a very wise decision. He chose to trust God for help. Jehoshaphat summoned all the people of Judah to come to Jerusalem to pray and fast. When everyone was at the temple door, including the children, Jehoshaphat prayed to God asking Him to protect the country of Judah and its people.**

God listened to Jehoshaphat's prayer. He was pleased that this king and the people asked for His help. He told them through one of his ministers, "Don't fear! This battle is not yours. It is my battle. Tomorrow, go to your enemy, but don't worry. You won't have to fight. Wait and see what I will do for you."

When King Jehoshaphat and the people heard the words that God had spoken through His minister, they fell down on their knees to praise the Lord. The priests in the temple sang hymns of praise that were heard throughout the city.

The next day, early in the morning, the army of Judah gathered. All the soldiers were armed and ready for battle. But King Jehoshaphat decided that the soldiers wouldn't be the first ones going to the battle. "I want the praising choir to go first on the march. They should face the enemy by singing this song, 'Praise the Lord, because His mercies are forever.'"

The choir led the march while singing to the Lord. At the very time they started to sing, the Lord made the enemy soldiers confused, and they began to fight each other. When Judah's army arrived on the battle field, the enemy had destroyed themselves. There was no one for them to fight. God fought their battle as they were singing praises to His name.

Say: **Before we started with our Bible story, we made a list of things that a king could do if an enemy army was trying to invade his country. Now, let's make a list of the things that King Jehoshaphat did.** Write the list on the back of your previous list. Say: **King Jehoshaphat asked God for help, and he trusted God. He and the people of Judah chose to worship God by singing. God wants us to worship Him too! He will take care of us as we worship Him.**

APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Creative Writing, "Praise Song"

Preparation

Make enough copies of the "My Praise Song" worksheet for each child to have one.

Materials
pencils
"My Praise Song" worksheet

Presentation

Say: **There are many praise songs in the Bible. One of the those songs is a litany. It includes words of praise and then a repeated phrase. Let's read an example.** Read Psalm 136:1-8 to the children. **What phrase do you hear repeated?** Allow children to answer. **Yes, after each phrase telling about who God is or what He has done, the writer says, "His love endures forever." We are going to write our own praise songs to God.**

Pass out the "My Praise Song" activity sheet. Guide children as they complete the sheet and write their own praise song.

*If children need additional help, create a list of characteristics and actions of God before they begin.

*If you teach younger children, you might do this activity together.

MINISTRY TIME

Preparation

None

Materials
completed "My Praise Song" worksheets
instrumental praise music

Presentation

As instrumental praise music is played, invite children to read the praise songs they wrote. End by singing a praise song that is familiar to all of the children. Remind them that just like God took care of Judah and King Jehoshaphat, He will also take care of us as we worship Him.

My Praise Song

Directions: Fill in the blanks to create your own song of praise.

Example:

God is powerful.
His love endures forever.
God is loving.
His love endures forever.
I give thanks to God because he healed my mom.
His love endures forever.
I give thanks to God because he helped me with my spelling test.
His love endures forever.
Praise God who made the world.
His love endures forever.

God is _____.
(Characteristic of God)

He love endures forever.

God is _____.
(Another characteristic of God)

His love endures forever.

I give thanks to God because_____.
(Something God has done for you.)

His love endures forever.

I give thanks to God because_____.
(Something God has done for you.)

His love endures forever.

Praise God_____.
(Something God has done for everyone.)

His love endures forever.

We Worship God When...We Speak Words of Praise

Lesson Scripture: Luke 19:29-40

Bible Truth: I can worship God when I speak words of praise.

Bible Story: Luke 19:29-40

Bible Verse: "All you have made will praise you, O Lord; your saints will extol you. They will tell of the glory of your kingdom and speak of your might." (Psalm 145:10-11, NIV 1984)

FOCUS

Learning Activity: "Wall of Praise"

Preparation

Tape a large piece of paper to the wall.

Materials
large piece of paper
markers or crayons

Presentation

Say: **Often when we want to worship God, we say words of praise. Can you think of any words of praise you have heard?**
Allow children to respond with words such as, "Hallelujah," "Praise the Lord," "Hosanna," etc.
Let's make a wall of praise to God that includes our words of praise!

Give children a marker or crayon. Have them go to the wall and write or illustrate a few praise words on the paper. When they are finished, read the praise words together.

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: Psalm 145:10-11

Preparation

Write Psalm 145:10-11 on poster board.

Divide the verse up into the following phrases and write the phrases on separate sheets of paper:

All you have made
will praise you.
O Lord;
Your saints

Materials
poster board
markers
paper
two envelopes

will extol you.
They will tell
of the glory of your kingdom
and speak
of your might

Prepare two sets. Place each set in an envelope.

Explanation

Read Psalm 145:10-11 to the children.

Say: **Let's see if we can discover the meaning of these scriptures together.** Ask the children the following questions. Have them underline the answers on the poster board when appropriate.

Who should praise the Lord? (All you have made)
Did God make you? (yes) **So, should you praise the Lord?** (Yes!)
In this verse, there is a fancy word that means to praise the Lord. Can anyone find that word? (Extol)
Who should extol the Lord? (Saints) **If you love Jesus, then you are a saint. Two times this verse tells us that we should praise the Lord!**
What should we talk about while praising the Lord? (the glory of the kingdom of God and the mighty acts God has done)
What wonderful things has God done for you?

The Bible tells us that we should speak about our wonderful God!

Memorization Activity

Divide children into two teams. Give them an envelope with the prepared pieces of paper inside. Have each team put the phrases in the correct order using the poster board as reference. Repeat the activity, but hide the poster board. Allow the teams to race each other in putting the verse together.

INSTRUCT

Bible Story: "The Disciples Speak Praises," Luke 19:29-40

Preparation

Read and study Luke 19:29-40.

Make copies of the Bible story skit for each child.

Materials
Bible
copies of the Bible story skit
optional props:
donkey on a stick,
pieces of cloth or coats to lay on the ground
Bible costumes

Presentation

Say: **A few weeks ago, we learned about children who were praising Jesus in the temple. Does anyone remember what happened before the children began praising Jesus?** Allow children to answer. **Let's learn a little bit more about that part of the story today.**

Pass out copies of the story script below. Choose one child to be Jesus, four children to be religious leaders, and the remainder of the children to be the disciples. The teacher will be the narrator. If any children are reluctant to participate, allow them to be the "audience."

Have children read through their parts and guide them as they prepare the skit. When everyone is ready, read it together.

Narrator: **Very soon, Jesus was going to die by hanging on the cross for our sins. But today, everyone was thinking wonderful things about Jesus as he rode the donkey through Jerusalem. People gathered on the side of the road to see Him. They threw their cloaks on the road for the donkey to walk on. While Jesus was riding it, His disciples thought of the many good things He had done. They started to praise Him.**

Disciples: "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord. Peace in heaven and glory in the highest."

Narrator: **Many of those in the crowd felt the same way as Jesus' disciples did. They had seen the most amazing miracles they had ever witnessed, so they knew that he was a great Master. But the religious leaders were jealous.**

Religious Leader 1: Listen to the words these people are saying. Jesus is not king.

Religious Leader 2: Does he think he is better than our king?

Religious Leader 3: This is getting out of hand.

Religious Leader 4: I think we should talk to Jesus.

Narrator: **So the religious leaders made their way through the crowd and reached Jesus.**

Religious Leader 1: Jesus, we need to speak with you for a moment.

Religious Leader 2: Did you hear what the disciples are saying? Tell them to be quiet.

Jesus: I can't tell them to be quiet. They are praising me. If my followers don't praise me, the rocks along the road will start to speak words of praise.

Say: **Did you notice what Jesus said? If Jesus' followers don't speak words of praise, then the rocks will start to speak words of praise. We don't want the rocks to do our job! We want to praise Jesus with our words!**

APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Creative Scripture, "Praise Rocks"

Materials
construction paper
markers or crayons
scissors

Preparation
Cut large rocks out of construction paper. Make enough for each child to have two rocks.

Presentation
Say: **Have you ever heard a rock speak? In today's Bible story we heard Jesus say if no one else praised Him the rocks would shout out. What do you think the stones would say if they started praising Jesus?** Allow children to answer.

Explain to the children that they are going to make "praise stones" by writing their own words of praise on the paper rocks. Give them several minutes to write the words. Encourage them to decorate their rocks with pictures to go with their words.

MINISTRY TIME

Materials
completed "Praise Rocks" from the application activity

Preparation
None

Presentation
When the children have finished writing praises on each one of the rocks, ask them to share what they have written. Collect the rocks and place them in such a way that it looks like a stone path of praises. Allow each child to walk the path and read the "praise stones."

We Worship God When...We Go To Church

Lesson Scripture: 2 Chronicles 5:1-14

Bible Truth: I can worship God by going to church.

Bible Story: 2 Chronicles 5:1-14

Bible Verse: "Give thanks as you enter the gates of his temple. Give praise as you enter its courtyards. Give thanks to him and praise his name." (Psalm 100:4, NIrV)

FOCUS

Learning Activity: "Worship through Action"

Preparation

Make a poster similar to the one made for lesson 1. Write the word "Worship" at the top of the paper and include the following definition: Worship is what you do to show God that you know who He is and what He has done. Under the definition, divide the paper into two columns, "Words" and "Actions."

Materials
poster board
markers

Presentation

Show children the poster you made. Say: **Does anyone remember the definition of worship?** Allow children to answer. **Worship is what you do to show God that you know who He is and what He has done. The last few weeks we have talked about how we worship God with our words. Can anyone tell me two specific ways we have learned to worship God with our words?** Help children recall the lessons about singing praises and speaking words of praise. Add these to the "Words" section of the poster. **Do you know that you can also worship God without saying any words? We do this with our actions. Let's make a list of actions that show we know who God is and what He has done for us.** Write the children's answers on the poster board. Their responses should include going to church, reading the Bible, praying, being kind to others, etc.

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: Psalm 100:4

Preparation

Write Psalm 100:4 on a piece of poster board.

Write each of the three sentences from the verse on a separate sheet of paper.

Materials
poster board
marker
3 sheets of paper

Explanation

Say: **Does anyone know which book of the Bible we have used for all of our memorization scriptures about worship?** Allow children to answer. **They all come from the book of Psalms. Do you know who wrote the book of Psalms?** Allow children to answer. **Yes, it was written by David, the same David who killed the giant Goliath and eventually became the King of Israel. He loved to worship God. One of the ways he worshiped God was by going to church. In Bible times, the church was called a tabernacle and then a temple. Let's read what David said we should do when we go to church.** Read Psalm 100:4.

What phrases in this verse mean "going to church?" Allow one child to underline the phrase, "enter the gates of His temple" and another child to underline the phrase, "enter its courtyards." **In David's time, the church had an outside area called a courtyard.**

What does this verse say we should do when we come into church? Allow two children to circle the words "give thanks" and "give praise." **David said we could worship God with our actions by going to church and with our words by giving thanks and praise in church.**

Memorization Activity

Divide the children into three groups and give them a prepared sheet of paper. (See preparation section.) Each group will practice saying their part of the verse as listed below:

Group 1: This group will pretend to open a door and shout, "Give thanks as you enter the gates of his temple."

Group 2: This group will walk in a circle and shout, "Give praise as you enter its courtyards."

Group 3: This group will put their hands in the air and shout, "Give thanks to Him and praise His name."

Allow each group to practice. Then have them say the verse in the correct order using the motions they practiced. When they have mastered their part, have the groups exchange phrases and repeat the activity.

INSTRUCT

Bible Story: "Solomon and Israel Go to the New Temple," 2 Chronicles 5:1-14

Preparation

Read and study 2 Chronicles 5:1-14.

Draw pictures to illustrate King David, King Solomon, the priests, the Tabernacle tent, the Temple, the leaders of Israel, the Ark of the Covenant, and the gold angel statues. Draw enough pictures for each child to hold one, making duplicates if necessary.

Materials
Bible
paper
markers or crayons

Presentation

Pass out the pictures you prepared to the children and ask them to hold up their picture when you mention it in today's Bible story.

Say: **Have you ever seen or slept in a tent? Tents are nice to have because you can move them from place to place and still have some shelter. Has anyone ever seen a really big building?** Allow children to answer. **It would not be easy to move a big building. It is permanent. The people of Israel had always used a large tent for their church. They called it the Tabernacle. They went to the Tabernacle to offer sacrifices and to worship God. King David wanted to build a permanent building for their church. It would be called the Temple. He wanted it to be a beautiful building where they would go to worship God. However, God told King David not to build the Temple. Instead, God gave the job to David's son, Solomon. It took many years, but the Temple was finally completed. King Solomon planned a celebration (called a dedication) for the first day they would worship in the new Temple. He asked all of the Israelites to attend the dedication.**

The priests carried the Ark of the Covenant (a special box that represented God) from the tabernacle tent to the Temple that Solomon built. The people then began offering sacrifices to God.

The priests carried the Ark of the Covenant to the most holy place in the Temple. In that room, there were two gold angel statues. The priests placed the Ark of the Covenant under the angels' wings. As the priests were coming out of that room, the choir and the trumpet players gathered to praise and thank the Lord. They were joined by people playing cymbals and other instruments. The choir raised their voices as an act of praise. They said, "He is good, and His love endures forever."

Then, God filled up the Temple with His presence. They all worshipped and thanked God because they knew that God was pleased with the Temple they had built for Him.

Say: **Solomon built the Temple, so people could go there to worship God. Today we worship God in churches. What do we do during worship time at church that Solomon and the people of Israel did when they worshipped? What do we do that is different?** Discuss with children.

APPLICATION:

Learning Activity: Art, "I Worship in Church"

Preparation

Draw the outline of a church on a piece of paper. Be sure the drawing accurately represents a church in your culture or community. Prepare one paper for each child.

Materials
paper
markers or crayons

Presentation

Ask children to draw a picture on the paper of themselves worshipping God. Once they have added themselves to the church, they can add other people worshipping with them. Encourage them to draw their family and specific friends.

When children are finished, allow them to share with the class about their pictures and display them in the ministry room.

MINISTRY TIME

Preparation

None

Materials
none

Presentation

Take children on a "worship walk" by visiting different locations within your church building. If you do not have a building to worship in, let the children walk around the area where the people worship. At each new location, invite the children to worship God. If children are unsure of how to express their worship, have them say a specific phrase, such as, "We love you Lord!" in each location. You may want to use a new praise phrase each time.

BONUS ACTIVITY

Bible Study: "They Worshipped in the House of the Lord"

Preparation

Make copies of the "Who Went to Church?" worksheet for each team.

Materials
"Who Went to Church?" worksheet
pencils or crayons
Bibles

Presentation

Say: **In the Bible, people always worshipped God when they went to church, to the Temple, or to the Tabernacle. In today's activity we will discover the names of some people in the Bible that went to church to worship God.**

Divide the class in teams. Give each team a Bible and a copy of the "Who Went to Church?" worksheet. (If Bibles are not available, read each verse aloud and let each team decide who went to church in that passage.) The first team to correctly complete the matching activity wins the game. You could also do this activity as a group if the children need help locating the scripture references.

Who Went to Church?

Directions: Match the Bible verse references to the person(s) it mentions who went to church. Remember, in Bible times, the church was often called a tabernacle or temple.

_____1. Acts 3:1	A.	Hezekiah
_____2. John 7:14	B.	priests
_____3. Exodus 33:9	C.	Peter and John
_____4. 1 Kings 8:6	D.	Jesus
_____5. Acts 2:42-46	E.	King Josiah and the people of Judah
_____6. 2 Kings 19:14	F.	Moses
_____7. 2 Chronicles 34:30	G.	The believers of the early Church

We Worship God When...We Pray

Lesson Scripture: Daniel 6

Bible Truth: I can worship God by praying.

Bible Story: Daniel 6

Bible Verse: "In the morning, Lord, you hear my voice; in the morning I lay my requests before you and wait expectantly." (Psalm 5:3, NIV)

FOCUS

Learning Activity: "Talk to Me About Prayer"

Preparation

If possible, draw an outline and make a pattern of a child bowing his head down to pray. Cut five silhouettes out of that pattern. On each pattern, write one of the following questions:

Materials
paper
scissors
markers or crayons

WHAT is prayer?
WHY should we pray?
WHY do we close our eyes while praying?
WHERE can we pray?
WHEN should we pray?

Presentation

Divide the children into five teams. Give each team a silhouette. Ask them to discuss their questions. At the end of two or three minutes, ask each group to share their answers. Possible answers are listed below.

WHAT is prayer?
Answer: Talking and listening to God

WHY should we pray?
Answer: Prayer helps us share with God and allows Him to tell us what we should do.

WHY do we close our eyes while praying?
Answer: It helps us concentrate on God and not look at the things around us. However, we don't have to close our eyes to pray.

WHERE can we pray?
Answer: We can pray anywhere.

WHEN should we pray?
Answer: We can pray at any time.

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: Psalm 5:3

Preparation
Write Psalm 5:3 on a poster board.

Materials
poster board
markers or crayons
paper for each child

Explanation
Read Psalm 5:3. Say: **This verse was written by King David. He prayed to God during a specific time of day. When was this?** Allow children to answer. **Do you think that God was waiting for David to talk to Him in the morning?** Allow children to answer. **God wants to meet with you each day. When you have a specific time to pray, then God knows that He is important to you. When you show God that you know who He is and what He has done, you are worshipping Him. So, you worship God when you pray.**

Memorization Activity
Pass out paper and drawing supplies to each child. Ask them to write the verse in their own words. Where the verse mentions the time of prayer (morning), they can include any time of the day they pray.

INSTRUCT

Bible Story: "Daniel in the Lion's Den," Daniel 6

Preparation
Read and study Daniel 6.

Write the following Bible verses on small pieces of paper:
Daniel 6:1-5
Daniel 6:6-9
Daniel 6:10
Daniel 6:11-17
Daniel 6:18-21
Daniel 6:22-23

Materials
paper
markers or crayons
Bibles

Presentation

Divide the children into six teams. Give each team drawing supplies and a paper that has one of the Scripture references. Instruct the children to read the verses and discuss which event is the most important in the verse. Then, they should illustrate that event. Allow the children eight to ten minutes to complete their illustrations. (You can choose to have one illustration per group or allow each child to make their own illustration.)

When children are finished, ask the groups to share. Team 1 should talk about what was happening in the verses they were given. They should use their illustration as a visual aid. When team 1 has finished, attach their illustration(s) to the wall. Then, team 2 can do their presentation, etc. When all teams have finished, children should know the story of Daniel 6.

APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Art, "A Prayer Reminder"

Preparation

None

Materials
paper
pencils

Presentation

Say: **Do you ever have trouble thinking of things to say to God when you are praying? We are going to make a prayer reminder to help you.** Ask each child to trace his hand on a sheet of paper. You will need to help younger children.

Ask children to write the phrases listed below on each finger as you discuss.

Write on thumb: *Pray for those close to you.*
Say: **The thumb is the finger closest to us. It reminds us to pray for our family, friends, neighbors, and the church family.**

Write on the index finger: *Pray for those who point you to God.*
Say: **The index finger is used to point at things. This finger reminds It us to pray for those people who point us to God: teachers, ministers, and parents.**

Write on the middle finger: *Pray for those in authority (leaders).*
Say: **The middle finder is the tallest; it stands out from the rest. It reminds us to pray for those who are in authority: presidents, judges, police, and others.**

Write on the fourth finger: *Pray for those who are weak.*
Say: **The next finger is weak because it's the one we use least. It reminds us to pray for the poor, sick, homeless, and unhappy people.**

We Worship God When...We Read His Word

Lesson Scripture: Nehemiah 8:1-12

Bible Truth: I can worship God by reading His Word.

Bible Story: Nehemiah 8:1-12

Bible Verse: "I rejoice in Your Word as one who finds a great treasure." (Psalm 119:162, NKJV)

FOCUS

Learning Activity: "Let's Go on a Hunt"

Preparation

Make a copy of the following treasure hunt clues for each team of two children. Do not include the words in parenthesis.

Materials
treasure hunt clues
Bibles
pencils
small box or bag for holding treasure

Psalm 31:3 (rock)

Genesis 8:11 (leaf)

Deuteronomy 11:15 (grass)

Genesis 2:7 (dust)

Job 14:2 (flower)

John 15:5 (branch)

*If children do not have Bibles, write the entire verse out as a clue and have children circle in the verse the name of the treasure they need to find.

Presentation

Say: **Have you ever gone on a treasure hunt? Today, we're going to use the Word of God to help us find wonderful treasures in the world God has created.** Allow each child to choose a partner. Give each team a copy of the treasure clues. The children should look up the Bible verses to discover the treasures they need to find. Encourage them to write the name of the treasure next to the verse. When the children have completed this task, they can start looking for the treasures. Supervise the children while they are on the hunt. After the treasures have been found, give each

team a small prize. If possible, their prize should have a Bible verse written on it. Remind them the Word of God is the greatest treasure.

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: Psalm 119:162

Preparation

Materials
poster board
paper
markers or crayons

Write Psalm 119:162 on a piece of poster board.

Hide a small treasure (like a candy) somewhere in the classroom for each child.

Write the words of the Bible memorization verse on small pieces of paper. Hide the papers somewhere in the classroom before the children enter.

Explanation

Say: **We have been learning about different ways to worship God. We have learned to worship Him with words and actions. What are two ways we have learned to worship God with our actions?** Allow children to answer. **Yes, we can worship God by going to church and praying. Today, we are going to learn about something else we can do to worship God. We can worship God by reading our Bibles. The Bible contains God's words. When we read the Bible, we are showing God that we know His words are important. Let's read the Bible right now.** Read Psalm 119:162 with the children.

Say: **Today, I have hidden one small treasure for each of you in this room.** Allow children to find the candy. They should go back to their seat after they find one piece. (If needed, tell the children that the papers they see hidden in the room are a different type of treasure, and they will find them later.)

After all the children have found one piece of candy, allow them to eat it while you discuss the following questions:

How did you feel when you found the small treasure?
How do you feel when you read the Bible?

Say: **Psalm 119:162 tells us that we should be happy when we read our Bibles, in the same way we are when we find a treasure.**

Memorization Activity

Tell the children that the words of today's memorization verse are hidden and they need to find them. Let the children know when they should start looking. When they find a word on a piece of paper, they should sit down. When all of the words have been found, allow the child who has the

first word of the verse to stand up and say that word. Then, the child who has the next word should stand and say that word. Continue until all the words in the verse have been said. Have the children exchange words and repeat the activity.

INSTRUCT

Bible Story: "Ezra Reads the Law of God to the People," Nehemiah 8:1-12

Preparation

Read and study Nehemiah 8:1-12.

Materials
Bible

Presentation

Say: **In today's Bible story, the people stood up as the Bible was being read to them. Let's see how long you can stand as I read the Bible.** Ask all of the children to stand up. Begin reading Psalm 119. Let the children know that they can sit down when they get tired. Stop reading when the last child has sat down or at the end of two minutes, whichever comes first.

Say: **For how long do you think I read the Bible? Was it for a long time? I read it for _____ minutes** (mention the amount of time you read). **In today's story we're going to learn about a man who read the Bible to a group of people for an entire morning.**

Choose volunteers to play the parts of Nehemiah and Ezra as you tell the Bible story. The rest of the children will be the people of Israel. Guide all of the children in acting out the story as you tell it to them.

Say: **Nehemiah, the governor in Jerusalem, wanted the people that lived in Jerusalem to be able to understand God's Word. One morning during sunrise he gathered all the people together in the town square. He asked Ezra, a minister of God, to read the Bible to them.**

Ezra stood up on a platform holding the book that contained the Word of God. When Ezra opened the book, everyone stood up. He praised the Lord for His greatness and the marvelous things He had done for His people. The people raised their hands and said in a loud voice, "Amen. Amen!"

Then, Ezra read aloud the Word of God so everyone would be able to understand it. He read from the early hours in the morning until it was afternoon. The Word of God touched the hearts of the people and they started to cry.

When Ezra was done with the reading, Nehemiah told the people "Don't cry. This is a holy day for the Lord!"

So they all went back to their homes and shared a meal with their neighbors. There was a lot of joy and celebration in the city because they were able to understand the Word of God.

APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Bible Study, "The Word of God is my Treasure"

Materials
small container for each child (disposable cup, basket, or box)
paper
scissors
crayons or markers
items to decorate the small containers

Preparation

Cut enough small squares of paper so that each child has at least three.

Presentation

Say: **The Bible memorization verse compares the Word of God to a treasure. In what sense is the Word of God similar to a treasure? What makes the Word of God special to us?** Allow children to answer. **Today, we will make a treasure that contains the Word of God. Write three of your favorite Bible verses on the small squares of paper. Fold the squares and put them in the little box. Each time you want to hear the Word of God, open the box and find the treasure from the Bible.**

When the children are finished writing the Scripture verses, let them decorate their treasure box. If the children you are teaching are too young to write, prepare some Bible verses ahead of time to put in their treasure box. Encourage young children to ask someone in their family to read the Scripture verses to them.

MINISTRY TIME

Materials
Bibles
paper
crayons
instrumental praise music (optional)

Preparation

Gather Bibles for each child. If Bibles are not available, copy Psalm 100 and 150 on a piece of paper for each child.

Presentation

Say: **God wants you to worship Him by reading His Word everyday. We are going to spend some time today reading His Word. First, we are going to pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word.** Pray for the children. Then, give each child a Bible and help them find Psalm 100 and 150. Say: **When you are finished reading, sit quietly and think about what you read. God can speak to you during this quiet time. If there is something special you want to remember from your Bible reading or quiet time, you may come get a piece of paper and crayons to write it down or draw a picture of it.** Play some instrumental music while children read their Bibles. After a few minutes, ask volunteers to share something special they learned, felt, or heard from God during their Bible reading time.

*If the children in your class are too young to read, do this activity with them.

Write on the little finger: *Pray for yourself.*
Say: **The little finger reminds us to pray for ourselves.**

MINISTRY TIME

Preparation
None

Materials
prayer reminder from the application activity

Presentation
Lead the children in a time of prayer using the prayer reminders they made during the application activity. Pause after each finger to give children time to pray. If children seem unfamiliar with prayer, model how to pray for each of the people listed on their paper hand.

We Worship God When...We Obey Him

Lesson Scripture: 1 Samuel 15:1-28

Bible Truth: I can worship God by being obedient.

Bible Story: 1 Samuel 15:1-28

Bible Verse: "Love the Lord your God. Do what he requires. Always obey his rules, laws and commands."(Deuteronomy 11:1,NIrV)

FOCUS

Learning Activity: "What Makes God Smile?"

Preparation

Drape a piece of material over a chair to create a throne. Ask an adult to play the role of the king. Choose one thing that will make the king smile, such as singing or giving a compliment. Instruct the adult to only smile if the children do the action you have chosen for the game. DO NOT tell the children what will make the king smile.

Materials
paper crown
chair
piece of material

Presentation

Say: **We are going to play a game called, "Make the King Smile." Let me introduce you to the king.** Introduce the king and ask him to sit on his throne. He should have a very serious expression on his face. **Our king is a very serious man, but one thing can make him smile. Unfortunately, he does not want to tell you what makes him smile. You will have to figure it out.** Divide children into teams of two or three. Explain that each team will get one opportunity to make the king smile. Give them a few minutes to plan how they are going to make him smile.

When everyone has had an opportunity to plan, allow each team to come before the king and do or say something that they hope will make the king smile. If no one is able to make the king smile, the teacher gets a turn!

Say: **What things did you do or not do to make the king smile? What was the only action that would make the king smile?** Allow children to respond. **Did you know that God is our true king? Do you ever wonder what makes God smile? Listen carefully to today's Bible lesson in order to discover one action that pleases God and makes Him smile.**

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: Deuteronomy 11:1

Preparation

Write Deuteronomy 11:1 on a piece of poster board.

Write each word of the Bible verse on a separate sheet of paper. Place the words in an envelope. Do this three times to create three sets for the memorization game.

Materials
poster board
paper
3 envelopes
pencil or marker

Explanation

Read Deuteronomy 11:1 with the children. Say: **What does the first part of this verse tell us to do?** Ask one child to underline the phrase "Love the Lord your God." **The rest of this verse tells us how we can show this love to God. Can someone underline the word that tells us how we can show love to God?** Allow one child to underline the word obey. **Has your mom ever asked you to do something? What happens if you grumble or complain?** Allow children to answer. **What happens if you do it cheerfully?** Allow children to answer. **Yes, when you obey your mom, it shows that you know she is in charge and you respect her. You also obey your mom because you love her. When we obey God, it shows Him that we know He is in charge of the whole world and it is our job to obey Him. Remember, when we show God that we know who He is and what He has done, we are worshipping Him. Love and worship go together. When we obey God, we show that we love Him as we worship Him through our obedience.**

Memorization Activity

Divide the children into three groups. Give each group a prepared envelope containing the words of the Bible verse. Let them race to see which group can put the verse in order the quickest.

INSTRUCT

Bible Story: "King Saul Disobeys," 1 Samuel 15:1-28

Preparation

Read and study 1 Samuel 15:1-28.

Write the following questions on small pieces of paper:

Against whom was Saul fighting?
What did the Lord ask Saul to do?
What was the name of the prophet God used to speak?
How did Saul disobey the Word of God?
Why did Saul keep some things and some sheep?
What was Saul's punishment for being disobedient?

Materials
Bible
paper
pencil
markers or crayons

Presentation

Divide children into six teams. Give each team one of the questions you have written on the pieces of paper. Ask them to listen for the answer to their question as you tell the story.

Draw pictures of the Bible story as you tell it to the children (or draw the pictures ahead of time).

Say: **One day, Samuel went to visit King Saul. "I have a message for you from the Lord," he said. "God wants you to destroy the Amalekite people. Don't save any of the spoils- the sheep, camels, or bulls. Destroy everything and everyone."**

Saul gathered his army and marched to the city of Amalek. They fought the Amalekites and won. But Saul didn't obey the Word of God that was spoken through Samuel. Saul and his men took the king of the Amalekites as prisoner and kept the best part of everything that belonged to the Amalekites.

While Saul and his men were marching back home, the Lord spoke to Samuel, "I am sorry that I chose Saul to be king over my people. He doesn't obey my commandments." Samuel was very sad. He cried all night long, praying and talking to God.

The following morning, Samuel went to see Saul. When Saul saw Samuel, he said, "I've done what God ordered me to do."

"Then, why do I hear the sound of sheep and bulls," asked Samuel.

Saul replied by saying, "I've brought these animals to be offered as sacrifices to the Lord."

Samuel said, "Saul, it's better to obey God than to offer Him sacrifices. Because you did not obey the word of the Lord, He has rejected you as king of Israel."

Give each team a few minutes to discuss the answer to their questions. Then the teams can share their questions and answers with the whole group. Say: **Sacrifice was an important part of Old Testament worship, but in this story God had not asked for sacrifice. He had asked for obedience. Remember to always do what God asks you to do.**

APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Creative Scripture, "More Than Sacrifice"

Preparation

Write 1 Samuel 15:22 on a poster board.

Cut several small pieces of paper that can cover the word "sacrifice" written on the poster board.

Materials
poster board
markers or crayons
paper
scissors
tape or adhesive to attach paper to poster

Presentation

Say: **Let's read what Samuel told Saul in today's Bible story.** Read 1 Samuel 15:22 with the children: "But Samuel replied: Does the Lord delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the Lord? To obey is better than sacrifice…"

What did Saul offer to God instead of obeying? Allow children to answer. **Yes, he said he was going to offer the bulls and sheep as sacrifices, but God wanted his obedience more than a sacrifice.**

What do we offer God instead of obeying Him? Sometimes we offer our time. We are willing to spend time reading the Bible but we are not willing to obey God by controlling our tempers. Write the word "time" on a piece of paper and put it over the word "sacrifice." **It is possible that we want to give money to help out someone who is sick, hungry, or homeless. But perhaps we are not willing to obey God and forgive someone who has mistreated us.** Write the word "money" on a piece of paper and put it over the word "sacrifice."

Give each child a piece of paper. Ask them to write one thing that children sometimes want to do instead of obeying. When they are finished, place each of their words over the word "sacrifice" and discuss. Say: **Many of the things we wrote are good things. We should read our Bibles and give money to help others. However, if we do all of those things, but do not obey God, then we are not doing what He has asked.**

MINISTRY TIME

Preparation

None

Materials
the words children wrote during the application activity
trash can

Presentation

Say: **Let's look at the words we wrote. If they are good things like reading our Bibles, let's say, "I will read my Bible AND obey." If they are things we shouldn't do, let's throw them in the trash.** Go through the words with the children and say the appropriate phrase or toss the paper into the trash. Then say a prayer asking God to help the children always be obedient to God.

Praise in the Prison

Lesson Scripture: Acts 16:19-32

Bible Truth: I will worship God in difficult times.

Bible Story: Acts 16:19-32

Bible Verse: "I will extol the Lord at all times; his praise will always be on my lips." (Psalm 34:1, NIV)

FOCUS

Learning Activity: "What Time Is It?"

Preparation

Write several different times on slips of paper.

Materials
paper
markers or crayons

Presentation

Show children the various times you have written. Ask them what they do during those times. For example, show children the time 8:00 a.m. and say: **"What do you do at 8:00 a.m.?"** Choose a child to share what he/she does at that time. Continue to have a discussion about what children do during the day and night as you show the various times.

Read Psalm 34:1. Say: **Our Bible verse today reminds us that we should worship God at all times. Any time of the day is the right time to praise the Lord.**

Give each child a sheet of paper. Have them write their favorite time of day at the top of the paper and draw what they like to do at that time. Encourage the children to write Psalm 34:1 on their paper as well.

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: Psalm 34:1

Preparation

Write Psalm 34:1 on a piece of poster board.

On a large sheet of paper, make a poster similar to the one below. Attach it to the wall.

Materials
poster board
paper
markers or crayons
tape
small, soft ball

Good Times	vs.	Bad Times
playing with friends		sickness
listening to music		taking a test
going to church		making a mistake
time with family		family problems

Explanation

Read the *Good Times vs. Bad Times* poster on the wall. Discuss how children feel during the good times and the bad times.

Give a soft ball to a child. Ask him to throw it at one of the signs. If the ball hits the *Good Times* side, ask him to say, "I will praise God during the good times." If the ball hits the *Bad Times* side, ask him to say, "I will praise God during the bad times."

Say: **What is easier, to praise the God during good times or bad times? Why?** Read Psalm 34:1 with the children. Say: **Do you remember the fancy word we learned that means to praise God?** Allow children to answer. **Yes, it is extol. When does God want us to extol, or praise Him?** Allow children to answer. **Does God want us to praise Him only when good things happen to us?** Allow children to answer. **When should we praise Him?** Allow children to answer.

Memorization Activity

Allow each child to throw the ball at the poster. When hitting the poster, have each child say the Bible memorization verse twice.

INSTRUCT

Bible Story: "Paul and Silas Praise in the Prison," Acts 16:19-32

Preparation

Read and study Acts 16:19-32.

Ask a teen or adult to prepare to tell the Bible story from the perspective of the jailer. Provide him with a Bible costume to wear.

Materials
Bible
Bible costume

Presentation

Say: **Today we are going to hear from a man who saw people worshipping God in a prison! How could you praise God in a prison? Let's listen as he tells us the story.**

The person dressed as a jailer enters. He says: **Hello boys and girls. I am in charge of a jail in a city called Philippi. One day, two men, who had been severely beaten by Roman guards, were brought to my jail. "Lock these men in prison," the guards ordered. "Make sure they don't escape. If they escape, you will pay with your life." You see, during this time in history, if prisoners escaped from jail, the man in charge of the jail would be killed. Since I didn't want to lose my life if these men escaped, I put them in the deepest, most secure cell in prison. I had chains put on their hands and feet. However, I noticed that these two prisoners were different from any other prisoners I had. Most prisoners yelled, cried, screamed, or cursed when they were put in chains and thrown in a cell. These two didn't complain or curse. They went to the cell quietly. I learned that they were Jews. There names were Paul and Silas. They had spent several days in the city teaching about their God. Perhaps that was the reason they didn't complain or curse.**

After I made sure all the prisoners were chained and well guarded, I went to sleep in my room next to the prison. Several times throughout the night I thought I heard loud voices and singing, but since I knew the prison doors were closed and guarded, I went back to sleep. But suddenly, exactly at midnight, there was a great earthquake and the prison walls started to move. I ran toward the prison doors. They were open. I was sure all the prisoners had escaped. I knew that when the Roman officials found out about this, they would beat me and then kill me. So, I took out my sword, determined to end my life before the officials could torture me.

At that time, someone yelled out of the darkness in the prison, "Don't hurt yourself! All the prisoners are here!" I asked one of the servants to bring me a candle, and I went inside the prison. All the prisoners were still there. And standing among them were Paul and Silas. I fell down at their feet. I knew that if they had kept everyone from escaping, it was because of their God. I wanted to know their God too!

"What should I do to be saved?" I asked. "Believe in Jesus and you will be saved," answered Paul.

I immediately believed in Jesus, who had freed Paul and Silas from prison. He was the Son of God. I took Paul and Silas home. I woke up everyone there. Then Paul and Silas spoke to my family about Jesus. They also believed in Him. Before sunrise, we were all baptized and were praising the Lord along with Paul and Silas. God used their worship to help lead my family to salvation. Jailer exits.

Say: **Paul and Silas could have been angry and sad while in prison. Instead, they chose to worship God in the middle of their troubles. They didn't know that God was going to rescue them. When you are facing a bad time, sometimes God will rescue you from the problem. Other times He may choose to comfort you while you are going through the situation. Always remember that God loves you, and keep praising Him no matter what happens! He can use your worship to be an example to others, just as He did with Paul and Silas and the jailer.**

APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Skits, "I Will Praise at All Times"

Preparation

Materials
paper
pencil or marker

Write each of the following scenarios on different sheets of paper.

1. Mary is planning to go to the park with her friends this weekend. When she wakes up Saturday morning, she has a fever and is feeling sick to her stomach.
2. John really struggles in math class. His teacher just announced that they are having a surprise test.
3. Katie's best friend just yelled at her and said she doesn't want to be friends anymore.
4. Joe really wanted to be on his school soccer team. This morning he learned that the coach did not choose him to be on the team.

Presentation

Divide children into four groups and give each group a paper with a different scenario written on it. Ask them to prepare a skit to show how the child can still praise God during this bad time. When groups are ready, have them present their skits to the class.

MINISTRY TIME

Preparation

None

Materials
poster from the Scripture memorization activity

Presentation

Say: **We all go through difficult times. Let's practice praising God during difficult times.** As a group, lead the children in saying the following phrase for each of the bad times listed on the poster: Even if _____, I will praise the Lord. For example, "Even if I am sick, I will praise the Lord!" Say a prayer asking God to remind the children that He is with them during the bad times.

BONUS ACTIVITY

Game: Jailed

Preparation

Choose an area in the room or outside that will be designated as a jail. Prepare a sign that says "Jail" and put it in the designated area.

Materials
paper
marker or crayon

Presentation

Choose one child to be the "jailer" for each five or ten children. The "jailers" try to capture the children by tagging them. When a child is captured, the jailer will puts him/her in jail. When the teacher screams "Earthquake!" the children that were in jail are freed and the game starts over again.

What is Trust?

Lesson Scripture: Luke 8:22-25

Bible Truth: I will trust God.

Bible Story: Luke 8:22-25

Bible Verse: "Trust in the Lord with all your heart. Do not depend on your own understanding. (Proverbs 3:5, NIrV)

FOCUS

Learning Activity: "What is Trust?"

Preparation
None

Materials
none

Presentation
Say: **I need a volunteer who really trusts me.** Allow children to raise their hands. **You need to really, really trust me.** Pick a volunteer.

Say to your volunteer: **I want you to stand in front of me and place your arms across your chest. When I say go, I want you to fall backwards. I promise I will catch you. Do you trust me enough to try?** If the child agrees, proceed with the demonstration, being sure to catch the child and not let him fall. If the child is unsure, choose another volunteer.

Ask the volunteer: **Why were you willing to fall backwards?** The child should answer that he trusted you and knew you wouldn't let him get hurt. Say: **When you trust someone, you rely on them to help you. You know that they would never hurt you. When we trust God, we remember that He knows what is best for us and that He will always take care of us.**

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: Proverbs 3:5

Preparation
Write Proverbs 3:5 on a piece of poster board.

Materials
poster board
marker
small ball

Explanation

Read Proverbs 3:5 with the children. Say: **This verse tells us one thing we should do and one thing we should not do. Can anyone underline the phrase that tells us what we should do?** Allow a child to underline the phrase, "Trust in the Lord." **What does it mean to trust God?** Allow children to answer. **When we trust God, we believe that He can take care of us. When we believe that He can take care of us, we do not worry.**

Can anyone underline the phrase that tells us what we should not do? Allow a child to underline the phrase, "Do not depend on your own understanding." **What word in this phrase means to trust?** Allow a child to point to the word "depend." **Yes, when you depend on someone, you trust them. God doesn't want us to depend on ourselves. Sometimes people think they don't need God's help. They think they are smart enough or have enough money to take care of themselves. But God doesn't want us to trust in ourselves or our money, He wants us to trust in Him.**

Memorization Activity

Have children form two lines, facing each other. Give the first child in line a ball. Ask him to say the first word of the Bible verse as he throws it to the child standing across from him. That child says the second word of the Bible verse and throws the ball to the second child in the other line. Continue tossing the ball between the two lines until children have said the entire verse. If you have more words than children, they can start over. When children are familiar with the verse, hide the poster board and let them play the game from memory.

INSTRUCT

Bible Story: "Jesus Calms the Storm," Luke 8:22-25

Preparation

Read and study Luke 8:22-25.

Materials
Bible

Choose children to act out the Bible story as you narrate it. You will need at least 2 children to act out the characters of Jesus and the disciples and several children to pretend to be the storm.

Presentation

Say: **Today, we are going to learn about a time that Jesus' disciples forgot to trust Him. As I tell you the story, you can act it out.** Guide children in acting out the story as you tell it.

Say: **Jesus, together with His disciples, had been traveling to many towns teaching, preaching, and healing people. One day, He told them that they needed to travel across a huge lake to the other side. They got into a boat and began the trip.** The children pretending to be Jesus and the disciples should get into a pretend boat.

Jesus was very tired and soon fell asleep. The child playing the part of Jesus should pretend to fall asleep.

Many of the disciples had been fishermen before they became Jesus' disciples, so they were probably confident that they didn't need any help getting the boat to the other side of the lake. Ask the children playing the disciples to stand confidently.

However, the sky suddenly became dark and a huge storm began. The waves were very high, and the disciples were afraid. They thought they were in danger of drowning. The children playing the part of the disciples should pretend to be frightened and the children playing the part of the storm should make loud thunder and wind noises.

They woke Jesus up to tell him that they were all going to drown. Jesus got up and looked at the waves and the storm. He calmly told the storm to stop, and it did! The water was calm and quiet again. Children should perform these actions as you continue story.

Jesus looked at his disciples with sadness. He asked why they didn't trust Him. The disciples should have known that Jesus would never let the storm harm them. Jesus had told the disciples they were going to the other side of the lake, and He planned to get them there safely.

Discuss the following questions:

Who suggested they get into the boat? (Jesus)
Why were the disciples not scared when they first got into the boat? (Most of them had been fishermen, and they trusted in themselves to sail the boat.)
When the storm came, could the disciples take care of themselves? (No)
Instead of trusting that Jesus would take care of them, what did the disciples do? (They woke Jesus up to tell them that they were all going to drown.)
What did Jesus do? (He calmed the storm.)
Why was Jesus sad? (The disciples had not trusted Jesus to take care of them.)

Say: **Instead of trusting in ourselves, we need to put our trust in Jesus. He will always take care of us and help us.**

APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Creative writing, "Who Do You Trust?"

Preparation

Materials
paper
marker
tape or other adhesive

Write the following phrases on separate sheets of paper:

Worry
Trust in Themselves
Trust in God

Attach the papers to three different walls in the room. If you are meeting outside, ask three volunteers to hold the paper signs for you.

Presentation

Say: **Sometimes it is hard to trust God. We either worry about something, or we try to fix it ourselves. I am going to read you short stories about five children. Decide if the children worried about their problems, trusted in God, or trusted in themselves.** Ask children to stand by the correct sign when they decide if the child in the story worried about their problem, trusted in God, or trusted in themselves.

Story 1: John has always slept in the same room as his brother, but his brother is going to be away for a week. John is going to have to sleep in a room by himself. He hides a flashlight under his pillow, so he can use it if he gets scared.

Story 2: Mary has a math test at school tomorrow. She doesn't like math and usually does poorly on tests. Mary is awake all night worrying about the test.

Story 3: Steve and Jane can hear their parents arguing in the other room. They hate it when their parents yell at each other. They kneel by their bed and begin to pray for their parents.

Story 4: Jeremiah has been sick for a week. He begins to think that he is never going to feel better.

Story 5: Katrina's family is moving to a new town. She has to leave all of her friends. She prays and asks God to send her new friends.

MINISTRY TIME

Preparation

None

Materials
signs used during the application activity

Presentation

Say: **Some of you may struggle with worry. Instead of worrying, Jesus wants you to trust Him. When you have a problem, some of you try to fix it yourself. Instead of trusting in yourself, Jesus wants you to trust Him.** Invite children who struggle with worry or tend to trust in themselves to stand by the corresponding sign. Pray with each group of children. When everyone is finished praying, ask all of the children to stand by the "Trust in God" sign and say together, "We will trust in God."

Trusting God for Protection

Lesson Scripture: I Samuel 17

Bible Truth: I will trust God to protect me.

Bible Story: 1 Samuel 17

Bible Verse: "You are my hiding place; you will protect me from trouble…" (Psalm 32:7a, NIV)

FOCUS

Learning Activity: "What Can Protect Me?"

Preparation

Make a shield out of poster board or use the lid of a large container. Crumple several sheets of paper to create paper balls.

Plan to do this activity outside if you want to demonstrate how an umbrella protects us from water.

Materials
poster board
paper
umbrella
cup of water

Presentation

Invite two volunteers to play a game. One child will throw balls of paper at another child holding the created shield. The goal is for the child holding the shield to be protected from the paper balls.

Say: **The shield did a good job of protecting that child from those paper balls. Today we are going to be talking about protection.** Show an umbrella. **Here is another object that can be used for protection. How can an umbrella protect me?** Allow children to answer. **Yes, an umbrella protects me from the sun and rain.** If you are outside, invite a child to pour a cup of water over your head as you use the umbrella to protect you from getting wet.

Paper balls and a little water aren't really big dangers to children. However, sometimes children face big troubles or problems in their life from which they need to be protected. We can trust God to protect us. He is so much better than a shield or an umbrella.

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: Psalm 32:7a

Preparation

Materials
small toy
2 colors of paper
marker
scissors (optional)

Write Psalm 32:7a on a piece of poster board.

Write the words of Psalm 32:7a on separate pieces of paper. Make two sets using different colors of paper. If you don't have two colors of paper, cut your paper into two shapes, circles and squares. Write one set of words on square pieces of paper and one set on circle pieces of paper. Hide the words around the room.

Before children arrive, hide a small toy somewhere in the room. Make the toy hard to find.

Explanation

Say: **I have hidden** _____ (describe the toy) **somewhere in this room. Let's see if you can find it.** Give children several minutes to find the hidden toy. If they cannot locate it, give them clues until it is found. (Remind the children not to pick up any pieces of paper with words written on them. They will be used later.)

Say: **You had to work very hard to find the toy because it was in a great hiding place. Sometimes the Bible compares God to something we can see to help us understand Him. Today's Bible verse compares God to a hiding place. Let's read Psalm 32:7a together.** Read the Bible verse with the children.

How is God like a hiding place? Allow children to answer. **Yes, he protects us from trouble. My toy was safe as long as it was in its hiding place. You can trust God to protect you.**

Memorization Activity

Divide the children into two teams. Assign each team a color or shape of paper. Explain that you have hidden the words of Psalm 32:7a around the room. Each team should find all of the words in their color or shape. Once they have found all of their words, they should put the verse in the correct order.

INSTRUCT

Bible Lesson: "David Trusted God," 1 Samuel 17

Preparation

Materials
Bible
paper
markers or crayons

Read and study 1 Samuel 17.

Draw pictures to use as visual aids as you tell the story.

Presentation

Show the pictures you drew as you tell the story.

Say: **One day, David, a young boy, was watching over his father's sheep when he received a message to go to his house. "David," said his father, "your brothers, who are with the king of the Israelites, King Saul, are getting ready to fight against the Philistines. I want you to take them food. See how they are doing, and come back to tell me."**

When he arrived at the Israelite camp, David quickly went looking for his brothers. While talking to them he heard a loud voice yelling and insulting the God of Israel. David looked across the valley and saw a Philistine giant challenging the people of God.

"Instead of all of us fighting a battle with each other, choose one man and have him come fight me. If he kills me, the Philistines will be your servants; but if I kill him, you Israelites will become our servants," this giant declared.

"Who is this man that dares insult our God?" asked David.

"He is Goliath, a Philistine giant. Everyone is afraid to fight him." answered a soldier.

"I will fight him," answered David courageously.

King Saul quickly heard about this young man in the Israelite camp willing to fight the giant. The king called David to his tent. When Saul saw David, he said, "David, you are just a boy. You can't fight that giant."

"With God's help, I have killed lions and bears to protect my sheep. God protected me from being harmed by those wild animals. In the same way, I know God will protect me from this giant and help me defeat him."

"Go," said King Saul. "I know the Lord will be with you."

David walked across the valley toward the Philistines' camp. On the way, he stopped by a stream and picked up five smooth stones. He placed them in his satchel and took out his sling. He continued toward the giant, Goliath, and the Philistine army.

The giant was surprised to see David approaching him. In a loud voice, he said, "You are just a boy. Does Israel think that I am dog and they sent you, a little stick, to fight me?"

David was not scared to hear the words of the giant. He yelled back to the giant, "You come against me with sword, and spear, and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty. He will help me win this battle."

Slowly the giant moved toward David. David quickly took a stone out of his bag and ran towards Goliath. He put the stone in the sling and shot it at Goliath. The stone hit the giant on the forehead, and he fell to the ground.

Say: **Goliath chose to trust in his weapons to protect him, but David chose to trust God for protection.**

APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Art, "God is My Protection"

Preparation

Draw a picture of an umbrella in the middle of a piece of paper or make copies of the picture at the end of this lesson.

Materials
paper
crayons
copy of the umbrella picture at the end of the lesson

Presentation

Say: **We can trust God to protect us just like David trusted God. David needed protection from a giant. From what types of things do children need protection?** Allow children to answer. They should mention things such as storms, fear of the dark, dangerous people, sickness, etc. **Let's make a picture to remind us that we can trust God to protect us from all of those things.** Give each child a prepared sheet of paper. Instruct them to write "God" on the umbrella, reminding them that the umbrella is a symbol of protection. Then they can draw a picture of themselves under the umbrella.

Say: **Just like an umbrella can protect you from sun and rain, you can trust God to protect you!**

MINISTRY TIME

Preparation

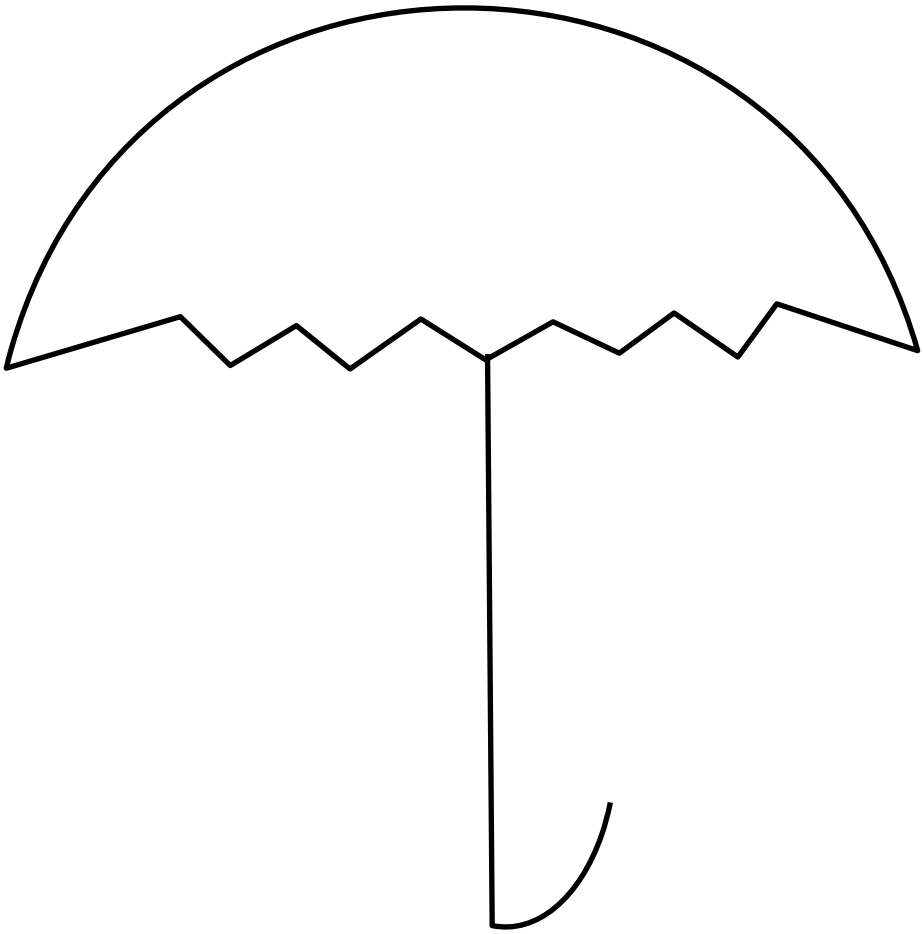
Gather children under some type of covering. This could be umbrellas, several paper shields, or a large piece of cloth.

Materials
umbrellas or a large piece of cloth for children to stand under

Presentation

Say: **As we stand under this _____, we are reminded that God can protect us. Let's say a prayer asking God to help us trust in Him for protection.** Say a prayer for the children, praying for anything specific that they mentioned during the lesson.

I can trust God to protect me.



Trusting God for Provision

Lesson Scripture: Exodus 15:22-27 and 16:1-36

Bible Truth: I will trust God to provide for me.

Bible Story: Exodus 15:22-27 and 16:1-36

Bible Verse: "And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:19, NIV)

FOCUS

Learning Activity: "Need or Want?"

Preparation

Place all of the materials on a table at one end of the room.

Materials
2 food items
2 cups of water
2 pieces of clothing
4 toys
2 balls

Presentation

Say: **Have you ever heard someone say they wanted or needed something? Can you name something you want?** Allow children to answer. **Can you name something you need?** Allow children to answer. **Sometimes it is hard to remember that the things we want are sometimes different from the things we need. We need food, clothing, and shelter. Those are things we need to live. There are also things we want, like toys, but we do not need them to live.**

Divide children into two teams of six. (If you have more than 12 children, choose volunteers or play the game more than once.) They will play a relay race type of game where each child races to the table and gets an item. Once the team has six items, they need to divide them into two piles: things people want and things people need. The first team to correctly gather and sort six items wins.

Say: **God has promised that He will provide everything we need. He will not give us everything we want, but we can always trust Him to provide what we need.**

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: Philippians 4:19

Preparation

Write Philippians 4:19 on a piece of poster board.

Write each word of Philippians 4:19 on a separate piece of paper and attach them to the wall. If you are meeting outside, attach the papers to a piece of string and have two people hold the ends of the string.

Materials
poster board
markers or crayons
paper

Explanation

Read Philippians 4:19 with the children. Say: **This Bible verse contains a promise. Can someone underline the promise?** Allow one child to underline the phrase, "And my God will meet all your needs." **The second part of this verse tells us that God will meet our needs out of the riches of glory that come from Jesus. Since there is no end to the riches or glory of Jesus, there is no end to God's provision for you. He will meet your needs.**

Memorization Activity

One at a time, ask children to remove one word of the Bible verse from the wall or string. Each time a word is removed, read the verse with the children, asking them to remember the missing words.

INSTRUCT

Bible Story: "God Provides for the Israelites," Exodus 15:22-27 and 16:1-36

Preparation

Read and study Exodus 15:22-25 and 16:1-36.

As an adult or teen helper to prepare the Bible story monologue. Give him a Bible costume to wear if available.

Materials
Bible
Bible costume

Presentation

Say: **Do you remember the story about God parting the Red Sea for the Israelites? Moses was the leader of the Israelites during that time. He has some interesting stories to tell us about God providing for their needs.**

Moses: **Thank you so much for inviting me to speak to you today. As your teacher mentioned, I was the leader of the Israelites. My first job as leader of the Israelites was to guide the people out of slavery in Egypt and across the Red Sea. I stood in amazement as God pushed the water of the Red Sea aside so we could walk across on dry ground. Then, when we were all across the sea, He let the water fall on Pharaoh's army so they couldn't chase us. We were so excited and sang praises to God for protecting us. I thought the people would always trust God because they had seen His power. Unfortunately, they quickly forgot to trust God.**

Just a few days after crossing the Red Sea, the people began to complain that they were thirsty. I have to admit that I was thirsty too! We had not had any water for three days. We finally came to a water source, but the water was too bitter to drink. I prayed to God, and He sent an interesting answer. He told me to throw a stick into the water. When I did, the bitterness disappeared, and we had all of the water we needed. Then, God led us a little further into the desert to a place with 12 springs of fresh water. Now, I was sure the people would trust God to provide what they needed.

Once again, I was wrong. After a few more days of traveling, the people began to complain that they were hungry. They even said that they wished we had stayed as slaves in Egypt because as slaves as least they had food to eat. Once again, I prayed to God for help. He answered in an amazing way. That evening, God sent birds (called quail) into the camp for everyone to eat. Then, the next morning, He covered the ground with a special type of bread called manna. We continued to find the manna every morning! God gave us specific instructions about gathering the manna because He wanted to us to trust Him to provide for us. We were only allowed to gather enough manna for each person to eat on that day. We couldn't save any of the manna for the next day. Some of the people didn't have enough faith that God would send manna each morning, so they collected extra and saved some in containers. But the next morning, fresh manna was on the ground and the manna they had saved was full of worms! From then on, we only collected the amount of manna allowed by God, and He continued to provide for our needs each day.

APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Art, "God Provides"

Preparation

Write "God Provides" at the top of a sheet of paper for each child.

Materials
paper
poster board
crayons or markers

Presentation

Say: **We can trust God to provide what we need. Let's make a list of things that God provides for us on this poster board.** Write down the children's suggestions. Be sure to emphasize the difference between our needs and our wants. When finished, give each child a prepared sheet of paper and ask them to draw three things that God has provided for them.

MINISTRY TIME

Preparation

Cut the paper into the shape of a piece of bread. Make one for each child.

Materials
paper
scissors
pencils

Presentation

Say: **Just like God provided water and food for the Israelites, He will provide everything you need. Can you think of a need you have right now? Maybe your family needs more money to pay the bills or buy food. Maybe you need a new pair of shoes or clothes.** Give each child a bread-shaped piece of paper. Ask them to write their need on it. If children cannot think of anything they need personally, ask them to write down the need of a friend. You might also share needs of children in other countries. Place each of the papers in a bowl and pray for God to provide for these needs.

Trusting God for Guidance

Lesson Scripture: 1 Samuel 23:1-13

Bible Truth: I will trust God to guide me.

Bible Story: 1 Samuel 23:1-13

Bible Verse: "He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them his way." (Psalm 25:9, NIV)

FOCUS

Learning Activity: "Following A Trusted Voice"

Preparation

Set up an obstacle course in one area of the room. Choose one or two children to participate in the activity. Blindfold them before they see the obstacle course.

Materials
blindfold
objects to use for an obstacle course

Presentation

Say: **Today, we need to help** (name of volunteer) **get through this obstacle course safely. I would like** (name of volunteer) **to pick one child he trusts to guide him through this obstacle course.** Allow the blindfolded child to choose someone to help him. Instruct the helper to give verbal commands to the blindfolded child. He cannot touch him.

Be prepared to intervene if the blindfolded child is headed into an obstacle that could cause him harm.

If there is time, repeat the activity with different volunteers.

At the end of the activity, say: **Our volunteers were not worried about getting to the end of the obstacle course safely because they chose friends they trusted to help them. When they had to make a choice about which direction to turn or how to get over an obstacle, they knew they could ask their friends for guidance. In our lives, when we have choices to make, we should always ask God what to do. We can trust Him to guide us.**

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: Psalm 25:9

Preparation

Write Psalm 25:9 on a poster board or whiteboard.

Materials
poster board
markers or crayons

Explanation

Read Psalm 25:9 with the children. Say: **Today we are learning that we can trust God to guide us. This Bible verse tells us that God will guide us in what is right.** Ask a child to underline the word "right." **It also says that God will teach us His way.** Ask a child to underline the word "way." **Can someone read to me the two words we underlined?** Allow one child to read. **Great job! God will guide us in the "right way" to go. When you have a decision or a choice to make, always ask God the "right way" for you to go.**

Memorization Activity

Divide the children into three groups. Assign each group one of the following phrases from the Bible verse and ask them to create an action or hand motion for the phrase.

He guides the humble
in what is right
and teaches them His way.

When each group has created an action or hand motion, have them teach it to the class. Say the verse together using the motions.

INSTRUCT

Bible Story: "David Asks God," 1 Samuel 23:1-4

Preparation

Read and study 1 Samuel 23:1-4.

Write each of the following questions on separate pieces of paper.

Materials
Bible
paper
pencil

Where did David and his men hide from Saul?
What was happening in the city of Keilah?
Why did David ask God twice if he should attack the Philistines that were causing problems in Keilah?
What two questions did David ask about Saul and the men in Keilah?
What did God do for David after he asked God for guidance?
How many times did David ask the Lord what to do in this Bible story?

Presentation

Divide the children into three groups. Give two prepared papers to each group. Ask them to listen for the answers to their questions while you tell to the Bible story. Remind them not to shout out the answers during the Bible story. At the end of the Bible story, ask each team to read their questions and give the answers. If one of the groups can't answer their questions, give the other groups an opportunity to answer.

Say: **David was chosen by God to replace Saul as king of Israel. Because of this, Saul was determined to kill David. David, and the men following him, hid from Saul in caves and forests.**

One day, a messenger came with bad news for David. "The men in the city of Keilah are in trouble. The Philistines are stealing their grain. They won't have any food for the winter."

David asked God immediately, "Do you want me to go and attack the Philistines? Do you want me to help the people of Keilah?

"Yes," the Lord answered.

But when David told his men, they didn't want to go. "We are afraid in our own country. There is no way we can fight the Philistine army."

So David asked God again, "Do you want me to attack the Philistines?"

"Yes," the Lord answered. "Go to Keilah. I will help you defeat the Philistines."

David and his men went to Keilah and fought the Philistines. They destroyed the Philistine army and took all of the livestock. The people of Keilah were saved.

Saul heard of David's victory over the Philistines. "Well," he thought, "David is in Keilah. This city has walls. David is trapped." Saul called his army and began his march towards Keilah.

Once again David asked God what he should do. "Lord, will Saul come to Keilah to capture me? Will the people of Keilah betray me?"

The Lord answered by saying, "Yes, David. Saul is coming. The men of Keilah will turn you over to Saul."

David knew what he needed to do. He gathered his men and quickly left Keilah. When Saul found out that David had left Keilah, he stopped his march towards the city. But he never stopped looking for David. Saul would look for David daily, but the Lord would not let him find David.

APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Bible Search, "What Should I Do?"

Materials
copies of the "What Should I Do?" activity
pencils
Bibles

Preparation
Make copies of the "What Should I Do? activity located at the end of this lesson. Make enough copies for each pair of children to have one.

Presentation
Say: **There are many times in life when we don't know what to do. We need to ask God for guidance, just like David did. Since the Bible contains God's words, we can find the guidance we need from God when we read the Bible. Let's look at some children that need guidance and see if we can find answers for them in the Bible.**

Pass out the "What Should I Do?" activity. Let children work in pairs to find the answers. Discuss when finished.

*There are two copies of the activity. One includes the scripture reference and the other has the scriptures written out for those children who may not have Bibles.

MINISTRY TIME

Materials
pencils
paper

Preparation
None

Presentation
Give each child a piece of paper and a pencil. Say: **Is there a situation in your life where you need God's guidance? On your piece of paper, write down any questions you have for God.** Give children a few moments to write on their papers. Once they are finished, place all of their papers inside a Bible. Gather around the Bible and pray together, asking God to give the children guidance. Remind the children to pray during the week for God's guidance and to listen for God's answer.

*With the children's permission, you may want to look at their questions and help them find answers in the Bible or encourage them to talk to their parents.

What Should I Do?

Directions: Match each child's question with guidance from the Bible.

1. My parents want me to clean up my toys, but I want to play instead. God, what should I do?

2. My best friend did not do her math homework. She wants me to let her copy my answers. God, what should I do?

3. My grandmother just died, and I am so sad. God, what should I do?

4. I just moved to a new neighborhood, and I don't have any friends. God, what should I do?

5. I had a big fight with my sister. God, what should I do?

6. I have to talk in front of a large group of people, and I am nervous. God, what should I do?

7. I am worried about my mom because she is sick. God, what should I do?

A. James 5:14

B. Joshua 1:9

C. Ephesians 4:28a

D. Ephesians 6:1

E. Matthew 7:12

F. Psalm 34:18

G. Proverbs 18:24

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3. My grandmother just died, and I am so sad. God, what should I do?

4. I just moved to a new neighborhood, and I don't have any friends. God, what should I do?

5. I had a big fight with my sister. God, what should I do?

6. I have to talk in front of a front of a large group of people, and I am nervous. God, what should I do?

7. I am worried about my mom because she is sick. God, what should I do?

A. "Is any among you sick? Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord." (James 5:14, NIV)

B. "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go." (Joshua 1:9, NIV)

C. "Anyone who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with their own hands…" (Ephesians 4:28a, NIV)

D. "Children obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right." (Ephesians 6:1, NIV)

E. "So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets. (Matthew 7:12, NIV)

F. "The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit." (Psalm 34:18, NIV)

G. "A man who has friends must himself be friendly, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother." (Proverbs 18:24, NIV)

Trusting God When I Am Afraid

Lesson Scripture: 2 Chronicles 32:1-23, 2 Kings 18:17-19:36

Bible Truth: I will trust God when I am afraid.

Bible Story: 2 Chronicles 32:1-23

Bible Verse: "When I am afraid, I put my trust in you." (Psalm 56:3, NIV)

FOCUS

Learning Activity: "What Can I Do with my Fears?"

Preparation

None

Materials
paper
markers
small box with a lid
Bible

Presentation

Say: **Can you think something that makes children afraid? Let's write those things on these pieces of paper.** Write down any fears listed by the children. The fears mentioned should include things such as fear of the dark, fear of death, fear of monsters, fear of talking in front of people, fear of not having any friends, etc. When finished, place the fears in a small box.

I want to make these fears disappear. Spend several minutes doing different things with the box in an effort to make the fears disappear. Throw the box in the air. Hide it under a chair. Ask another helper to eat the fears. (Be sure they refuse!). Shake the box really hard. After each action, open the box and see if the fears have disappeared.

No matter what I do, I can't seem to get these fears to go away. Can anyone think of a way to make these fears to away? Allow children to answer. **The only way to get rid of these fears is to give them to God.** Take fears out of the box and put them inside a Bible. **When we give our fears to God and trust Him, we don't have to be afraid anymore.**

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: Psalm 56:3

Preparation

Write Psalm 56:3 on a poster board.

A week before this lesson, give a copy of the following skit to one of the older children. Ask him or her to memorize the lines for the sleepy kid and be ready to present it during this week's lesson.

Materials
poster board
markers or crayons
2 copies of the skit

Explanation

(Sleepy kid should sit on the first row and act as if he is very sleepy. While you talk to him, he will stretch out and yawn making a lot of noise. Then he needs to pretend to fall asleep and fall on the floor.)

TEACHER: (Walks toward sleepy kid who is sitting on the floor, and helps him to get up.) **Are you ok?**

SLEEPY KID: Yes, I think I fell asleep.

TEACHER: **Did you get any sleep last night?**

SLEEPY KID: (Rubs his eyes.) Not much. I kept hearing weird sounds that scared me.

TEACHER: **Did something hurt you?**

SLEEPY KID: No, but I was awake all night. I was afraid that if I fell asleep something would hurt me.

TEACHER: **You don't have to be afraid of the dark or going to sleep.**

SLEEPY KID: But I really hate the dark.

TEACHER: **God will be with you any time of the day and night. He is more powerful than anything that could harm you.**

SLEEPY KID: Well, if God is with me, I think I'll be able to go back to sleep. (Closes eyes to sleep again.)

Say: **Sleepy kid was afraid of the sounds he heard at night. We've all been afraid at some point. Can you remember a time you felt scared? What can you do when you are afraid?** Allow children to answer questions. Read Psalm 56:3 with the children. **Our Bible memory verse tells us to trust God when we are afraid.**

Memorization Activity

Ask two children to stand in the front of the room, facing each other. They will start the game. The first child says the first word of the memorization verse. The other child says the next word. They continue saying alternating words until the verse is completed or until one of them cannot say the next word. When a child cannot say the next word, he/she will sit down. Another child is chosen to play against the champion. The last child standing is the winner.

*Instead of a competition, you can also divide the children into pairs and have them practice the verse using the same procedure described in the game.

INSTRUCT

Bible Story: "Hezekiah Trusts God," 2 Chronicles 32:1-23, 2 Kings 18:17-19:36

Preparation

Read and study 2 Chronicles 32:1-23 and 2 Kings 18:17-19:36.

Materials
paper
string
Bible

Make two messages by rolling two pieces of paper into scroll shapes and tying each with a string.

Choose two children to be the messengers. The first messenger will bring the letter from the king of Assyria. The second messenger will bring Isaiah's message.

Presentation

Say: **How would you feel if a bully told you he was going to beat you up tomorrow?** Allow children to answer. **Most of us would be terrified.**

Even though Hezekiah was king of the Israelites, God's chosen people, he felt terrified. The king of Assyria, a bully, had promised to destroy Hezekiah and his kingdom.

This man was Sennacherib, and he was the king of Assyria. Sennacherib wanted to fight against Judah, King Hezekiah's kingdom. Hezekiah knew he had to do something to protect his people from the king of Assyria. He worked hard fortifying the city walls, organizing an army, and storing water in case the enemy attacked the city. Hezekiah did everything possible to protect his kingdom.

On one day, King Hezekiah looked out his window in the palace and saw some men running towards the palace. Ask your first messenger to bring you the prepared scroll. **"Who are those men?" he asked himself. "What do they want?"**

The men were messengers sent by Sennacherib, the king of Assyria. They carried a letter for King Hezekiah. Open the prepared message as if you are reading it.

> ***King Hezekiah,***
>
> ***Don't trust that your God will save you. I have come to capture you. Remember how I destroyed the countries around you. Your God won't be able to save you.***
>
> ***Sincerely,***
> ***Sennacherib, king of Assyria***

Hezekiah knew that the king of Assyria had a great army. His army had conquered many other countries surrounding Judah. King Hezekiah was afraid, but he knew what he needed to do. He took the letter and ran to the temple. He got on his knees and placed the letter before the Lord.

Then Hezekiah prayed, "Oh Lord, You are God of all the earth. Please, hear me, oh God. The king of Assyria wrote saying that You are too weak to save us from his army. He's coming to capture us. Please help us. Then the whole world will know that you are the one true God."

After Hezekiah prayed, he did one more thing. He sent a message to Isaiah, God's prophet. "Pray. Pray long," the message said. "The king of Assyria is mocking our God. There's no doubt that God will punish him for this."

Isaiah sent the king a message. Ask the second messenger to bring you the second prepared scroll. Open the message and begin to read:

> **King Hezekiah,**
>
> **Don't worry. God won't allow the king of Assyria to harm you or the people. God has heard your prayer. He will take care of you.**
>
> **Isaiah**

God did as He said. That night, an angel visited Sennacherib's army and destroyed thousands of soldiers. When Sennacherib woke up the next morning and saw what God had done, he felt terrified. He fled Judah and returned to his own country.

When the story is finished, have a discussion time with the children. Say: **Hezekiah didn't send the king of Assyria a message picking a fight with him. He avoided trouble. What are some ways we can avoid frightening situations?**

What did Hezekiah do to protect the city? Allow children to answer. **Yes, he improved the city's defenses. How can you protect yourself from fear?** Allow the children to answer. Then suggest that they can protect themselves from fear by memorizing the Word of God, being careful about what they watch on television or read in books, trying not to think of frightening things, etc. **What was the most important thing Hezekiah did?** Allow children to answer. **Hezekiah**

immediately prayed to God for help and asked Isaiah to pray for him. When you are afraid, it is important for you to pray for help and to ask others to pray for you.

APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Art, "Sometimes I'm Afraid"

Preparation
None

Materials
paper
pencils
markers or crayons

Presentation
Give each child a piece of paper and markers or crayons. Ask them to draw or write something that makes them afraid. When they finish drawing, ask them to fold their paper in half and write today's Bible memory verse, Psalm 56:3, on the outside of the paper.

MINISTRY TIME

Preparation
None

Materials
papers from the application activity

Presentation
Say: **We learned from our Bible lesson today that when we are afraid, we need to pray for ourselves, and we need ask others to pray for us.** Invite children to kneel on the floor and place their papers from the application activity in front of them. Give them time to pray silently about their fears. When finished with this individual time of prayer, invite children to share their fears with a friend or the teacher and pray for each other.

Trusting God in the Midst of Trouble

Lesson Scripture: Acts 27

Bible Truth: I will trust God when I am in trouble.

Bible Story: Acts 27

Bible Verse: "God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble." (Psalm 46:1, NIV)

FOCUS

Learning Activity: "What Goes Up…"

Preparation

If you do not have a ball for each child, make several out of paper.

Materials
small ball or piece of paper for each child

Presentation

Say: **What do you think will happen when I toss this ball up into the air?** Allow children to answer and ask each child to toss the ball into the air.

Every single one of our balls came back down after we tossed them into the air. What will happen if we do it again? Allow children to answer and then repeat tossing the balls into the air. **How did you know that the balls would come back down again? Is it because of some law or rule?** Allow children to answer. **Yes, everything that goes up must come down. That is the law of gravity.**

Did you know that God has laws concerning our trust in Him? We can trust God because He promises to help us during times of trouble. Today we will learn about Paul. He knew about the law of trust. He trusted God during trouble, and God helped him.

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: PSALM 46:1

Preparation

Write Psalm 46:1 on a piece of poster board.

Write "Refuge" on a piece of paper. Attach the paper to one end of the room or have an adult hold the sign if you meet outside.

Materials
poster board
markers or crayons
paper

Explanation

Read Psalm 46:1 with the children. Say: **This verse tells us that God will be three things for us when we are in trouble. Can someone circle these words?** Allow a child to circle the words "refuge," "strength," and "help." **You are probably familiar with the words strength and help, but does anyone know what the word "refuge" means?** Allow children to answer. **A refuge is a place you can go when you are in trouble. It can also be a person you go to for help. When you have having a bad day, your refuge might be your house. Your refuge could also be talking to your mom or dad. This verse tells us that when we are in trouble, our refuge is God. When can go to Him for strength and help when we are in trouble.**

Memorization Activity

Guide children in playing a game of "Run to the Refuge." One child will stand in the center of the room while the other children line up on the wall opposite the "Refuge" sign. When you tell them to begin, all of the children try to run to the "Refuge" wall without being tagged by the child in the middle. Once everyone has been tagged or reached the wall, all of the children should say the Scripture memory verse together. Play continues again with those children who were tagged in the first round helping to tag other children until only one child makes it to the "Refuge" wall. Be sure to say the Scripture memory verse at the end of each round.

INSTRUCT

Bible Story: "Paul Trusts in God Even When His Ship Wrecks," Acts 27

Preparation

Read and study Acts 27.

Draw pictures of the Bible story to use as visual aids while telling the story.

Put children into three groups. Ask the first group to make the sound of thunder by stomping their feet on the ground, the second group to make the sound of wind by blowing with their mouths, and the third group to make the sound of rain by

Materials
paper
markers or crayons
2 small coins
Bible

snapping their fingers. Have all of the groups practice individually and together until they sound like a storm. Instruct them to make their sounds any time a storm is mentioned in the story.

Presentation

Say: **Paul was chosen by God to be a missionary. He obeyed God and traveled to each country where the Holy Spirit directed him to go. Many things happened to Paul in the places where he went to preach about Jesus. One day, Paul made a list of the things that had happened to him. Listen to these verses in order to know what those things were.** Read 2 Corinthians 11:24, 25 with the children. Write on a blank sheet of paper each of the things they discovered Paul experienced.

In each of these situations, God was with Paul because Paul trusted Him. Today we will discover the wonderful miracles performed by God after something terrifying happened to Paul.

At this point in Paul's life, he had been arrested for preaching about Jesus and was being guarded by Roman soldiers. Paul, along with other prisoners and the guards, was traveling on a ship to Rome. In Rome, Paul would be judged by Caesar, the ruler.

Winter was approaching and traveling by ship was very dangerous. But the Roman captain wanted to return to Rome. Paul warned him, "This trip will be very dangerous. If you set sail, there will problems."

But the captain decided that the ship would continue its journey to Rome. They were not far from port when a strong STORM came upon them. Enormous waves rocked the ship. Those traveling on the ship could not see the sun or stars for many days.

One morning as the STORM continued, Paul told the captain, "If you had paid attention to me, this wouldn't have happened, but don't be afraid. The angel of God told me last night that we will lose the ship but not our lives."

The STORM continued for two more weeks. Then one night, the sailors discovered they were near land. Some of them had decided to abandon ship before it was destroyed by the rocks along the shore. Paul knew what they were planning. He told the Roman captain, "No one will be saved unless they stay on the ship." This time, the captain listened and everyone stayed on the ship.

When morning came, those onboard were able to see dry land. As the boat approached the land, it hit a sandbar and could not get any closer to land. The Roman soldiers were afraid that the prisoners would jump into the water and escape.

"Let's kill these prisoners before they get away," said one of the Roman soldiers.

The Roman captain wanted to save Paul, so he said, "No. They all must swim to shore." So everyone on the ship jumped into the water. Some swam to the shore. Others found pieces of wood and floated on them until they reached the shore. None of the 276 people that were onboard perished or escaped. God protected Paul and all who were in the boat because Paul trusted in God and obeyed Him.

Say: **Paul faced two types of trouble in this story. He was being held as a prisoner, and his boat was in a huge storm. In both situations, Paul trusted God, and God helped him.**

APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Game, "Trouble Balls"

Materials
paper
marker or crayon
basket

Preparation
Write the word, "God" on a piece of paper and attach it to a basket.

Presentation
Say: **Children can experience different types of trouble. Let's make a list of troubles on this piece of paper.** Write children's suggestions on a large piece paper. Their answers should include storms, family problems, sickness, bullies, difficulties at school, etc. **When we experience trouble, we can trust God to help us just like He helped Paul.** Tear the paper into enough pieces for each child to have one and ask them to it crumple into a ball. Have a contest to see if children can throw their balls into the "God" basket. As each paper is thrown into the basket, say, "I can trust God when I am in trouble."

MINISTRY TIME

Materials
paper
pencils
"God" basket from the application activity

Preparation
None

Presentation
Say: **You may be experiencing some trouble in your life right now. You may also have a friend or family member that is experiencing trouble.** Encourage children to write those troubles on a piece of paper and then give them to God by putting the paper in the God basket. Say a prayer together telling God that you will trust Him when you are in trouble.

Trusting God To Help Me Do The Right Thing

Lesson Scripture: Daniel 3

Bible Truth: I will trust God to help me do what is right.

Bible Story: Daniel 3

Bible Verse: "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." (Philippians 4:13, NKJV)

FOCUS

Learning Activity: "How Strong Are You?"

Preparation

Line up your objects from lightest to heaviest weight. Be sure to have an object too heavy for any of the children to lift.

Materials
several objects of various weights

Presentation

Explain to the children that you are looking for the strongest person in the room. Allow several of the children to demonstrate their strength by picking up the various objects you have displayed. After all of the volunteers have tried, but failed, to lift the heaviest object, ask one of them to try again. This time, help them lift the object.

Say: **The only way for you to lift** (heavy object) **was when we worked together. It was just too big for one person. You needed help. Sometimes in life, we need help to do hard things too. It can be hard to forgive someone. It can be hard to share your toys. Whenever you struggle with doing the right thing, you can trust God to help you.**

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: PHILIPPIANS 4:13

Preparation

Write Philippians 4:13 on a piece of poster board.

On a large sheet of paper, list several things that are hard for children to do. Examples include sharing toys, studying for a test at school, obeying your parents, being kind to your brothers and sisters, etc.

Materials
Bible
poster board
markers or crayons
large piece of paper

Explanation

Say: **There are many things that may be hard for a child to do. I've written several of them this paper.** Read list to the children. **The Bible tells us that these are the right things to do, but sometimes it is really hard to do thing right thing. Can you think of anything else that you know is the right thing to do, but it is hard for you to do it?** Add children's answers to the list.

I have good news for you. You don't have to rely on your own strength to do these things. The Bible says that Jesus will help you. Read Philippians 4:13. **There is a word in this verse that tells us how many things Jesus will give us the strength to do. Can anyone underline it for me?** Allow one child to underline the word "all". **You can trust Jesus to help you do the right thing!**

Memorization Activity

Read the verse several times with the children, replacing the word "all" with one of the hard things listed on the piece of paper. For example, "I can share my toys through Christ who gives me strength." Once you have inserted all of the hard things listed, have children jump and shout, "I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength!"

INSTRUCT

Bible Story: "Three Young Men Refuse to Worship," Daniel 3

Preparation

Materials
Bible
Bible costumes
poster board
marker

Read and study Daniel 3.

Pick three children to play the roles of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

Choose some other children to play the roles of the king, guards, and a multitude of people. If possible, give each child a Bible costume to wear.

Make a large statue out of poster board or cardboard.

Presentation

Ask children to act out the story as you tell it to them.

Say: **King Nebuchadnezzar, the greatest king in the world at this time, demanded that a ninety feet tall statue be made and covered with gold. When the statue was finished, it was put in an open field for everyone to see.**

The king ordered all the officials in his kingdom to come and kneel before it. Among those officials were three Jewish men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

While at the open field, King Nebuchadnezzar gave this command:

> **"Nations and peoples of every language, this is what you are commanded to do: As soon as you hear the sound of the horn, you must fall down and worship the image of gold that I have set up. Whoever does not fall down will immediately be thrown into a blazing furnace."**

The music sounded. The officials fell on their knees, except for the three Jewish men. They remained standing.

Some of the officials went running to King Nebuchadnezzar. "King, at the sound of the music, three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego did not fall down. They refused to kneel before the statute that you set up."

The king was furious! He ordered Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego brought before him. When they were brought in, he asked them why they didn't kneel and then decided to give them a second chance. "Be ready," he said. "When you hear the music, kneel before the statue I have set up. For if you don't worship it, you will be thrown in the blazing furnace. Will your God save you then?"

The three brave men answered, "King, we won't kneel before the statue you built and worship it. We only worship the one true God. Our God is so big that He will deliver us from this blazing furnace. But even if He doesn't, we still will not worship your statue."

This made the king very angry! He said, "Make the furnace seven times hotter." Then soldiers came and tied up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, so they couldn't move. They were taken to the blazing furnace and thrown inside.

After the three men were thrown into the furnace, King Nebuchadnezzar looked inside it. The furnace was hot enough to instantly kill anyone who even got close to it, but Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were walking around inside. They were not harmed at all. The king also noticed something very strange and he asked, "Didn't we throw three men into the furnace? There is a fourth man walking inside with them, and he looks like the Son of God."

"Quickly!" shouted king Nebuchadnezzar, "Take Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego out of the furnace."

When they came out of the furnace, the king saw that the fire had not harmed their bodies. Their clothes were not burned, and there was no smell of smoke on them. Only the ropes used to tie their hands and feet were burnt.

King Nebuchadnezzar said, "Their God kept them safe, because they trusted in Him."

When you have finished telling the Bible story, lead children in a discussion using the questions below.

What was King Nebuchadnezzar's command? (Kneel before the statue and worship it at the sound of the music.)
Why was it wrong for them to obey the king's command? (God says we should only worship Him.)
What was a consequence of this disobedience? (Being thrown in the blazing furnace)
Did they make the right choice? (Yes)
Why were they able make the right choice? (They trusted God to take care of them.)

APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Story, "Madelyn Needed Help"

Preparation
None

Materials
a doll
paper
markers or crayons

Presentation
Show children the doll as you tell them the story below.

Say: **I want to tell you about a little girl who needed to trust God to help her do the right thing. This little girl's name was Madelyn and she loved pretty things. Her mom also loved pretty things and had a collection of small dolls that Madelyn thought were beautiful. One night as Madelyn was looking at one her mom's dolls, she decided to hold it. All of a sudden, she dropped it and part of the doll broke. Madelyn knew the right thing would be to tell her mom, but she was afraid of getting in trouble. Instead of asking God to help her do the right thing, Madelyn hid the doll under her bed and tried to go to sleep. But all night long, God kept speaking to her heart and telling her the right thing to do. Finally, in the morning, Madelyn went to her mother and told her what had happened. When Madelyn confessed, her mother forgave her, and Madelyn knew in her heart she had done the right thing.**

Madelyn learned an important lesson that day. When we need to do the right thing, we can trust God to give us the strength to do it.

Say: **Can you think of a time when you had to trust God to help you do the right thing?** Pass out paper and crayons and ask children to draw a picture of themselves when they had to trust God to help them do the right thing. If they can't think of a situation, have them draw a picture of the story about Madelyn.

MINISTRY TIME

Preparation

Write the word "fear" on several pieces of paper. Make enough for each child to have one.

Materials
paper
markers or crayons

Presentation

Say: **In our story, Madelyn didn't do the right thing because she was afraid of getting in trouble. Can you think of any other reasons some children don't do the right thing?** Allow children to answer. They should include fear of getting in trouble, fear of someone laughing at them, fear of making a mistake, etc. **Most of the time, children don't do the right thing because of fear. Trusting in God is the opposite of fear. We trust that He will take care of us. Sometimes He takes away the thing we fear. Other times, He gives us the strength to get through a hard situation. No matter what happens, we know that when we do the right thing, we are pleasing God and that is what is most important in life!**

Give each child a piece of paper with the word "fear" written on it. Have them put the piece of paper under their foot and say, "I will not fear. I will trust God to help me do the right thing." Invite children to pray for any situation in their life where they are struggling to do the right thing.

Trusting God At All Times

Lesson Scripture: Genesis 37, 39-46

Bible Truth: I will trust God at all times.

Bible Story: Genesis 37, 39-46

Bible Verse: "Trust in him at all times, you people; pour out your hearts to him, for God is our refuge." (Psalm 62:8, NIV)

FOCUS

Learning Activity: "What Time Is It?"

Preparation

Make two signs. One sign should say "Good Times" and the other "Bad Times." Attach the signs to opposite walls.

Materials
Bible
paper
pencil, markers, or crayons

Presentation

Say: **Everyone goes through situations in their lives that are good. Everyone also goes through situations in their lives that are bad. Let's play a game to see if you can tell the difference between a good time and a bad time.** Explain to the children that you are going to read some short stories to them. If the story talks about a good time, they should run to the "Good Time" sign. If the story talks about a bad time, they should run to the "Bad Time" sign.

- Sarah was playing in her yard and another girl, a bully, came and pushed her so hard that Sarah fell and broke her arm.
- Elizabeth received a good grade on her math test.
- Caleb's dad got a new job and the family is moving to a new town. Caleb is worried that he won't have any friends.
- John is scared of the dark. He wants all of the lights on at night.
- A new family just moved into the house next to George. They have a boy his age, and they have already played today. George is so thankful for a new friend.
- Maria's best friend is very sick. They can't play together, and Maria is worried about her friend.

Say: **It can be hard to trust God when we are going through bad times, but the Bible tells us that we can trust God at ALL times.**

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: Psalm 62:8

Preparation

Write Psalm 62:8 on a piece of poster board.

Write the words "worry," "fear," "sadness," and "trust" on separate pieces of paper. Fill a glass with water.

Materials
poster board
markers or crayons
glass
water
bowl

Explanation

Say: **We have spent several weeks taking about trusting God. We know that we can trust God at all times.** Underline that part of the verse. **It is easy to trust God during good times, but how do you trust God during bad times? This second part of this verse gives us a clue. It says to pour out your hearts to him.** Show children a glass of water and begin to pour it into a bowl or onto the ground. **When I pour the water out of this glass, what is left inside?** Allow children to answer. **There is nothing left. This glass is like your heart. When you are facing a bad time, your heart is probably full of worry, fear, and sadness.** Place the pieces of paper with those words written on them into the glass. **God wants you to pour out these things to Him.** Pour the papers out of the glass. **You pour out these things by praying. When you pray and give them to God, He takes your worries, fear, and sadness away and fills you with trust.** Place the trust paper inside the empty glass. **In lesson 6 we learned that a refuge is a place or person you go to when you are facing a bad time. This verse reminds us that God is our refuge; we can pray to him; and He will fill us with trust.**

Memorization Activity

Ask children help you make up motions for the Bible verse. Practice saying it aloud and with the motions. Do this several times until children have learned the verse.

INSTRUCT

Bible Story: "Joseph Trusts God at All Times," Genesis 37, 39-46

Preparation

Read and study Genesis 37, 39-46.

Draw pictures of each good and bad time that Joseph experienced. Attach them to the wall as you tell the story. Place the good times at the top of the wall and the bad times at the bottom of the wall. The pictures should show a pattern of good and bad times in Joseph's life when he trusted in God.

Materials
paper
markers or crayons
Bible

Presentation

Say: **There was a man in the Bible that had to learn to trust God during good times and bad times. His story starts with a good time.**

Good Time: **Joseph was the favorite son of his father Jacob. His father gave him a beautiful new coat and loved him very much. BUT**

Bad Time: **Joseph's brothers were jealous, so they sold time as a slave. The people who bought Joseph took him to Egypt, far away from his father. BUT**

Good Time: **God was with Joseph and allowed him to work in the home of Potiphar, a rich man. Potiphar came to trust Joseph and put Joseph in charge of Potiphar's entire house. Joseph was happy and safe. BUT**

Bad Time: **Potiphar's wife told lies to Potiphar about Joseph. Potiphar believed his wife and had Joseph thrown in jail.**

Good Time: **Again, Joseph did not understand what was happening in his life, but he trusted God. God allowed the prison guard to see that Joseph was a good man, so the guard put Joseph in charge of the prison. Even though he was in prison, Joseph was treated well.**

Bad Time: **While in prison, Joseph met the king's cupbearer and baker. Both of these men had dreams and Joseph interpreted the dreams for them. Through the dreams, Joseph knew that the cupbearer would be released from prison. He asked the cupbearer to talk to the king about releasing Joseph from prison. But when the cupbearer was released from prison, he forgot about Joseph. Joseph was in prison for two more years.**

Good Time: **Finally, the cupbearer remembered Joseph when the king had two dreams no one could interpret. Joseph was brought from the prison to appear before the king. God told Joseph that the king's dreams meant that Egypt was about to have seven good years of crops and then seven years of famine. The king was grateful that Joseph understood his dream. He put Joseph in charge of preparing Egypt for the seven years of famine. The king made Joseph the second most important man in Egypt. Joseph helped the people save enough food during the seven good years of crops that everyone in Egypt had enough to eat during the seven years of famine. And the best part is that during the famine, Joseph was reunited with his father and forgave his brothers.**

Even though Joseph did not understand why the bad things happened in his life, Joseph trusted God. God used the bad things to put Joseph in a place to save his family and all of Egypt from starving.

APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Art, "God Answers Prayer"

Preparation

Draw lines on a piece of paper to divide it into three sections. Write the words "yes," "no," and "wait" at the top of the sections. Prepare one paper for each child.

Materials
paper
markers or crayons

Presentation

Say: **When you ask your parents for a snack, what are some answers they might give you?** Allow children to respond. They should mention parents saying yes, no, or wait. **Your parents hear your request, but they don't always say yes or give you what you want. You might even not understand why your parents said no, and you get upset with them. They will probably respond that they know what is best for you and you just have to trust them.**

It is the same way with God. When we pour out our hearts to God in prayer during bad times, we can be certain that God hears our prayers. But He doesn't always say yes. Sometimes God says no. Sometimes God says wait.

Give each child a prepared sheet of paper. Ask them to write or draw prayers that they have prayed where God has answered yes, no, or wait. If this is too difficult for children to do individually, you might do this as a group activity with a large piece of paper or poster board.

MINISTRY TIME

Preparation

Write out the following Bible verse references on separate sheets of paper. Each verse lists one or two characteristics of God. The characteristics are listed for the teacher's reference.

Daniel 2:20 (wise and powerful)
Jeremiah 31:3 (loving and kind)
Psalm 73:1 (good)

Materials
3 Bibles
paper
pencils
paper from the application activity

*If Bibles are not available, write the entire verse on the pieces of paper.

Presentation

Say: **One of the hardest things we will ever do as Christians is to trust God when bad things happen or when God says "no" or "wait" when we pray. How do we know we can trust**

God during these times? Allow children to answer. **Let's look at what the Bible says to help us answer this question.** Divide children into three groups. Give each group a prepared piece of paper. Ask the group to read the verse and find one or two words that describe God. When finished, ask each group to share their words with you. Write them on a large piece of paper. (Answers are listed in the preparation section.)

Do you think you can trust someone who is wise, powerful, loving, kind and good? Allow children to answer. **Because the Bible tells us that God is all of those things, we know we can trust Him. Even when bad things happen or we don't understand why God says no to some of our prayers, we can trust Him because we know He is all of these things. We can trust God at ALL times.**

Invite children to place their hands on the "no" column of their paper and say, "I will trust You, God, even when You say no because you are wise and powerful." Then have them place their hand on the "wait" column and say, "I will trust You, God, even when you say wait because you are loving and kind." Pray with the children asking God to help them trust at ALL times.

Growing as a Christian

Lesson Scripture: Galatians 5:19-23

Bible Truth: I can live a life full of the fruit of the Spirit.

Bible Story: Galatians 5:19-23

Bible Verse: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law." (Galatians 5:22-23, NIV, 1984)

FOCUS

Learning Activity: "What Kind of Fruit?"

Preparation

This skit can be done using two puppets or two adults. Practice the skit before presenting it to the children. Create an area that looks like a store. You might make a sign for the store, put an apron on the store employee, have a broom for him to hold, etc.

Materials
puppets
items to make the ministry area look like a store

Presentation

(Mr. Smith enters the store. He's cleaning the area as Mary enters through the pretend door.)

MARY: **Hello, Mr. Smith.**

STORE MANAGER: (Looking at her) **Good morning, Mary. How may I help you?**

MARY: **I'm looking for some tools!**

STORE MANAGER: **Tools? What kind of tools?**

MARY: **Garden tools. A shovel. A rake.**

STORE MANAGER: **What are you going to plant?**

MARY: **Fruit trees!**

STORE MANAGER: **Wow! Trees take a long time to grow and produce fruit.**

MARY: (Sadly bows her head) **Oh, I thought they grew quickly.**

STORE MANAGER: (Shakes his head) **No, Mary, fruit trees take a long time to grow.**

MARY: (Shaking her head sadly) **I am sure that my teacher said that if I was a Christian, I'd be able to see the fruits almost immediately.**

STORE MANAGER: (Understanding) **Oh, you mean that kind of fruit.**

MARY: (Looking at him) **Are there different kinds?**

STORE MANAGER: **Of course there are. I thought you were referring to the kind of fruit that you eat, but what you want is the fruit of God that can be seen in your life.**

MARY: **Is that what I want?**

STORE MANAGER: **Yes, and they are called the Fruit of the Spirit. Any person that receives Jesus as their Savior can start to show that kind of fruit in their lives.**

MARY: **What tools do I need for that?**

STORE MANAGER: **Well, the first thing you need is the Bible.**

MARY: **I have one at home.**

STORE MANAGER: **Great! Read it and study it, daily. And don't forget to obey it.**

MARY: **And what else?**

STORE MANAGER: **Pray. Spend time talking to God every day.**

MARY: **Is that all I need?**

STORE MANAGER: **The Bible, prayer, and the help of the Holy Spirit.**

MARY: **How can I get help from the Holy Spirit?**

STORE MANAGER: **By asking God to be in charge of everything you think, say, and do.**

MARY: **Those are strange tools to plant fruit!**

STORE MANAGER: **These fruits are not like apples, pears, or oranges. They are different!**

MARY: **How?**

STORE MANAGER: **They are good attitudes, like love, kindness, and self-control. These are fruits that will grow in the life of the person who loves and follows Jesus.**

MARY: **How awesome! I can have fruit growing inside of me!**

STORE MANAGER: **You mean in a garden. Fruit grows in a garden.**

MARY: **But you said they can grow in a person like me.**

STORE MANAGER: **(Laughing) Regular fruit grows in a garden, but the special fruit of the Spirit of God grows in the lives of those that are controlled by God.**

MARY: **That's the fruit I want. I don't think I need the tools for gardening.**

STORE MANAGER: **No. All you need is your Bible, prayer, and the help of the Holy Spirit.**

MARY: **Then, can I buy some candy instead of the gardening tools?**

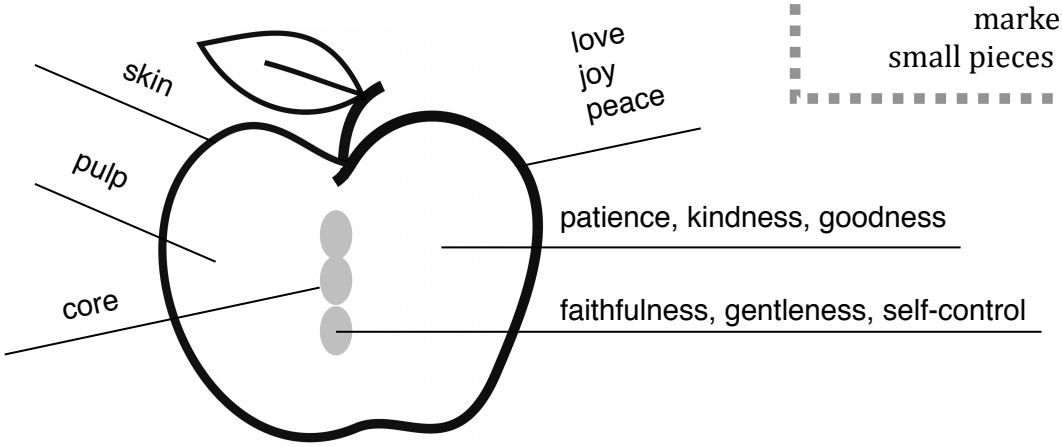
SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: Galatians 5:22-23

Preparation

Write Galatians 5:22-23 on a poster board.

Make a drawing of your fruit showing its three parts. On one side, label the sections with their actual names. On the other side, label it with the fruit of the Spirit. (See illustration below.)

Materials
an apple or any other fruit with skin, pulp, and core that grows on a tree
a knife
poster board
markers
small pieces of paper



Explanation

Show children the fruit. Say: **I am holding a wonderful tasting fruit. It has three parts. Can someone tell me its three parts?** Allow children to answer. **This fruit takes a long time to grow on a tree before I can eat it. The Bible tells us that there are certain ways God wants a Christian to act. These actions are called the fruit of the Spirit. The fruit of the Spirit isn't something you eat. Instead, it is something that grows inside of you when you are a Christian.**

(Refer to your poster as you explain the next part.) Say: **The fruit of the Spirit has three parts. The first three fruits are love, joy, and peace. These fruits tell us the kind of relationship we**

should have with God. The next three fruits talk about our relationship with others- patience, kindness, and goodness. The last three fruits are faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. These fruits remind us of the qualities we must develop if we want to please God.

Cut your fruit and share it with the children.

Memorization Activity

Divide children into three groups. Give each group the name of a fruit. Place chairs in a circle. Ask the children to sit in them.

Say the name of one of the fruits you gave the children. The group with the name of that fruit should stand up and say the Bible memory verse. Say the name of another fruit after each group finishes. When you say, "fruit salad," all the children should stand up and say the Bible memory verse together.

INSTRUCT

Bible Story: "A Good Tree Bears Good Fruit," Luke 6:43-45; Matthew 7:16-18, 20; Galatians 5:19-23

Preparation

Read and study the Bible verses.

Draw a picture of two identical trees on two pieces of poster board, one tree on each poster board. Write the words "Christian" and "Not a Christian" on two separate pieces of paper. Plan to attach these labels to the trees when instructed in the lesson.

Cut out nine fruit shapes from construction paper and write one of the following words on each fruit-shaped paper: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

Cut out five more fruit shapes from construction paper and write one of the following words on each fruit-shaped paper: hate, fighting, jealousy, anger, trouble-maker.

Materials
Bible
poster board
markers
construction paper
scissors
tape or other type of adhesive
a good piece of fruit
a bruised, broken, or spoiled piece of fruit

Presentation

Show the good fruit. Say: **If you go to a** (name the fruit) **tree and take a fruit from its branches, what kind of fruit would you get?** Allow children to answer. **Yes, you would get** (name the fruit). **Each tree produces its own fruit.**

I have drawings of two trees. Show the poster boards. **Can you tell me which tree is good and**

which is bad? Allow children to answer. **Was it difficult to choose? There is no way to really know which tree is good and which is bad unless you see the fruit that comes from it.** Show the bruised fruit and explain it was on a tree like the first poster board. Show the good fruit and explain that it was on a tree like the second poster board.

Now, which tree do you think is a good tree? Allow children to answer. **How did you decide?**

Say: **We know which tree is good by looking at the fruit. Jesus wanted us to understand that people are similar to trees. The fruit you produce is determined by the type of person you are. You won't produce apples, oranges, or bananas. No, the fruits that grow in the lives of children are words, actions, attitudes, and thoughts.**

Those who don't know Jesus, who are not Christians, bear sinful fruits. Label the first tree "Not a Christian." Place the fruit-shaped papers with non-Christian traits on the tree as you describe each one. Say: **People who are not Christians often have these qualities in their lives. They are ruled by sin.**

Say: **But when you asked Jesus to forgive you of your sins and come into your life, He gave you a new life. You became a Christian.** Label the second tree "Christian." **Now you don't have to produce sinful fruits. With the help of the Holy Spirit, you can start growing these fruits in your life.** Read Galatians 5:22, 23. Place the fruit-shaped papers with the fruits of the Spirit written on them on the tree labeled "Christian."

APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Bible Study, "What Does the Bible Say?"

Preparation

Write each fruit of the Spirit on a separate sheet of paper. Display the papers around the room where children can clearly see them.

Materials
paper
markers
Bible

Presentation

Explain to the children that you are going to be reading Bible verses. They should listen for the fruit of the Spirit that is listed in that verse. When they hear it, they should go stand by the sign that matches the correct fruit. Verses and answers are listed below.

1 John 4:8	love
Nehemiah 8:10	joy
Hebrews 13:20	peace
2 Peter 3:9	patience

Ephesians 2:7	kindness
Psalm 27:13	goodness
Psalm 119:90	faithfulness
2 Corinthians 10:1	humility (gentleness)
Psalm 78:38	self-control (This trait is implied based on God's actions. It is not specifically listed.)

MINISTRY TIME

Preparation

Cut out fruit shapes from paper. Make one for each child.

Materials
paper
crayons or markers
scissors
"Christian" tree from the Bible lesson

Presentation

Give each child a fruit-shaped paper and a crayon or marker. Say: **We have learned about nine traits God wants to grow in Christians. Let's read them together.** Read them from the Christian tree. **Is one of these particularly hard for you?** Ask children to write the one that is hard for them on their fruit-shaped paper. Pray with the children that the Spirit will help grow these fruits in their lives. Attach their fruit-shaped papers to the bottom of the poster to use in future lessons.

*Be sure there is at least one of each fruit of the Spirit listed on a fruit-shaped piece of paper at the bottom of the "Christian" tree poster.

Growing in Love

Lesson Scripture: Luke 23:26-46; John 19:25-27

Bible Truth: My love can grow.

Bible Story: Luke 23:26-46; John 19:25-27

Bible Verse: "Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God." (I John 4:7, NIV)

FOCUS

Learning Activity: "God Loves You"

Preparation
None

Materials
paper
crayons or pencils
"Christian" tree poster from Lesson 1

Presentation
As the children arrive, ask them to draw something or someone they love. When the time comes to start the session, ask each child to share what they drew.

Say: **In our last lesson, we learned that God wants Christian boys and girls to have nine specific traits in their lives.** Refer to the "Christian" tree poster from the last lesson. **Today, we are going to learn about the first trait- love. God wants us to love everyone. It is easy to love our friends and our families, but God also wants us to love our enemies.**

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: I John 4:7

Preparation
Write 1 John 4:7 on a poster board.

Materials
poster board
marker
red construction paper
scissors

Cut out five paper hearts for each group of 4 children. Write the phrases and reference from the memory verse on each group of hearts as listed below:

1st heart: Dear friends, let us love one another,
2nd heart: for love comes from God.

3rd heart: Everyone who loves has been born of God,
4th heart: and knows God.
5th heart: 1 John 4:7

Explanation

Read 1 John 4:7 with the children. Ask them to find the answers to the following questions in the verse. When a child discovers the answer, ask him/her to stand in the front and underline the answer with a marker.

What commandment does God gives us in this verse? (Love one another.)

Where does love come from? (God)

What two things do we know about people who show love? (They have been born of God and they know God.)

Memorization Activity

Divide children into groups of 4. Give each group a set of prepared hearts. Ask them to arrange their hearts in the correct order and practice saying the verse together. Say: **Let's see if we can say the verse without looking at some of the words. Turn over the third heart.** Practice saying the verse with the children with the third heart turned over to the blank side. **Now, turn over the fifth heart.** Practice saying the verse with the children with the fifth heart turned over to the blank side. Continue asking groups to turn over their hearts and practice saying the verse until they can say it with all of the hearts turned over to the blank side.

INSTRUCT

Bible Story: "Jesus Loved Everyone," Luke 23:26-46; John 19:25-27

Preparation

Read and study Luke 23:26-46; John 19:25-27.

Cut three hearts out of red construction paper for each child. Write one of the following words on each heart: friends/family, enemies, sinners.

Give each child a set of three hearts.

Materials
Bible
paper (red construction paper if possible)
marker or crayon

Presentation

Say: **The first trait that God wants to see in Christians is love. When did Jesus show His love for us in a big way?** Allow children to answer. **Yes, when He died on the cross, He showed His love for us. On that day, Jesus also showed us who He wants us to love, and how He wants us to love them. I am going to tell you about three things Jesus did while He was on the cross. Listen and decide if He was showing love to His friends and family, His enemies, or sinners in each part of the story. When you know the correct answer, show me the heart with the correct word.**

Story 1

Say: **As the oldest son of Joseph and Mary, it was Jesus' job to take care of his mother when she got older. As Jesus was dying on the cross, He knew that he wouldn't be able to take care of Mary. He loved her very much and wanted to be sure someone took care of her. His disciple, John, was standing with Mary watching Jesus on this sad day. From the cross, Jesus asked John to take care of Mary. The Bible tells us that from that day, John took care of Mary as if she were his own mother. Was Jesus showing love to his friends/family, sinners, or enemies in this story?** Ask children to display the correct heart. (friends/family)

Story 2

Say: **Two other men were put on crosses next to Jesus on the day that he died. They had both done very bad things. One of the men laughed at Jesus and made fun of him. The other man realized that he was a sinner and that Jesus was God's son. He wanted Jesus to forgive him of his sins. Jesus promised this man that He would go to heaven. Was Jesus showing love to his friends/family, sinners, or enemies?** Ask children to display the correct heart. (sinners)

Story 3

Say: **Jesus had done nothing wrong, and yet he was being put to death. The soldiers hurt him, took His clothes, and made fun of Him. As Jesus was on the cross He prayed a special prayer. He asked God to forgive those people who were hurting Him and killing Him. Was Jesus showing love to his friends/family, sinners, or enemies?** Ask children to display the correct heart. (enemies)

Say: **As He was dying, Jesus showed loved to everyone. He wants us to have this same kind of love in our lives, even when it is hard.**

APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Creative writing, "Love Is an Action"

Preparation

Divide a sheet of paper into three sections. Write one of the following words at the top of each section: friends, family, enemies.

Materials
paper
markers or crayons

Presentation

Say: **Jesus showed His love for people with His actions. How did he love is family?** Allow a child to answer. **Yes, he asked John to take care of Mary. He loved with His words. How did he love His enemies?** Allow a child to answer. **Yes, He loved them by praying for them. He wants us to love people with our words and our actions.**

Give each child a prepared sheet of paper and markers or crayons. Ask children to make a list of ways they can love their friends, families, and enemies in the correct column of their paper. Encourage them to be specific. You may need to discuss specific examples, such as cleaning their room to show love to their mom or saying something nice to a person at school who has been mean to them. If children cannot write words, allow them to draw pictures of themselves showing love.

MINISTRY TIME

Preparation

Place a small basket at the bottom of the "Christian" tree poster used in Lesson 1.

Materials
papers created during the "Love is an Action" activity
small basket
"Christian" tree poster from Lesson 1

Presentation

Ask children to put their papers in the basket. Say: **When you begin to love people by doing the things you wrote on your paper, your love will grow.** Take any fruit-shaped papers with the word "love" written on them (located at the bottom of the poster from Lesson 1) and move them from the bottom of the poster into the tree.

Let's pray and ask God to help us love others by doing the things we wrote on our papers. Say a prayer with the children.

Growing in Joy

Lesson Scripture: Luke 2:4-20

Bible Truth: My joy can grow.

Bible Story: Luke 2:4-20

Bible Verse: "You make known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand." (Psalm 16:11, NIV)

FOCUS

Learning Activity: "Happiness or Joy?"

Preparation

Make two smiling faces out of yellow paper. Write "joy" on one of the them and "happiness" on the other.

Materials
yellow construction paper
marker
picture of children playing together
picture of an award
small amount of local currency
small mirror
small cross
"Christian" tree poster from Lesson 1

Presentation

Say: **Have you ever said, "I feel so happy I could scream!" or "I could jump for joy!"?** Show the two smiling faces. **Sometimes we use the words happiness and joy as synonyms, as if they both had the same meaning. Do they mean the same?** Allow children to answer.

Say: **Your happiness may depend on what's happening around you. Your happiness may depend on the way people treat you.** Show a picture of a children playing together. **How do you feel when others are nice to you?** Allow children to answer. **How do you feel when they don't treat you well?** Allow children to answer. **Even people we love can hurt us or disappoint us.**

Say: **Your happiness may depend on things that happen in life. How do you feel when you get good grades?** Allow children to answer. Show picture of an award. **How do you feel when you win an award?** Allow children to answer. **How do you feel when you are sick?** Allow children to answer. **How do you feel when your parent doesn't have time to take you to the park?** Allow children to answer. **Feelings change, don't they?**

Show children some money. Say: **Your happiness may depend on the things you have, like money, a bicycle, or clothes. But you can run out of money. Toys break or wear out. You grow out of your clothes.**

Show children the mirror. Say: **Your happiness may depend on the way you look. If you think you are pretty or handsome, you may feel happy. But your physical appearance is constantly changing. That's why you can't expect to be happy all the time based on how you look.**

Use the two smiling faces as visuals. Say: **Joy is different from happiness because it doesn't depend on what happens around you. Joy is a fruit of the Spirit.** Show children the "Christian" tree poster from Lesson 1. **Joy comes from God. Only those who have accepted Jesus as their Savior come to know true joy.**

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: Psalm 16:11

Preparation

Write Psalm 16:11 on a piece of poster board.

Cut out a small yellow circle. Draw a big, happy face on the front, and write the word "joy" on the back.

Materials
poster board
yellow paper
marker
scissors

Explanation

Read Psalm 16:11 with the children. Say: **What does this verse say God will make known to us?** Allow children to answer. **The path of life is the way God wants you to act and what God wants you to do. How can God let you know what He wants you to do and how He wants you to act?** Allow children to answer and then explain that God reveals His path to us through Bible reading and prayer.

Say: **The second part of this verse uses a word that means to be with someone. Can anyone find that word?** Allow a child to underline "presence." **When we read our Bibles and pray, we are in God's presence. What does our verse say will happen when we are in God's presence?** Allow a child to answer. **Yes, we will be filled with JOY!**

Memorization Activity

Play the game "Who's Got the Joy?" to help the children memorize Psalm 16:11. Ask the children to sit in a circle. The child that's "it" will sit in the center of the circle and close his eyes while the happy face is passed around the circle. When you give the signal, the child that has the happy face must hide it behind him/her. The child that's "it" opens his eyes and guesses who has the "joy." Each time the "joy" is found, say the memorization verse together.

INSTRUCT

Bible Story: "Jesus' Birth Brings Joy," Luke 2:4-20

Preparation

Read and study Luke 2:4-20.

Materials
Bible
paper
marker or crayons
yellow paper

Make three big smiley faces out of yellow poster board. Write one of the following names on each smiley face: Mary, shepherds, wise men.

Draw pictures of Mary, the shepherds, and the wise men on separate pieces of paper. Use these pictures as visuals to tell the Bible story.

Presentation

Divide the children into three groups and give each group a prepared smiley face. As you tell the Bible story, ask them to listen for the reason why the person/people listed on their smiley faces felt joy.

Show the picture of Mary. Say: **One day, something amazing happened to a girl named Mary. An angel appeared to her and told her that she was going to have a baby. Her baby was going to save the world from their sins. This baby was Jesus. At first, Mary was frightened by the angel's appearance. But after she heard his message from God, she rejoiced that God has chosen her for this special job. She told God she was willing to be Jesus' mother.**

Show the picture of the shepherds: Say: **Several months after the angel appeared, Mary traveled with her husband Joseph to Bethlehem. While in Bethlehem, she gave birth to baby Jesus in a barn. That very night, there were shepherds out in a field near Bethlehem taking care of their sheep. Suddenly, an angel appeared to the shepherds and told them about the birth of Jesus. They explained that Jesus, the Savior, had been born and was lying in a manger in a barn. Then the sky was filled with a large group of angels, and they began to sing praises to God. When the angels left, the shepherds went to Bethlehem to see baby Jesus. They rejoiced and praised God for letting them be part of this special day. When they left the barn, they told everyone they met about Jesus.**

Show a picture of the Wise Men. Say**: At the time of Jesus' birth, God put a special star in the sky. A group of wise men saw the star and began to follow it. It may have taken them as long as two years to reach Bethlehem. When they got to Bethlehem, the star was directly above the house where baby Jesus was living with Mary and Joseph. The Bible says that the Wise Men were overjoyed because the star had led them to Jesus. They presented gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh to Jesus.**

After the story, ask each group to share their answers to the questions below. Possible answers are included below each question.

Why was your person/group of people filled with joy?

Mary: She was chosen to be the mother of Jesus.
Shepherds: They got to see Jesus on the night he was born.
Wise Men: A star led them to Jesus.

How did they express the joy they felt for Jesus and His birth?

Mary: She told God she was willing to do what He asked.
Shepherds: They told others about baby Jesus.
Wise Men: They gave gifts to Jesus.

Say: **How do you feel when thinking about the birth of Jesus?** Allow children to answer. Read John 3:16 with the children. **This verse gives us a reason to feel joy because of Jesus' birth. What is that reason?** Allow children to answer.

APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Game, "Increase My Joy"

Preparation

None

Materials
"Christian" tree poster from Lesson 1

Presentation

Say: **When Mary, the shepherds, and the wise men were in Jesus' presence, they felt true joy. Our Bible memory verse today tells us that we will also feel joy when we are in Jesus' presence. Let's play a game to remind us to remain in Jesus' presence to feel true joy.**

Directions for the Game:

Place the "Christian" tree from Lesson 1 on one side of the room. Children should line up in a horizontal line a long distance away from the poster. Read the sentences below to the children. If they think the sentence lists something that would cause them to be in God's presence and feel joy, they should take one giant step toward the tree. If the action would not put them in God's presence, they should take one step away from the tree.

1. You read your Bible every day.
2. You pray every night before going to sleep.
3. You complain about doing your chores.
4. You tell God you are sorry for your sins.

5. You are unkind to your little brother/sister.
6. You tell a friend about Jesus.
7. You go to church.
8. You tell a lie to your parents.
9. You trust God even when you are having a bad day.
10. You sing a praise song to Jesus.

When the children have reached the tree, say: **As you spend time with Jesus and follow His commands, you will be in His presence and your joy will grow.** Take any fruit-shaped papers with the word "joy" written on them (located at the bottom of the poster from Lesson 1) and move them from the bottom of the poster into the tree.

MINISTRY TIME

Preparation

Materials
worship CD
CD player

Choose a worship song with which the children are familiar. Play the song on a CD player or ask someone to be prepared to play it on an instrument. You can also choose to do this activity without music and just allow the children to sing a favorite song.

Presentation

Invite the children to participate in a time of praise and worship. Remind them that as they enter God's presence, He will fill them with joy. At the end of the song, let the music continue playing and ask children to find a quiet place in the room to pray and talk with God.

Growing in Peace

Lesson Scripture: Matthew 14:22-33

Bible Truth: My peace can grow.

Bible Story: Matthew 14:22-33

Bible Verse: "You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You." (Isaiah 26:3, NKJV)

FOCUS

Learning Activity: "Three Types of Peace"

Preparation

Write each letter of the word "peace" on a small sheet of paper. Attach the letters out of order to the top of a piece a poster board.

Divide the poster board into three sections.

Write each of these phrases on a separate piece of paper: peace with God, peace of God, peace with others.

Materials
paper
marker or pencils
Bible
crayons
poster board

Presentation

Say: **Can anyone rearrange these letters and discover the fruit of the Spirit we will be learning about today?** Allow a child to arrange the letters correctly. **Yes, it is peace. Can anyone tell me what peace means?** Allow a child to answer.

Some people think peace is not arguing with someone. Other people think of peace as the opposite of war. The kind of peace we are talking about today can only come from God. It is one of the fruit of the Spirit. This peace is being calm and strong in every situation.

Use the poster to explain God's peace. Say: **God's peace has three parts. Let's read some Bible verses to find out what they are.**

Ask a child to read Romans 5:1. **This verse talks about peace with God.** Ask a child to attach the phrase "Peace with God" to one section of the poster. **How can we obtain this peace?** Allow children to answer. **Peace with God comes to us when we ask Jesus to forgive our sins.**

Ask a child to read Philippians 4:7. **This verse talks about the peace of God.** Ask a child to attach the phrase "Peace of God" to another section of the poster. **This kind of peace helps you when you have trouble in your life. The Holy Spirit lets you know that you are not alone and that God is with you, so you don't have to worry or be afraid.**

Ask a child to read Romans 12:18. **This verse talks about peace with others.** Ask a child to attach the phrase "Peace with Others" to the final section of the poster. **The will of God is that we have peace with our family, friends, and even with our enemies. Peace with others means we will get along and not fight/argue with each other.**

Give each child a sheet of paper and ask them to illustrate a situation where someone has peace with God, the peace of God, or peace with others. Continue to give examples and discuss the three types of peace as children are working. When they are finished, attach their pictures to the poster.

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: Isaiah 26:3

Preparation
Write Isaiah 26:3 on poster board.

Materials
poster board
paper
marker
ball

Explanation
Read Isaiah 26:3 with the students. Ask and discuss the following questions:

Who keeps us at peace? God
What do we need to do in order to have God's peace? Stay focused on God and trust in Him.

Say: **Let's make a list of things we can do to stay focused on God.** Write down the children's suggestions on a large sheet of paper. Include things such as reading the Bible, praying, remembering what God has done for us, spending time with Christian friends, etc.

Memorization Activity
Ask the children to stand in a circle. Toss the ball to one of the children. He/she should say the first word in Isaiah 26:3 and throw the ball to another child. That child should say the second word in Isaiah 26:3. Continue tossing the ball until all the children have memorized the verse.

INSTRUCT

Bible Story: "Jesus Brings Peace," Matthew 14:22-33

Preparation

Read and study Matthew 14:22-23.

Materials
Bible
paper

Presentation

Allow the children to act out the story as you tell it to them. Choose one child to be Peter and another child to be Jesus. The other children can be disciples. If you have a large group, some of the children can pretend to be the storm by waving pieces of paper during the "storm" part of the story.

Say: **Jesus had spent all day teaching over 5,000 people near the sea. At the end of the day, his disciple got in a boat to sail to the other side of the sea, and Jesus went away by Himself to pray.** Ask the child pretending to be Jesus to "climb" a mountain in the corner of the room and kneel to pray. The disciples can huddle together and pretend to row a boat.

In the middle of the night, a storm came up on the sea and the disciples' boat was tossed around by the waves. The children pretending to be the storm should wave their papers.**They were scared!** The actors should look scared. **The last time they were in a storm, Jesus had stopped it, but Jesus wasn't with them. They didn't know that Jesus knew they were in trouble and was already on His way to help.**

(Instruct the children playing the parts of Jesus and Peter to act out the next part of the story as you tell it.)

Suddenly, they saw a man walking on the water toward them. They thought it was a ghost until they heard Jesus' voice. He said to them, "Don't be afraid. It is I."

Peter replied, "Lord, if it's you, tell me to come to you on the water."

"Come," replied Jesus.

Peter stepped out of the boat and began to walk on the water. It was amazing. He didn't sink and neither did Jesus. Then Peter began to think about the storm. He looked around at the waves and the storm and took his eyes off of Jesus. He began to sink. Jesus reached out his hand and pulled Peter out of the water, and they both got into the boat. Immediately the storm stopped.

Discuss the following questions with the children:
Why were the disciples frightened? There was a bad storm.
At first, Peter was able to walk on the water with Jesus. Why did he start to sink? He took his eyes off Jesus. He forgot the lesson we learned from the Scripture memory verse. To have God's peace, we need to stay focused on Jesus and trust Him.
What kind of peace did the disciples need during the storm? Peace of God

APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Creative Writing, "Peace Poetry"

Preparation

Make copies of the "Peace Poem" and "Peace Acrostic" activity sheets. (See note at the bottom if you speak a language other than English.)

Materials
copies of either "Peace Poem" or "Peace Acrostic"
pencils

Presentation

Ask the children to write a short poem of about five lines. It doesn't have to rhyme. Instead, they should follow the pattern on one of the activity sheets. With the "Peace Poem" sheet, they will write a poem by filling in the blanks. An example is listed below.

Peace
Peace is blue.
It feels like a gentle breeze.
It sounds like the pages of my Bible turning.
Peace of God

With the "Peace Acrostic" sheet, they will write a description of peace using the letters in the word peace. An example is listed below.

P- Pausing to remember God
E- Every day
A- As I pray
C- Can help me
E- Enjoy God's goodness.

If you teach younger children, you can do this activity together on a large poster board.

*NOTE: The "Peace Acrostic" activity was written in English. If this does not translate well into your language, use the "Peace Poem" activity instead.

MINISTRY TIME

Preparation

Place a small basket at the bottom of the "Christian" tree poster from Lesson 1.

Materials
paper
pencils
small basket (from Lesson 2)
"Christian" tree poster (from Lesson 1)

Presentation

Give children a small piece of paper and a pencil. Say: **I want you to think about the kind of peace you need God to give you today. If you have never asked Jesus to forgive you of your sins, then you need peace with God. If you are worried about something in your life, then you need the peace of God. If you have having problems with other people, you need peace with others.**

On one side of your paper, write the kind of peace you need from God today. Allow children to write. Give direction as needed. **Now, let's turn our papers over and make a list of ways we can keep our focus on Jesus and trust Him to give us the peace we need.** Help children write things such as pray, read their Bible, talk to a Christian adult, spend time with Christian friends, etc. When finished, say a prayer with the children asking God to give them peace. Pray separately with any child who wants to be saved.

After the prayer, say: **We are going to put our papers in this basket as a symbol of our trust in God that He is going to give us peace.** Allow children to place their papers in the basket. **As we trust Him, our peace will grow.** Take any fruit-shaped papers with the word "peace" written on them (located at the bottom of the poster from Lesson 1) and move them from the bottom of the poster into the tree.

Peace Poem

Directions: Fill in the blanks to create a poem about peace.

Peace

Peace is _____
(color)

Peace feels like _____.

Peace sounds like _____.

Peace _____
(with God, of God, or with others)

Example:

Peace

Peace is blue

It feels like a gentle breeze.

It sounds like the pages of my Bible turning.

Peace of God

Peace Acrostic

Directions: Use the letters in the word peace to describe what peace means to you.

P_____

E_____

A_____

C_____

E_____

Example:

P- Pausing to remember God
E- Every day
A- As I pray
C- Can help me
E- Enjoy God's goodness.

Growing in Patience

Lesson Scripture: 1 Samuel 10:8 and 13:1-15

Bible Truth: My patience can grow.

Bible Story: 1 Samuel 10:8 and 13:1-15

Bible Verse: "Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love." (Ephesians 4:2, NIV)

FOCUS

Learning Activity: "Wait!"

Preparation

None

Materials
timer or stopwatch

Presentation

Say: **How often do you hear the word "wait"? Can you share about a particular moment when someone asked you to "wait"?** Allow children to answer. **When you ask your mom for something sweet to eat, she probably will tell you to wait until after the dinner. When you ask your teacher about playtime, he might respond, "We won't go outside until after math." When you ask your coach for your turn to play, she might respond, "You'll have to wait until the second half." Waiting is something that you have to do every day. At times, it's not easy to wait. Learning to wait without complaining is called being patient. Patience is a fruit of the Spirit.**

Say: **Let's try an experiment to see if you can wait patiently. I'm going to ask you to wait patiently for thirty seconds. During that time you cannot move or talk.** Set a timer and have the children sit or stand completely still for thirty seconds. At the end of thirty seconds, say: **How did you feel while waiting? Did time go by quickly or slowly?** Allow children to answer.

Say: **Let's try doing the experiment again. But this time, while you are waiting, I want you to think of ten good things Jesus has done for you.** Set a timer and have the children sit or stand completely still for thirty seconds while thinking about what Jesus has done for them. After thirty seconds, say: **Was it easier to be patient while thinking about Jesus and what He has done for you?** Allow children to answer. **Jesus can help our patience grow.**

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: Ephesians 4:2

Preparation

Materials
poster board
paper
marker

Write Ephesians 4:2 on poster board.

Write the words of Ephesians 4:2 on separate pieces of paper. Make two sets and write each set in a different color.

Hide the words throughout the room.

Explanation

Read Ephesians 4:2 with the children. Say: **Can anyone tell me what three fruits of the Spirit are named in this verse?** Allow children to answer. **Yes, this verse talks about gentleness (humility), patience, and love. We want to focus on patience.**

Say: **Can you mention one way to be patient with your friends?** Allow a child to answer. **Can you think of a time when you have to be patient with a family member?** Allow children to answer. **Sometimes it can be hard to be patient with others, but God can help your patience grow.**

Memorization Activity

Divide the children into two teams. Assign each team a color, based on the colors you used to write the Bible memory verse. Instruct each team to find the words written in their color. When they have found all of the words, they should put them in the right order. After completing this task, they should read the verse together.

INSTRUCT

Bible Story: "Saul Is Impatient," I Samuel 10:8 and 13:1-15

Preparation

Materials
Bible

Read and study I Samuel 10:8 and 13:1-15.

Be prepared to tell the story with enthusiasm without reading it. If the children are interested, you could allow them to act out the story as well.

Presentation

Say: **I am going to tell you about a man named Saul. When he does something that shows patience, put your thumb up. When he does something that shows impatience, put your thumb down.**

Say: **Saul had just been anointed as the first king of Israel. The prophet Samuel had some very specific instructions from God that Saul was to follow. One of those instructions was to go to the town of Gilgal. Saul was to wait there for seven days until Samuel arrived. When Samuel arrived, he would offer sacrifices to God and pray for God's blessings on Saul and the nation of Israel.**

Saul did as Samuel asked and traveled to Gilgal. Children should put their thumbs up. **During this time, his son Jonathan fought a battle against the Philistines and won. The Philistines were angry and were getting ready to retaliate against Israel. Saul knew he needed to attack the Philistines again, but his army in Gilgal was scared and ready to go home. Saul wanted to attack quickly before his army ran away. However, he was under instructions from God not do to anything until Samuel arrived to offer sacrifices and prayers of blessings.**

Saul waited for seven days. Children should put their thumbs up. **When He did not see Samuel immediately on the seventh day, he became impatient and decided to offer the sacrifices and prayers himself.** Children should put their thumbs down. **Just as the sacrifices and prayers were finishing, Samuel arrived. When Samuel saw what Saul had done, he was very upset. He said, "You have acted foolishly. You have not kept the command the Lord your God gave you." Then he told Saul the consequences of his actions. Had Saul waited patiently for Samuel, his family would have continued as the royal family of Israel for generations. Instead, God was going to choose another family and king.**

Eventually, Saul lost his position as king because of his impatience and disobedience. Even worse, he lost out on a relationship with God.

What can we learn from King Saul? Allow children to answer. **Even when it is hard, God wants us to be patient.**

APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Communication, "How Patient Am I?"

Preparation

Make three signs that say the following: A. Patient; B. Somewhat Patient; C. Impatient

Place the three signs in different locations in the room.

Materials
paper
markers or crayons

Presentation

Say: **Who can tell me what it means to be patient?** Allow children to answer. **Yes, being patient means being able to wait without getting angry. Today, we will discover our level of patience. Each time I read a sentence, choose the answer that best illustrates how you would probably respond in each situation. Be honest!**

Read each situation below. Children should stand by the sign that matches their attitude in that situation.

1. Your friend is coming over to play. He is five minutes late. Do you…
   a. wait patiently for him to arrive?
   b. start looking out the window every 10 seconds to look for him?
   c. call his house to see why he is late?

2. You are playing a game with some friends. Every time one particular child takes a turn, he is very slow. All of the other children have to wait for him to finish. Do you…
   a. patiently wait because you know he is trying his best?
   b. roll your eyes and tap your fingers as a sign that he needs to hurry?
   c. scream, "Hurry up. We all want a turn too!"?

3. You can't dry the dishes until your brother finishes washing them. You want to go out and play, but he is washing the dishes very slowly. Do you…
   a. wait patiently and talk to him while he works?
   b. tell him, "Hurry up. Wash them faster."?
   c. push him aside and do it yourself?

4. You are trying to teach your little sister how to ride a bike. She is trying, but she still hasn't learned yet. Do you…
   a. encourage her and keep working with her until she learns?
   b. say,"I wish you would hurry up and learn how to do this. I've got other things to do."?
   c. give up and walk away?

After reading all the sentences, say: **In which of the three areas (patient, somewhat patient, impatient) did you spend most of your time?** Allow children to answer and then discuss the following questions:

Has this activity shown that you are impatient?

What are some of the ways you respond that show impatience?

What are some of the things you could do to help the fruit of patience grow in your life?

MINISTRY TIME

Preparation

None

Materials
"Christian" tree poster (from Lesson 1)

Presentation

Say: **When we ask God to help us be more patient, He will often allow us to be in situations where we must make a choice to be patient. As you practice being patient in these situations, your patience will grow.** Take any fruit-shaped papers with the word "patience" written on them (located at the bottom of the poster from Lesson 1) and move them from the bottom of the poster into the tree.

Let's pray some specific prayers for patience together. I am going to read some sentences to you. After each sentence, repeat the phrase, "God, help me be patient."

Read the following phrases to the children and allow them to respond.

Say: **When my little brother or sister keeps asking me questions,**
Children: God, help me be patient.
Say: **When I want my parents to take me somewhere but they have to work,**
Children: God, help me be patient.
Say: **When I am waiting for my turn to play a game,**
Children: God, help me be patient.
Say: **When I am hungry and want my mom to fix my lunch,**
Children: God, help me be patient.
Say: **When I am waiting for an answer to prayer,**
Children: God, help me be patient.

Close with a prayer for all of the children to grow in their patience.

Growing in Kindness

Lesson Scripture: Matthew 18:21-35

Bible Truth: My kindness can grow.

Bible Story: Matthew 18:21-35

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

FOCUS

Learning Activity: "Be Kind to Others"

Preparation

Write the following words on separate pieces of paper and display them at the front of the room: "time," "actions," "money," and "words."

Materials
paper
crayons

Presentation

As children arrive, ask them to draw a picture of someone being kind. Once everyone is finished, say: **There are many ways we can show kindness to others. Sometimes we are kind by spending time with someone, like a little brother or sister. Sometimes we show kindness with our actions, such as when we help our parents clean the house. Other times we show kindness by giving money to someone or encouraging them with our words. Let's decide how the people in your pictures showed kindness.** Allow each child to tell you about their picture. Decide if their picture illustrated kindness through time, actions, money, or words and place their picture by the correct sign at the front of the room.

Say: **How did Jesus show us His love and kindness? Yes, He suffered the punishment of our sins when He died on the cross. We want to be kind like Jesus.**

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: Ephesians 4:32

Preparation

Materials
poster board
paper
markers

Write Ephesians 4:32 on poster board.

Write each word of Ephesians 4:32 on a separate sheet of paper.

Explanation

Read Ephesians 4:32 to the children. Say: **How would you put this verse in your own words?** Write a class paraphrase of Ephesians 4:32 on the back of the poster board.

Memorization Activity

Give each child a word from Ephesians 4:32. Ask them to put themselves in correct verse order based on their words. When children are in the correct order, say the verse together. Mix up the words and have them repeat the activity several times until children have learned Ephesians 4:32.

*If you have a small number of children, give each child more than one word, making sure the words you give them are near each other in the verse. If you have a large group of children, allow them to take turns.

INSTRUCT

Bible Story: "The Parable of the Unforgiving and Unkind Servant," Matthew 18:21-35

Preparation

Materials
Bible
paper
markers

Read and study Matthew 18:21-35.

Make two signs that read "first servant" and "second servant."

Make a crown out of paper.

Draw pictures of money on several sheets of paper.

Presentation

Ask three children to help you tell today's Bible story. Place the "first servant" sign on one child; the "second servant" sign on another child, and the crown on the third child. Give the child wearing the crown the pictures of money.

Say: **Jesus often told stories to help people learn a lesson. One day his disciple Peter wanted to know how often he had to forgive someone and be kind to them. Jesus used a story to answer Peter's question. Here is the story:**

There once was a servant who had borrowed a lot of money from a king. Have the king give the "first servant" child all of the pictures with the money drawn on them. **There was also a second servant that borrowed a small amount of money from the first servant.** Have the "first servant" give the "second servant" one picture with money drawn on it. **Both of the servants spent all of the money.** Take all of the pictures of the money from the children to use at the end of the story.

Allow the children to continue acting out the story as you tell it. Remember to show the pictures of the money to illustrate the small vs. large amounts borrowed.

Say: **Some time later, the king decided it was time for the first servant to pay back the large amount of money he had borrowed. The first servant begged the king for mercy, explaining that he couldn't pay the money back. Rather than have the man thrown in jail, the king decided to forgive the first servant. He even told the first servant that he never had to pay back the money! The king showed true kindness to this man.**

As the first servant was leaving the king's house, he saw the second servant who owned him a small amount of money. He demanded that the second servant pay him back immediately. The second servant begged for mercy, explaining that he couldn't pay the money back. But rather than show kindness like the king had shown to him, the first servant had the second servant thrown in jail until he could pay back the money.

Someone told the king what had happened, and the king became angry. He couldn't believe that the first servant wouldn't forgive and show kindness to the second servant over a small amount of money. After all, the king had forgiven a debt of a large amount of money for the first servant. In fact, the king was so angry that he also had the first servant thrown in jail until he could repay his debt.

Say: **Jesus told the people that the king was like God, and we are like the servants. God showed us forgiveness and kindness when He sent Jesus to die for our sins. Since He has shown us great kindness by forgiving all of our sins, it is our responsibility to be kind and forgive others.**

Discuss the following questions with the children:

1. How is God like the king?
2. How is the first servant's debt like our sin?
3. How is the second servant's debt like things people to do hurt us?
4. What lesson can we learn from this story?

APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Skit, "Showing Kindness"

Preparation

Materials
paper
pencils

Write each of the scenarios listed below on different pieces of paper.

1. You want to go play with your friend, but your dad has been working late all this week. He hasn't had time to work on the yard. Your mom just asked if you could pull out the weeds in the garden.

2. You have been saving money to buy a bicycle, but tomorrow is your mom's birthday. There is something she really wants and your sister doesn't have enough money to buy it. Your sister asked for your help.

3. A new child just came to your school. He dresses differently from the other children, and no one wants to be his friend.

4. It is your turn to do the dishes, but your best friend just called and invited you over to play. You ask your sister if she will do the dishes for you.

5. Your best friend said mean things about you to some children at school. Now, she realizes what she did was wrong and asks you to forgive her.

Presentation

Divide children into four groups. Give each group a scenario. Ask them to create a skit showing someone being kind in their scenario. When groups are ready, ask them to present the skits to the class.

Say: **Sometimes kindness involves giving up what we want so that we can help others. Other times, kindness is forgiving someone who has hurt us. In all situations, God wants us to be kind to everyone.**

MINISTRY TIME

Preparation

None

Materials
paper
pencils
"Christian" tree poster (from Lesson 1)

Presentation

Talk to the children about simple acts of kindness they can do for others on a daily basis. Ask each child to think about seven easy things they can do to show kindness during the following week. Have them to write those things on a piece of paper. Encourage them to do one of those kind acts each day.

Say: **As you practice being kind, God will help your kindness grow.** Take any fruit-shaped papers with the word "kindness" written on them (located at the bottom of the poster from Lesson 1) and move them from the bottom of the poster into the tree. Pray with the children asking God to help them be kind to others.

Growing in Goodness

Lesson Scripture: 1 Samuel 25

Bible Truth: My goodness can grow.

Bible Story: I Samuel 25

Bible Verse: "But I tell you who hear me: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you." (Luke 6:27, NIV)

FOCUS

Learning Activity: "Goodness=God"

Preparation

Make a sign that reads: "Goodness=God."

Write these Bible verses on two separate pieces of paper: Psalm 100:5 and Mark 10:18. Give the papers to two children who arrive early. Ask them to be ready to read the verses during the class.

Materials
paper
pens or pencils
candle
matches

Presentation

Give each child a piece of paper and a pencil. Ask them to write names of the people they think are good. When all the children are finished, ask them to share the names they have written and the reasons they think those people are good.

Say: **Each person that was mentioned seems to be good in some way, but let's see what the Bible says about being good.** Ask a child to read Psalm 100:5. **This verse says that the Lord is good.**

Let's study the Bible some more to see if there's someone else who is good. Ask one of the children to read Mark 10:18. **This verse says that only God is good.**

Show children the candle. Say: **Each one of us is like this candle. Is it good for anything before it's lit?** Allow children to answer. **No, it isn't. In the same way, none of us is good. But we can be full of God's goodness.** Light the candle. **After the match lights the candle, it is is full of light and useful. We don't become Christians by doing good deeds. Instead, when we accept Jesus as our Savior and allow the Holy Spirit to take control of our lives, then the fruit of goodness starts to grow in us. Our lives start to shine with good deeds because a good God lives in us.**

Refer to the children's lists of "good" people. Choose a few people you know are Christians. Say: **The reason these people seem good is because they have accepted Jesus as their Savior, and they are letting the fruit of goodness grow in them.**

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: Luke 6:27

Preparation

Write Luke 6:27 on poster board.

Divide the Bible verse into three phrases and write each phrase on a separate piece of paper.

Materials
poster board
paper
markers or crayons

Explanation

Read the verses with the children. Ask them the following questions:

Who was Jesus talking to? (anyone who hears Him or reads this verse)
What does He tell us to do? (love our enemies and do good to those who hate us)
How can we show love and do good to our enemies?

Memorization Activity

Divide the children into three teams. Give each team a piece of paper with one phrase from the Bible verse written on it. Ask each team to memorize their phrase. Then, read the verse as a class, asking teams to say their phrase at the correct time. Repeat this several times, and then say, "Trade." Each team should trade their phrase with another team. Repeat the activity until children have had the opportunity to learn the entire verse.

INSTRUCT

Bible Story: "Abigail Helps David," I Samuel 25

Preparation

Read and study I Samuel 25.

Ask an adult or teenager to play the part of Abigail. Give her a Bible costume if one is available.

Materials
Bible Costume
Bible

Practice the skit together before class.

Presentation

Teacher: **I have invited a special woman from the Bible to tell us the amazing story of something good that she did. She stopped a huge fight with this good deed. Let me introduce Abigail to you.**

Abigail: It is so nice to be here today.

Teacher: **Abigail, can you tell us a little bit about yourself and your family.**

Abigail: Well, during the time of this story I was living in Canaan with my husband Nabal. He was very rich, but He was not a nice man. He was cruel to people and often cheated them in business deals.

Teacher: **I understand that one day your husband had a special visitor.**

Abigail: Yes, David, the newly anointed king of Israel, was running from King Saul. David and his men were hungry and in need of supplies. Since David had once helped my husband's shepherds, he asked Nabal to help him.

Teacher: **Did your husband send David the food and supplies he needed?**

Abigail: Oh, no! I told you Nabal was not a nice man. He refused to help and said some mean things about David. His words and refusal made David very angry. Someone brought me a message that David and his men were planning to attack our home because of my husband's actions.

Teacher: **That sounds awful. Were you scared?**

Abigail: I was frightened, but I tried to think of a way that I could help the situation. I quickly gathered food and supplies and traveled with some of my servants to meet David. I gave him the supplies and apologized for Nabal's behavior.

Teacher: **Did David still attack?**

Abigail: Thankfully, no. David told me that because of this good deed, he would not attack our home.

Teacher: **Wow! I am so glad you let God's goodness shine through you to help in this situation. You did something good for an enemy of your husband and God blessed you because of it.**

APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Art, "Doing Good to Others"

Preparation
None

Materials
paper
markers or crayons

Presentation
Say: **It is easy to do good things for our friends and family, but the Bible tells us that God wants us to do good to our enemies and people who are unkind to us. It is hard to do good to mean people, but we know that God's goodness is growing in us when we are able to fulfill this command.**

Give each child a piece of paper. Ask them to draw of picture of themselves doing something good for someone who has not been nice to them. Encourage children not to mention names as they draw their pictures.

MINISTRY TIME

Preparation
Place the small basket (from Lesson 2) at the bottom of the "Christian" tree poster.

Materials
small basket (from Lesson 2)
"Christian" tree poster (from Lesson 1)
drawings from the application activity

Presentation
Say: **If we are going to do the good things we drew on our papers, we are going to need God's help. Let's put our papers in this basket and ask God to help us.** Allow children to place their papers in the basket. Say a prayer asking God to give them the strength and courage to do good to everyone.

Say: **As you do good, even to your enemies, God will make the fruit of goodness grow inside of you.** Take any fruit-shaped papers with the word "goodness" written on them (located at the bottom of the poster from Lesson 1) and move them from the bottom of the poster into the tree.

Growing in Faithfulness

Lesson Scripture: Ruth 1-4

Bible Truth: My faithfulness can grow.

Bible Story: Ruth 1-4

Bible Verse: "Let love and faithfulness never leave you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart. Then you will win favor and a good name in the sight of God and man." (Proverbs 3:3-4, NIV)

FOCUS

Learning Activity: "What Is Faithfulness?"

Preparation

Write the following definition of faithfulness on poster board:

Faithfulness is doing what God and His Word tell you to do and not giving up.

Materials
poster board
marker

Presentation

Say: **Today, we will learn about how to allow the fruit of faithfulness to grow in our lives. What is faithfulness?** Allow children to answer. **Let's read this definition. "Faithfulness is doing what God and His Word tell you to do and not giving up."**

I'm going to read several stories. After I finish reading each story, you can decide whether the child showed faithfulness to God. Put your thumb up if the child was faithful. Put your thumb down if the child was not faithful.

1. **Sarah's Sunday school teacher taught the class about the importance of reading the Bible. Sarah decided that she would read her Bible every day. On Monday and Tuesday, she got up early and read her Bible before school. But the rest of the week, she forgot her promise. Was Sarah faithful?** Allow children to respond. **No, she started to do what God wanted her to do, but she didn't finish. Faithfulness is doing what God wants you to do and not giving up.**

2. **Mike's dad had been sick for a long time. One night, during the family devotion time, Mike's older brother read a verse from Isaiah, "by his stripes we are healed." Mike thought, "Jesus was pierced so we can be healed. He can heal my dad." Then Mike prayed and told Jesus, "Lord, I believe you can heal my dad because you suffered for his healing." Mike continued to pray for his dad even though his dad didn't get better right away. Was Mike faithful?** Allow children to answer. **Yes, Mike believed the Bible, prayed for his dad, and didn't give up even though he didn't get an answer right away.**

3. **Richard invited his friend Adam to go to church with him on Sunday. A few days later, Sam asked Richard to go camping with him for the weekend. Richard really wanted to go camping, but he knew it was important to go to church with the friend he had invited. He went to church instead of going camping. Was Richard faithful?** Allow children to answer. **Yes, Richard kept his promise and took his friend to church.**

4. **Katie got some money from her Aunt Lucy. She prayed about what she should do with the money and knew that God wanted her to give half of it in the missionary offering. On the way to church, she went to the store and saw a toy that she wanted. She decided to spend all of her money on the toy. Was Katie faithful?** Allow children to answer. **No, she knew what God wanted her to do, but she gave up on His plan and did what she wanted to do.**

Say: **God is looking for boys and girls who will be faithful. He is looking for boys and girls who do what the Bible tells them to do and who don't give up! As you practice being faithful, your faithfulness will grow.**

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: Proverbs 3:3-4

Preparation

Materials
poster board
markers
paper
string

Write Proverbs 3:3-4 on a piece of poster board.

Write the words "love" and "faithfulness" on a paper circle. Poke a hole in the top of the circle and put a string through it to make a necklace.

Cut out enough circles and string for each child to make a paper necklace during the memorization activity.

Explanation

Say: **What two fruit of the spirit are mentioned in this verse?** Allow children to answer. **This verse tells us love and faithfulness should be found in two places- around your neck and in**

your heart! Ask a volunteer to wear the necklace you made around his neck. **You can see love and faithfulness around my volunteer's neck, but you can't see if they are in his heart. Who is the only one who can see our hearts?** Allow children to answer. **Yes, only God can see our hearts. The Bible verse is explaining that our love and faithfulness should be seen by people through our actions and by God through our attitude. When you are faithful to do what the Bible says and don't give up, other people will see it. When you are faithful to do what the Bible says and have a good attitude about it, God will see.**

The second part of the verse lists two rewards for having faithfulness. Can someone circle those words? Allow a child to circle "win favor" and "good name." **This just means that God will be pleased with you and other people will smile when they hear your name. That is the kind of Christian that you want to be- a Christian that brings a smile to the face of others.**

Memorization Activity

Give each child a circle and a piece of string. Let them write the words "love" and "faithfulness" on the circle and attach the string to make a necklace like the one used in the explanation. When everyone is finished, read the verse together several times.

INSTRUCT

Bible Story: "Ruth Is Faithful; God Is Faithful," Ruth 1-4

Preparation

Read and study Ruth 1-4.

A week before the class, ask a woman or teenage girl in your congregation to memorize the following monologue and be prepared to present it to the children during this session. Give your helper a Bible costume or pieces of fabric to create the look of a Bible costume.

Materials
Bible Costume
Bible

Presentation

Hello, my name is Ruth. Maybe you've heard of me. One of the books in the Bible has my name. I thought you would really enjoy hearing my story since you are learning how to allow the fruit of faithfulness to grow in your lives.

When I was younger, I married a man named Mahlon. He was a foreigner in my country. His family practiced strange customs. They would rest every seventh day and would not work on that day. They refused to attend our great festivals to the god Chemosh.

I loved Naomi, my mother-in-law. She was very kind to me. She would tell stories about her home in the land of Israel and about her relatives and friends she left behind. She told me about her God, the God Jehovah, and about the wonderful things He had done for His people. But soon tragedy surprised us all. Naomi's husband died. Then her two sons died. Naomi, my sister-in-law, Orpah, and myself were left widowed. There was nobody to take care of us. Naomi decided to return to her country. Orpah and I decided to go with her.

After following her for a short distance, Orpah decided to return to her family. Then Naomi turned to me and said, "Your sister-in-law has returned to her family. You should do the same."

"Naomi, don't ask me to leave you," I begged her. "I will live where you live. Your people will be my people, and your God, my God."

And so we continued our journey to Israel for several days. We arrived safely. Since Naomi was older and couldn't work, I went out to the fields and picked up the grain from the harvesters so Naomi and I could have something to eat. I helped Naomi in any way that I could. I was faithful to help her and to serve the one true God." Because of my faithfulness, God sent me a new husband who loved me, and I became the great-grandmother of King David. I truly found favor with God.

APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Service, "I Can Be Faithful"

Preparation

Materials
paper
pencil

On separate pieces of paper, write a few acts of service that children can do during the session. Some suggestions include:

Straighten the chairs.
Put the crayons back in their boxes.
Sharpen pencils.
Pick up the trash.
Make a get well card for a sick church member.

Presentation

After the Bible story, give a piece of paper with a task written on it to each child. Ask them to read their paper and complete the task. If they don't understand what they need to do, give them further instructions. Allow several minutes for the children to complete their tasks. Ask them to return to their seats as soon as they are finished.

When everyone is finished, discuss the following questions:

Was the task I gave you simple?
Did you do it right?
How did you behave while doing the task? Did you complain or do it cheerfully?
Did you finish your task? Why? Why not?
Does God care about your attitude when you are being faithful?
Does the word faithfulness mean that you don't give up?

Say: **Thank you for being faithful to finish your task.**

MINISTRY TIME

Preparation

None

Materials
"Christian" tree poster (from Lesson 1)
necklaces made during the memorization activity
pencils

Presentation

Say: **On the back of our necklaces, let's write some things that we want to be faithful to do this week.** Help children think of things to write such as reading their Bibles, praying for others, obeying their parents, etc.

If we are going to be faithful, we are going to need God's help. Let's ask God right now to help us be faithful. Say a prayer asking God to help them be faithful in the tasks they have written down.

Say: **As you are faithful to complete the things God wants you to do, He will make the fruit of faithfulness grow inside of you.** Take any fruit-shaped papers with the word "faithfulness" written on them (located at the bottom of the poster from Lesson 1) and move them from the bottom of the poster into the tree.

Growing in Gentleness

Lesson Scripture: I Samuel 24

Bible Truth: My gentleness and humbleness can grow.

Bible Story: I Samuel 24

Bible Verse: "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility, value others above yourselves." (Philippians 2:3, NIV)

FOCUS

Learning Activity: "What Is Gentleness?"

Preparation

If possible, arrange for a mother and her baby to visit the class.

Make a sign that says "Gentleness=Humility" on one side and "Pride" on the other. Draw a happy face on the "Gentleness=Humility" side and a sad face on the "Pride" side.

Materials
baby doll or ask a mother to visit the class with her baby

Presentation

Show the class the baby doll or real baby. Say: **Babies are so special. Each of you was once tiny like this baby and someone had to take good care of you. Have any of you ever held a baby?** Allow children to answer. **When you hold a baby, an adult usually tells you to be gentle. They are explaining that you need to hold the baby softly and carefully.** Ask the mother to demonstrate how she holds the baby gently, or let children practice holding the baby doll gently.

Say: **The word "gentleness" in the Bible refers to how we treat everyone, not just babies. Just like we have to be gentle with a baby, Jesus wants us to be gentle with others. Since you can't hold people like we hold a baby, the Bible tells us another way to be gentle. It says we should think about other people and what they need before we think of ourselves. It is also having the attitude of wanting to help other people instead of wanting to be better than them. We call this being humble. So gentleness equals humility.** Show the sign you made. **The opposite of gentleness and humility is pride.** Turn your sign over.

Read the following stories to the children. Ask them to tell you if the child in the story demonstrated gentleness and humility or pride. As children give answers, turn your sign to the correct side to reinforce the concept.

1. **Mary was tired and just wanted to read her book. Her little sister kept asking her to play. Mary yelled at her sister and told her to be quiet. Which quality did Mary demonstrate?** (Mary demonstrated pride. Pride is thinking that what you want is more important than what other people want.)

2. **John was planning to go outside and play, but he noticed his mom was very tired. He decided to stay and help her clean the house. Which quality did John demonstrate?** (John demonstrated gentleness and humility because he thought about what his mom needed instead of what he wanted to do.)

3. **James scored the only two goals in the soccer game. He bragged to everyone about how great he played and never mentioned how the other team members had helped. What quality did James demonstrate?** (James demonstrated pride because he wanted everyone to think he was better than the other players.)

4. **Kaylee got a good grade on her spelling test, but her friend was upset because he did not do well. Instead of talking about her good grade, Kaylee offered to help her friend study for the next test. What quality did Kaylee demonstrate?** (Kaylee demonstrated gentleness and humility because she thought about her friend and how she could help him instead of talking about her good grade.)

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: Philippians 2:13

Preparation

Write Philippians 2:13 on a piece of poster board.

With a permanent marker, write the word "humility" on one balloon and the word "pride" on the other. You may need to inflate the balloons to write on them. Do not tie the balloons. Allow the words written with the marker to dry and then deflate the balloons.

Materials
two balloons
permanent marker
poster board
marker or crayon
music player or someone to play an instrument

Explanation

Say: **This verse contains two phrases that mean the same thing as "pride."** Ask a child to underline the words "selfish ambition" and "vain conceit." **This verse tells us that we should not do anything with a prideful attitude.** Show children the balloon with the word "pride" written on it. It should be deflated. **This balloon reminds me of prideful children. What are some of the things you say or do when you are prideful?** Allow children to answer. Inflate the balloon as you speak about each one of the characteristics. **Yes, prideful people insist on doing things their way, brag about the things they have done or what they have, and also want to be the first in everything.** Ask someone to hold the balloon full of air. Be sure it remains inflated but do not tie it.

Say: **The second part of the verse tells us that instead of being prideful, we should have a different attitude.** Ask a child to underline the word "humility." **Being humble is valuing or thinking of others before ourselves.** Show children the balloon with the word "humility" written on it. It should be deflated. **This balloon reminds me of the children that reflect the fruit of gentleness and humility in their lives. Can you think of some ways these children behave?** Allow children to answer. Inflate the balloon as you give the following examples: **When these children receive an award or are honored in some way, they give God the glory. They know that God is the one who helps them in everything. They are considerate with others. Also, things don't have to be done their way. Our verse tells us that God wants us to be humble. Let's keep humility.** Tie the "humility" balloon. **And let's get rid of pride.** Ask your helper to let the air out of the "pride" balloon.

Memorization Activity

Ask the children to sit in a circle. While listening to some music, ask them to pass around the "humility" balloon. When the music stops, the child holding the balloon says the Bible memory verse. Continue playing until each child has had the opportunity to say the verse.

INSTRUCT

Bible Story: "David Demonstrates Humility," I Samuel 24

Preparation

Read and study I Samuel 24.

Make a cave by draping a sheet or large piece of cloth over several chairs. Have children enter the "cave" and sit in the back as you tell the story. Ask a volunteer to play the part of Saul and enter/exit the "cave" where appropriate in the story.

Materials
Bible
paper
crayons
markers
chairs
sheet or large piece of cloth

Presentation

Say: **Do you remember the name of the first king of Israel?** Allow children to answer. **Yes, it was King Saul. Unfortunately, Saul was a prideful man and often disobeyed God. God had already decided that because of Saul's disobedience, He would replace Saul with David as the new king of Israel. In the meantime, the people of Israel were starting to realize that David was a better leader than Saul, and this made Saul angry. He was full of pride and wanted everyone to think that he was the best leader. Saul decided that the best way to solve this problem was to have David killed.**

The first part of today's Bible story takes place in a cave. David and the men with him were hiding in the back of a cave. Let's pretend to be David's men and hide in this cave. Sit with the children in the back of the cave you made prior to class.

Suddenly, they heard a noise. David motioned for his men to be quiet. One single man entered the cave. Volunteer enters the cave and pretends not to see the children. **It was Saul, and he didn't know that David is there. David's men whispered to him that this would be the perfect time to kill Saul. They could get rid of this enemy forever. David quietly walked up behind Saul, but instead of killing him, he cut off a corner of Saul's robe. Saul left the cave without knowing that David was near.** Volunteer leaves the cave.

Ask the children to crawl out of the cave and sit in a circle. **David exited the cave and called out to Saul. He showed Saul the piece of robe he had cut off. Saul realized that David had the opportunity to kill him, but He didn't do it.**

David demonstrated gentleness and humility. Even though Saul was trying to kill him, David considered Saul's life more important than his own and did not kill Saul.

APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Skit, "What Should They Do?"

Preparation

Write each of the following scenarios on a separate sheet of paper.

Materials
paper
pencil

1. Mary is tired and just wants to read her book. Her little sister keeps asking her to play.
2. John is planning to go outside and play, but he notices his mom is very tired.
3. James scored the only two goals in the soccer game.
4. Kaylee got a good grade on her spelling test, but her friend was upset because he did not do well.

Presentation

Divide children into four groups. Give each group one of the stories from the FOCUS activity. Ask the groups to act out how the child in each situation could respond with pride and then how the child could respond with humility.

MINISTRY TIME

Preparation

None

Materials
"Christian" tree poster (from Lesson 1)
paper
pencil or crayons

Presentation

Say: **Being gentle and humble means thinking of others and what they want before thinking about yourself. Can you think of some things that your parents sometimes want you to do that you don't like to do?** Allow children to answer. Include things such as cleaning their room, helping with dinner, doing homework, etc. **Can you think of somethings that your friends sometimes want to do or play that you don't like to do?** Allow children to answer.

Give each child a piece of paper and a pencil. Ask them to write or draw something on the paper that they can do this week that will make someone else happy. Encourage them to pick something that they personally do not like to do. (Clean their room, help with dinner, play a certain game with a sibling or friend, etc.)

Say: **Let's ask God to help us do the things that we wrote on our papers so the fruit of gentleness can grow in our lives.** Say a prayer asking God to help them complete the tasks they have written down.

Say: **As you are practice having an attitude of gentleness and humility, God will make the fruit of gentleness grow inside of you.** Take any fruit-shaped papers with the word "gentleness" written on them (located at the bottom of the poster from Lesson 1) and move them from the bottom of the poster into the tree.

Bonus Activity

Learning Activity: Game, "Connect the Squares"

Preparation

Materials
paper or poster board
marker

Divide a large piece of paper into sixteen squares. You should have four across and four down.

Prepare review questions for the lesson. Some suggested questions are:

Whose side was God on?

What does it mean to be gentle and humble?

What does it mean to be prideful?

How did David show humility?

Why was Saul jealous of David?

Recite Philippians 4:3.

Presentation

Divide the children into two teams. Ask each team to select a captain and give their team a name. Ask them some review questions, alternating between teams. When a child answers correctly, the captain will place the name of the team in one of the squares. The objective of the game is for the teams to connect four squares horizontally, vertically, or diagonally. Remind the players that they should not only look for ways to connect four squares for their team but also to block the opposing team's chances of connecting four squares. Remind each team to consult with their team players before placing their team's name on a square.

Growing in Self-Control

Lesson Scripture: Daniel 1:1-21

Bible Truth: My self-control can grow.

Bible Story: Daniel 1:1-21

Bible Verse: "Like a city whose walls are broken through is a person who lacks self-control." (Proverbs 25:28, NIV)

FOCUS

Learning Activity: "Do You Have Self-Control?"

Preparation

None

Materials
small treat for each child

Presentation

Give each child a small treat that they would enjoy. Invite them to hold it and smell it, but tell them that they absolutely cannot eat it until you give them permission. Continue talking about how great this treat will be until most of the children are begging to eat it.

Say: **Is it really hard to wait for your treat?** Allow children to answer. **You have to use a lot of self-control to keep from eating it before you have permission.** Pause. **You can eat it now.** Continue talking as children eat their treat.

Say: **The last fruit of the Spirit listed in Galatians in self-control. Can you think of a situation where you would need to use self-control?** Allow children to answer. **Sometimes you have to use self-control to keep you from yelling at someone who is mean to you. Sometimes you have to use self-control to keep you from talking disrespectfully to your parents. Sometimes you have to use self-control to stop playing and take time to read your Bible. When you give up something you want, whether it is something good or bad, so you can do what God wants you to do, you are using self-control. The Holy Spirit can help your self-control grow.**

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: Proverbs 25:28

Preparation

Write Proverbs 25:28 on a piece of poster board.

Gather enough blocks for children to work in groups and build small cities and walls. If you do not have enough blocks, construct one walled city before class and refer to it as you discuss the verse.

Materials
blocks or boxes
small dolls or toy houses
12 boxes or sheets of paper for the memorization activity
markers
poster board

Write the following phrases on separate boxes. Make two sets. If boxes are not available, you can write the phrases on separate sheets of paper.

Box 1: Like a city
Box 2: whose walls
Box 3: are broken through,
Box 4: is a person
Box 5: who lacks self-control.
Box 6: Proverbs 25:28

*If you are using paper instead of boxes, draw a picture of a house on one piece of paper.

Explanation

Divide children into groups. Give each group several blocks or boxes and ask them build a wall around a small doll or toy house.

Say: **In Bible times, people built walls around cities to protect them from their enemies. As long as there was a wall around the city, the enemy could not get inside to attack them. If the walls were broken down** (knock down some of the blocks or boxes), **it was much easier for the enemy to attack the people inside the city.**

Read Proverbs 25:28 to the children.

Our Scripture memory verse tells us that a person who does not have self-control is like a city whose walls are broken down. Image that you are the city. Rebuild the wall of blocks or boxes around the toy. **When you have self-control, it is much harder for your enemies to attack you. Who is your enemy?** Allow children to answer. **Satan is our enemy, and He wants to tempt you and cause you to sin. When you allow the Holy Spirit to grow the fruit of self-control in your life, it is much harder for Satan to invite you to sin. However, if you lose your temper and do whatever you want, it is like your protection is gone.** Knock down the blocks or boxes again. **Without self-control protecting you, you are more likely to sin and do wrong. We all want to keep our walls of self-control around our lives.**

Memorization Activity

Divide children into two teams. Give each team a set of prepared boxes. Ask each team to stack their boxes in correct order. Read the verse together. Knock the boxes down and repeat the activity several times. If you have a small group, you may want to allow children to take turns and stack the boxes individually.

*If using paper instead of boxes, allow children to arrange the verse in the correct order around a picture of a house.

**adapted from a lesson from the Ministry to Children website. http://ministry-to-children.com/self-control-bible-lesson-fruit-of-the-spirit/

INSTRUCT

Bible Story: "Daniel Uses Self-Control," Daniel 1:1-21

Preparation

Read and study Daniel 1:1-21.

Prepare a tray of food that would be appealing to your children. Include a special drink as well. Prepare a second tray of food that only has fruits, vegetables, and a glass of water.

Materials
Bible
food appealing to children in your culture
fruits
vegetables
water

Presentation

Use the two trays of food as illustrations as you tell the story.

Say: **We have already learned the story of Daniel when he was an adult and had to face the lions. However, long before Daniel was thrown in the lion's den, he faced another enemy. This enemy was the king's food.** Show the tray of appealing foods.

When Daniel was just a boy, the city where he lived was taken over by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon. The king ordered his soldiers to capture several boys and bring them to live in Babylon. These boys had to be very smart because they were going to be trained to work for the king. Daniel was one of these boys.

The king ordered the boys to eat only the best food in the kingdom, food that had been prepared in the king's kitchen. This was the best food you could find anywhere. This should have made Daniel happy, but there was a problem. Just like we pray before eating, this food had been prayed over too. However, the people who prayed over this food had prayed to false gods. Daniel and the other boys served the one true God. God did not allow them to eat food that had been offered in prayer to false gods. If they ate it, they would be sinning.

Hold up the tray of appealing foods. Say: **The food looked really good, and I am sure that the boys were hungry! However, Daniel and three of the other boys decided to use self-control and not eat this food. Instead, they asked the man in charge of the food to only feed them fruits, vegetables, and water that had been not been offered in prayer to false gods.**

Show the tray of fruits, vegetables, and water. **The man was worried that the boys would get weak only eating this food, but he agreed to let them try.**

At the end of ten days, Daniel and his three friends, who had eaten the fruit and vegetables (show correct tray), **were stronger and healthier than the boys who had eaten the food** (show the tray of appealing foods) **from the king. God also made Daniel and his three friends the smartest of all of the boys taken to serve the king.**

Because Daniel used self-control, it was as if he had a wall built around his life. His self-control kept sin out of his life. His self-control caused him not to eat the food. Because of Daniel's self-control God blessed his life. God will do the same thing for you when you use self-control!

APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Art, "Controlling Myself"

Preparation

Divide a sheet of paper into four sections. At the top of each section write one of the following words: "mouth," "hands," "feet," and "mind." Prepare one paper for each child.

Materials
paper
pencil
crayons

Presentation

Say: **It is important to let self-control grow in our lives. Can anyone think of a situation when you would need to control your mouth?** Allow children to answer. **When would you need to control your hands or feet?** Allow children to answer. **When do you need to control your mind?** Allow children to answer.

Give each child a prepared sheet of paper. Ask them to list or draw situations in the appropriate box to demonstrate when self-control is needed.

MINISTRY TIME

Preparation

Cut the colored paper into fruit-shaped pieces. Make enough for each child to have one.

Materials
"Christian" tree poster (from Lesson 1)
colored paper
scissors
adhesive

Presentation

Say: **God can make the fruit of self-control grow in your life.** Take any fruit-shaped papers with the word "self-control" written on them (located at the bottom of the poster from Lesson 1) and move them from the bottom of the poster into the tree.

Say: **Over the last few weeks we have learned about the fruit of the Spirit. Can anyone name the different fruit we have learned about?** Allow children to answer. **God wants to grow the fruit of the Spirit in your life.**

Give each child a piece of fruit-shaped paper. Ask them to write their name on the paper. Pray a special prayer over the children asking God to grow the fruit of the Spirit in their lives. Help the children attach their fruit-shaped papers to the tree.