

Jesus and the Children

Bible Verse

Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs.

Mark 10:14

Bible Story

Mark 10:13-16

This favorite Bible passage tells the story of Jesus' love and acceptance of children. Parents were bringing their children to be blessed by Jesus. The disciples tried to stop the children from bothering Jesus, but Jesus told the disciples to "let the little children come to me" (Mark 10:14).

Jesus was indignant when he stopped his friends from sending the children away. His attitude must have been hard for his friends to understand. Children, like women, had few personal rights in Bible times. Jesus' friends probably thought the children were not important enough to interrupt Jesus. After all, crowds of adults had come to hear Jesus teach. But Jesus had a way of turning around common practices. He must have surprised

everyone when he stopped what he was doing to spend time with children.

Jesus told the crowd gathered to hear him teach that the kingdom of God belongs to children. He wanted the people to realize that the characteristics of children—their sense of wonder, their innocence, their ability to forgive quickly—were characteristics that everyone needed in order to be part of God's kingdom.

Jesus welcomed the children and showed them what God's love was like by touching them and blessing them. As teachers you have the opportunity to show the children you teach what God's love is like. When you are patient, kind, consistent, and respectful with your children, you are modeling God's love.



We know Jesus loves us and that we are important to God.

If time is limited, we recommend those activities that are noted in **boldface**. Depending on your time and the number of children, you may be able to include more activities.

ACTIVITY	TIME	SUPPLIES
Welcome All God's Children	10 minutes	Reproducible 8A, construction paper, scissors, crayons or felt-tip markers, glue, tape
Jesus Loves...	10 minutes	Reproducible 8B, white crayons, watercolor paints, brushes, cups of water, paint smocks, table covering
Obstacles	10 minutes	items to create an obstacle course, such as tables, chairs, sheets or fabric, boxes, crepe paper streamers
Sing Jesus Loves Me	5 minutes	None
Bible Story: Jesus Says Yes	10 minutes	copies of the story, poster-board, marker, Bible-times costumes
Chant the Story	5 minutes	None
Loving Hands, Loving Hearts	10 minutes	construction paper, scissors, crayons or felt-tip markers, large piece of paper, masking tape, glue
Important Prayers	5 minutes	None

JOIN THE FUN

BIBLE STORY FUN

LIVE THE FUN

JOIN THE FUN

Supplies

Reproducible 8A, construction paper, scissors, crayons or felt-tip markers, glue, tape



Welcome All God's Children

Photocopy the welcome sign (**Reproducible 8A**) for each child.

Greet each child as he or she arrives. Give each child the welcome sign. Let the children decorate the signs with crayons or felt-tip markers. Encourage each child to sign his or her name on the sign.

Let each child choose a favorite color of construction paper. Have the children glue the signs onto the colored paper.

Say: Today our Bible story is a well-known story about how Jesus welcomed the children. Jesus' friends thought that children were not important enough to see Jesus. But Jesus showed his friends that children were important to God and important to him. Let's place our signs around our church to welcome everyone — men, women, and children.

Take the children to post the signs around your church.



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Supplies

Reproducible 8B, white crayons, watercolor paints, brushes, cups of water, paint smocks, table covering



Jesus Loves...

Photocopy Jesus loves... (**Reproducible 8B**) for each child. Use a white crayon to write the child's name in the heart, pressing hard.

Cover the table. Have the children wear paint smocks to protect their clothing. Set out watercolor paints and cups of water.

Give each child the paper with his or her name printed in white crayon. Let the children paint over the page with water colors. The paint will not cover the crayon writing, thus revealing each child's name.

Say: Our Bible story tells us that Jesus thought children were just as important as adults. We know that Jesus loves each one of us. Each and every one of us is important to God.

Obstacles

Help the children create an obstacle course that they must cross in order to get to the Bible story area. They can crawl under tables, over chairs, around bookcases, under sheets or fabric, or through boxes or crepe paper streamers.

Be sure that the obstacle course is safe and can be completed by every child.

Once they have created the obstacle course, have the children move to the beginning of the course.

Say: We must all get through the obstacle course successfully before we can hear today's Bible story.

Encourage the children to help one another get through the course safely.

Ask: What was the hardest part of the course? What was the easiest? Was going through the course fun? Why did you want to get to the end of the course?

Say: In today's Bible story the children wanted to go to Jesus, but they found an obstacle in their way.

Sing Jesus Loves Me

Divide the children into two groups. Have the groups stand at opposite ends of the room and face each other.

Have the groups alternate singing the phrases of the song.

For example:

Group 1 - Jesus loves me! This I know,

Group 2 - For the Bible tells me so.

Teach the children a simple body rhythm. Sing the song again and have the children repeat the rhythm throughout the song.

Text	Action
Jesus	stomp twice
Loves me!	pat thighs twice
This I	clap twice
Know	snap once

Supplies

items to create an obstacle course, such as tables, chairs, sheets or fabric, boxes, crepe paper streamers



Supplies

None



Jesus Says Yes

by Sandy Mabry and Sally Johnson

Make two signs for the prompter. Sign 1: Yeah! Sign 2: Boo!

Photocopy "Jesus Says Yes" for the children. Choose children to play these roles: Jesus, parents, 2 or 3 children, 3 disciples, and prompter. Children without specific parts will be the crowd.

Have Jesus, the parents, children, and disciples wear costumes if desired.

Give the prompter the signs made earlier.

(Parents and children are gathered on one side of the stage area. The disciples are on the opposite side.)

Disciple One: I'm so tired.

Disciple Two: Me too. Traveling from town to town is hard work.

Disciple Three: Even though it is great to be with Jesus, I'm so tired. I need a long nap.

(Jesus Enters)

(Prompter holds up sign: Yeah!)

Jesus: Hello, my friends. What a great day we've had! *(Disciples nod their heads.)* It makes me

happy to see people hearing God's Word.

(The children rush over and surround Jesus.)

Child One: Hello, Jesus!

Child Two: I love you, Jesus!

(Prompter holds up sign: Yeah!)

(The disciples rush to the children and send them back to their parents.)

Disciple One: Stop crowding around Jesus!

Disciple Two: Can't you see he is too tired to mess with you?

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Supplies

None

Chant the Story

Teach the words and rhythm of the story. Then teach the motions to go with the words. This is a call and response chant. You will speak the part in bold print and do the motions. The children will repeat the words and motions after you.

Say: Let's tell the story again. This time I want you to listen to me and then repeat what I say.

The children said; yes, the children said: (*Shake head, "yes."*)

Hey, Jesus! (*Raise hand in the air.*) **Hey, Jesus!** (*Raise hand in the air.*)

(*Children repeat*)

The disciples said; no, the disciples said: (*Shake head, "no."*)

Stop children! (*Hold up palm to say stop.*) **Stop children!** (*Hold up palm.*)

(*Children repeat*)

The children said; yes, the children said: (*Shake head, "yes."*)

Look, Jesus! (*Wave.*) **Look, Jesus!** (*Wave.*)

(*Children repeat*)

Jesus said; yes, Jesus said: (*Shake head, "yes."*)

Come, children! (*Motion, "come here."*) **Come, children!** (*Motion, "come here."*)

(*Children repeat*)

The children said; yes, the children said: (*Shake head, "yes."*)

We love you! (*Cross hands over heart.*) **We love you!** (*Cross hands over heart.*)

(*Children repeat*)

The disciples said; yes, the disciples said: (*Shake head, "yes."*)

Come children! (*Motion, "come here."*) **Come children!** (*Motion, "come here."*)

(*Children repeat*)

Jesus said; yes, Jesus said: (*Shake head, "yes."*)

Bless the children! (*Cross hands over heart.*) **Bless the children!** (*Cross hands over heart.*)



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Loving Hands, Loving Hearts

Help each child trace his or her hands on a piece of construction paper. Children may help each other do the tracings.

Have the children cut out their hand tracings. Let them decorate their handprints with crayons or markers.

Draw the outline of a heart on a large piece of paper. Or use masking tape to make the outline of a large heart on the wall or door.

Have the children glue or tape their handprints on to the heart outline.

Say: Our Bible story today is about a time when Jesus showed God's love to children. Children were not very important in Bible times. Jesus showed the children that they were important to God and to him.

Ask: Have you ever felt unimportant? When?

Say: You are important!



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Important Prayers

Have the children sit in a circle. Encourage the children to look closely at their thumbs and then at the palms of their hands. Tell the children to compare their hands with the hands of their neighbors.

Choose a child to stand up.

Say: *(Child's name)* you are important to God and to us.

Continue with each child and teacher in the circle.

Say: None of you has thumbs or hands that are just alike, but each one of you is a child of God. You are all special and you all have an important place in God's family.

Pray: Thank you, God, for *(name each child and teacher in the circle)*. Help each of us remember that we are important to you. Amen.

Supplies

construction paper, scissors, crayons or felt-tip markers, large piece of paper, masking tape, glue



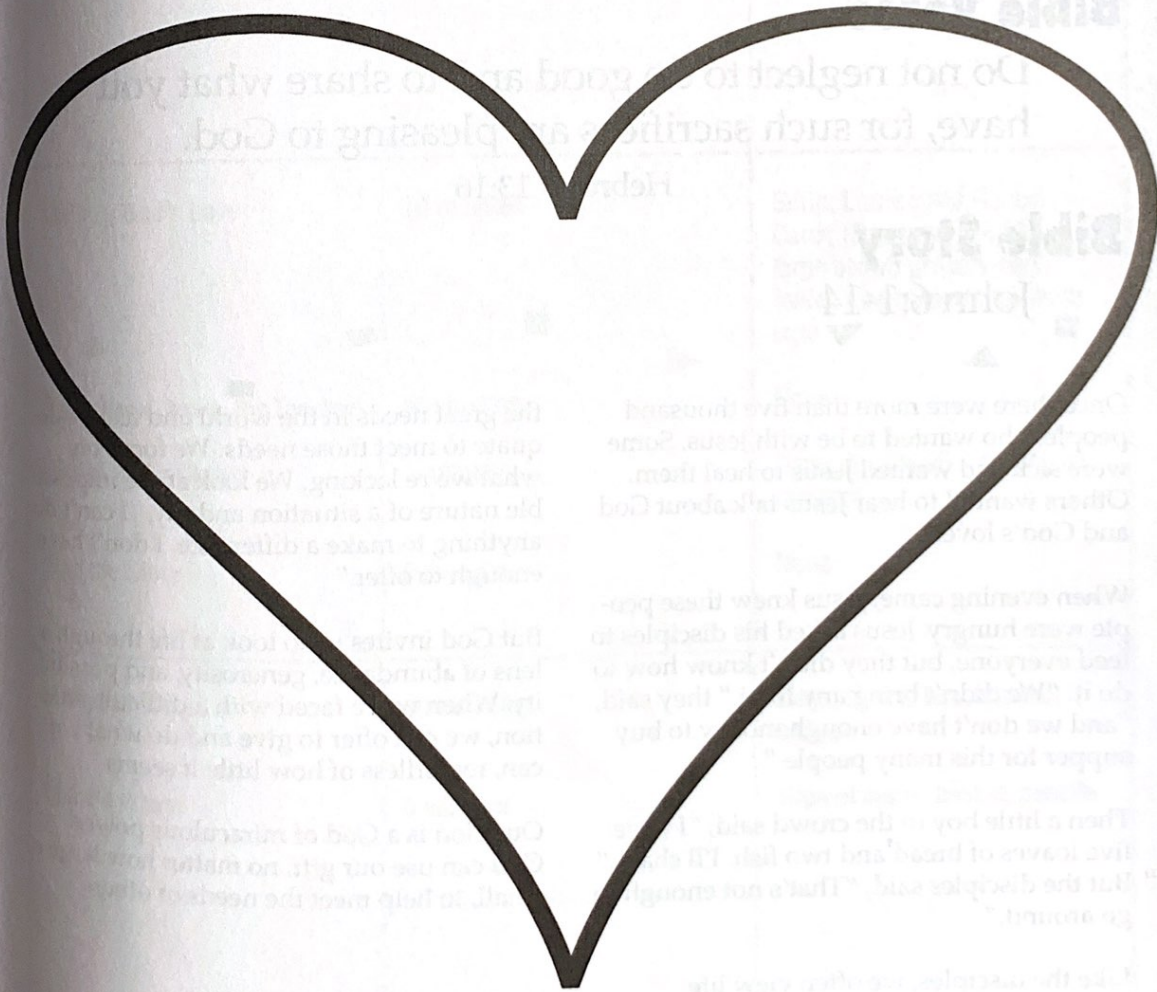
Supplies

None



WELCOME
to the
FAMILY OF GOD

Jesus loves



REPRODUCIBLE 8B

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