

Just Us Little Guys

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

Series 1

God Loves Me

Lesson 1	God Loves Me
Lesson 2	I am Important to God
Lesson 3	God Loves My Family
Lesson 4	I Can Love God Back
Lesson 5	What is Faith?
Lesson 6	God Never Changes
Lesson 7	What is Forgiveness?
Lesson 8	God Loves Everybody

Using these Lessons

Each of these lessons:

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

Each of these lessons consists of 7 parts:

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

Teaching Tips:

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

This is the secret of being a good teacher!

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

With love in Christ,

Sharon

God Loves Me

Teacher Pep Talk: This is my favorite lesson! It is also the most important lesson you will EVER teach ANYONE... GOD LOVES YOU! Enjoy yourself as you teach it to the children. You will be amazed at how Little Guys can soak up BIG concepts so quickly! Is it any wonder that Jesus said that the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to ones "such as these"?

Before teaching the lesson, review the following verses:
Psalm 139:13, John 3:16, 1 John 4:8, and Hebrews 13:8.
Luke 12:7 "...the very hairs of your head are all numbered"

You will need: A hairbrush or comb of your own.

Major Points: God knows who I am.
God knows all about me.
God loves me just like I am right now.
God is love.
God's love doesn't ever change.

Memory Verse: 1 John 4:8b ... God is love.

Lesson:

God knows who I am.

- How many of you have a brother or sister?
- Did you know them before they were born?
- God knew you before you were born, and He knows you now!

God knows all about me.

- How many of you know me? (*We may not know each other very well yet, but I hope we will soon.*)
- God knows me/you very well. In fact He knows us better than we know ourselves!
- **Show a hairbrush.** I don't know how many hairs I have on my own head. I suppose that I could try and count them. But even if I managed to count them, every day I lose some hairs and every day some new hairs grow! You can see from my hairbrush that today I have already lost some. (**Pull out one hair from hairbrush.**)
- But God knows the number of hairs on my head, and on yours too! (And He knows everything else about us too!)
- Luke 12:7 *Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered.*

God loves me just like I am right now

- Who loves their mommy?
- Does she have to do something else before you can love her?
- God loves us already and has proven it by sending Jesus to tell us how much He loves us!

- John 3:16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son...

God is Love/ God's Love doesn't ever change

- Hebrews 13:8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.
- Since God doesn't change and God is love, His love can't change either.
- You and I may change, but God doesn't change.
- God loves you know and He will never stop loving you. He only wants what is best for you. Isn't that a wonderful thing?

Prayer: Let's pray and thank God for His love.

Dear God,
Thank you that you love me.
Thank you for knowing me.
Thank you for never changing.
I love you back. Amen.

Suggested Activities: (Pick and choose the activities that work best for you!)

Heart Nametags

Preparation before Class: Cut out one construction paper heart for each child. On each one write the words "God Loves ME..." leaving space for the child's name underneath.
During Class: (Older children may wish to cut out their own paper heart and write the words.) Distribute one paper heart to each child. Allow the children to write their name on the heart and to decorate it using crayons, etc. Tape or pin the nametag on each child.

Paper Hearts

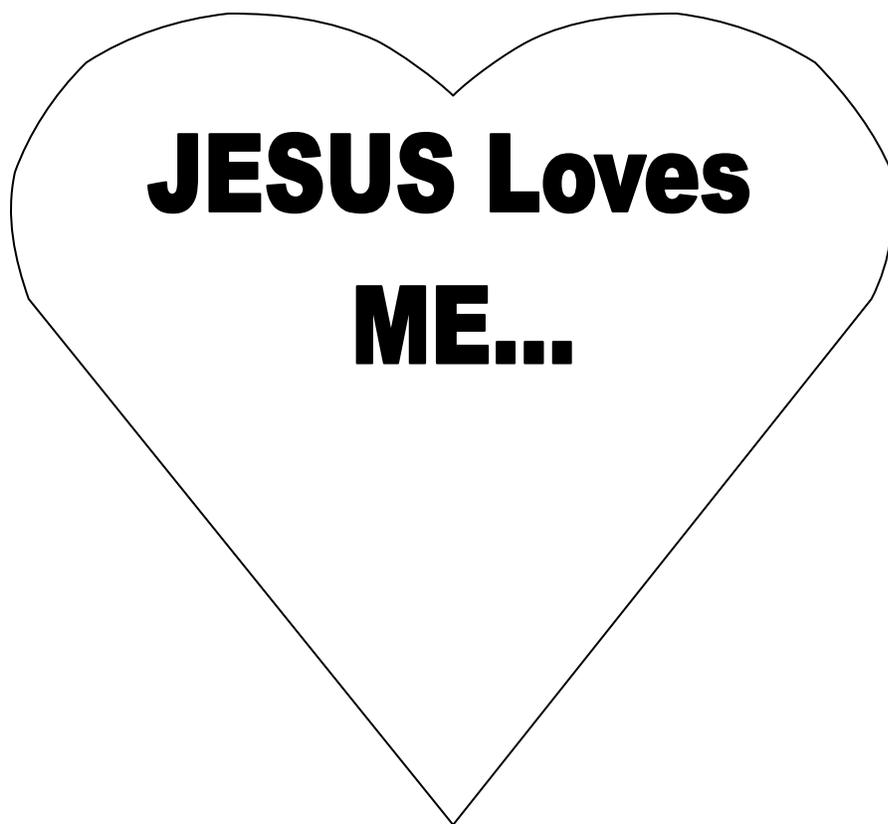
Cut out a construction paper heart for each child in the classroom. Write "Jesus Loves Me" on the paper heart, leaving room for the child's name underneath. Glue the heart to a larger piece of paper of a contrasting color. Have the children "write" their name with glue or glue sticks on the heart. Sprinkle the wet glue with glitter and then gently tap the paper to dislodge glitter that is not stuck. Allow to dry!

Sing "Jesus Loves Me"

Teach the children the words to this wonderful old song and sing it with them at least twice. Clap hands, snap fingers, or march around the room while singing to change things up!

Memorize "God is Love"

With chalk or masking tape draw three circles on the floor that are one "hop" away from each other. The circles represent the 3 words in our memory verse. Take turns and let each child say the words of the verse "God" "is" "love" as they hop from one circle to the next. The other children listen to the words in the verse as they wait, that way they will be ready when it is their turn!



I am Important to God

Teacher Pep Talk: People need to know that they are important to God. The whole basis of the Christian faith rests on the reality that God cherishes us and cares for us. The facts that God knows who we are as individuals and that he cares about each and every one of us are very important to convey to children. You will do a great job of teaching this, I am sure! Be positive and encouraging!

Before teaching this lesson familiarize yourself with the following verses and the verses around them. John 3:16, Jesus' teaching on the Birds of the Air and the Lilies of the Valley in Luke 12:24-28, and the Parable of the Lost Sheep in Luke 15:4-7.

Major Points: God knows me.
God loves me.
God cares about me and for me
I am important as an individual to God.

Memory Verse: Psalm 23:1 The LORD is my shepherd...

Lesson:

God knows me.

- How many of you were here last week?
- Remember the hairbrush?
- God knows how many hairs are on our heads! (Luke 12:7)
- God knew us before we were born! (Psalm 139:13)

God loves me.

- Whom do you love?
- How do you show them your love?
- Do you take care of them when they're sick? Do you help feed them? Do you hug them?
- God loves you very much!

God cares about me and for me.

- Do you know who makes the flowers? (God) Who is it that created the birds? (God)
- It is God who makes the flowers so pretty. They don't work and yet God clothes them beautifully. (Luke 12:27-28)
- It is God who takes care of the birds. They don't farm and they don't have any barns, but God feeds them. (Luke 12:24)
- And God who cares so well for the birds and the flowers has said that He cares even more about you! Therefore He will surely take care of you and your needs!

I am important to God as an individual.

- How many of you have a pet?
- Do you take care of it?
- Long ago boys looked after herds of goats and sheep. They took care of them. They were called “shepherds.”
- Jesus told a story about a shepherd who was taking care of 100 sheep! One wandered off and got lost! The shepherd left the other 99 to go and find the lost one. When he found it he was happy and rejoiced!
- Jesus said that God cares about us that way!
- Our memory verse says that “The Lord is my shepherd”.
- God knows us, and loves us, and is taking care of each of us!

Let’s pray and thank God that we are each important to Him!

Prayer: Dear God,
Thank you that you care about each of us!
Thank you that we are important to you!
Thank you for loving us! We love you back! Amen.

Suggested Activities:

Cotton Ball Sheep

Draw the outline of a sheep on a piece of paper. Write the words “Thank you, God, for caring about each one of us.” at the top of the page. You may also want to add “The Parable of the Lost Sheep, Luke 15:4-7”. Copy the paper for each child. Provide cotton balls and glue. Allow the children to dip the cotton balls into a little bit of glue and then glue the cotton balls to the sheep picture. Allow to dry.

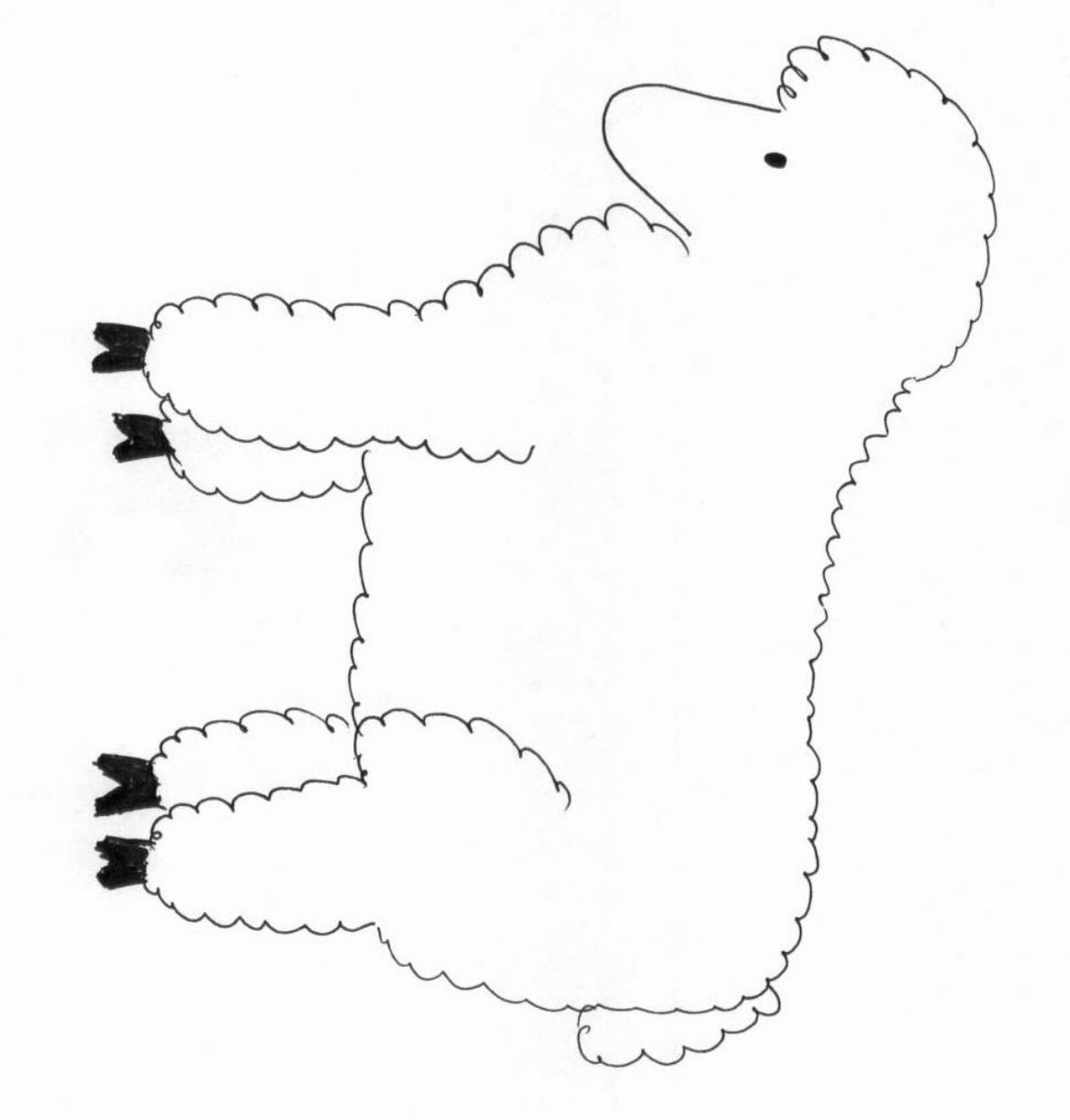
Play Hide and Sheep

NOTE: For fun hang some sheets or towels around the room on tables or chairs (to make better places to hide).

Have the children start sitting in a circle in the middle of the room. Have someone volunteer to be the Shepherd who will “search” for the lost sheep. Then have the other children go and hide around the room while Shepherd hides his/her eyes and counts to 10 (or higher). The sheep should occasionally make some “baa” sounds like sheep. The Shepherd goes to find the sheep and brings them safely back to the circle (or “pen”). The last sheep found becomes the new Shepherd.

Alternatively: Blindfold the Shepherd and have the sheep stand around the shepherd. When the shepherd calls out “sheep” the sheep answer “baa”. The Shepherd tries to touch a sheep, and the sheep try to escape. When someone is finally touched they switch places with the shepherd.

Thank you, God, for caring about each one of us!
The Parable of the Lost Sheep. Luke 15:4-7



God Loves My Family

Teacher Pep Talk: Families are central to the life of a child. They represent his/her world, especially when the child is very young. Children often do not understand that all families are not the same as theirs. This lesson is offered to help talk about how God created families so that we could love each other, and take care of each other. In families parents and children have different roles. Everyone in a family is important. This lesson helps children think about who is in their family and what our responsibilities are to each other. Let the children know that God loves all the members of their family and that it is good for us to love our family members too.

Before teaching this lesson, please familiarize yourself with the following verses and the verses surrounding them. Genesis 2:24, Psalm 127:3, Ephesians 6:1-4. The Bible story is from Genesis 18:10-15 and 21:1-2 and is about Abraham, Sarah, and Isaac.

Major Points: God knows and loves our family members.
Children are a gift from God.
Children are to obey their parents.
Parents are to love their children and take care of them

Memory Verse: Psalm 127:3 Children are a gift from God...

Lesson: **Bible Story: Abraham, Sarah and Isaac**
Many years ago there lived a man named Abraham and his wife Sarah. Abraham and Sarah had been married a long, long time, but they had never had any children. One day God promised Abraham and Sarah a son, even though they were very old. *(Abraham was 100 and Sarah was 90!!)* Although it seemed impossible, Abraham believed what God had promised! Not long afterwards, baby Isaac was born! God had blessed all of them!

God knows and loves our family members.

- The story of Abraham, Sarah and Isaac is about a family.
- Who is in your family? *(Wait until everyone answers.)*
- Does God know who we are? *(Yes!)*
- Does God know who our family members are? *(Yes!)*
- Does God care about us? *(Yes!)*
- And God cares about all the members of our family!
- God loves us and all our family!

Children are a gift from God.

- The Bible tells us that God made families and that God gives us children, just like God gave Abraham and Sarah a son. (*Isaac*)
- The Bible says that “Children are a gift from God!” Did you ever think of yourself as a gift? (*That’s kind of funny isn’t it?*)
- But the Bible says that children are a gift from God.

Children are to obey their parents.

- Tell me more about families. What do the people in your family do? (*Listen for answers. They will, of course, vary greatly.*)
- Everyone in a family has different jobs to do.
- Did you know that as a child you have a job to do?
- The Bible says that children are to obey their parents.
- What does that word, obey, mean? (*Obey means to do what you are asked by your parents.*) **[Give some examples.]**

Parents are to love and care for their children.

- Parents have a job to do too!
- Parents are to love their children and take care of them.
- This is another reason God made families!

Let’s pray and thank God for making families!

Prayer:

Dear God,
Thank you for making families!
Thank you for our families!
Help us to love everyone in our family!
Amen.

Suggested Activities:

NOTE: This is a rather lengthy lesson, so if you do all of it as written you will have less time than usual today for activities.

Children are a Gift from God

Write “Children are a gift from God... Psalm 127:3” on a sheet of paper. Make copies and give one to each child. Allow the child to draw the various members of their family on the paper. Help the child write names for the people on the paper.

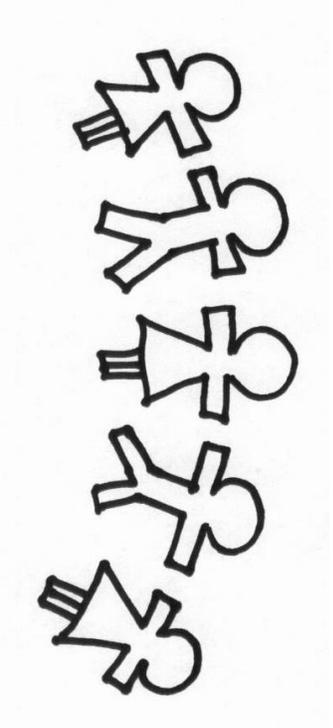
Paper Links

Before class, cut out strips of construction paper 1” wide and 8” long. Allow the children to write the names of their family members on the strips. Make paper chains with the strips of paper by gluing the ends of one together and putting the second strip through the first one before gluing. Glue Sticks work best! (Or you can staple them as well.)

Alternative: Give one link that says “The links of my family are important to God!” to each child and allow the children to add enough other links to represent their family.

Children are a Gift from God!!

Psalm 127:3



I Can Love God Back

Teacher Pep Talk: God loves us! And you get to teach the children that they can love God back!! The amazing thing about this is that no one can EVER take that away from you!! You can love God all you want! He is big enough to take all of our love, from all of us, all of the time. And the REALLY amazing thing is that He never stops loving us. So, no matter how much love we give God, He gives us back MORE!!!

Before you take on this lesson, please familiarize yourself with these verses Matthew 23:37, John 15:10-11, and 1 John 4:19-21.

You will Need: A telephone (*can be a toy phone*) for an object lesson, copies of the coloring sheet for each child, crayons or colored pencils, scissors, yarn or stapler.

Memory Verse: We love him, because he first loved us. 1 John 4:19

Major Points: God loves us.
We can love God back.
We can talk to God through prayer.

Lesson: **God loves us.**

- We have been learning that God loves us!
- The Bible tells us over and over how much God loves us!
- God shows us in many ways that He loves us. Let's list some. (*Wait for answers.*)
- God knows who we are and he cares about each of us.
- God gives a family to love us and take care of us.
- And God proved his love for us by sending his only son, Jesus, here for us.

We can love God back.

- It is a wonderful thing to know that God loves us!
- Did you know that God wants us to love Him back?
- Jesus said that the greatest of all the commandments was for us to love God!
- The Bible says: We love him, because he first loved us. (*1 John 4:19*)
- Let's say that together. (*Repeat verse x 2*)
- That means the reason we are able to love God is that He loved us first.

Object Lesson: **We Can Talk to God through Prayer**

- Bring out Telephone

- Children, what is this? (*A telephone.*)
- What do we use a phone for? (*To make calls, etc.*)
- We use a phone to talk to people: to tell them things, and to listen to them.
- Whom do you like to call on the phone? (*Parents, grandparents...*)
- Let's pretend to call someone on the phone! [**Demonstrate calling someone and talking to them on the phone.**]
- We can talk to God without a phone. It is called **prayer**.
- We can love God back. Prayer is just one way to express our love to God.
- Let's talk about other ways we can show God that we love Him. (*Prayer, Reading the Bible, Coming to Church, Obeying our parents, etc.*)

Let's pray and thank God that He loves us and we can love Him back.

Prayer: Dear God,
Thank you for loving us!
Thank you that we can love you back!
Amen

Suggested Activities:

Play Telephone

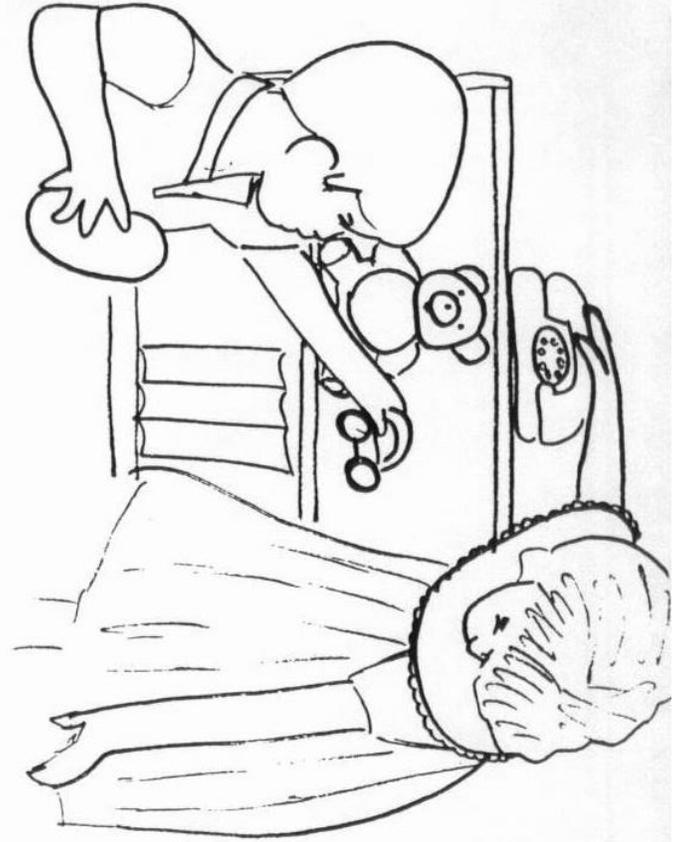
Using the pretend telephone, allow the children to "call" people they know and talk to them. Talk about the different parts of a conversation. (*Greeting; Expressions of love, news, needs, or feelings; Closing words and Good-bye.*) Point out that through **prayer** we can talk to God without a phone. We may want to tell Him important things in prayer. When we say "Amen" at the end of our prayer that means "Let it be so."

NOTE: You may wish to allow the children to "call" God on the pretend phone and tell Him one important thing.

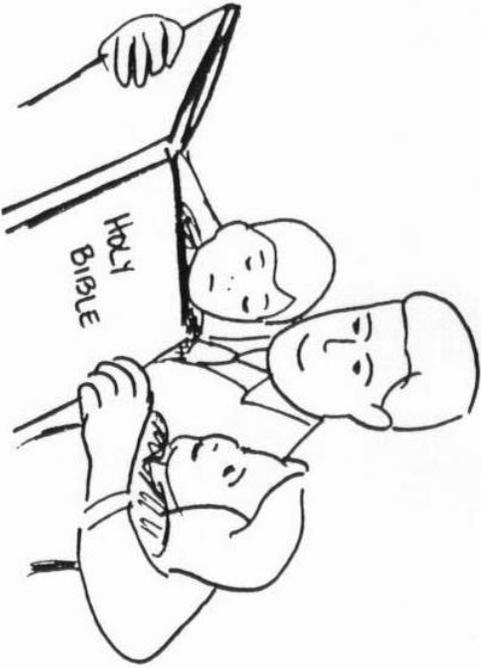
We Love God Back

Discuss ways that we may honor God and His commands and show that we love Him. (Ex: Prayer, Reading the Bible, Obeying Parents, Coming to Church.) Have the children color the attached page representing four of these ways to honor God. After coloring the four pictures, cut the sheet into fourths; stack portions on top of each other; staple left edge to make a book. OR punch two holes in left edge and tie yarn through holes to bind into a booklet. Send these booklets home with the children.

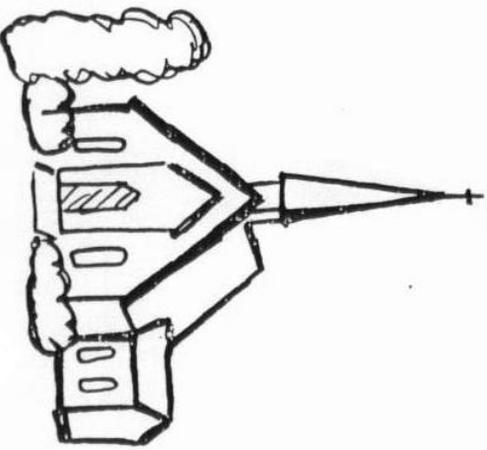
Sing "Jesus Loves Me"



1 John 4:19 We love because...



...He first loved us.



What is Faith?

Teacher Pep Talk: How much fun! You get to talk about what faith is! It is such a great blessing to teach a huge spiritual concept to a room full of children and watch them drink it all in without batting an eyelash. Children are amazing in their capacity to do just that. And when they finish listening to your lesson, they will understand faith as well as any grown-up. I believe this is why Jesus said that “the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these” when referring to little children. Bless them!

Before you start teaching this lesson, please review the following Bible verses: Romans 12:3, Ephesians 2:8, Romans 2:23-28, and our memory verse for this lesson, Hebrews 11:1

You will need: Copies of the activities page for each child, crayons or colored pencils, scissors, yarn, and glue.

Memory Verse: Hebrews 11:1 Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. KJV

Major Points:

- Faith is a gift from God.
- God wants us to live in faith.
- Moving in faith causes us to be blessed.

Lesson:

NOTE: As you begin the lesson, show the children something you are good at that required some practice. (EX: writing your name in cursive, or playing an instrument.)

Faith is a gift of God

- Today we are going to talk about a special kind of believing.
- Do you know what believing is? (*Allow them to answer.*)
- How many of you believe you will have lunch today? (*Wait for answers.*) Who will fix lunch for you? (*Wait for answers*)
- So, you believe that _____ will fix your lunch today. You believe this because _____ has done so in the past over and over again.
- Faith is believing in something you can't necessarily prove.
- Memory Verse: *Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things unseen. Hebrews 11:1*
- The Bible says that Faith is given to us by God. But it is something you may have to practice for it to feel natural (*like writing your name in cursive, or playing an instrument.*)

God wants us to live in faith

- God loves us and He can do all things. This means that God is always able to take care of us. So, we can **trust** God.
- When we go through our days trusting God and knowing He will help take care of us, that is **living in faith**.
- Jesus told His disciples to have faith (or to believe in) God.

When we live in Faith, we are blessed.

- When we trust God (even a little), we find out that He keeps His word. This helps us trust Him even more the next time.
- The Bible is full of stories of how people had faith in God, and He blessed them for it!
- If the children want to hear one of the stories of faith, tell them this one from Mark 5:24-34 about an old woman who had been very sick for a long time. She believed that if she could just touch Jesus' robe that she would be healed. She managed to touch the hem of His robe and she was healed! When Jesus realized she had touched Him, He told her *"Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering."*
Mark 5:34

Let's pray and thank God that He gives us faith.

Prayer:

Dear God,
Thank you that you love us.
Thank you for giving us faith.
Thank you that we can know you and trust you! Amen

Suggested Activities:

Faith Door Hangers: Use the sheet provided. Make one copy for each child. Allow the children to color the circles with crayons, and then cut out the circles. Write the children's names on the back of the circles. Use yarn to attach the two circles together (you may either glue one end of the yarn to each circle, or punch holes in the circles and tie the yarn to each one.) Send the Door Hangers home with the children, so that they may hang them over the doorknobs to their rooms. (The kids love these things!)

Test of Faith: Scatter 4-5 chairs or large objects across the floor of your room. Have the children sit by the wall or on one end of the room. Ask for a volunteer who will trust you to lead them safely around the room. Blindfold the volunteer. While the other children watch, lead the blindfolded child around the room safely avoiding all of the chairs you have scattered there. Remove the blindfold. Explain as you are doing this that this is how God leads us through life. Sometimes we are unaware of dangers or problems around us, but God is always there, helping us through them. We can have faith in God. Repeat until all children have had a turn.

NOTE: For more fun put words or pictures on the chairs depicting kinds of trouble or problems we may encounter in life. Lead the child safely through them all.

Faith is the Substance of Things Hoped for,
the Evidence of things Not Seen.

Hebrews 11:1 KJV



God Never Changes

Teacher Pep Talk: Stability is so important for children. It is really great for them to learn that God never changes. So many things in their lives may change. People grow older, friends come and go, and schedules change. But no matter what else may change, God is good and He never changes. This is a very reassuring concept for young children to grasp. You are going to have the joy of teaching that to the children!

Before teaching the lesson, review over the following verses: Malachi 3:6, Romans 8:35 and 38-39. Also our memory verse: Hebrews 13:8

You will need: A copy of the activities sheet for each child, crayons, and scissors.

OPTIONAL: Pictures of baby animals and grown animals.

AND/OR Bring a picture of you when you were younger.

Major Points:

- People and things change around us.
- God does not change.
- God loves us forever (not changing) no matter what our circumstances.

Memory Verse: Hebrews 13:8 *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever.*

Lesson:

People and things change around us.

- Today we're going to be talking about things that change.
- Things change all around us all the time.
- **[Look at pictures of animals as they grow and change.]**
- Sometimes people change. Do you grow? Do you learn new things? These are ways of changing.
- Here is a picture of me when I was younger. I have changed, haven't I? **[Show picture of younger you.]**

God does not change.

- People change, things change. Sometimes change can even be scary or cause us to worry. But there is one thing we can always count on: God does NOT change!
- Isn't that wonderful? God does not change... ever.
- The Bible teaches us that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday today and forever. Hebrews 13:8
- Let's repeat that together. **(Repeat x2)**

God loves us forever.

- God loves us and nothing will ever separate us from that love in Jesus.
- Absolutely nothing can separate us from God's love.
- Can you make a happy face? (Wait for happy faces.) Can you make a sad face or a frowny face? (See sad faces.) Can you make a scared face? An angry face? (Wait)
- God loves us when we are happy and sad. He loves us whether we are scared or mad. God loves us all the time.
- And God never changes, so that means that God loves us forever and ever.
- Isn't that a good thing to know? Even if lots of things change around us, even if we change, God always loves us and God does NOT change.

Let's pray and thank God that He will always love us.

Prayer:

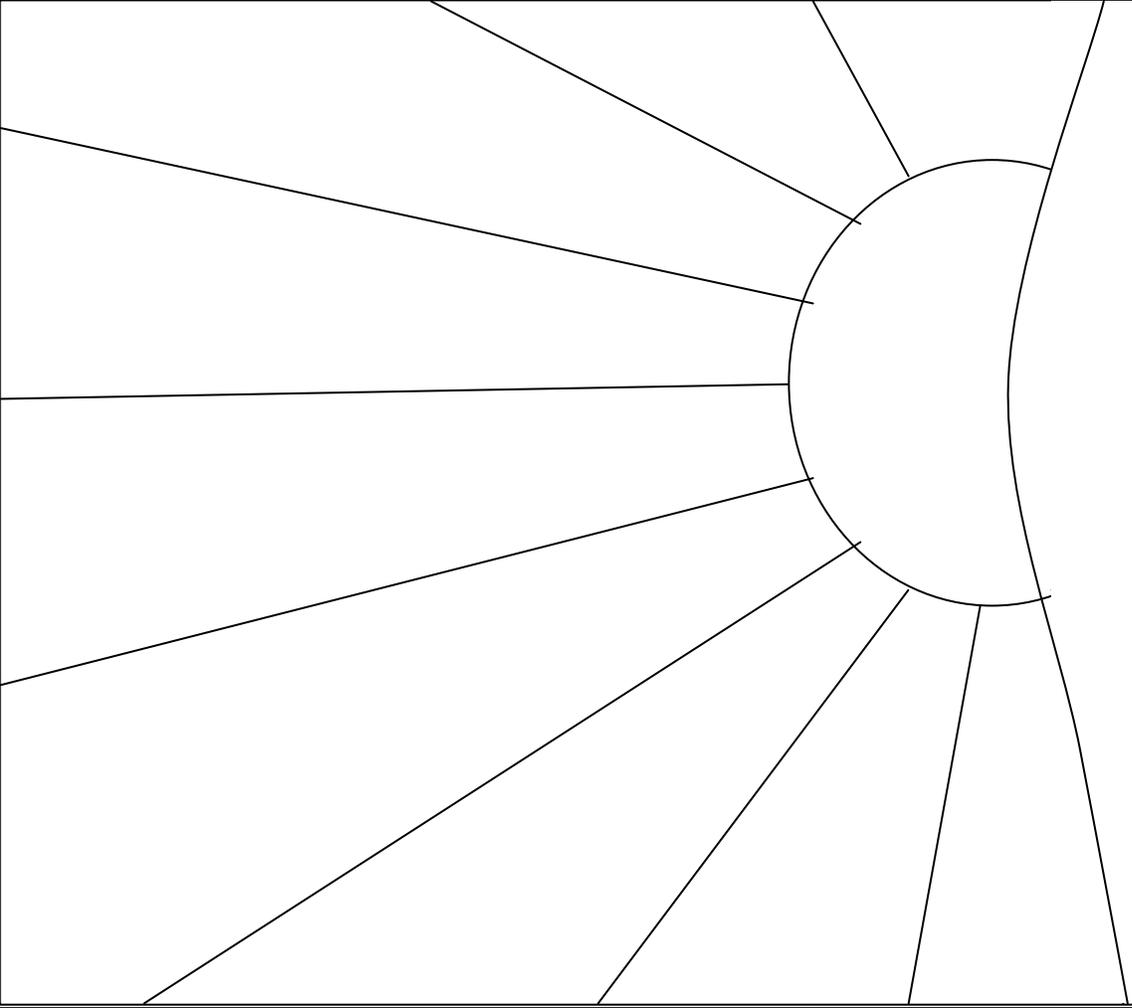
Dear God,
Thank you that you never change!
Thank you that you love us forever and ever.
We love you back.
Amen.

Suggested Activities:

Sunray cutouts: Children this age love to practice cutting with scissors. In this activity they cut along straight lines after they have colored a picture with crayons. Make one copy for each child in class. (There are two copies on each page.) The half-sheet has a picture of the sun coming up over the horizon with sunrays extending to the edge of the paper. Have the children color the page. When they are finished coloring, give them scissors and let them cut from the edge of the paper, along the sunrays to the sun. When they have accomplished this the sun rays will be separated from each other. You may choose to glue the base to a larger sheet of paper. Leave the sunrays loose.

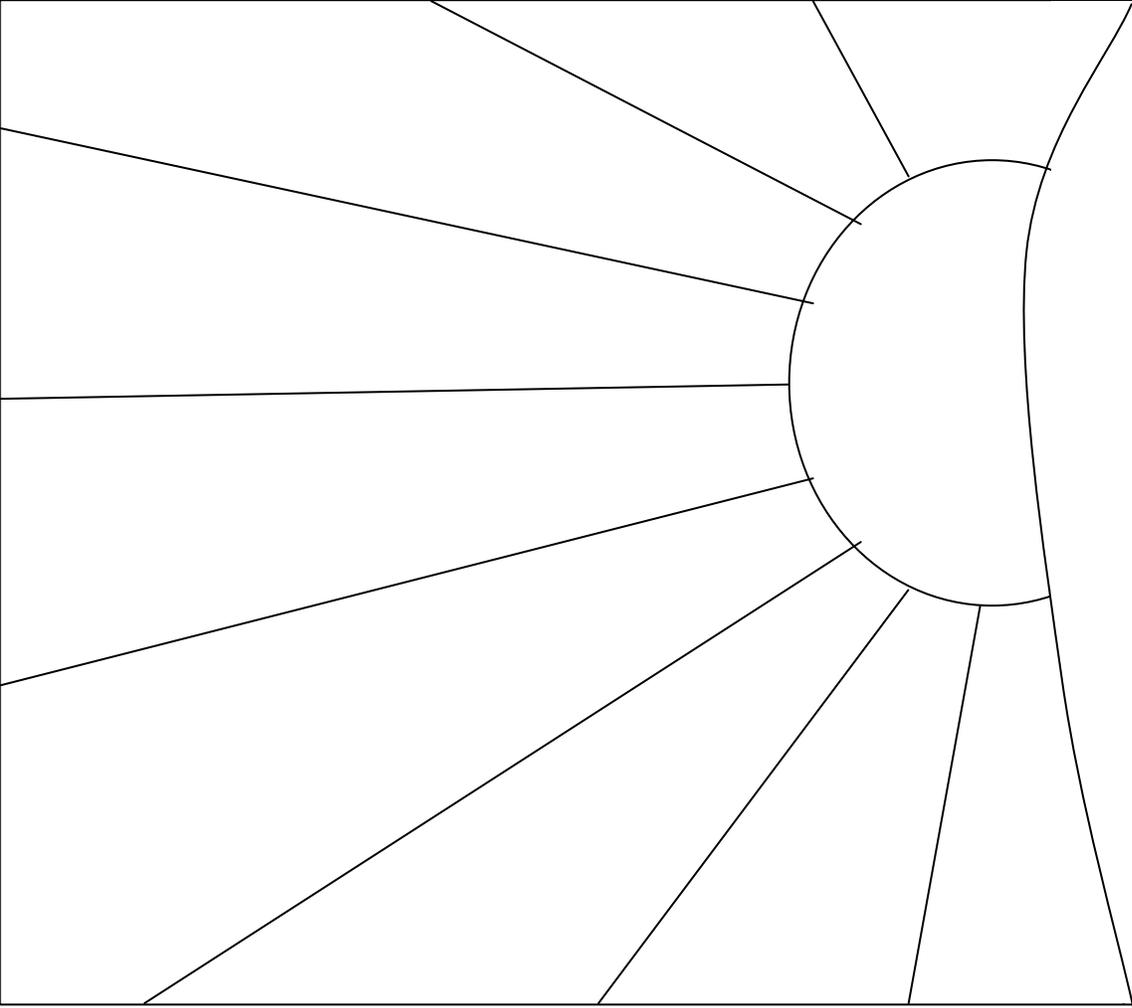
Bible Verse Memorization: Hebrews 13:8 *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday today and forever.* Have the children line up against the wall. Clear a path in front of them for some hopping room. Say the first part of the verse together. "Jesus Christ is the same..." and then let them hop forward once each time as they say "yesterday" "today" and "forever". (See who can hop the farthest especially on the word "forever".) It shouldn't take too long to memorize this verse!

Yesterday, Today and Forever. Talk about the concepts of "yesterday" "today" and "forever". Today means right now or today. Yesterday means stuff that happened and was true yesterday (or before today) and forever means not just tomorrow, but all the days following that from now on. To demonstrate these ideas have one child stand in front of group (today), one child stand over to side slightly (yesterday) and have a third child get up and run out into the hallway where he can't be seen (forever)! (*Go get him!*)



Hebrews 13:8

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday
today and forever.



Hebrews 13:8

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday
today and forever.

What is Forgiveness?

Teacher Pep Talk: Teaching people about the Forgiveness offered by God through His Son, Jesus Christ, is the most important and life changing thing you can ever teach anybody. You are truly way out in the middle of the mission field here. You are sowing seeds that will lead to the salvation of others! Good for you!!! Don't be afraid!!

Pray before you go in to teach this lesson. Ask God to make your presentation soft and meek, to help you be open and transparent and vulnerable. Ask the Holy Spirit to be with you as you present this most wonderful of all messages... **the Good News of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.**

Before you head in to teach this lesson, please review the following scripture verses: John 3:16, Hebrews 9:22, Romans 6:23, Romans 8:1 and Acts 10:43.

You will need: A clear jar with a lid, strips of dark colored paper, a cross made out of white paper, all of which will fit into the jar.

Major Points:

- God loves us.
- Each of us sins.
- We can't clean up our own sins.
- God can and will forgive our sins because of Jesus.

Memory Verse: Acts 10:43...everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.

Lesson:

God loves us.

- We've been talking about how God loves us.
- We have learned that God loves us all the time. He loves us when we are happy or sad. He loves us when we are good or bad. He loves us forever and ever.
- God loves us so much that He sent His Son Jesus to us to provide forgiveness for all of our sins.

Each of us sins.

- That is a strange word, "sin". We need to talk about what it means.
- The word "sin" literally means "to miss the mark". If you had a bow and arrow and were shooting for a bull's-eye, and you missed, that would be picture of what the word "sin" means.

- We don't always do what is right. Sometimes we choose to do wrong things. That is sin.
- When we know what is right, but we choose to do what is wrong, that is sin.
- And sin is a real problem for us. Let me show you.

Object Lesson: **We can't clean up our own sins.**

- **[Take clear jar with lid and show the children.]** See this jar? It is pretty and clean, there is nothing in it. This jar is like us before sin.
- **[Take dark strips of paper, open lid, and put them in.]** See this dark colored paper? This represents sin. Whenever we know what is right, but we choose to do what is wrong, we sin. It is like if we take the dark paper and put it in the clear jar.
- **[Close lid with strips of paper inside.]** Uh-Oh. Now the sins are on the inside and they can't come out. **[Shake jar upside down.]** They don't come out no matter what. *(If the children suggest taking off the lid, tell them "No, that's the real problem with sin. Once it's on the inside of us, there's no way we can clean ourselves up! Only God can do that!")*
- This is very sad. It would be VERY sad if we had to live this way forever. There is no way for us to clean ourselves up. There is no way for us to take out the sins.

God can and will forgive our sins because of Jesus.

- **[Be excited!!!]** But!!!! There is GOOD NEWS!! God can clean us up!! God can clean us up because of JESUS!!!
- **[Show paper cross.]** Jesus, the Son of God, came to earth and died for our sins on the cross. And because of what Jesus has done, we can be forgiven of all of our sins!!
- **[Open jar lid, take out dark paper, and put in paper cross. Close jar lid again.]** Because of Jesus and what He did for us, God can and will forgive our sins. When Jesus comes in, the sins go out! And then our lives are new and different, because Jesus comes to live inside of us.
- **[Throw dark strips of paper at the outside of the jar.]** Even if we sin again (and we will) the sins don't get stuck inside. Once Jesus lives inside of us, the sins can't get back inside again. Only Jesus lives there!
- **[Show children the jar with the cross inside.]** God has forgiven our sin because of what Jesus has done. And He will never count those sins as ours again. When God looks at us now, He only sees Jesus in us!! Isn't that wonderful?!

Let's pray and thank God for sending Jesus and for forgiveness of our sins.

Prayer: Dear God,
Thank you for loving us.
Thank you for sending Your Son, Jesus.
Thank you for forgiveness of sin through Him.
Amen.

Suggested Activities:

NOTE: This is a long lesson today. As a result you may have less time to do activities afterwards.

Repeat the Object Lesson Children find this object lesson fascinating. They may wish to have you repeat it, or they may want to try putting the strips of paper in by themselves, or taking them out, etc. Encourage them to do so with your supervision. As they do the parts of opening and closing the lid and putting in the various papers, tell them the parts of the lesson again.

Missing the Mark This is a simple game of eye-to-hand coordination. You will need a bucket and at least one small ball. Place the empty bucket at the end of the room. Have the children line up behind an imaginary line on the floor. From the line have the children try 3 times to throw a ball into the bucket. Repeat until everyone has had a turn. Explain that the word sin originally meant “missing the mark.” When we choose to do what is wrong instead of what is right, it is called “sin”. This is because we are “missing the mark” of what God wanted for us originally. **NOTE:** *To change up this game, have more than one target, or more than one type of object to throw. You can change the distance needed to throw, keep score, blindfold the thrower, etc. Masking tape makes a great line on the floor or rug. You can use sheets of newspaper wadded up for “balls”. Plastic buckets work great, or you can use wastepaper cans, etc.*

Wiggle Waters *I used to think my first grade teacher made up this game... but then as I got older I figured “No... probably not.” Anyway... it’s a great game for Little Guys!* Choose one person to be the “Judge”. The Judge comes to the front of the room and says “1, 2, 3, Wiggle Waters!” Everyone else in the room begins wiggling all over while standing in place. Then the Judge says “1, 2, 3, Still Waters!!” and everyone “freezes” and stands perfectly still. The Judge then chooses someone who seems to be the stillest to be the next “judge”. Repeat... and repeat... and repeat.... (*Great game!*)

NOTE: <i>I love to use a variation of this game. Use a CD player and a fun Christian music CD. The Judge turns the music on and then off again. (No need to say the Wiggle Waters line.) While the music is playing, the children dance in place. When the music is off they “freeze.” The Judge chooses the stillest person to become the next judge. Repeat until all of the children have had a chance to play the Judge.</i>

God Loves Everybody!

Teacher Pep Talk: We talk to children a lot today about tolerance, and about treating others equally or fairly. We talk and talk and talk. But many times we don't give them a reason for them to treat others as we ask. This lesson lays the foundation for all human relationships. The reason we are to treat others well, or as we wish to be treated ourselves, is that God loves everybody! Since God created all of us, and loves all of us, and values each of us, we should follow His example and love others as He loves them. Today you get a chance to teach the children to follow the "Golden Rule" just as Jesus taught us to do.

Before you teach this lesson, please review the following Bible verses that have to do with God's love and His command that we love one another (*even our enemies*): John 3:16, Matthew 5:43-47, 1 John 4:7-21, and our memory verse: Matthew 7:12 (**The Golden Rule**)

You will need: Pictures of people from around the world. (*From different ethnic groups, races, ages, wearing different clothes, etc.*)

Major Points:

- God loves us.
- God loves everybody.
- God commands us to love others.
- We are to treat others as we'd like to be treated.

Memory verse: Matthew 7:12 ...do to others what you would have them do to you...

Lesson:

God loves us.

- We have been learning that God loves us.
- Tell me, if God loves us, does that mean He loves you? Does it mean that He loves me? Does it mean that He loves even the people we don't know? How many people do you think God loves? (*Wait for answers to these questions.*)

God loves everybody.

- God loves you, and me. God loves him, and her.
- God loves everybody!!
- The Bible tells us that God loves the whole world!!

- Let's look at some pictures of people in the world. **[Show pictures of persons from different places in the world. Discuss differences in appearances, dress, age, etc.]**
- God loves all of these people, no matter how different they may seem from one another or from us.

God commands us to love others.

- Did you know that God wants us to love other people? (Yes.)
- God wants us to love others. In fact, God commands that we love others. A command is like an order.
- So, then we are supposed to love other people. But how are we supposed to do that? How are we supposed to show love to other people? (Take answers, they will vary.)

We are to treat others as we'd like to be treated.

- Sometimes it may seem hard to know exactly how to show love to other people.
- But Jesus gave us a rule to follow to help us.
- The rule is in our Memory verse today. Matthew 7:12 "...do to others what you would have them do to you..."
- How do you like to be treated? (Nicely, fairly, kindly, etc.)
- So we can treat others that way too. That is showing love to them. We are to treat others the way we'd like to be treated.

Isn't it nice that God loves us and that He taught us to love others?
Let's pray and thank God for that!

Prayer: Dear God,
Thank you for loving us.
Thank you for helping us show love to others.
Thank you that you love everybody!
We love you back! Amen.

Suggested Activities:

Sing "Jesus Loves Me" Children enjoy singing familiar songs, especially in church!
Sing "He's Got the Whole World in His Hands"

Same and Different: Show the pictures from the lesson again. Talk about the people in the photos. How are they the same as us? How are they different? Does God love these people? Yes, God loves Everybody!

How to Treat Others: Make a list of different situations in which children might find themselves. (New person at school, dropped something on the floor, scared at night, etc.) Ask the children how they might feel in each situation. Ask how they might want to be treated in those situations. How can we show love to others in situations like those? Review the Memory Verse. Say the verse together several times.

How to Treat Others – Activity

Choose from the following list of situations in which a child might find himself/herself.. Ask the children in your classroom how they might feel if they were in these situations. Ask them how they would want to be treated in those situations. How can we show love to others in situations like those? Review the Memory Verse with the children: Matthew 7:12 “...do to others what you would have them do to you...”

NOTE: For even more fun, have the children act out the situations. The words in bold print are the situations. The words in italics are suggestions for how we might treat persons in those situations. (Read them only if the children get stuck for answers.)

You accidentally drop a bunch of little toys on the ground.
(Maybe someone could help you pick them up.)

You are the NEW kid in class and you are a little nervous.
(It would be nice if someone would say "hello" and invite you to play with them or sit by them.)

It's your birthday!
(How fun it would be if someone said "Happy Birthday!")

You have fallen down and skinned your knee.
(Perhaps someone will get help, or put a bandage on it.)

You have a NEW puppy at your house!!
(It would be nice if someone would listen to you tell about your puppy! Perhaps they could come see it, too.)

You want to play a game with the other children.
(Maybe they will invite you to play with them!)