

April 21, 2024

Today's Bible Story: Jesus says to love like Him.

Early Church • Acts 2:42-47; John 15:12; Hebrews 10:24

Memory Verse: "Let your light shine." Matthew 5:16, NIV

Key Question: Who can do what Jesus says?

Bottom Line: I can do what Jesus says.

Basic Truth: Jesus wants to be my friend forever.

Groups: Creating a Safe Place to Connect (Small Groups, 25 minutes)

Create a safe place to connect through activities that are written to reach every learning style while reinforcing the Bottom Line that was introduced during the Bible Story and applying it to real life experiences. In addition, these activities provide preschoolers with an opportunity to build relationships with their Small Group Leader.

During the Activity: Guide the children as they take turns "fishing" for the story pictures. After all the fish have been caught, sit with the children and put the story pictures in order as they happened. Put the fish back in the basket and play again!

Light the Lantern

[Live for God | Application Activity]

Made to Create: An activity that allows preschoolers to review the Bible Story, Bottom Line, or Memory Verse by creating a craft

What You Need: "Light the Lantern" Activity Page, cardstock, washable yellow markers or dot markers, heart stickers, blunt-tip preschool scissors, adult scissors, stapler, and permanent marker

What You Do:

Before the Activity: Copy "Light the Lantern" on cardstock and cut, one per child. Write each child's name on their paper.

During the Activity: Encourage children to color the back of their paper with the yellow marker. Help children fold their paper along the solid fold line, and then ask each child to cut along the dotted lines, help as needed. Help children unfold their paper and encourage them to add heart stickers to their lantern. Help roll each child's paper to connect the two edges, add the handle, and staple together to form a lantern.

After the Activity: Review the Bible Story.

What You Say:

Before the Activity: "Friends, come sit at the table with me. Let's make a craft to help you remember to shine your light."

During the Activity: "Turn your paper over to the blank side, and color it with a yellow marker. (Pause.) Awesome! Flip your paper back over and fold it in half like this. (Demonstrate and help as needed.) Take your scissors and cut on each of the dotted lines. (Help as needed.) Great job! (Unfold each child's paper.) Add some heart stickers to your paper. (Pause.) Now let's turn your paper into a lantern. (Roll to connect the edges, add the handle, and staple together.) Your lantern looks like it's shining!"

After the Activity: “When you do what Jesus says, you shine your light! Jesus told His friends to love people the way He loves them. And they did! They were loving like Jesus and shining their light! When we love like Jesus, we are shining our light too. **Who can do what Jesus says? [Bottom Line] I can do what Jesus says.** We can all do what Jesus says and love like Jesus. **Who can do what Jesus says? [Bottom Line] I can do what Jesus says.**”

Journal and Prayer

[Pray to God | Prayer Activity]

Made to Reflect: An activity that encourages personal application and prayer

What You Need: “Memory Verse Card” Activity Page from Week One in Bible, a journal, and a fun-shaped pen

What You Do:

Before the Activity: If you do not have the “Memory Verse Card” in your Bible, copy “Memory Verse Card” on cardstock and cut, one per Small Group. Place one card in your Bible at Matthew 5:16. Keep this card in your Bible all month.

During the Activity: Lead the children to pretend they’re carrying baskets of food to your Small Group spot. Sit down and gather the children around you. Review the Memory Verse and motions. Then, encourage the children to help you make a list in the journal of ways we can love like Jesus.

After the Activity: Pray with the children using the list you made in the journal.

What You Say:

Before the Activity: “It’s Small Group time! Today we’re going to pretend we’re carrying baskets of food to our Small Group spot. Okay, everyone, pretend to fill your basket with food! (*Demonstrate.*) Now that our baskets are filled with food, follow me! (*Pretend you’re carrying a basket of food as you lead the children to your Small Group spot.*) Yay! We made it! You can put your baskets of food down. We’re going to sit and talk about today’s Bible Story. One, two, three, sit down with me!”

During the Activity: (*Open the Bible and lay it in front of the children.*) “In our Bible Story today, people did what Jesus said and loved like Jesus by eating together, helping each other, sharing with each other, and praying together, because they wanted to do what Jesus says and love like Jesus. We can do what Jesus says and love like Jesus too! **Who can do what Jesus says? [Bottom Line] I can do what Jesus says!**

“And when we do what Jesus says, we shine our light! The Bible verse we’ve been learning will help us remember to shine our light. It says, ‘Let (*move flat hands forward from hip*) your light (*palms facing forward*) shine,’ (*twinkling hands moving out*) Matthew 5:16. (*Open hands like a book.*) Jesus said those words! Stand up with me and let’s say Jesus’ words together. Just say what I say and do what I do. ‘Let (*move flat hands forward from hip*) your light (*palms facing forward*) shine,’ (*twinkling hands moving out*) Matthew 5:16. (*Open hands like a book.*)

“Way to go! (*Clap.*) Now let’s sit down so we can write in our prayer journal and talk to God. (*Open journal.*) Today, we’re going to make a list of ways we can love like Jesus. When I say your name, tell me one way you can love like Jesus, and I will write it in our journal.” (*Remember to print as you write in the journal, so the children can recognize their names and the letters.*)

After the Activity: “These are wonderful ways we can love like Jesus. And when we love like Jesus, we SHINE! Let’s use our list when we pray. Would anyone like to pray before I pray? (*Give each child*

who wants to pray the opportunity to do so.) Dear God, thank You for loving us so much You gave us Your Son, Jesus, to show us how to love and to be our friend forever. Please help us to do what Jesus says and love others the way Jesus loves us. We love You, God. In Jesus' name. Amen."