

QUARTER OVERVIEW

Bible explorations for preschoolers during Spring 2017 center on the Book of Matthew. Bible-related activities, games, and conversations help teachers lead preschoolers to dig deep to discover and learn about this part of the Bible and what it has to say about Jesus.

THE KING

Jesus is the King that God promised to send. People recognized Jesus as someone special, but many failed to realize His true identity. Kids will hear of Peter's confession, learn about the transfiguration, hear a story of how Jesus wants people to respond to Him, and learn of His entry into Jerusalem as He was praised as king.

MATTHEW (PART 2)

Since the end of the Book of Matthew deals primarily with the end of Jesus' life, girls and boys will dive deep into Jesus' sacrifice on the cross and the events which led up to and surrounded it.

THE REASON

Jesus died on the cross to pay the penalty for the sins of all people. Kids will learn that Judas agreed to betray Jesus for a small sum of money, Jesus prayed in the garden for His disciples, Peter denied Jesus, and Jesus rose from the dead and gave His disciples and all people a commission to fulfill.

THE PASSION

After Jesus entered Jerusalem, He told parables to the people that identified what He would accomplish. Girls and boys will hear the parables of the vineyard owner and the banquet. Kids will also learn of Jesus' death and resurrection and His promise to return.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE PRESCHOOL LEADER GUIDE



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For free online training on how to lead a group, visit
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We believe that the Bible has God for its author; salvation for its end; and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter and that all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. To review LifeWay's doctrinal guideline, please visit lifeway.com/doctrinalguideline.

The Bible stories printed in this product are based on Scripture and are written in words and language young preschoolers can understand.

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TEACHING TIPS

PREPARE FOR TEACHING

- 1 Review the teaching plan. Practice using Bible-related conversation. Pray for the children and their families.
- 2 Gather teaching tools and resources for Bible explorations. NOTE: Digital versions of items identified as “Enhanced CD” are available in the Music and Print Extras Bundle.
- 3 Arrive early to set out resources and prepare the environment. Arrange small-group activities (Exploration Stations) around the room so children can move and explore at their own pace.

FOCUS ON BIBLE EXPLORATION

- Use the Bible. Let preschoolers see, touch, and turn Bible pages.
- Talk about the Bible.
- Say Bible words and phrases during the entire session.
- Sing about the Bible and Bible truths.
- Encourage children to participate in Bible exploration activities according to their skills, abilities, and interests.

SUGGESTED SCHEDULE

• ARRIVAL-5 MINUTES

Greet children individually and welcome them to church. Interest each child in an arrival activity or resource.

• EXPLORATIONS-45-60 MINUTES

Engage preschoolers in small-group activities that help them explore the Bible and its truths. Provide at least three exploration stations to offer choices of multisensory activities and movement for busy preschoolers.

• CIRCLE TIME-2-5 MINUTES (YOUNGER CHILDREN) OR 10-15 MINUTES (OLDER CHILDREN)

Gather children for a large-group experience. Play games, sing, and introduce the Bible story. Hear and recall the Bible story. Practice Bible skills. Pray.

• NEXT HOUR-60 MINUTES

Continue activities from the first hour or try something different. Choose two or three new activities. (See Next Hour sessions on Enhanced CD.)

DON'T FORGET!

Label children's belongings.

Post an allergy sign to inform parents of food, animals, or nature items in use.

Keep the classroom door closed for the safety of children.

Focus on the children and your Bible-teaching goals.



AT-A-GLANCE



SESSION	SUGGESTED FOR THE WEEK OF	CORE PASSAGE	TEXT TRUTH
1	Mar. 5	Matthew 16:13-28	Jesus said He was God's Son.
2	Mar. 12	Matthew 17:1-13	God was pleased with His Son, Jesus.
3	Mar. 19	Matthew 19:16-26	Jesus taught people what is important.
4	Mar. 26	Matthew 21:1-11	People welcomed Jesus and worshiped Him.
5	Apr. 2	Matthew 21:33-45	Jesus helped people know God sent Him.
6	Apr. 9	Matthew 22:1-14	We can believe that Jesus will help us.
7	Apr. 16	Matthew 27:41-52	Jesus is alive.
8	Apr. 23	Matthew 24:36-51	Jesus wants people to be prepared.
9	Apr. 30	Matthew 26:17-30	Jesus wants us to remember how much He loves us.
10	May 7	Matthew 26:36-46	Jesus prayed for God's help.
11	May 14	Matthew 26:63-75	Love Jesus all the time.
12	May 21	Matthew 28:1-15	Jesus returned to see His friends.
13	May 28	Matthew 28:16-20	Jesus said to tell everyone He is alive.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE: PRESCHOOL SPRING 2017

	BIBLE STORY	PRESCHOOL VERSE
	Jesus Asked a Question (based on Matthew 16:13-28)	Matthew 16:24
	Jesus Pleased God (based on Matthew 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21-22)	Matthew 17:5
	Jesus Taught the People (based on Matthew 19:1-6,13-26)	Matthew 19:26
	The People Praised Jesus (based on Matthew 21:1-11)	Matthew 21:9
	Teaching at the Temple (based on Matthew 21:12-15)	Luke 4:43
	Martha Trusted Jesus (based on John 11:1-3,17-44)	Romans 10:13
	The First Easter (based on Matthew 27:27-61; 28:1-8)	Matthew 28:6
	Noah Got Ready (based on Genesis 6:9-22; 7:1-10)	John 14:3
	A Special Supper (based on Matthew 26:17-30)	Luke 22:19
	Jesus Prayed (based on Matthew 26:36-46)	Matthew 26:39
	A Sad Day for Peter (based on Matthew 26:69-75)	1 Peter 3:15
	A Surprise for Jesus' Friends (based on John 21:1-13)	John 21:12
	News for Jesus' Disciples (based on Matthew 28:6-10,16-20)	Matthew 28:19-20



Session

1



WHO IS JESUS?

Matthew 16:13-28

Matthew gives us the account of Jesus talking with His disciples about His identity. In the account, Jesus shows disciples then and now the need to identify Him correctly. Everyone around us seems to have an opinion about who Jesus is and what He came to do. Some of the opinions come close to what the Bible teaches about Jesus, while others have no basis in truth at all. Believers share a conviction about Jesus that compels us to declare that He is the Christ. Declaring Him to be the Messiah means something to us, in us, and through us. The Matthew account encourages us to make our declaration and to live it out each day.

Why would an omniscient Christ ask for information? Jesus often used questions to bring His listeners along the path of spiritual understanding. This teachable moment occurred after Jesus and His followers left Tyre and Sidon and traveled along the Sea of Galilee before arriving in the region of Caesarea Philippi, a town about twenty miles north of Galilee. The men encountered various groups of people who misunderstood Jesus. In asking who the people thought Him to be, Jesus was preparing His disciples for a more personal question.

Jesus challenged the disciples about their beliefs. He used the personal pronoun *you* twice for emphasis. The phrase *but you* shifted the focus from the general population to the ones who would carry forth Jesus' mission and His message.

Peter served as the spokesperson for the Twelve when he declared without equivocation that Jesus was the Messiah. Jesus affirmed Simon Peter's declaration by speaking to him individually and through him to the disciples collectively. Simon did not gain this special understanding of Jesus' identity based on human (flesh and blood) understanding. God had revealed the truth to Simon and the others.

We do not need to seek after external signs to validate Jesus' divinity. His identity as God the Son has been established!

SESSION FOCUS

CORE PASSAGE

Matthew 16:13-28

PRESCHOOL VERSE

Matthew 16:24

PRESCHOOL TEXT TRUTH

Jesus said He was God's Son.

PRESCHOOL CONNECTION STORY PASSAGE

Matthew 16:13-28

CHRIST IN CONTEXT

Everything God promised to His people in Old Testament times came true when He sent Jesus.

SESSION BRIEF

Jesus' disciples finally realized that He was the Messiah who was sent by God. Jesus affirmed Peter's insight and told him that Peter's understanding of Jesus' kingship would guide Peter and future believers. Jesus prepared His disciples for His future death.

During this session, preschoolers will hear and learn that Jesus helped people know that He was God's Son.

YOU CHOOSE!

Are your preschoolers ready to learn memory verses? Decide which wording of the Preschool Verse you want to use with your group.

From the Bible text:

Jesus said, "If anyone wants to come with Me, he must deny himself." Matthew 16:24

Preschool Verse Paraphrase:

Jesus said, "Forget about yourself and follow Me." Matthew 16:24

TEXT TRUTH

Jesus said He was God's Son.

PRESCHOOL VERSE

Matthew 16:24

LEADER TIP!

New words for preschoolers may include *Messiah* and *Son of Man*. Help children begin to learn that Jesus was called by many names.

Jesus was called the Messiah because God sent Jesus to save people.

CONNECT TO MATTHEW:

JESUS ASKED A QUESTION

Matthew 16:13-28

Jesus and His disciples traveled to many places and taught people. The men watched Jesus feed people and make sick people well. The disciples heard Jesus tell stories to help people understand what they should do.

One day Jesus asked His disciples a question. "Who do the people say that the Son of Man is?" (Jesus was talking about Himself.)

The disciples knew Jesus was special and that God had sent Him. So they answered that some people said Jesus was a prophet or messenger like John, Elijah, or Jeremiah.

"But I am asking you, My friends," Jesus said. "Who do you say that I am?"

Peter was first to answer. "You are the Messiah, the Son of God!"

Jesus was pleased with Peter's answer. Jesus knew Peter only knew this was true because God had helped Peter know it.

Jesus told Peter that God would show Him what to do to start the first church. Jesus said that no one would be able to stop Peter and all the people who believed in Jesus and loved Him. Jesus said He would lead Peter and be with him so that everything happened as Jesus said it would.

SET THE STAGE FOR EXPLORATION

1. PREPARE FOR TEACHING

- Review the teaching plan and practice using Bible-focused conversation. Pray for the preschoolers and their families.
- Before children arrive, set out the materials needed for early arrivers. Put materials for Exploration Stations and Circle Time in baskets or paper bags and set them in the areas in which children will work. Teachers may want to set up the stations before class time.
- Display posters and teaching reminders in suggested locations to remind you of the biblical focus for today.

2. OFFER ARRIVAL ACTIVITIES (5 MINUTES)

Offer two or three choices for preschoolers to explore:

- Search an illustrated Bible for pictures of Jesus.
- Work puzzles about Jesus.
- Use a smart phone or tablet to look at pictures of churches.

3. GET STARTED (5 MINUTES)

- Allow preschoolers time to finish the arrival activities. Welcome boys and girls and begin asking preschoolers questions about themselves.
- Inquire: “What is your name? Who is in your family? What foods do you like to eat? What is your favorite animal? Can you find a Bible in our classroom?”
- Say: “I asked a lot of questions! In today’s Bible story from the Book of Matthew, we will hear about a question that Jesus asked His friends. Let’s go to our Exploration Stations and learn more about what Jesus wanted His friends to know.”

4. GO TO EXPLORATION STATIONS AND CIRCLE TIME.

LEADER TIP!

Display the Spring Welcome Poster (Pack Item 15) on the classroom door. As children arrive at church, point to the opened Bible. Remind preschoolers that the Bible tells about Jesus.

TOOLS

- illustrated Bibles
- puzzles such as *Jesus: A Special Friend* (LifeWay, 005160679), *Life of Jesus Wooden Box Puzzles* (LifeWay, 001051003)
- tablet or smart phone

TEXT TRUTH

Jesus said He was God's Son.

BIBLE STORY JESUS ASKED A QUESTION

Matthew 16:13-28

PRESCHOOL VERSE

Matthew 16:24

PACK ITEMS

- 1 Story Picture: Jesus Asked a Question
- 16 Bible Markers A
- 19 Build-a-Church Pieces

LEADER TIP!

Preschoolers already associate personal experiences with the word *church*. They can begin to understand that church is a gathering of people who love and worship Jesus. The building is simply a location where the people meet.

EXPLORATION STATIONS (45-60 MINUTES)

Set up at least three stations to provide choices of multisensory activities and movement for busy preschoolers.

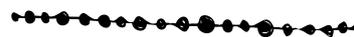
BUILD A CHURCH



Tools: Bible, blocks, tape, Build-a-Church Pieces (Pack), pictures of church buildings, puzzle Going to Church (LifeWay, 005159906)

- Tape the church pieces onto blocks. Lay the Bible and puzzle near the blocks.
- Show a child pictures of churches. Then encourage him to build a church, incorporating the architectural pieces.
- Another child may enjoy working the puzzle showing a church building. Say: "Churches can look different. We can even have 'church' outdoors! That's because a church is really the people."
- Open the Bible to Matthew 16. Say: "Jesus told Peter that God would show Peter what to do to start the first church."

TWIST CHENILLE STEMS



Tools: Bible, Bible Markers A (Pack), colorful thick chenille stems

- Place the Bible Marker at Matthew 16.
- Form a question mark using a chenille stem. Show the question mark to a preschooler.
- Remark: "This symbol is called a 'question mark.' It is used in writing when a question is asked."
- Invite a child to twist chenille stems to make question marks or other creations.
- As the child works, tell the story about Jesus asking an important question.

USE TEACHER TOOLS

Tools: Bible, lined writing paper, sentence strips, colored pencils, dry-erase boards and markers, Story Picture: Jesus Asked a Question (Pack)

- Print the words *Jesus, God, Peter,* and *Bible* on sentence strips. Display the Bible and other materials.
- Invite a preschooler to draw pictures or copy words onto paper or dry-erase boards. Remark that the child is using some tools that teachers use.
- Show the child the Story Picture and count the people around Jesus.
- Say: “Jesus helped His disciples know about Him. Peter listened to Jesus and answered Jesus’ question. Peter said that Jesus was God’s Son.”

TELL AND TOSS

Tools: Bible, bucket, beanbag, masking tape

- Place the bucket on the floor. Open the Bible to Matthew 16. Place a strip of tape on the floor for children to stand behind.
- Invite a child to first tell something he knows about Jesus. Then tell the preschooler to toss the beanbag toward the bucket.
- After a successful toss, help the child locate the Preschool Verse in the Bible.
- As boys and girls take turns tossing and telling, remind them that Jesus said, “Follow Me.”
- Ask a child to repeat the Preschool Verse. Say: “This was one important thing Jesus told His disciples. Jesus wanted the men to know that He was God’s Son.”

REVEAL AN ANSWER

Tools: Bible, Activity Page, white paper, white crayon, watercolor paints, paintbrushes, water cups, paint smocks

- Use the white crayon to print today’s Text Truth or the name *Jesus* on papers.
- Invite a preschooler to paint on a paper using the watercolors. Tell her the paint will reveal the answer to an important question.
- When the words are revealed, read them to the child. Comment: “Jesus asked His disciples who He was. And this is the answer to Jesus’ question.”
- Show the child the picture on the Activity Page. Summarize the Bible story.
- Help the child locate the Book of Matthew in the Bible. Find the Preschool Verse (Matthew 16:24) and read it aloud. Lead the preschooler to repeat the verse with you.

CIRCLE TIME (10-15 MINUTES, DEPENDING ON YOUR AGE GROUP)

LEADER TIP! USE THE BIBLE

Open a Bible to the Scripture passage while you tell the story. Doing this will help preschoolers know the story comes from the Bible.

CIRCLE TIME TOOLS

- Bibles
- Enhanced CD
- clipboard with paper, marker

PACK ITEMS

- 1 Story Picture: Jesus Asked a Question
- 16 Bible Markers A
- 18 Question Cards



LET'S GATHER.

- Walk around the room and give each child a Question Card. Play the Enhanced CD as children follow you to Circle Time.
- When children are seated in the group, say: "Each of you has a card. When I call your name, walk to the center of the circle. I will ask you a question."
- Give every child a turn to stand, hear a question, and answer.
- Comment: "I asked you some fun questions, but Jesus asked a very important question. Listen to the Bible story to hear Jesus' question."



LET'S HEAR THE BIBLE STORY.

- Say: "Jesus' friends knew many things about Jesus, but Jesus wanted the disciples to understand more."
- Invite a child to open the Bible to the marker at Matthew 16.
- Tell the story, using your own words. Show children the Story Picture.
- Say: "Now I will ask you some questions. Let's answer together." Ask questions such as:
Who did Peter say Jesus was? (the Messiah, the Son of God)
How did Peter know this? (God helped him)
What would God later show Peter what to do? (build [start] the church)
- Make up a tune to sing these words:
Who am I? Who am I?
Jesus asked, Who am I?



LET'S PRACTICE BIBLE SKILLS.

- Distribute Bibles to pairs of children and/or teachers.
- Tell children: "The part of the Bible that we are learning from is the Book of Matthew. Matthew was a real person. He was one of Jesus' friends. God told Matthew what to write about Jesus. Let's find a verse to see what God told Matthew to write."
- Ask teachers to help preschoolers locate the Preschool Verse (Matthew 16:24).
- Lead the group to say the verse together.



LET'S PRAY TOGETHER.

- Say: "Let's tell what we know about Jesus. I will write your answers." Help children recall things about Jesus.
- Pray briefly, thanking God for helping preschoolers understand more about who Jesus is. Thank God for the Bible that tells about Jesus.



LET'S EXPLORE MORE.

- Form into small groups of two or three preschoolers and a teacher. Look at today's Activity Page. Guide the children to do the activity on the back.
- Help preschoolers repeat the Preschool Verse again.

**DON'T FORGET TO
GIVE THIS WEEK'S
ACTIVITY PAGE TO
PRESCHOOLERS!**



Session 2



JESUS, GOD'S SON

Matthew 17:1-13

Today's core passage covers a unique event where Peter, James, and John were given an opportunity to see Who Jesus really was. At this event, God Himself appeared and announced that Jesus was indeed God's very own Son. Not only was Jesus God's Son, but God was well pleased with Jesus. Preschoolers today will learn about another time that God declared Jesus His Son.

The Book of Matthew records for us the most complete version of Jesus' baptism and also gives a glimpse into what was happening when John was baptizing. John the Baptist had come preaching in the wilderness. John was baptizing those who had repented of their sin as a way to show they had been changed. The religious leaders of the day had come to see what was going on, but they were not welcomed warmly by John. John warned those leaders to stop living a life of hypocrisy and turn to God.

In his message to those who were gathered, John preached that he was baptizing with water, but he prophesied that another was coming after him who had more power and authority. The One coming after John would baptize with the Holy Spirit. The crowd likely snickered at the oddly dressed John making the proclamation when, all of a sudden, Jesus arrived on the scene.

Jesus' arrival and desire to be baptized had John in quite a tough spot. John knew that Jesus was the One whom he was prophesying about. John knew that Jesus had no need of baptism; in fact, John even stated, "I need to be baptized by You." Jesus encouraged John by reminding him that Jesus' baptism was necessary to fulfill Scripture.

Immediately following Jesus' baptism, the heavens opened wide. The voice of God Himself spoke, declaring that Jesus was His Son and that God was well pleased with Him. God loved His Son, Jesus, and had sent Him to fulfill God's plan on earth. From this moment, Jesus began His ministry and, thankfully, fulfilled His purpose from God.

SESSION FOCUS

CORE PASSAGE

Matthew 17:1-13

PRESCHOOL VERSE

Matthew 17:5

PRESCHOOL TEXT TRUTH

God was pleased with His Son, Jesus.

PRESCHOOL CONNECTION STORY PASSAGES

Matthew 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21-22

CHRIST IN CONTEXT

Everything God promised to His people in Old Testament times came true when He sent Jesus.

SESSION BRIEF

When Jesus led His three closest disciples to the mountain, the men were privileged to witness Jesus' glorified position as Son of God. Three years before, John, too, upon baptizing Jesus, experienced a revelation of Jesus' glory and position. On both occasions, the Father declared, "This is My beloved Son."

Preschoolers can learn that God loved His Son, Jesus, and took great delight in Him. Preschoolers can become aware that Jesus is special because He is God's Son.

YOU CHOOSE!

Are your preschoolers ready to learn memory verses? Decide which wording of the Preschool Verse you want to use with your group.

From the Bible text:

A voice said, "This is my beloved Son. I take delight in Him." Matthew 17:5

Preschool Verse Paraphrase:

God said, "This is My Son. I love Him." Matthew 17:5

TEXT TRUTH

God was pleased with His Son,
Jesus.

PRESCHOOL VERSE

Matthew 17:5

CONNECT TO MATTHEW:**JESUS PLEASED GOD**

Matthew 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21-22

Jesus lived with His family in Nazareth and grew to be a man. He knew that soon He would begin His special work.

One day Jesus walked from His home, looking for His cousin John. Jesus wanted John to baptize Him.

John knew Jesus was more important than he was. In fact, John thought he should not be the one to baptize Jesus. "I need to be baptized by You, Jesus," John said.

But this is not what Jesus wanted. He said John must baptize Him because this was God's commandment. Jesus wanted to obey God.

So John baptized Jesus. Jesus prayed, then He got up out of the water. Immediately the sky became very bright and something like a dove came toward Jesus.

Then Jesus heard a voice say, "You are my beloved Son. I take delight in You!"

God was speaking to Jesus! God was pleased with His Son.

SET THE STAGE FOR EXPLORATION

1. PREPARE FOR TEACHING

- Review the teaching plan and practice using Bible-focused conversation. Pray for the preschoolers and their families.
- Before children arrive, set out the materials needed for early arrivers. Put materials for Exploration Stations and Circle Time in baskets or paper bags and set them in the areas in which children will work. Teachers may want to set up the stations before class time.
- Display posters and teaching reminders in suggested locations to remind you of the biblical focus for today.

2. OFFER ARRIVAL ACTIVITIES (5 MINUTES)

Offer two or three choices for preschoolers to explore:

- Use letter tiles to spell the names *John* and *Jesus*.
- Draw a picture of your family.
- Look at nature pictures of rivers.

3. GET STARTED (5 MINUTES)

- Allow time for preschoolers to complete the arrival activities. Ask boys and girls to tell which activity they enjoyed most. Admire a child's drawing and ask her to tell about her family.
- Inquire: "Did anyone draw a picture showing a cousin? Some of you may have cousins in your family. In today's Bible story, we will hear about something that happened when Jesus went to find His cousin John. Jesus wanted John to do something for Him."
- Tell about each Exploration Station and allow kids to choose what to do next.

4. GO TO EXPLORATION STATIONS AND CIRCLE TIME.

TOOLS

- letter tiles
- drawing paper, colored pencils
- travel magazines showing river pictures

TEXT TRUTH

God was pleased with His Son, Jesus.

BIBLE STORY

JESUS PLEASED GOD

Matthew 3:13-17;

Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21-22

PRESCHOOL VERSE

Matthew 17:5

PACK ITEMS

- 2 Story Picture: Jesus Pleased God
- 21 Book: *Bradley's Bible*
- 22 Find-a-Bible Cards
- 27 Family & Friends Figures

LEADER TIP!

Some preschoolers may have attended a baptismal service. Help the children understand that to baptize someone means to lower the person into the water then bring them back up out of the water again.

EXPLORATION STATIONS (45-60 MINUTES)

Set up at least three stations to provide choices of multisensory activities and movement for busy preschoolers.

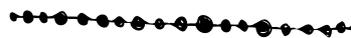
SCOOP, POUR, SQUIRT



Tools: Bibles, Story Picture: Jesus Pleased God (Pack), plastic dishpan, pitcher, turkey baster, pipette, scoops, funnels, towels

- Using the baster or pipette may be a new experience for children, so applaud successes. Demonstrate how to squeeze the bulb of the pipette to draw water up into it.
- Say: "When Jesus found His cousin John, Jesus told John to baptize Him. The men went to the river."
- Show preschoolers the Story Picture. Point to Jesus and John.
- Open the Bible to Matthew 3 and say: "This is the place in the Bible where we learn about Jesus and John. Jesus did what God wanted Him to do."

MAKE SAND ART



Tools: Bible, clean play sand in plastic saltshakers, glue, heavy paper or poster board, box lid

- Suggest that a child dribble glue across the paper to make interesting designs. Tell him to lay the paper in the box lid, then lightly shake sand over it. Guide the preschooler to move the box to shake the excess sand off the picture.
- While the child works on his sand art, remark that Jesus walked over the sandy desert. He walked to find His cousin John.
- Remark: "Jesus wanted to do what God said to do. And God was pleased with His Son, Jesus."
- Tell the Bible story.

**PLAY WITH PEOPLE
FIGURES**

Tools: Bible, Activity Page, Family & Friends Figures (Pack), wooden blocks, toy cars

- Invite preschoolers to drive cars and pretend with the family and friends figures. As the children play, ask them about their families.
- Say: “Jesus had a family, and you have a family. John was Jesus’ cousin. Do you have a cousin?” Listen as preschoolers tell you about their families.
- Open the Bible to Matthew 3. Remark: “Matthew wrote about a time when Jesus asked His cousin John to do something for Him.”
- Show the children the picture on the Activity Page. Recall the Bible story.
- Say: “God was pleased with His Son, Jesus.”

MATCH BIBLE WORDS

Tools: Bible, smooth river rocks, permanent marker, long strip of paper, gift bag

- Print the Preschool Verse across the strip of paper. Print each word of the verse on a rock. Place the rocks in the bag.
- Help a child find the Book of Matthew in the Bible. Help her discover the Preschool Verse (Matthew 17:5).
- Call attention to the paper strip and read the words of the Preschool Verse.
- Direct the child to get a rock from the bag, then find the matching word on the paper. Tell her to place the rock on the matching word. Continue until all the rocks are on the paper.
- Touch each rock and say the Preschool Verse together.

SEARCH BIBLES

Tools: several Bibles, cards with names Matthew and Jesus printed on them, pad of sticky notes, Book: Bradley’s Bible (Pack), Find-a-Bible Cards (Pack) (place in a gift bag)

- Show the preschooler the Matthew card. Invite the child to choose a Bible and look for the Book of Matthew. Give him a sticky note to mark the page.
- Ask another child to find Jesus’ name in the Bible and mark that page.
- Remark: “You are looking in the Bible at the Book of Matthew. This is where we learn that God was pleased with His Son, Jesus.”
- Invite a different child to get a card from the gift bag. Help the preschooler search the room for a Bible that matches the description on the card.
- Read the book to the children. Say: “The Bible tells about Jesus.”

CIRCLE TIME (10-15 MINUTES, DEPENDING ON YOUR AGE GROUP)

LEADER TIP! USE THE BIBLE

Open a Bible to the Scripture passage while you tell the story. Doing this will help preschoolers know the story comes from the Bible.

CIRCLE TIME TOOLS

- Bibles
- sheets of paper with words *Jesus* and *John* printed on them (tape papers to opposite walls)
- foam ball

PACK ITEMS

- 2 Story Picture: Jesus Pleased God
- 16 Bible Markers A



LET'S GATHER.

- Divide the class into two groups. Direct one group to hop and the other to tiptoe to the Circle Time area. Tell preschoolers to be seated.
- Toss a foam ball to a child. Say: "God loves you. Can you name someone in our circle whom God loves?"
- After the child names a friend, tell him to toss the ball to the person he named. That child then has a turn to name a friend whom God loves. Repeat so every child gets a turn.
- Say: "God loves us. Our Bible story is about someone God loved. Let's listen."



LET'S HEAR THE BIBLE STORY.

- Open the Bible to Matthew 3.
- Tell the Bible story using your own words. Emphasize that Jesus wanted to obey God, and God loved His Son, Jesus.
- Show preschoolers the Story Picture. Pass the picture around the circle.
- Read the names on the papers taped to the wall. Instruct: "I will ask a question about today's story. If you think the answer is *Jesus*, go stand by the Jesus card. If you think the answer is *John*, go stand by the John card."
- Ask questions such as:
Who looked for John? (Jesus)
Who baptized Jesus? (John)
Who obeyed God? (both John and Jesus)
Whom did God say He loved? (Jesus)



LET'S PRACTICE BIBLE SKILLS.

- Comment: "Jesus heard God's voice, and He knew that God was pleased with Him. Let's open our Bible and see what God said about Jesus."
- Invite a child to open the Bible to the marker at Matthew 17. Touch verse 5 and say the Preschool Verse aloud.
- Lead preschoolers to say the Preschool Verse with you.



LET'S PRAY TOGETHER.

- Ask preschoolers to name their prayer concerns. Say: "God hears us when we talk to Him. He loves us and cares about us."
- Pray for the children's concerns, then thank God for His Son, Jesus.



LET'S EXPLORE MORE.

- Direct children to move into small groups of two or three preschoolers and a teacher.
- Look at the Activity Page. Guide the children to do the activity on the back.
- Help preschoolers repeat the Preschool Verse again.

**DON'T FORGET TO
GIVE THIS WEEK'S
ACTIVITY PAGE TO
PRESCHOOLERS!**



Session 3



WHAT IS IMPORTANT?

Matthew 19:16-26

Matthew told about someone who went to Jesus in search of assurance about eternal life. The man had given himself to making sure that he lived according to religious rules, but he wondered if something was still missing. He wanted to know what he needed to do in order to enter the kingdom of heaven. That's why the man turned to Jesus for help. Like people today, the man thought that eternal life was something that had to be earned. Jesus helped him see that He alone offers eternal life to people who are willing to follow Him.

When asked about what a person must do to gain eternal life, Jesus first pointed to keeping God's commandments. The inquiring young man claimed to have kept the laws identified by Jesus, yet he still lacked assurance, confusing outward performance with obedient trust in God.

Human reasoning usually arrives at a wrong conclusion because it starts with the wrong question. The young man who approached Jesus appeared to have honorable motives, but he misunderstood the basic issues about himself, Jesus, and eternal life.

Despite his imperfect spiritual understanding, the young man should be credited at least with desiring a good goal. The biblical text shows he had material success but recognized he had a need. He lacked assurance of eternal life. This man apparently was not trying to trick Jesus, like so many other questioners. He truly wanted to know the way to everlasting life. He was not, however, willing to accept Jesus' answer.

The ultimate issue regarding eternal life is not merely obeying the commandments or altruistically helping the poor. Each person must decide what to do with Jesus. Jesus knew the only way this young man could devote himself completely to being a disciple was to let go of his former life, including its wealth, ease, and self-dependence. Christ never leaves room for negotiation or argument. Only one option is possible—total surrender.

SESSION FOCUS

CORE PASSAGE

Matthew 19:16-26

PRESCHOOL VERSE

Matthew 19:26

PRESCHOOL TEXT TRUTH

Jesus taught people what is important.

PRESCHOOL CONNECTION STORY PASSAGE

Matthew 19:1-6,13-26

CHRIST IN CONTEXT

Everything God promised to His people in Old Testament times came true when He sent Jesus.

SESSION BRIEF

Jesus wanted to ensure that people knew the cost and reward of following Him.

Jesus' discourses and interactions excited some and angered others. The Bible story for this session is a summary of key interactions in which Jesus revealed the way to heaven and the blessing of heaven. He spoke of priorities and loyalties, of humility and compassion.

Through activities and Bible-focused conversation, help preschoolers recognize that Jesus taught people what is important.

YOU CHOOSE!

Are your preschoolers ready to learn memory verses? Decide which wording of the Preschool Verse you want to use with your group.

From the Bible text:
With God all things are possible. Matthew 19:26

Preschool Verse Paraphrase:
With God all things are possible. Matthew 19:26

TEXT TRUTH

Jesus taught people what is important.

PRESCHOOL VERSE

Matthew 19:26

CONNECT TO MATTHEW:**JESUS TAUGHT THE PEOPLE****Matthew 19:1-6,13-26**

Jesus had been teaching many people. Large crowds of people followed Jesus.

Some teachers went to Jesus and asked Him questions about husbands and wives. Jesus answered by telling the teachers that God planned for husbands and wives to be together. He told the people about Adam and Eve, the first man and woman.

While Jesus talked about this, some people brought children to Jesus. The families wanted Jesus to touch their children and pray for them. At first, Jesus' helpers told the children and families to leave. But Jesus said, "Leave the children alone, and don't try to keep them from seeing Me." Jesus loved the children, and He wanted the people to know.

Then a man walked up to Jesus and asked a question. "Teacher, what must I do to live forever?"

Jesus taught the man that he should obey God's laws and help poor people. "Go, sell your belongings and give everything away. You will have much more treasure in heaven. Then you can follow Me."

Jesus had many things to teach the people while He lived on earth. Jesus wanted the people to know what is important. Some of the people listened to Jesus and believed what He taught. But other people did not listen to Jesus.

SET THE STAGE FOR EXPLORATION

1. PREPARE FOR TEACHING

- Review the teaching plan and practice using Bible-focused conversation. Pray for the preschoolers and their families.
- Before children arrive, set out the materials needed for early arrivers. Put materials for Exploration Stations and Circle Time in baskets or paper bags and set them in the areas in which children will work. Teachers may want to set up the stations before class time.
- Display posters and teaching reminders in suggested locations to remind you of the biblical focus for today.

2. OFFER ARRIVAL ACTIVITIES (5 MINUTES)

Offer two or three choices for preschoolers to explore:

- Build an outdoor scene using paper, rocks, and blocks.
- Sort pictures of people. (Older preschoolers may be interested and able to cut out people pictures.)
- Look at pictures of husbands and wives.

3. GET STARTED (5 MINUTES)

- Allow a few minutes for preschoolers to complete the activities.
- Ask a child who looked at wedding pictures to tell about some of the pictures. Remark: “Jesus taught people about families and husbands and wives. Today we will hear about that and other things Jesus taught.”
- Give attention to outdoor landscapes some children may have created. Remark that Jesus spent much time outdoors helping people.
- Invite a child who sorted pictures of people to tell about the different people he saw.
- Comment: “The Bible tells us that many people followed Jesus wherever He went. The crowds wanted to hear what Jesus had to say. We will hear more about what Jesus taught the people. Let’s go explore!”

4. GO TO EXPLORATION STATIONS AND CIRCLE TIME.

TOOLS

- wooden blocks, rocks, green and brown construction paper
- magazine cutouts showing people, blunt-tipped scissors
- wedding photo album or album with wedding picture cutouts

TEXT TRUTH

Jesus taught people what is important.

BIBLE STORY JESUS TAUGHT THE PEOPLE

Matthew 19:1-6,13-26

PRESCHOOL VERSE

Matthew 19:26

PACK ITEMS

- 3 Story Picture: Jesus Taught the People
- 23 Number Cube
- 24 Actions Cube
- 25 Backgrounds
- 26 Bible-times Figures

EXPLORATION STATIONS (45-60 MINUTES)

Set up at least three stations to provide choices of multisensory activities and movement for busy preschoolers.

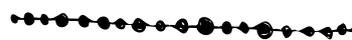
COLLECT NATURE ITEMS



Tools: Bible, paper sacks (one per child), Outdoor Checklist (Enhanced CD), tape, markers, Allergy Sign (Enhanced CD)

- Print enough checklists so each child has one. Tape a checklist to the outside of each child's paper sack.
- Give preschoolers some time to decorate their paper bag. Review the items pictured on the checklist before trekking outdoors.
- Take a few children at a time outdoors. Encourage the children to collect the items on the list and place them in their sacks.
- Return to the room. Open the Bible to Matthew 19:26. Comment: "Jesus taught people wherever He went. Jesus told people that with God all things are possible."

STACK UP BLOCKS



Tools: Bible, 6 large cards, markers, cardboard or wooden blocks, tape

- Print each word of today's Text Truth on separate cards. Tape the cards on a wall near the blocks. Attach the cards at varying heights (no higher than a child's chin).
- Encourage a child to stack blocks beneath a word card until the block tower reaches the card. Continue for all the cards.
- Point to each word as you guide the preschooler to say it aloud. Remark: "We learn about Jesus, the Teacher, from the Book of Matthew."

**PLAY A MOVEMENT
GAME**

Tools: Bible, Number Cube (Pack), Actions Cube (Pack), Enhanced CD, Story Picture: Jesus Taught the People (Pack)

- Play the Enhanced CD. Gather preschoolers and show them the sides of the cubes. Say: "One cube has numbers on it. The other cube shows things we can do with our bodies."
- Invite a child to toss both cubes. Show boys and girls how to perform the action a particular number of times. For instance, turn around four times when one cube shows the number 4 facing up and the other cube says *turn around*.
- Remark that many people moved through the towns and hills to look for Jesus.
- Show children the Story Picture and tell the story.

**DESIGN A STORY
COLLAGE**

Tools: Bible, Activity Page, construction paper, pictures of people and things (see Collage Pictures on Enhanced CD), glue sticks

- Show a child the picture on the Activity Page. Comment: "See the people listening to Jesus. Some of the people liked what Jesus said. Others were not happy to learn what they should do."
- Invite preschoolers to create collages using the pictures of people and things. While children glue pictures, relate the pictures to today's Bible story.
- Say: "Jesus told people they should give away their things and follow Him. Sometimes that is hard to do. But Jesus wants people to love and worship Him more than anything or anyone."

**BUILD A BIBLE-TIMES
TOWN**

Tools: Bible, Bible-times Figures (Pack), Backgrounds (Pack), wooden blocks, small boxes, tape

- Encourage preschoolers to explore the materials. Then suggest they could use them to create a Bible-times town.
- While children are busy, remark that Jesus walked to many places, including towns. Jesus wanted to teach the people and help them.
- Say: "Sometimes the people followed Jesus. They wanted to see and hear Him. One time some church leaders stopped Jesus and asked a question."
- Continue with the Bible story.
- Open the Bible to Matthew 19 and help a child find Jesus' name.

CIRCLE TIME (10-15 MINUTES, DEPENDING ON YOUR AGE GROUP)

LEADER TIP! USE THE BIBLE

Open a Bible to the Scripture passage while you tell the story. Doing this will help preschoolers know the story comes from the Bible.

CIRCLE TIME TOOLS

- several Bibles
- puzzle *Jesus and the Children* (LifeWay, 001050963)
- gift bag
- Enhanced CD

PACK ITEMS

- 3 Story Picture: Jesus Taught the People
- 16 Bible Markers A



LET'S GATHER.

- Visit the Exploration Stations and tell children it is Circle Time. Tell preschoolers to follow you in a circle around the room.
- When you reach the Circle Time area, tell children to do the motions as you say:
I can snap my fingers,
I can tap my toes.
I can nod my head,
I can wiggle my nose.
I can stretch up high,
I can bend down low.
I can sit on the floor
and fold my hands just so.
- Remark: "Thank you for listening to your teacher. Our Bible story tells about people who listened to Jesus teach."



LET'S HEAR THE BIBLE STORY.

- Ask a child to come to the front and open the Bible to the marker placed at Matthew 19.
- As the child holds the Bible, tell the Bible story in your own words. Then show children the Story Picture.
- Invite a few volunteers to come to the front. Ask children to look at the people shown in the Story Picture and pose like them.
- Pass the bag holding the puzzle pieces. Direct each child to get one piece. Lay the puzzle frame on the floor.
- Invite preschoolers one by one to place their puzzle piece in the frame. Thank children for giving verbal clues and encouraging one another.
- Remark that Jesus loved children and was happy when they were with Him. Say: "Jesus loves you!"



LET'S PRACTICE BIBLE SKILLS.

- Distribute Bibles to the children. (If children brought Bibles to church, encourage them to get their Bibles.)
- Ask teachers in the group to help preschoolers open the Bible to locate the Book of Matthew.
- Remark: "Matthew is the first book in the New Testament, the second part of the Bible. The New Testament tells about things that happened after Jesus came to live on the earth."
- Next ask teachers to help children turn to Matthew 19:26. Say the Preschool Verse. Then lead children to repeat it.
- Listen to the song "Shine on Me." Direct preschoolers to listen for the name *Matthew*.



LET'S PRAY TOGETHER.

- Invite preschoolers to share their prayer requests.
- Comment: "Let's thank God for the Bible."
- Pray for the children's requests, then thank God for telling Matthew what to write so we can learn what Jesus said is important.



LET'S EXPLORE MORE.

- Form small groups of two or three preschoolers and a teacher.
- Look at today's Activity Page. Guide the children to do the activity on the back. Review the Bible story. Recall three things Jesus said are important.
- Help preschoolers repeat the Preschool Verse again.

**DON'T FORGET TO
GIVE THIS WEEK'S
ACTIVITY PAGE TO
PRESCHOOLERS!**



Session

4



HOSANNA TO JESUS!

Matthew 21:1-11

In July 2015, the US Women's Soccer Champions, winners of the Women's World Cup, received a ticker-tape parade through the center of New York City. Thousands of people applauded and hundreds threw shredded paper from office windows onto the passing champions. Yet, on other occasions, those same athletes visited the Big Apple individually without being recognized by the people they passed on the street.

Similarly, Jesus had visited Jerusalem many times without fanfare before His famed triumphal entry. (See John 5:1-9; 7:1-10 for examples.) This time was different. Although Jesus did not make a public announcement of His arrival, large crowds gathered to greet Him. The masses swelled as word spread that the Prophet from Galilee was approaching.

Even in their praise, the people failed to understand Jesus' nature or His purpose. They thought He was a great prophet, but did not recognize Him as the Son of God. They were enamored with His miracles, grateful for His healing, and amazed by His teaching, but none of them were prepared for what would happen over the coming week. Their cheers would degenerate into jeers as He not only upended the money changers' tables in the temple, but turned their world upside down through the cross.

When the children presented perfect praise as they delighted in Jesus' presence, the Jewish leaders responded with indignation. They had been challenged not only by Jesus' rebuke over their prostituting the temple grounds for profit, but by His popularity with the people. For months these religious charlatans chaffed at Jesus' authenticity and conspired to remove Him one way or another. Jesus' open rebuke of them and their authority was the last straw, yet they could neither refute His miraculous power nor withstand a popularity fanned by His healing of the sick. As Jesus departed to spend the night in Bethany, probably with his friend Lazarus, the Jewish leaders began their final conspiracy against Him.

SESSION FOCUS

CORE PASSAGE

Matthew 21:1-11

PRESCHOOL VERSE

Matthew 21:9

PRESCHOOL TEXT TRUTH

People welcomed Jesus and worshiped Him.

PRESCHOOL CONNECTION STORY PASSAGE

Matthew 21:1-11

CHRIST IN CONTEXT

Everything God promised to His people in Old Testament times came true when He sent Jesus.

SESSION BRIEF

For centuries the people had awaited the promised King. They expected Him to arrive in grandeur, not humbly on a lowly donkey. Jesus rode through the streets and was welcomed by the common people who had heard about His miraculous healings and teachings. The people praised Jesus, the Son of David.

Lead preschoolers to know they can worship Jesus and thank God for sending His Son to love and help people.

YOU CHOOSE!

Are your preschoolers ready to learn memory verses? Decide which wording of the Preschool Verse you want to use with your group.

From the Bible text:
Hosanna to the Son! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Matthew 21:9

Preschool Verse Paraphrase:
People shouted, "Hosanna to Jesus!" Matthew 21:9

TEXT TRUTH

People welcomed Jesus and worshiped Him.

PRESCHOOL VERSE

Matthew 21:9

CONNECT TO MATTHEW:**THE PEOPLE PRAISED JESUS****Matthew 21:1-11**

Jesus and His disciples were walking toward Jerusalem. They stopped at the Mount of Olives.

“Go into the village,” Jesus told two disciples. “You will see a donkey and a colt. Untie them and bring them to Me. If anyone says anything, tell Him I need the animals. The person will agree to let you take them.”

The disciples did just as Jesus said. They found the donkey in the street, tied by a door. The disciples took the animals to Jesus and laid their robes on the animals’ backs.

Jesus sat on the animals and began riding into the city.

Many people spread their robes on the road, and others spread leafy branches they cut from trees. The people went in front of Jesus as He rode on the animals.

The crowds shouted, “Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna!”

When Jesus entered the city of Jerusalem, the whole city was surprised. The crowds of people kept saying, “This is Jesus!”

SET THE STAGE FOR EXPLORATION

1. PREPARE FOR TEACHING

- Review the teaching plan and practice using Bible-focused conversation. Pray for the preschoolers and their families.
- Before children arrive, set out the materials needed for early arrivers. Put materials for Exploration Stations and Circle Time in baskets or paper bags and set them in the areas in which children will work. Teachers may want to set up the stations before class time.
- Display posters and teaching reminders in suggested locations to remind you of the biblical focus for today.

2. OFFER ARRIVAL ACTIVITIES (5 MINUTES)

Offer two or three choices for preschoolers to explore:

- Look at books about donkeys and horses.
- Work puzzles about Jesus.
- Make a sticker picture.

3. GET STARTED (5 MINUTES)

- After the children have arrived and had an opportunity to choose an arrival activity, play the Enhanced CD and sing a song about Jesus.
- Say: “Songs remind us of how special Jesus is and how much He loves us. Our Bible story today is about people who worshiped Jesus and praised Him.”
- Lead preschoolers to sing one more song about Jesus, waving their hands in the air.

4. GO TO EXPLORATION STATIONS AND CIRCLE TIME.

TOOLS

- animal books featuring horses and donkeys (or look for pictures online)
- puzzles *Jesus and the Children* (LifeWay, 001050963) and *Children Praise Jesus* (LifeWay, 001050967)
- paper, colorful stickers (such as pictures of Jesus, donkeys, horses, palm leaves)
- Enhanced CD

TEXT TRUTH

People welcomed Jesus and worshiped Him.

BIBLE STORY THE PEOPLE PRAISED JESUS

Matthew 21:1-11

PRESCHOOL VERSE

Matthew 21:9

PACK ITEMS

- 4 Story Picture: The People Praised Jesus
- 21 Book: *Bradley's Bible*

LEADER TIP!

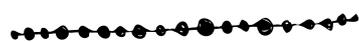
Use music often. Music is a great tool for helping a preschooler remember a biblical truth.

Play a song from the Enhanced CD or sing a Bible verse to a familiar tune. Make up an original melody to sing the Preschool Verse.

EXPLORATION STATIONS (45-60 MINUTES)

Set up at least three stations to provide choices of multisensory activities and movement for busy preschoolers.

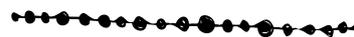
PLAY OUT THE BIBLE STORY



Tools: Bible; Activity Page; Bible-times dress-up clothing (robes, ties, scarves); real palm leaves (or cut leaves from green construction paper; see Enhanced CD); Allergy Sign (Enhanced CD)

- Show children the picture on the Activity Page and point to the people. Comment on their joyful expressions as they welcomed Jesus.
- Invite preschoolers to put on Bible-times clothing to play out the Bible story.
- After children put on clothing, tell the Bible story, giving time for children to recreate the story.
- Remark: "Many people were happy to see Jesus. They knew He was special."

WAVE HOSANNA STREAMERS



Tools: Bible, wide craft sticks, gift-wrap ribbon, washi tape, Enhanced CD

- Cut long strips of ribbon. Help a child tape the ribbon to the end of a craft stick. He can decorate his stick with the washi tape.
- Play a song about Jesus. Begin to sing along and wave a streamer. Guide boys and girls to wave their streamers to show love for Jesus.
- Comment: "The people welcomed Jesus and worshiped Him. Let's wave our streamers and shout, 'Hosanna! Hosanna!'"

UNCOVER BIBLE WORDS

Tools: Bible; shallow pan with layer of shredded paper; small objects on which to write words (wooden block, small gift box, plastic cup, plastic lid, small paper plate); marker

- Write these words (one word per object): *Bible, Jesus, Hosanna, Matthew, Praise*. Hide the objects in the pan filled with shredded paper.
- Invite a child to feel in the paper for a hidden object. When she discovers an object, read the word printed on it. Relate the word to the Text Truth, Bible story, or Preschool Verse.
- Say: "*Hosanna*. The people shouted 'Hosanna!' to Jesus when He rode into the city."
- Help the child find the words in the Bible.

PLAY WITH FARM ANIMALS

Tools: Bible, Story Picture: The People Praised Jesus (Pack), plastic interlocking blocks, toy farm animals

- Suggest that preschoolers build pens for the animals. Engage in conversation as children play, being mindful to direct the conversation to the Bible story.
- Show children the Story Picture and point to the village outside the city. Say: "Jesus told His helpers to go to the village and untie a donkey and bring it to Him."
- Open the Bible and help a child locate the Book of Matthew. Say: "This is the place in the Bible where we read about the people worshiping Jesus."

WEAVE PAPER STRIPS

Tools: Bible, 9-by-12-inch sheets of construction paper, strips of paper (cut 1-by-12 inches), scissors, marker, Book: Bradley's Bible (Pack)

- Cut slits in a sheet of paper, leaving a 1-inch margin on all sides. On one edge write the Preschool Verse.
- Show a child how to weave the narrow paper strips through the slits of the sheet of paper to create a woven pattern.
- Point to the words printed on the child's paper. Say: "These words are in the Book of Matthew. Matthew wrote about the day Jesus rode into the city."
- Give the preschooler the Bible to hold. Help the child turn Bible pages to find Matthew 21:9.
- Read the book to the preschooler. If he brought a Bible to church, ask him to get it. Look for the Book of Matthew.

CIRCLE TIME (10-15 MINUTES, DEPENDING ON YOUR AGE GROUP)

LEADER TIP! USE THE BIBLE

Open a Bible to the Scripture passage while you tell the story. Doing this will help preschoolers know the story comes from the Bible.

CIRCLE TIME TOOLS

- Bibles, including one red-letter edition
- large card with word *Matthew* printed on it
- tape
- Enhanced CD
- Activity Page

PACK ITEMS

- 4 Story Picture: The People Praised Jesus
- 29 Emotions Matching Cards

LEADER TIP!

If you need additional pictures showing emotions, print the Happy/Sad Faces (Enhanced CD).



LET'S GATHER.

- While preschoolers are completing Exploration Station activities, tape one set of Emotions Matching Cards (Pack) to the front of chairs in the Circle Time area.
- Distribute the second set of cards to preschoolers and invite them to go to the circle.
- Play the Enhanced CD and lead children to walk around the circle, paying attention to pictures taped to chairs.
- Say: "When you see a picture matching the one you are holding, please sit down."
- Talk for a few minutes about the range of emotions shown. Comment: "Our Bible story is about some people who were happy. Let's listen."



LET'S HEAR THE BIBLE STORY.

- Open the Bible to Matthew 21 and tell the story using your own words. Make eye contact with preschoolers and speak with emotion to engage children.
- Show children the Story Picture. Allow each child to get a good look. Then ask questions to help children think about the story. Ask:
Where did the men find the donkey?
(in the village at a man's house)
Where was Jesus going? (Jerusalem)
What did the people lay in the road?
(leaves and robes)
What did the people shout as Jesus passed by? (hosanna)
- Continue: "The people praised Jesus. Let's praise Jesus and sing a song to Him."
- Sing (tune "Are You Sleeping?"):
People shouted, people shouted,
Ho-san-na, Ho-san-na,
Hosanna to Je-sus, Hosanna to
Je-sus.
We love You. We love You.



LET'S PRACTICE BIBLE SKILLS.

- Distribute Bibles to children.
- Show children the *Matthew* word card. Guide children to look in their Bibles to find the Book of Matthew. Ask teachers in the circle to assist as needed.
- Open the red-letter Bible to Matthew 21 and turn the Bible so everyone can see. Remark: "Some of the words are printed in the color red. Those are words that Jesus spoke. They are words Jesus actually said."
- Continue: "I am glad that we can read the Bible to learn about Jesus and know what He said."
- Guide children to find verse 9 and say the Preschool Verse with you.



LET'S PRAY TOGETHER.

- Say: "The people praised Jesus. We can praise Jesus, too."
- Repeat the song about hosanna to Jesus.
- Pray a brief prayer, thanking God for sending His Son, Jesus, to love people, teach them, and show them how to live.



LET'S EXPLORE MORE.

- Form small groups of two or three preschoolers and a teacher.
- In each small group, look at the Activity Page. Guide the children to do the activity on the back.
- Help preschoolers repeat the Preschool Verse again.

**DON'T FORGET TO
GIVE THIS WEEK'S
ACTIVITY PAGE TO
PRESCHOOLERS!**



Session 5



WHAT HE DID

Matthew 21:33-45

Previously, Jesus had arrived in Jerusalem on the back of a donkey. The crowds who welcomed Him would very quickly turn their attention another way and instead condemn Jesus to death.

Matthew 21:10 alludes to the fact that Jesus' arrival into Jerusalem was such a momentous event that the city was shaken by His presence. The crowds were so enamored with Who Jesus was, amazement took over. The amazement did not, however, last very long, as Jesus walked into the temple complex and was disturbed by the sight before Him.

The temple was a place set aside for the worship of God. The temple structure itself was surrounded by quite a few courtyards, and it was in these outer courtyards that the selling of goods and services was in full swing. Those who set up places to sell animals for the Passover sacrifice were doing so in contrast to the holiness the temple deserved. Not only were the booths they constructed for their illegal sales out of place, the prices the businessmen charged for the animals were outrageous. Jesus overturned the booths and declared that God's house would be a house of prayer.

While Jesus was at the temple, many came to see Him and be healed by Him. Jesus, with the weight of everything He was about to face on Him, still took time to heal those who needed His healing touch.

Once again, the religious leaders, who were threatened by Jesus and His message and miracles, took the opportunity to show their indignation of His actions and of the children who praised Jesus. The children's praise of Jesus served as an example to those learned men, who should have known the praise of these children was well deserved by Jesus.

These vignettes showed the people gathered that Jesus was sent by God and that He had come to fulfill the prophecies of the Messiah. This week, which began in glorious celebration, would end with dramatic events that fulfilled God's plan.

SESSION FOCUS

CORE PASSAGE

Matthew 21:33-45

PRESCHOOL VERSE

Luke 4:43

PRESCHOOL TEXT TRUTH

Jesus helped people know God sent Him.

PRESCHOOL CONNECTION STORY PASSAGE

Matthew 21:12-15

CHRIST IN CONTEXT

Everything God promised to His people in Old Testament times came true when He sent Jesus.

SESSION BRIEF

Jesus is central in God's plan of redemption. Jesus' earthly ministry centered on leading people to know who He was and why God sent Him.

Matthew recorded what happened one day when Jesus went to the temple complex. Jesus drove out the money changers, heard children praise Him, and replied to questioning religious leaders. Jesus' actions were focused on leading people to know who sent Him.

Children can learn that Jesus taught people that God sent Him to help.

YOU CHOOSE!

Are your preschoolers ready to learn memory verses? Decide which wording of the Preschool Verse you want to use with your group.

From the Bible text:

Jesus said, "I must proclaim the good news about the kingdom of God." Luke 4:43

Preschool Verse Paraphrase:

Jesus said, "I must tell the good news because I was sent to do that." Luke 4:43

TEXT TRUTH

Jesus helped people know God sent Him.

PRESCHOOL VERSE

Luke 4:43

CONNECT TO MATTHEW:**TEACHING AT THE TEMPLE****Matthew 21:12-15**

Jesus went to Jerusalem. He walked to the temple where many people gathered. Jesus looked around and what He saw made Him angry. Some people at the temple were doing things they should not be doing!

Jesus saw people buying and selling things. Sellers had tables everywhere with baskets of money and cages with birds.

Jesus did not like what He saw. He went to the tables and turned them over. He told the sellers and buyers to get out of the temple. "The Bible tells us that the church house is to be a place of prayer. You have turned it into a market!"

The people must have been amazed at what Jesus did.

Some sick and hurting people were at the temple that day. They hurried to Jesus so He could make them well. Children shouted words of love to Jesus.

The church leaders saw the amazing things Jesus did and were not happy that the people praised Jesus.

SET THE STAGE FOR EXPLORATION

1. PREPARE FOR TEACHING

- Review the teaching plan and practice using Bible-focused conversation. Pray for the preschoolers and their families.
- Before children arrive, set out the materials needed for early arrivers. Put materials for Exploration Stations and Circle Time in baskets or paper bags and set them in the areas in which children will work. Teachers may want to set up the stations before class time.
- Display posters and teaching reminders in suggested locations to remind you of the biblical focus for today.

2. OFFER ARRIVAL ACTIVITIES (5 MINUTES)

Offer two or three choices for preschoolers to explore:

- Build a church with blocks.
- Design Bible markers.
- Sort coins into a muffin pan.

3. GET STARTED (5 MINUTES)

- Allow preschoolers to do one or more arrival activities as time permits.
- Ask a few individuals to tell about the activities they did when they arrived at church. Remark that all of the activities relate to church and what takes place at church.
- Say: “In today’s Bible story, we will hear that Jesus went to church. Jesus’ church was called the temple. Jesus saw some things happening at church that made Him angry.”
- Continue: “Let’s discover what the people learned that day from Jesus at the temple.” Describe the Exploration Station activities, and tell children they may choose where they would like to begin.

4. GO TO EXPLORATION STATIONS AND CIRCLE TIME.

TOOLS

- blocks, Build-a-Church Pieces (Pack Item 19)
- wide construction paper strips, colored shape stickers, crayons or colored pencils
- muffin pan, assorted coins (Supervise children closely.)

TEXT TRUTH

Jesus helped people know God sent Him.

BIBLE STORY TEACHING AT THE TEMPLE

Matthew 21:12-15

PRESCHOOL VERSE

Luke 4:43

PACK ITEMS

5 Story Picture: Teaching at the Temple
28 Road Pieces

EXPLORATION STATIONS (45-60 MINUTES)

Set up at least three stations to provide choices of multisensory activities and movement for busy preschoolers.

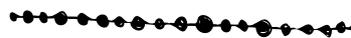
DRIVE CARS ON ROADS



Tools: Bible, toy vehicles, masking tape, Road Pieces (Pack), wooden blocks

- Use the masking tape to make roads on the floor. Add the Road Pieces for more interest.
- While preschoolers drive their cars or build with blocks, engage them in conversation. Ask: "If your mom needs to buy some milk, where does she go? Does she drive to get there?" Ask other questions about places to go. Include traveling to church.
- Say: "You came to church today to listen and learn from the Bible. Those are good things to do at church. One day Jesus saw people at church doing things that were not good."
- Tell the Bible story.

TOUR THE CHURCH



Tools: Bible, Activity Page

- Take a few children at a time on a walk through the church building. Tell them: "Let's walk to see what people at our church are doing. Look and listen for people who might be praying, singing, or reading the Bible."
- Show children the Activity Page. Talk about Jesus going to the temple one time and seeing people doing wrong things at the church building.
- Say: "Jesus wanted the people to know what was right, so He taught them."
- Return to the room. Recall the things you saw people at your church doing.

CREATE CHURCH MOSAICS

Tools: Bible, paper cut into church building shapes (see Enhanced CD), pieces of colorful paper cut into 1-inch pieces, glue sticks, marker

- Print the Preschool Verse at the bottom of the church shapes.
- Direct a child to select colors of paper to glue on her paper. As the child decorates her church picture, say the Preschool Verse.
- Say: "Some church buildings have pretty mosaic tiles or windows. Church is a special place. At church we sing, read the Bible, and talk to God."
- Turn to Luke 4:43. Remark: "Jesus went to the temple church. He taught people what they should do at church. Jesus told people He came to tell good news."

WORK PUZZLES

Tools: Bible; Story Picture: Teaching at the Temple (Pack); puzzles Going to Church (LifeWay, 005159906) and The Temple (LifeWay, 001051001); Enhanced CD

- Invite children to work the puzzles. Comment that both puzzles show places where people go to learn from the Bible.
- Ask a child to tell what he likes to do at church. Say: "We learn that Jesus went to church. He taught people that they should pray to God while they are at church."
- Show children the Story Picture. Tell preschoolers that Jesus wanted people to know He had good news to tell them, and this is why God sent Him."
- While children work puzzles, play the Enhanced CD.

PLAY "GOOD NEWS" RELAY

Tools: 2 Bibles, 2 shoe boxes, 2 large cards with Preschool Verse printed on them, tape

- Tape the cards on the top of each box lid. Put a Bible inside each box and replace the lid.
- Form two teams. Tell the children to stand against one wall. Put two chairs across the room.
- Read the words on the cards, then say: "Inside the box you have a clue about where those words are written. Can you guess?"
- Say: "Yes, the words are in the Bible. Now let's 'relay' this good news to our friends. When I say GO, walk as fast as you can to the chair, then turn around and come back. Give the box to your friend in line and say, 'Good news!'"
- When both teams finish, help them say the Preschool Verse together.



CIRCLE TIME (10-15 MINUTES, DEPENDING ON YOUR AGE GROUP)

LEADER TIP! USE THE BIBLE

Open a Bible to the Scripture passage while you tell the story. Doing this will help preschoolers know the story comes from the Bible.

CIRCLE TIME TOOLS

- Bible
- ball
- musical shakers
- Enhanced CD
- Activity Page

PACK ITEMS

- 5 Story Picture: Teaching at the Temple
- 16 Bible Markers A
- 21 Book: *Bradley's Bible*



LET'S GATHER.

- Sing as children move to Circle Time. Use the tune "The Farmer in the Dell" to sing:
*The people in the church,
The people in the church,
People go to church to learn,
The people in the church.*
- Once children are in the circle, direct them to stand in front of their chairs.
- Toss the ball to each child, asking each one to tell something he knows about Jesus.
- After the last child has responded, say: "We learn about Jesus when we come to church. Jesus went to church, too. Today we are going to hear about an important lesson Jesus taught people at church. Listen closely."
- Pick up the Bible and open it to Matthew 21.



LET'S HEAR THE BIBLE STORY.

- Tell the Bible story, then show preschoolers the Story Picture.
- Ask review questions such as:
Where did Jesus go? (to the temple)
Who did He see there? (sick people, children, people buying and selling things)
What did Jesus tell the people? (church is the place to pray and worship God)
What else did Jesus do there? (He made sick people well.)
Who praised Jesus? (children)
- State: "Jesus was a teacher who helped people know what they should do."
- Distribute shakers and invite preschoolers to shake them while listening to songs about Jesus.



LET'S PRACTICE BIBLE SKILLS.

- Read the Book: *Bradley's Bible* (Pack) to the group. Remind preschoolers that every word of the Bible is true.
- Invite a child to open a Bible to the marker placed at Luke 4:43. Say: "Listen to these words Jesus said." Read the Preschool Verse.
- Comment: "These words are written in the Book of Luke. Luke and Matthew wrote about Jesus."
- Lead preschoolers to repeat the Preschool Verse with you.
- Comment: "Many people were excited to hear Jesus teach and learn why God sent Him, but other people did not want to listen to Jesus."



LET'S PRAY TOGETHER.

- Ask preschoolers to share prayer requests and concerns. Invite willing children to pray.
- Pray, thanking God for sending His Son, Jesus. Thank God for the Bible that helps us learn about the things Jesus did and the things He taught people.



LET'S EXPLORE MORE.

- Form small groups of two or three preschoolers and a teacher.
- In the small groups, look at the Activity Page. Guide the children to do the activity on the back.
- Help preschoolers repeat the Preschool Verse again.

**DON'T FORGET TO
GIVE THIS WEEK'S
ACTIVITY PAGE TO
PRESCHOOLERS!**



Session 6



JESUS, OUR HELPER

Matthew 22:1-14

Following Jesus' cleansing of the temple, the Bible says that Jesus left the temple complex and made His way to Bethany where He would spend time with Mary, Martha, and their brother, Lazarus. Jesus made it a habit to stop at their house whenever He was in the area. John 11 records another instance that brought Jesus to the home of Mary and Martha.

Jesus had been preaching around the area in the Jordan River where John the Baptist previously had been baptizing. Soon, word arrived from Bethany that Lazarus was sick. The sisters took time to seek out Jesus and let Him know that Lazarus was sick. By the time Jesus arrived in Bethany, Lazarus had died and had been buried four days.

Mary and Martha both recognized Jesus' ability to perform miracles. Both women independently stated that if Jesus had been present, Lazarus would not have died. The women had seen Jesus' ability to heal the sick, but both, it appeared, did not believe that even Jesus could raise the dead. Jesus' announcement that He is the resurrection and the life identified Him as the Messiah, and Martha agreed that Jesus was indeed the Messiah sent to save the world.

Jesus left and went to the tomb of Lazarus. When He arrived, He asked that the stone covering the opening be removed. Martha was skeptical and tried to persuade Jesus not to remove the stone because of the stench from the rotting corpse. Jesus gently reminded Martha that He was the resurrection and the life.

With a simple command to Lazarus to come forth, the dead man walked from the tomb still wrapped in the linen cloths used to cover the body after death. Once Lazarus was loosed from his binding, the family was reunited. In typical fashion, some of those who were present believed in Jesus, while others went to the Pharisees to tell what Jesus had done, further enraging them against Jesus. Mary and Martha believed that Jesus would help if they asked. We, too, can ask Jesus for help in any situation.

SESSION FOCUS

CORE PASSAGE

Matthew 22:1-14

PRESCHOOL VERSE

Romans 10:13

PRESCHOOL TEXT TRUTH

We can believe that Jesus will help us.

PRESCHOOL CONNECTION STORY PASSAGE

John 11:1-3,17-44

CHRIST IN CONTEXT

Everything God promised to His people in Old Testament times came true when He sent Jesus.

SESSION BRIEF

God wants us to trust in Jesus and believe in Him. God provided a way for people through His Son.

Martha, in her despair over her brother Lazarus, knew that Jesus could help. Jesus healed Lazarus to show people that God sent Him to lead people to God. Mary and Martha believed that Jesus could heal their brother.

Preschoolers can begin to know that Jesus will help us. As children hear about Easter and participate in Palm Sunday experiences, talk to them about Jesus' great love for people.

YOU CHOOSE!

Are your preschoolers ready to learn memory verses? Decide which wording of the Preschool Verse you want to use with your group.

From the Bible text:

Everyone who calls on the Lord will be saved. Romans 10:13

Preschool Verse Paraphrase:

Ask Jesus to help you.
Romans 10:13

TEXT TRUTH

We can believe that Jesus will help us.

PRESCHOOL VERSE

Romans 10:13

CONNECT TO MATTHEW:**MARTHA TRUSTED JESUS****John 11:1-3,17-44**

Mary and Martha were sisters, and they had a brother named Lazarus. Lazarus became very sick, and the sisters were worried. They sent a message to Jesus to tell Him about their brother.

In a few days Jesus and His disciples went to the women's house. Many other people had also come to be with Mary and Martha because Lazarus had died.

When Martha heard that Jesus was coming to her house, she rushed out to meet Him. "Jesus, if You had been here sooner to help, my brother would still be alive. But I know that whatever You ask God, He will answer You."

Then Jesus gently told Martha her brother would live.

Martha trusted Jesus. She knew He was God's Son, the one God sent to heal people and help them. So Martha went to her sister, Mary, and told her what Jesus said.

Mary hurried to Jesus, too. She was very, very sad about Lazarus and cried.

Jesus prayed to God. "Father, thank You for hearing Me," Jesus prayed. "I want the people to believe You sent Me."

Then Jesus shouted, "Lazarus, come out!"

Martha saw her brother begin to walk. The sisters and all the people were amazed at what Jesus did!

SET THE STAGE FOR EXPLORATION

1. PREPARE FOR TEACHING

- Review the teaching plan and practice using Bible-focused conversation. Pray for the preschoolers and their families.
- Before children arrive, set out the materials needed for early arrivers. Put materials for Exploration Stations and Circle Time in baskets or paper bags and set them in the areas in which children will work. Teachers may want to set up the stations before class time.
- Display posters and teaching reminders in suggested locations to remind you of the biblical focus for today.

2. OFFER ARRIVAL ACTIVITIES (5 MINUTES)

Offer two or three choices for preschoolers to explore:

- Draw pictures of your family.
- Use letter tiles to write Bible names.
- Construct the letter *J* with blocks.

3. GET STARTED (5 MINUTES)

- Give preschoolers choices of activities when they first arrive. After each child has enjoyed at least one activity, get children's attention by blinking the light.
- Ask one or two children to tell about their pictures of family members. Remark: "Today's Bible story is about a family. Two sisters and a brother were in this family."
- Hold the word cards used earlier. Read the names. Say: "We will learn that Martha trusted Jesus. She believed that He could help her family."
- Direct children to move to Exploration Station activities.

TOOLS

- drawing paper, colored pencils, crayons
- cards with the words *Mary*, *Martha*, and *Jesus* printed on them; wooden or plastic letter tiles
- wooden or interlocking plastic blocks, masking tape (use to form the letter *J* on floor)

4. GO TO EXPLORATION STATIONS AND CIRCLE TIME.

TEXT TRUTH

We can believe that Jesus will help us.

BIBLE STORY MARTHA TRUSTED JESUS

John 11:1-3,17-44

PRESCHOOL VERSE

Romans 10:13

PACK ITEMS

- 4 Story Picture: The People Praised Jesus
- 6 Story Picture: Martha Trusted Jesus
- 25 Backgrounds
- 27 Family & Friends Figures

LEADER TIP!

Prepare the lacing picture before the session. For durability, glue the picture on poster board, then punch holes around the picture about ½ inch from the edge and 1 inch apart. Thread the ribbon through one hole and tie it to keep it in place.

EXPLORATION STATIONS (45-60 MINUTES)

Set up at least three stations to provide choices of multisensory activities and movement for busy preschoolers.

USE TOY MEDICAL KIT

Tools: Bible, Story Picture: Martha Trusted Jesus (Pack), toy medical kit, baby doll

- Invite preschoolers to use the toy medical kit to treat the baby doll or one another. As the children pretend, ask them about visits to see the doctor for checkups.
- Comment: “Doctors help us keep well and take care of us when we are sick. A story in the Bible tells about a man who was very, very sick, and no one could help him. The man’s sister asked Jesus to help.”
- Show the Story Picture to the children, pointing to Martha. Say: “Martha sent a message to her friend Jesus and asked Him to help. And Jesus did!”
- Turn to Romans 10:13 and say the Preschool Verse.

LACE A STORY PICTURE

Tools: Bible, Story Picture: The People Praised Jesus (Pack), hole punch, 12-inch green ribbon, tape, glue, poster board, live palm branch, Allergy Sign (Enhanced CD)

- Tell preschoolers that today is Palm Sunday. Show children the Story Picture and ask them if they remember the story about Jesus going to Jerusalem (Session 4).
- Point to the palm branches laid in the road. Remind children that the people wanted to praise Jesus.
- Invite a child to lace the ribbon around the picture. As he works, show him the palm branch.

**PLAY WITH FAMILY
FIGURES**

Tools: Bible, plastic people figures, Family & Friends Figures (Pack), Backgrounds (Pack), Activity Page, dollhouse (optional)

- Prop the Background against the wall with the indoor scene facing outward.
- Watch children pretend with the figures and dollhouse. Talk to the preschoolers about their families.
- Remark: "Families love one another and do things to help. Martha loved her brother Lazarus. She asked Jesus to help her brother. Martha trusted that Jesus would know what to do."
- Show the children the picture on the Activity Page as you tell the Bible story.

**MAKE A PEOPLE
MURAL**

Tools: Bible, long sheet of paper, tape, picture cutouts of people of all ages, pink and red heart cutouts, glue sticks, marker

- Tape the paper to the wall at preschoolers' eye level. Across the top of the paper print the Preschool Verse and reference.
- Put the pictures, heart cutouts, and glue sticks on a small table.
- Invite preschoolers to design a mural by gluing pictures and heart shapes on the paper. Begin by reading the words printed at the top of the paper.
- Say: "Those words remind us that we can trust Jesus to help us, just as Martha trusted Jesus."
- Open the Bible to Romans 10:13 and show the verse to the children.

**SEQUENCE
PRESCHOOL VERSE**

Tools: Bible, table tennis balls, colored fine-tipped permanent markers, paper bag, paper strip with Preschool Verse written on it, ice cube trays

- Print each word of the Preschool Verse on a table tennis ball. (Use a different color marker for each word.) Write the Preschool Verse on the paper using the same colors.
- Drop the balls in the bag and lay the sentence strip on the table. Read the words on the strip to a child. Point to each word.
- Lead the preschooler to get balls from the bag and put them in the cups of the ice tray in the correct order. Assist as needed.
- Repeat the words of the Preschool Verse. Then remark: "Martha trusted Jesus and asked Him to help her brother. We can believe that Jesus will help us, too, when we ask Him."

CIRCLE TIME (10-15 MINUTES, DEPENDING ON YOUR AGE GROUP)

LEADER TIP! USE THE BIBLE

Open a Bible to the Scripture passage while you tell the story. Doing this will help preschoolers know the story comes from the Bible.

CIRCLE TIME TOOLS

- several Bibles
- Activity Page

PACK ITEM

6 Story Picture: Martha
Trusted Jesus



LET'S GATHER.

- Ask preschoolers to complete activities and move to the Circle Time area. Ask them to remain standing until everyone is in the circle.
- Lead children to do these actions with you:
Good friend, good friend, Turn around.
Good friend, good friend, Touch the ground.
Good friend, good friend, Wink your eye.
Good friend, good friend, Reach up high.
Good friend, good friend, Slap your knees.
Good friend, good friend, Sit down, please.
- When children are seated, comment: "Friends have fun together, and friends can ask each other for help. Listen to this story about a friend of Jesus."



LET'S HEAR THE BIBLE STORY.

- Open the Bible to John 11 and say: "Martha, her sister Mary, and her brother Lazarus were friends of Jesus. Lazarus became very, very sick. Jesus cared about His friends."
- Lay the Story Picture on the floor in front of you as you hold the Bible and tell the story from the Bible.
- After the story, talk to the children about the meaning of trust. Say: "Martha trusted Jesus. She knew Jesus loved her and Lazarus, and she knew Jesus could help her brother. We can trust Jesus, too. We know He loves us and cares about us. We can ask Him to help us."



LET'S PRACTICE BIBLE SKILLS.

- Distribute Bibles to the children.
- Help boys and girls locate the Book of Romans. Say: "Just like Matthew, Romans is a book in the New Testament. It was written by Paul. Paul wrote letters to tell the people in Rome about Jesus."
- Continue: "Our verse for today is from the Book of Romans. Let's say it together."
- Read the Preschool Verse and lead children to say it after you.
- Comment: "Martha asked Jesus to help, and she believed that Jesus would help her. What are some ways Jesus can help you or your family?"
- Guide the discussion, being sensitive to a child's comments.



LET'S PRAY TOGETHER.

- Ask: "Would someone like to pray and ask for Jesus' help?"
- Encourage willing children to pray, but do not force children to pray.
- After children pray, voice a simple prayer asking God to help preschoolers know they can trust Jesus to help them.



LET'S EXPLORE MORE.

- Form small groups of two or three preschoolers and a teacher.
- In each small group look at today's Activity Page. Guide the children to do the activity on the back.
- Help preschoolers repeat the Preschool Verse again.

**DON'T FORGET TO
GIVE THIS WEEK'S
ACTIVITY PAGE TO
PRESCHOOLERS!**



Session 7



REJOICE! HE IS ALIVE!

Matthew 27:41-52

On Resurrection Sunday, Christians celebrate Jesus Christ's victory over death. The reason we celebrate becomes clearer the longer we walk with Christ. His resurrection serves as the centerpiece of our relationship with Him. He is alive, and He lives in us the moment we repent of our sin and receive His salvation.

When we think about Jesus and what He has done for us, our thoughts go immediately to the cross. Jesus' crucifixion demonstrated that He intended to sacrifice His life so all people could be saved. His death paid the price for our sin. When we study Jesus' sacrifice on the cross for us, we are led to worship Him and prompted to serve Him completely.

As Jesus died on the cross, several extraordinary events occurred. In addition to the darkness, the temple curtain was torn from top to bottom. Earthquakes shook the land and the graves were opened and dead saints were restored to life. In response, even the hardened Roman centurion exclaimed that this man must have been the Son of God.

Jewish leaders were scared. Romans were scornful. Followers of Jesus were saddened beyond heartache. Then, the dawn broke three days later on the first day of the week, revealing the tremendous truth that the grave was empty and Jesus was alive!

The women who followed Jesus from Galilee had witnessed His death and watched His burial. That morning they came to pay last respects with ointments suitable for a burial. The women fully expected to see a dead body. The Roman soldiers standing guard over the tomb were hardened troops whose lives would have been forfeit had they slept on duty or abandoned their posts. They had nothing to gain and everything to lose if anything happened to Jesus' body. Nothing about this scene suggested Jesus could have merely swooned and revived. No reasonable investigation could forensically demonstrate any other conclusion than the truth: Jesus had died and been resurrected. He is alive today and reigns forevermore. He is Messiah. He is King. He is our risen Lord!

SESSION FOCUS

CORE PASSAGE

Matthew 27:41-52

PRESCHOOL VERSE

Matthew 28:6

PRESCHOOL TEXT TRUTH

Jesus is alive.

PRESCHOOL CONNECTION STORY PASSAGE

Matthew 27:27-61; 28:1-8

CHRIST IN CONTEXT

Everything God promised to His people in Old Testament times came true when He sent Jesus.

SESSION BRIEF

Jesus died because He loved people and knew they would never be able to live with God without Jesus' help. Jesus willingly gave His life, proving the prophecies about a Messiah who would be sacrificed to atone for people's sin.

Jesus' appearance to His friends confirmed His promise to return to them, alive again. That promise is for us today.

Today as we celebrate Jesus' resurrection at the first Easter, guide preschoolers to know Jesus loves all people and is alive even now.

YOU CHOOSE!

Are your preschoolers ready to learn memory verses? Decide which wording of the Preschool Verse you want to use with your group.

From the Bible text:

He [Jesus] is not here! He has been resurrected.
Matthew 28:6

Preschool Verse Paraphrase:

He [Jesus] is not here! He is alive! Matthew 28:6

TEXT TRUTH

Jesus is alive.

PRESCHOOL VERSE

Matthew 28:6

CONNECT TO MATTHEW:**THE FIRST EASTER**

Matthew 27:27-61; 28:1-8

Many people were angry with Jesus. They wanted to be rid of Him. The people hurt Jesus, made fun of Him, called Him names, and said hurtful things to Jesus.

The people made Jesus get on the cross. They said, "If You are God's Son, save Yourself."

But Jesus knew this was how the people would treat Him. And Jesus knew this was God's plan.

Later that day, Jesus died on the cross. His friends were sad. They did not know what to do.

But three days later, everyone was surprised. Early in the morning Jesus' friends Mary Magdalene and Mary went to the place where Jesus' body had been placed. When the women arrived at the garden, they saw something strange. The stone that had been put in the door of the tomb had been rolled away!

Then Mary Magdalene and Mary saw someone standing near them. He was wearing bright clothes. The man was an angel.

"Don't be afraid," the angel said. "I know you are looking for Jesus. Come and look where His body was placed. He is not here. He is alive! Now go and tell His disciples that Jesus is alive!"

The women remembered that Jesus had told them about these things. They hurried to find the disciples and tell them the good news.

SET THE STAGE FOR EXPLORATION

1. PREPARE FOR TEACHING

- Review the teaching plan and practice using Bible-focused conversation. Pray for the preschoolers and their families.
- Before children arrive, set out the materials needed for early arrivers. Put materials for Exploration Stations and Circle Time in baskets or paper bags and set them in the areas in which children will work. Teachers may want to set up the stations before class time.
- Display posters and teaching reminders in suggested locations to remind you of the biblical focus for today.

2. OFFER ARRIVAL ACTIVITIES (5 MINUTES)

Offer two or three choices for preschoolers to explore:

- Match words, shapes, and colors.
- Work puzzles related to Easter.
- Search Bibles to find the words *Jesus* and *Matthew*.

3. GET STARTED (5 MINUTES)

- When children have arrived and had an opportunity to do one or more of the arrival activities, show children the rocks. Ask: “Can you guess what rocks have to do with Easter?”
- Invite preschoolers to tell what they know about Eastertime. Invite brief responses, and affirm answers that focus on Jesus. (Redirect conversation when it digresses to secular traditions associated with Easter.)
- Comment: “In today’s story from the Bible, we will hear about the very first Easter! We will learn what the Bible says Easter is all about. Let’s go to Exploration Stations and hear more about Jesus and the first Easter.”

4. GO TO EXPLORATION STATIONS AND CIRCLE TIME.

TOOLS

- Shape Board (Pack Item 33), Word Shapes (Pack Item 34)
- *Easter Wooden Box Puzzle* (LifeWay, 005267310)
- Bibles; magnifying glasses; index cards with the words *Jesus* and *Matthew* printed on them
- several round and smooth hand-size rocks

TEXT TRUTH

Jesus is alive.

BIBLE STORY THE FIRST EASTER

Matthew 27:27-61; 28:1-8

PRESCHOOL VERSE

Matthew 28:6

PACK ITEMS

- 7 Story Picture: The First Easter
- 30 Easter Flowers

LEADER TIP!

Preschoolers learn through play! Create opportunities to promote Bible conversations with children as they spend time in the Exploration Stations.

EXPLORATION STATIONS (45-60 MINUTES)

Set up at least three stations to provide choices of multisensory activities and movement for busy preschoolers.

DRAW AND DISCOVER

Tools: Bible, drawing paper, light-adhesive masking tape, fine-tipped marker, crayons

- Use the marker to print the Text Truth in small letters a few times on drawing paper. Cover the words with strips of tape. Provide one sheet per child. Set the crayons and Bible nearby.
- Demonstrate how a child can draw all over the paper, even drawing on top of the tape. Suggest that she cover as much of the paper as possible.
- Locate the Preschool Verse in the Bible. Say: "Let's carefully remove the tape from your paper and discover a message from the Bible!" Remove the tape and read the Text Truth.
- Say: "Jesus is alive! That is good news for everyone!"

STEP ON "STONES"

Tools: Bible, gray paper cut to look like stones, black marker, tape

- Print each word of the Preschool Verse on a "stone." Tape the stones on the floor in the correct sequence.
- Guide children to step on the "stones." Recall that Mary walked to the tomb where people put Jesus' body. A big stone was at the door.
- Read the words on the stones. Lead children to repeat them. Say: "Easter is a very special time. We know that Jesus is alive!"
- Help the child find the Bible story in Matthew 27-28.

**CREATE A BIBLE
VERSE GARDEN**

Tools: Bible, Story Picture: The First Easter (Pack), craft sticks, tape, Easter Flowers (Pack), play dough

- Cut out flower blossoms. Attach each cutout to a craft stick with tape. Make two sets.
- Give a child a set of flower blossoms and a mound of play dough. Guide the child to create a flower garden by placing the sticks into the dough. Read the words on the blossoms and help the child arrange the flowers in the correct order.
- A friend may use the duplicate set of flower blossoms to make a garden.
- Say: "Mary went to a place like a garden. She saw something amazing."
- Show the child the Story Picture and tell the story.

**ROLE PLAY MORNING
ACTIVITIES**

Tools: Bible, Activity Page, empty cereal boxes, frozen waffle cartons, oatmeal boxes, other breakfast food containers, toy dishes, blanket and pillow

- Arrange the blanket and pillow to resemble a bed. Invite a preschooler to lie down and pretend she is waking up in the morning.
- Guide the child to pretend to dress, then go to breakfast. Ask the child what she would like to eat. Pretend to prepare the food.
- Tell about the special morning when Mary went to Jesus' tomb and learned that Jesus was gone.
- Show the preschooler the picture on the Activity Page. Point to Mary.
- Help the child turn to Matthew 28:6 and "read" the Preschool Verse.

**WORK PUZZLES
ABOUT JESUS**

Tools: Bible, Enhanced CD, several wooden puzzles that depict Jesus as an adult

- Play the Enhanced CD and listen for songs about Jesus. Comment to preschoolers that songs about Jesus help us remember that He is alive!
- Direct a preschooler to choose a puzzle. Talk about the picture on the puzzle, recalling a Bible story or event associated with the picture.
- Say: "We can read these stories about Jesus from several books in the Bible. Today's story is from the Book of Matthew. Matthew told about the first Easter."
- After the child completes her puzzle, help her find the Book of Matthew in the Bible. Then lead her to repeat the Preschool Verse.
- Say: "Easter is a special time to remember Jesus."

CIRCLE TIME (10-15 MINUTES, DEPENDING ON YOUR AGE GROUP)

LEADER TIP! USE THE BIBLE

Open a Bible to the Scripture passage while you tell the story. Doing this will help preschoolers know the story comes from the Bible.

CIRCLE TIME TOOLS

- Bibles
- Activity Page

PACK ITEM

7 Story Picture: The First Easter

LEADER TIP!

“The First Easter” is perhaps the most important story a child will hear.

LEADER TIP!

Inform preschoolers that you will ask questions about the Bible story. Suggest that the children listen for certain things as you tell the story.



LET'S GATHER.

- Walk around the class, and tell preschoolers that they have three minutes to clean up and join you for Circle Time.
- Say: “Let’s play a game. Name three things that are blue. (Welcome responses.) Now, name three things that fly.”
- Continue calling out categories such as: three things that are good to eat, three animals that have fur, three places to read a book.
- Comment: “In today’s story, we will hear about something very special that happened in three days. Listen very closely as I tell this true story from my Bible.”



LET'S HEAR THE BIBLE STORY.

- Choose a volunteer to open the Bible to a marker placed at Matthew 27.
- Tell the Bible story, using your own words.
- Pass the Story Picture around the circle. Ask individual children to touch the stone, the women, the empty tomb, and an angel.
- Say: “Let’s review the story.” Ask questions such as:
At the beginning of the story, who was angry? (the people)
What did the people make Jesus do? (get on the cross)
What did the women discover at the garden tomb? (angels, Jesus was not there)
What did the angels tell the women? (Jesus is alive!)
- Celebrate by singing (tune “Mary Had a Little Lamb”):
Jesus is alive today.
Yes, He is. Yes, He is.
Jesus is alive today.
Jesus is alive!



LET'S PRACTICE BIBLE SKILLS.

- Distribute Bibles to preschoolers. Comment: "The story about the first Easter is in the Book of Matthew. Let's look for Matthew in your Bibles."
- Ask teachers in the circle to help children locate the Book of Matthew, then look for Jesus' name.
- Ask children: "What is the real story of the first Easter?" (Jesus is alive!)
- Sing to the tune "God Is So Good":
He is not here! He is not here!
He is not here! Jesus is alive!



LET'S PRAY TOGETHER.

- Welcome prayer requests from children.
- Invite a child to voice a prayer. If he is unwilling, call on another child, or say a prayer yourself.
- Thank God for the Bible that helps us know that Jesus is alive.



LET'S EXPLORE MORE.

- Form small groups of two or three preschoolers and a teacher.
- Look at today's Activity Page. Guide the children to do the activity on the back.
- Review the Bible story.
- Help preschoolers repeat the Preschool Verse a few times.

**DON'T FORGET TO
GIVE THIS WEEK'S
ACTIVITY PAGE TO
PRESCHOOLERS!**



Session 8



BE READY

Matthew 24:36-51

Forecasting the future is big business. Investors spend millions of dollars for analyses, hoping to know where the stock market is heading. Television stations hire meteorologists to predict the weather.

Jesus' disciples were eager to know when events regarding Jesus' future reign would occur. After His resurrection, the disciples hoped the time had come for Israel to rise from servitude with Jesus as king (Acts 1:6). Jesus not only wanted the Twelve to understand what would come in the end of days, He also desired that they would comprehend the serious challenges facing His followers in the future. We cannot know the hour of Jesus' coming, and idle speculation about such events is of little worth. However, Jesus' teachings can motivate us to live each day in a state of readiness for His return.

Jesus did not want people to guess futilely about the future, but to be ready for it by living for God in the present. Jesus compared His second coming to the flood of Noah's day, focusing on how both were unexpected and sudden. Being reminded of the past, believers can prepare for the future.

Jesus' allusions to Old Testament persons and events are part of the internal evidence that supports the inerrancy of Scripture. Jesus would not have used fictional material to support factual prophecy. In this case, He reminded the disciples of what happened during the days of Noah (see Gen. 5-8). Jesus likened this period of time with the coming of the Son of Man.

Jesus prepared the disciples for His death by pointing to His return. He reminded them of their need to be alert, since no one but the Father knows when Jesus' coming will take place. Jesus challenged His followers to be faithful in anticipation of His return. He also promised that faithful followers will be rewarded.

SESSION FOCUS

CORE PASSAGE

Matthew 24:36-51

PRESCHOOL VERSE

John 14:3

PRESCHOOL TEXT TRUTH

Jesus wants people to be prepared.

PRESCHOOL CONNECTION STORY PASSAGE

Genesis 6:9-22; 7:1-10

CHRIST IN CONTEXT

Everything God promised to His people in Old Testament times came true when He sent Jesus.

SESSION BRIEF

God told Noah to get ready for a great flood. God would tell Noah how to build the ark and prepare for the rain to come. Noah trusted God and prepared for what was to come.

Likewise, Jesus said He will come back to be with people and they will live with Him forever. Jesus taught people what to do to get ready for His return. Jesus revealed that if we love and obey Him, we can be ready for Him.

Jesus wants people to be excited and look forward to being with Him some day. Jesus wants us to be ready to see Him.

YOU CHOOSE!

Are your preschoolers ready to learn memory verses? Decide which wording of the Preschool Verse you want to use with your group.

From the Bible text:

I will come back and receive you. John 14:3

Preschool Verse Paraphrase:

Jesus said, "I will come back for you." John 14:3

TEXT TRUTH

Jesus wants people to be prepared.

PRESCHOOL VERSE

John 14:3

CONNECT TO MATTHEW:**NOAH GOT READY****Genesis 6:9-22; 7:1-10**

During the time Noah lived, the people disobeyed God. They did not follow God's rules or show they loved God.

But Noah loved God. He and his wife and children obeyed God and worshiped Him.

God decided to send a flood over the land, but He wanted to protect Noah. So God made a plan. He told Noah to get ready for the rain that He would send.

God told Noah to build an ark (boat). God told Noah how long, how wide, and how tall to build the ark. Noah built the ark just like God told him to build it.

When the ark was ready, God said: "Noah, get on the ark with your family. Take every kind of animal with you." Noah obeyed. He did what God told him. Now Noah was ready.

Rain started to fall. It rained and rained and rained! The water rose higher and higher. It lifted the ark right off the ground! The rain fell for 40 days and 40 nights. There was water everywhere, but God took care of Noah. Noah, his family, and the animals were safe on the ark.

Finally, the rain stopped falling. The water started to go down.

When the water was gone, Noah came out of the ark. His family and the animals came out, too. Noah thanked God for helping him get ready for the flood and for taking care of his family and the animals.

SET THE STAGE FOR EXPLORATION

1. PREPARE FOR TEACHING

- Review the teaching plan and practice using Bible-focused conversation. Pray for the preschoolers and their families.
- Before children arrive, set out the materials needed for early arrivers. Put materials for Exploration Stations and Circle Time in baskets or paper bags and set them in the areas in which children will work. Teachers may want to set up the stations before class time.
- Display posters and teaching reminders in suggested locations to remind you of the biblical focus for today.

2. OFFER ARRIVAL ACTIVITIES (5 MINUTES)

Offer two or three choices for preschoolers to explore:

- Look at books about animals.
- Measure wooden blocks.
- Count and move pom-poms with tongs.

3. GET STARTED (5 MINUTES)

- After preschoolers have had an opportunity to do one or more of the arrival activities, ask them about their activities. Inquire: “Did you measure wooden blocks? What animal pictures did you see? How many pom-poms did you move?”
- Show preschoolers the Bible and open it to Matthew 24. Comment: “Jesus taught the people that they needed to get ready for things that would happen. Jesus told the people about Noah and to remember how Noah got ready.”
- Continue: “Today we will hear Noah’s story and explore how Noah got ready!”

4. GO TO EXPLORATION STATIONS AND CIRCLE TIME.

TOOLS

- several preschool animal books
- wooden blocks (varied sizes), measuring tools such as tape measure, ruler
- colored cotton pom-poms, 2 bowls, plastic tongs

TEXT TRUTH

Jesus wants people to be prepared.

BIBLE STORY NOAH GOT READY

Genesis 6:9-22; 7:1-10

PRESCHOOL VERSE

John 14:3

PACK ITEM

8 Story Picture: Noah Got Ready

LEADER TIP!

You can easily make liquid watercolors. Pop a colored disk out of a tray of dry watercolor paints. Drop the disk into a cup with a tablespoon of hot water. The disk will dissolve.

Note: Food coloring will leave a stain.

EXPLORATION STATIONS (45-60 MINUTES)

Set up at least three stations to provide choices of multisensory activities and movement for busy preschoolers.

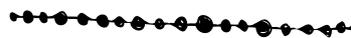
EXPLORE COLORED WATER



Tools: Bible; absorbent paper (paper towels, coffee filters, watercolor paper); blue liquid watercolors; pipettes

- Show children how to draw water up into the pipettes, then squeeze to release the water.
- Invite children to drip blue watercolor onto the paper and watch it pool, roll around, and soak into the paper.
- Relate the water to the rain God sent. Say: "God told Noah to get ready before He sent the rain."
- Turn to John 14:3 and touch the page. Say: "Jesus wants people to be prepared. Jesus said He will come back."
- Help children say the Preschool Verse.

PLAY WITH ANIMALS



Tools: Bible, Story Picture: Noah Got Ready (Pack), large shoe box, wooden blocks, plastic toy animals, illustration of Noah's ark (check an atlas or Bible dictionary)

- Suggest that preschoolers use the box and blocks to build a boat similar to the ark.
- Say: "God had a plan, and He shared it with Noah. God wanted Noah and his family to be ready when the rain began to fall."
- Show the Story Picture to the children and continue the story.
- Remark: "Jesus said He will come back for people, and He wants them to be ready."

PLAY READY, SET, GO!

Tools: Bible, green and red paper flags, masking tape

- Place the Bible on a chair at the end of several masking tape lines stretching parallel across the room.
- Tell children to stand on the tape. They are to go toward the Bible when you hold up the green flag and stop when you hold up the red flag.
- Prompt children by saying: "Ready, set, go!"
- Give instructions for children to walk on tiptoes, use baby steps, scoot, and so on.
- Stop movement by holding up the red flag.
- Resume movement, calling out "Ready, set, go!"
- Mention that Jesus said people should be ready when He comes back.

LEARN A VERSE

Tools: Bible, Activity Page, colored plastic cups, markers, paper strip

- Write one word of the Preschool Verse and Scripture reference on each cup. Write the entire verse on the paper strip.
- Read the verse from the strip. Then lead a child to sequence the cups to match the words on the paper. When this is done, help the preschooler repeat the Preschool Verse a few times.
- Open the Bible to John 14:3 and point to the words.
- Remark: "Jesus taught people what to do. He said He will come back someday, and He wants people to be ready."
- Show the child the picture on the Activity Page and recall that Noah got ready.

PREPARE FOR A GUEST

Tools: Bible, toy dishes, plastic food, tablecloth, napkins, Activity Page

- Show children the picture on the Activity Page. Mention that Noah got ready for the rain that God would send. Noah prepared.
- Say: "When you have guests come to your home, your family prepares for them. What are some things your family does to get ready?"
- Affirm preschoolers for responses, then comment: "Let's prepare a meal for a special guest. Who might it be?" Encourage preschoolers to name someone to invite to the "meal."
- While children pretend to cook and serve the meal, remind them that Jesus told people to prepare for Him to come back.

CIRCLE TIME (10-15 MINUTES, DEPENDING ON YOUR AGE GROUP)

LEADER TIP! USE THE BIBLE

Open a Bible to the Scripture passage while you tell the story. Doing this will help preschoolers know the story comes from the Bible.

CIRCLE TIME TOOLS

- several styles of Bibles
- electronic tablet or smart phone with animal sounds app
- gift bag
- Activity Page

PACK ITEMS

- 8 Story Picture: Noah Got Ready
- 16 Bible Markers A
- 22 Find-a-Bible Cards



LET'S GATHER.

- Ask boys and girls to walk like an animal to Circle Time.
- As children are seated, play an animal sound on the electronic device. Invite preschoolers to guess the animal sound.
- Say: "Today's Bible story is about Noah getting ready for God to send rain. Noah prepared a huge ark for his family and animals."
- Say: "Many, many years after Noah lived, Jesus reminded the people about Noah. Jesus said that Noah got ready, and it was important for the people to get ready. Let's learn more about that."



LET'S HEAR THE BIBLE STORY.

- Ask a child to open the Bible to the marker placed at Genesis 6. Tell this suspenseful story. Make it exciting and engaging to preschoolers.
- Show children the Story Picture.
- Say: "Let's pass the picture around the circle. You may have a turn to hold the picture and tell me something you remember about the Bible story."
- When all children have spoken, comment: "Noah listened to God and got ready. Jesus wants us to listen to His instructions in the Bible and get ready for Him."



LET'S PRACTICE BIBLE SKILLS.

- Show children the Bibles.
- Place the Find-a-Bible Cards (Pack) in the gift bag. Invite a child to take a card from the bag. Read the description and lead the preschooler to find the Bible described on the card.
- Give turns to other children to continue the Bible search.
- Ask children:
 - Which Bible is true?* (all of them)
 - Which Bible tells about the things God wants us to know?* (all of them)
 - Which Bible tells that Jesus wants us to be prepared?* (all of them)



LET'S PRAY TOGETHER.

- Remind preschoolers that when we pray, we are talking to God. We can tell God what we need.
- Pray, asking God to help us be ready for whatever Jesus wants us to do. Ask God to help us know how to be prepared when Jesus comes back.



LET'S EXPLORE MORE.

- Form small groups of two or three preschoolers and a teacher.
- Look at today's Activity Page. Guide the children to do the activity on the back.
- Help preschoolers repeat the Preschool Verse.

**DON'T FORGET TO
GIVE THIS WEEK'S
ACTIVITY PAGE TO
PRESCHOOLERS!**



Session 9



REMEMBER JESUS

Matthew 26:17-30

Jesus introduced the Lord's Supper for His disciples then and now. In a way, the supper serves the same purpose as an anniversary celebration. It is a time of remembrance. When we observe the Lord's Supper, we remember Jesus' sacrifice for us. When we take the bread, we recall His body that was broken so we could be made whole. The cup brings to our minds Jesus' blood that He shed so we could have eternal life. Every time we observe the Lord's Supper, we remember something else. We recall that we've given our lives to Him. Also, we have the opportunity to renew our pledge of loyalty to Him. Equally important, the Lord's Supper encourages us to look forward to the day when Christ will come again.

The last week prior to Jesus' crucifixion coincided with the Jewish festival of Passover. As Jesus directed His disciples to make provisions for their observance of the Passover meal, He was preparing them for His death. Passover was associated with the festival of Unleavened Bread (Ex. 23:15). This celebration lasted seven days and reflected God's deliverance of Israel from bondage in Egypt (Ex. 12: 15-17).

Jesus often referred to "My time." He was fully aware of His ultimate destiny at the cross. Previously, Jesus reminded various people that His time had not yet arrived. As this Passover approached, Jesus' time was near.

During the supper, Jesus gave new meaning to two elements of the Passover meal, interpreting the unleavened bread and the cup in terms of His sacrificial death. The Passover pointed forward to the Lamb of God who would take away our sins (John 1:29).

The Passover reminded Jewish people of God's covenant and their salvation from servitude in Egypt. Like other aspects of the sacrificial system, the Passover found its culmination in Jesus' death and resurrection. Our lesson about the Lord's Supper helps us gain a deeper appreciation for the new covenant with God made possible through Jesus' shed blood and broken body.

SESSION FOCUS

CORE PASSAGE

Matthew 26:17-30

PRESCHOOL VERSE

Luke 22:19

PRESCHOOL TEXT TRUTH

Jesus wants us to remember how much He loves us.

PRESCHOOL CONNECTION STORY PASSAGE

Matthew 26:17-30

CHRIST IN CONTEXT

Everything God promised to His people in Old Testament times came true when He sent Jesus.

SESSION BRIEF

We are to always remember Jesus and the sacrifice of His life for us. At an intimate supper with His disciples, Jesus reminded the men of His great love for them.

This week's Bible story for preschoolers is a glimpse at Jesus' love that extends to followers even now. As you tell the Bible story and guide preschoolers through Bible-related activities, talk about Jesus. Tell children that Jesus wants us to remember Him and the great love He has for each of us.

YOU CHOOSE!

Are your preschoolers ready to learn memory verses? Decide which wording of the Preschool Verse you want to use with your group.

From the Bible text:
Jesus said, "Do this in remembrance of Me."
Luke 22:19

Preschool Verse Paraphrase:
Jesus said, "Remember Me."
Luke 22:19

TEXT TRUTH

Jesus wants us to remember how much He loves us.

PRESCHOOL VERSE

Luke 22:19

LEADER TIP!

Mark 13:14 indicates that the disciples would see a man with a water pot, just as Jesus said.

CONNECT TO MATTHEW:**A SPECIAL SUPPER****Matthew 26:17-30**

One day Jesus told two of His disciples, Peter and John, to get everything ready for a special supper.

“Where do you want us to prepare the supper?” the helpers asked.

Jesus said, “Go into the city. You will meet a man with a water pot. Tell him that I want to eat a special supper with My helpers at his house.”

Jesus’ disciples did what Jesus told them to do. When they saw the man, they followed him to his house. Peter and John got everything ready for the special supper.

When it was time to eat, Jesus and the disciples went to the house. They sat at the table. As they were eating, Jesus took some bread. He thanked God for it, then He tore the bread into pieces. Jesus gave some bread to each disciple.

Then Jesus took a cup and gave the men something to drink. Jesus said thank you to God. Jesus shared the cup with each man.

Jesus told His disciples to always remember the things He did. “Remember Me, and always think about Me,” Jesus said.

After supper, Jesus and His friends sang. Then they left the house.

SET THE STAGE FOR EXPLORATION

1. PREPARE FOR TEACHING

- Review the teaching plan and practice using Bible-focused conversation. Pray for the preschoolers and their families.
- Before children arrive, set out the materials needed for early arrivers. Put materials for Exploration Stations and Circle Time in baskets or paper bags and set them in the areas in which children will work. Teachers may want to set up the stations before class time.
- Display posters and teaching reminders in suggested locations to remind you of the biblical focus for today.

2. OFFER ARRIVAL ACTIVITIES (5 MINUTES)

Offer two or three choices for preschoolers to explore:

- Copy Bible names onto dry-erase boards.
- Look through a Bible for pictures of Jesus.
- Look at recipe books and flag favorite foods (pictures) with sticky notes.

3. GET STARTED (5 MINUTES)

- Give families time to arrive and drop off preschoolers. Encourage early arrivers to do one or more of the arrival activities. Remind children to be careful with the markers.
- Ask a few preschoolers to tell about their activities so far. Remark: “Each activity is related to our Bible story and something Jesus did.”
- Continue: “In today’s story, we will hear about something special Jesus did with His friends. Let’s go to the Exploration Stations and hear what Jesus wanted His friends to do.”

4. GO TO EXPLORATION STATIONS AND CIRCLE TIME.

TOOLS

- sentence strips with *Peter*, *John*, and *Jesus* written on them; dry-erase boards and markers; paper towels
(*Option*: Offer paper and washable markers to younger preschoolers.)
- 2 picture Bibles featuring realistic pictures of Jesus (Read to Me Bible for Kids, LifeWay)
- recipe books, sticky notes

TEXT TRUTH

Jesus wants us to remember how much He loves us.

BIBLE STORY A SPECIAL SUPPER

Matthew 26:17-30

PRESCHOOL VERSE

Luke 22:19

PACK ITEMS

- 9 Story Picture: A Special Supper
- 20 Let's Make Music Poster
- 31 Puzzle: A Special Supper

LEADER TIP!

As preschoolers play, use the Bible often. Talk about it, show it, and let a child touch and hold it. Make exploring the Bible a priority in every activity.

EXPLORATION STATIONS (45-60 MINUTES)

Set up at least three stations to provide choices of multisensory activities and movement for busy preschoolers.

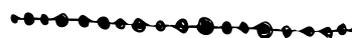
WORK PUZZLES



Tools: Bible; Puzzle: A Special Supper (Pack); puzzles My Friends (LifeWay, 005266977) and Jesus' Miracles Wooden Box Puzzle (LifeWay, 005191557)

- Provide several puzzles for preschoolers to work. Mention to children that each puzzle helps us think about Jesus and remember Him.
- Encourage children to help one another or take turns. Thank them for being kind and thoughtful.
- Ask a child to get the Bible. Help her find the Book of Matthew in the Bible. Say: "Matthew is the first book in the New Testament. It tells about many things Jesus said and did. Our Bible story for today is from the Book of Matthew."

DESIGN A PLACE MAT



Tools: Bible, large sheets of construction paper, washable markers, food and flower stickers

- Write today's Preschool Verse on each paper.
- Invite a child to design a place mat. Read the words on the paper, commenting that when the child uses the place mat at mealtimes, he can think about Jesus.
- Open the Bible to Luke 22. Invite a child to help turn pages until the Preschool Verse is located (v. 19). Say: "Here is where we read that Jesus told His friends to remember Him. Jesus wants us to remember Him, too."

**PLAY INSTRUMENTS
AND SING**

Tools: Bible, Let's Make Music Poster (Pack), small keyboard or guitar (opt.), rhythm instruments, Enhanced CD

- Show children the poster. Say: "These pictures help me remember Jesus. Singing songs about Jesus is a way to think about His love for people and what He did."
- Invite preschoolers to sing along to songs about Jesus as they play the instruments.
- Open the Bible to Matthew 26. Direct a child to look to find the letter *J* for Jesus. Say: "The Bible tells that Jesus sang a song with His friends."
- Listen to music on the Enhanced CD and continue playing instruments.

**TASTE GRAPES AND
BREAD**

Tools: Bible, Activity Page, red grapes (quartered lengthwise), bread, paper plates, hand sanitizer, Allergy Sign (Enhanced CD)

- Show the food to the children and tell them Jesus served bread to His disciples.
- Invite preschoolers to taste the bread and grapes after children have cleaned their hands.
- Show preschoolers the picture on the Activity Page. Point to foods on the table.
- Say: "This was a special supper for Jesus and His disciples. Jesus told His disciples something important."
- Recall the Bible story, then lead children to repeat the Preschool Verse.

ROLL AND TELL

Tools: Bible, Story Picture: A Special Supper (Pack), large ball

- Ask several preschoolers to sit in a large circle on the floor.
- Say: "Let's roll the ball. When you receive the ball, it is your turn to tell something you know about Jesus."
- Help children recall Bible stories they have heard, songs they know, and words used to describe Jesus.
- After everyone in the circle has a turn, say: "Jesus wants us to remember Him."
- Open the Bible to Luke 22:19 and read the words Jesus said. Lead children to repeat the Preschool Verse with you.
- Show the Story Picture and tell the Bible story. Remark that the story is from the Book of Matthew.



CIRCLE TIME (10-15 MINUTES, DEPENDING ON YOUR AGE GROUP)

LEADER TIP! USE THE BIBLE

Open a Bible to the Scripture passage while you tell the story. Doing this will help preschoolers know the story comes from the Bible.

CIRCLE TIME TOOLS

- several Bibles
- 10 index cards (Print two sets of the Preschool Verse Paraphrase with reference.)
- tape
- puzzle *Bible-times Food* (LifeWay, 005160677) or pictures of typical Bible-times foods
- Enhanced CD
- Activity Page

PACK ITEM

9 Story Picture: A Special Supper



LET'S GATHER.

- Place one set of verse cards in the Bible. Tape the other set around the room at children's eye level.
- Play the Enhanced CD and direct children to the Circle Time area.
- Show the puzzle to preschoolers. Talk about each type of food. Say: "These are the kinds of foods Jesus and His friends probably ate. Do you think you would like to eat this food?"
- Comment: "Jesus planned to have a special meal with His friends, but He served only two things. Listen to the Bible story and learn what the men ate at the special supper."



LET'S HEAR THE BIBLE STORY.

- Ask children to recall activities they enjoy at church and home. Give every preschooler a turn to name one activity.
- Say: "It is good to remember the things we do. Jesus wanted His friends to remember things He did."
- Ask for a volunteer to hold the Bible opened to Matthew 26. Tell the story from the Bible, but use your own words.
- Show preschoolers the Story Picture, then pass it around the circle.
- Play the Enhanced CD and listen for a song to sing about Jesus.



LET'S PRACTICE BIBLE SKILLS.

- Distribute Bibles to the children. (If any brought their Bibles, encourage them to get those.)
- Ask preschoolers to think of a book of the Bible that begins with the sound that the letter *M* makes. Guide preschoolers to locate the Book of Matthew in their Bibles. Assist when needed.
- Open the Bible to the Preschool Verse (Luke 22:19), and remove the index cards.
- Show the cards to the group, saying each word of the paraphrase as you hold it.
- Invite children to look around the room and find matching cards. Help as needed.
- Repeat the Preschool Verse together.



LET'S PRAY TOGETHER.

- Ask preschoolers to name people for whom they want to pray. Make a list of names.
- Lead the group in prayer. Pray specifically for requests, then ask God to help us remember Jesus and how much He loves us.



LET'S EXPLORE MORE.

- Form small groups of two or three preschoolers and a teacher.
- Look at today's Activity Page. Guide the children to do the activity on the back.
- Help preschoolers repeat the Preschool Verse again.
- Spend a few minutes recalling things to remember about Jesus.

**DON'T FORGET TO
GIVE THIS WEEK'S
ACTIVITY PAGE TO
PRESCHOOLERS!**



Session 10



PRAY FOR GOD'S HELP

Matthew 26:36-46

Our study this week focuses on Jesus' prayer in the hours leading up to His betrayal and arrest. Knowing His crucifixion was near, Jesus sought the face of His Father. As we study this passage, remember that Jesus was fully human as well as fully God. His experience not only revealed His humanity, but it also gives us an example to follow in our times of crisis. As the Son submitted His will to the Father, even so we find strength for difficulty by yielding ourselves to the Father's plan.

With Peter, James, and John nearby, Jesus prayed earnestly as He faced crucifixion. Jesus committed to following the Father's will no matter what. In Gethsemane, we witness Jesus' humanity interact with His deity as He prayed honestly and passionately. The word *Gethsemane* refers to a mechanism for making olive oil. As the olives were pressed, the precious oil would be harvested. Even so, on this night, Jesus would be pressed between His human nature and His divine purpose.

Ultimately, Jesus knew the Father's will and yielded to it. Perhaps one of the most amazing statements in Scripture is "not as I will, but as You will." Jesus' humanity withdrew from the painful path that lay ahead. Yet, even as Jesus prayed that the cup might pass, He reached out and embraced it, being obedient even to the cross (Phil. 2:8). As believers, we are compelled to accept God's direction and will in our lives.

The intensity with which Jesus prayed should have caused the disciples to observe His passion with amazement and intercede for Him. However, on several occasions, Jesus found the men sleeping. God's timing is sovereign and will move forward regardless of our hesitation or failure to stay alert and watchful. Jesus declared that the time had come for Him to pay the price for humanity's sin. Jesus came to earth for the sole purpose of laying down His life as a sacrifice. He would not turn away from that task. As the betrayer approached, Jesus went forward to fulfill His destiny.

SESSION FOCUS

CORE PASSAGE

Matthew 26:36-46

PRESCHOOL VERSE

Matthew 26:39

PRESCHOOL TEXT TRUTH

Jesus prayed for God's help.

PRESCHOOL CONNECTION STORY PASSAGE

Matthew 26:36-46

CHRIST IN CONTEXT

Everything God promised to His people in Old Testament times came true when He sent Jesus.

SESSION BRIEF

Though He felt the overwhelming burden of what faced Him, Jesus prayed that God's will would be done in Jesus' life.

When we are faced with great challenges, burdens, tests, and tribulations, do we pray for God's will? Or do we pray for ourselves—what we want in a situation?

As you tell preschoolers about Jesus' prayer time with God in the garden, help children learn it is better to ask God to help us in the way He chooses. God knows what is best.

YOU CHOOSE!

Are your preschoolers ready to learn memory verses? Decide which wording of the Preschool Verse you want to use with your group.

From the Bible text:

He [Jesus] prayed, "Not as I will, but as You will."

Matthew 26:39

Preschool Verse Paraphrase:

Jesus prayed for God's will.

Matthew 26:39

TEXT TRUTH

Jesus prayed for God's help.

PRESCHOOL VERSE

Matthew 26:39

LEADER TIP!

God's will is a difficult concept for young children. Help preschoolers begin to learn that God's will is His plan for every person. What does God want me/us to do?

CONNECT TO MATTHEW:**JESUS PRAYED****Matthew 26:36-46**

Jesus and His disciples walked to a place called Gethsemane. It was a garden at the foot of a mountain. Jesus said to the men, "Sit here while I go pray."

Then Jesus told Peter and two other disciples, James and John, to go with Him.

Jesus became quiet. He began to think about the plan God had for Him and the things that would happen soon. Jesus told His friends He was sad and wanted them to stay near Him.

While Peter, James, and John waited, Jesus walked a little farther away. He fell down on the ground and prayed. Jesus asked God to help Him. "Whatever You want, God, I will do," Jesus said.

Jesus walked back to the disciples. He found them sleeping. "Stay awake and pray," Jesus said to the men.

Jesus walked away again to pray some more. When He finished, He went back to the disciples. They were sleeping again!

So Jesus went to pray again. He asked God to help Him be ready to do God's plan.

When Jesus finished praying, He returned to His disciples. He told them to get up and leave the garden with Him.

SET THE STAGE FOR EXPLORATION

1. PREPARE FOR TEACHING

- Review the teaching plan and practice using Bible-focused conversation. Pray for the preschoolers and their families.
- Before children arrive, set out the materials needed for early arrivers. Put materials for Exploration Stations and Circle Time in baskets or paper bags and set them in the areas in which children will work. Teachers may want to set up the stations before class time.
- Display posters and teaching reminders in suggested locations to remind you of the biblical focus for today.

2. OFFER ARRIVAL ACTIVITIES (5 MINUTES)

Offer two or three choices for preschoolers to explore:

- Decorate a Bible bookmark with stickers.
- Look at pictures of mountain scenes.
- Draw a picture of a place where you can pray.

3. GET STARTED (5 MINUTES)

- Give preschoolers adequate time to do the arrival activities. Walk around the room and ask each child to tell you what activities she chose.
- Call preschoolers together. Ask: “Can you think of a time when you needed to talk to someone you love?” (Guide responses.) “Some days bad things happen, and it’s hard to know what to do. The Bible tells us that Jesus felt sad, and He knew just what He needed to do. We’ll learn what Jesus did.”
- Give overviews of the Exploration Stations and direct children to move to the activities of their choice.

4. GO TO EXPLORATION STATIONS AND CIRCLE TIME.

TOOLS

- strips cut from heavyweight paper, colorful stickers
- travel brochures and magazines featuring mountain scenes, Bible atlas
- white paper, colored pencils, crayons

TEXT TRUTH

Jesus prayed for God's help.

BIBLE STORY

JESUS PRAYED

Matthew 26:36-46

PRESCHOOL VERSE

Matthew 26:39

PACK ITEMS

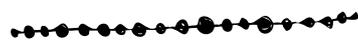
- 10 Story Picture: Jesus Prayed
- 23 Number Cube
- 25 Backgrounds
- 26 Bible-times Figures
- 32 Puzzle: Jesus Prayed



EXPLORATION STATIONS (45-60 MINUTES)

Set up at least three stations to provide choices of multisensory activities and movement for busy preschoolers.

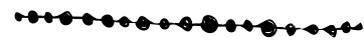
FOLLOW A PATH & WORK PUZZLES



Tools: Bible, Puzzle: Jesus Prayed (Pack), puzzle Jesus: A Special Friend (LifeWay, 005160679), wide masking tape, large sticky notes (single words of the Text Truth printed on them)

- Create a winding path on the floor using the masking tape. Place sticky notes on the floor along the path. Lay the puzzles and the Bible at the end of the path.
- Begin to walk on the path. Call attention to the words on the sticky notes, reading the Text Truth on the way.
- Invite a child to follow you on the path. When she reaches the puzzles at the end of the path, tell her to choose one to work.
- Open the Bible to Matthew 26:39 and read the Preschool Verse.

TOSS AND COUNT



Tools: 6 different-looking Bibles, Number Cube (Pack)

- Place the Bibles in different areas of the room.
- Invite a child to toss the Number Cube and say the number that lands faceup.
- Comment: "The cube shows the number 4. Look around the room and bring back four Bibles."
- After the child retrieves the Bibles, open one to Matthew 26. Remark that all the Bibles tell about Jesus going to pray in the garden. Tell the Bible story.
- Direct the child to place the Bibles around the room for another child to find.

PAINT AND PRAY

Tools: Bible, easel, paper, 2 colors of tempera paint, brushes, smock, marker

- Write on each child's paper today's Preschool Verse.
- Invite a child to paint. Read the words on the paper. Remark: "Jesus went to a quiet garden to pray. Jesus asked God to help Him, but Jesus also prayed that He would follow God's plan."
- Mention that though Jesus prayed in the garden, He also talked to God in many other places and at different times.
- Lead the preschooler to think about times when he can pray. Suggest that he can pray now, even while he is painting and playing at church.
- Remark: "God hears us talk to Him any time and anywhere."

PASS THE BAG

Tools: Bible, picture cutouts showing things we need (Bibles, clothes, food, people); gift bag, Enhanced CD

- Drop the pictures into the gift bag. Play the CD.
- Invite a few children to sit in a circle and pass the bag while the music plays.
- Stop the music. Tell the child holding the bag to draw out a card and describe it. Mention that we thank God for providing for our needs.
- Play the music again and give another child a turn. Ask this child to name a place or time to pray.
- Say: "The Bible tells us to talk to God. Jesus talked to God. We can ask God to help us."

PLAY WITH BIBLE-TIMES FIGURES

Tools: Bible, Activity Page, wooden blocks, Bible-times Figures (Pack), Backgrounds (Pack), tape

- Set up the garden scene background and tape Jesus, Peter, James, and John figures to the blocks.
- Show children the picture on the Activity Page. Ask a child to point to Jesus. Talk about what the other men are doing.
- Say: "Jesus went to the garden to pray, but His friends fell asleep."
- Arrange a few blocks to look like rocks and put figures near them. Suggest that preschoolers play out the Bible story while you tell it in your own words.
- Help a child open the Bible to the Book of Matthew. Say: "Matthew knew Jesus and wrote about the time Jesus went to the garden to pray."

CIRCLE TIME (10-15 MINUTES, DEPENDING ON YOUR AGE GROUP)

LEADER TIP! USE THE BIBLE

Open a Bible to the Scripture passage while you tell the story. Doing this will help preschoolers know the story comes from the Bible.

CIRCLE TIME TOOLS

- Bible
- Enhanced CD
- Activity Page

PACK ITEM

10 Story Picture: Jesus Prayed



LET'S GATHER.

- Walk around to each Exploration Station and ask preschoolers to complete their activities. Direct children to move to the Circle Time area when they hear music playing.
- Play the song "Shine on Me" as children are seated. Sing along, then comment: "That song is about the books of the Bible. We've been hearing stories from the Book of Matthew. Today's story is from Matthew 26."
- Continue: "Before we listen to our story, let's stretch and move."
- Direct children to stand and reach up high, turn around, clap 3 times, then sit down.



LET'S HEAR THE BIBLE STORY.

- Say: "One, two, three. Three friends went with Jesus to the garden to pray. Three times the men fell asleep. Listen as I tell the story from the Bible."
- Open the Bible to Matthew, 26 and tell the story. Make eye contact with preschoolers as you speak.
- Show children the Story Picture and pass it around the circle.
- Comment: "Jesus needed to spend time with God. Jesus prayed for God's help. He asked that God's will be done."
- Help preschoolers begin to learn that when we pray for God's will, we are praying that God will help us know and do His plan for us.



LET'S PRACTICE BIBLE SKILLS.

- Ask individual children to hold a Bible. Help children locate Matthew in the New Testament.
- Remind preschoolers that the New Testament tells about things that happened after Jesus was born.
- Remark: "A special verse in Matthew tells us that Jesus prayed for God's will."
- Lead children to repeat the Preschool Verse three times.



LET'S PRAY TOGETHER.

- Say: "Jesus talked to God. Just like Jesus, we can talk to God, too."
- Ask preschoolers to share prayer requests.
- Pray, thanking God that we can talk to Him any time and anywhere.



LET'S EXPLORE MORE.

- Form small groups of two or three preschoolers and a teacher.
- Show preschoolers the Activity Page and recall the Bible story.
- Guide the children to do the activity on the back of the Activity Page.
- Lead preschoolers to repeat the Preschool Verse again.

**DON'T FORGET TO
GIVE THIS WEEK'S
ACTIVITY PAGE TO
PRESCHOOLERS!**



Session

11



LOVE JESUS ALL THE TIME

Matthew 26:63-75

If we ever lose sight of what unwavering loyalty looks like we can always get a fresh vision of it when we take a long look at Jesus. In Him we observe unbending loyalty to our Father's plan of salvation. Following Jesus will be easy at times. However, at other times being loyal to Him may put us at risk. That's when our loyalty to Jesus will be put to the test.

Following Jesus' arrest, the disciples fled. Unwilling to stay awake with Jesus in prayer, they were unable to stand by Him in peril. Two of the disciples, John and Peter, followed from a distance and entered the courtyard of the high priest's palace (John 18:15).

None of the gospel accounts share Peter's thoughts as he waited to see what would happen to Jesus. Peter and John should be commended for going this far, since all the other disciples had fled. Peter had come this far despite his fear.

Notice the increasingly direct charge made toward Peter. The first was a statement by the slave girl to Peter. The second was a declaration about Peter to the people nearby. The third indictment was made by those standing there. John records that one of these third accusers was a relative of the servant who lost an ear to Peter's sword (John 18:25-27). The group had made up their mind. Peter was definitely one of the followers of Jesus.

Just as the charges became more direct and personal, Peter's denials intensified. The first time, Peter tried to deflect the girl's observation. The second time, he used an oath to deny the woman's remark. Finally, Peter began to curse and swear. As soon as Peter denied knowing Jesus a third time, a rooster crowed. Perhaps no one else noticed, but the sound froze Peter's heart. The guilt of failure fell on Peter and he went outside and wept bitterly.

As we remember the human failure of Peter and the other disciples, we must realize that even as a follower of Jesus did, we, too, sin and need the Savior, Jesus.

SESSION FOCUS

CORE PASSAGE

Matthew 26:63-75

PRESCHOOL VERSE

1 Peter 3:15

PRESCHOOL TEXT TRUTH

Love Jesus all the time.

PRESCHOOL CONNECTION STORY PASSAGE

Matthew 26:69-75

CHRIST IN CONTEXT

Everything God promised to His people in Old Testament times came true when He sent Jesus.

SESSION BRIEF

Peter got scared and did what came natural. He lied to protect himself. Before criticizing Peter too much, we must ask whether we would have acted differently. This session helps us think about the difficulty of standing with Jesus when we sense that to do so may be uncomfortable, unstylish, or unappealing. But with God's help, we can love Jesus all the time, even when it hurts.

Help preschoolers sense that Jesus wants us to love Him all the time.

YOU CHOOSE!

Are your preschoolers ready to learn memory verses? Decide which wording of the Preschool Verse you want to use with your group.

From the Bible text:
Always be ready to give a reason for your hope.
1 Peter 3:15

Preschool Verse Paraphrase:
Always be ready to tell about Jesus' love. 1 Peter 3:15

TEXT TRUTH

Love Jesus all the time.

PRESCHOOL VERSE

1 Peter 3:15

CONNECT TO MATTHEW:**A SAD DAY FOR PETER****Matthew 26:69-75**

One day Jesus' friend Peter was sitting in a courtyard. A servant walked up to Peter. She said, "You were with Jesus from Galilee."

This surprised Peter. He was afraid for the people to know He was Jesus' friend. Peter shouted so everyone nearby could hear: "I don't know what you are talking about!"

Peter walked out to the gateway. Another woman saw him and spoke to the people. This woman said, "This man was with Jesus!"

Now Peter was even more upset. Again he shouted, "I don't know the man!"

After a little while, some more people standing near Peter spoke up. They said, "You certainly are one of the people following Jesus. The things you say show that!"

Now Peter was even more afraid. He was angry at the people. "I do not know the man!"

Then Peter heard a rooster crow. Suddenly Peter remembered what Jesus had said about a rooster. And Peter remembered that Jesus had told him Peter would say he did not know Jesus.

Peter was so sad. He was Jesus' friend, but he told the people he did not know Jesus. Peter left the people and cried.

It was a very sad day for Peter.

SET THE STAGE FOR EXPLORATION

1. PREPARE FOR TEACHING

- Review the teaching plan and practice using Bible-focused conversation. Pray for the preschoolers and their families.
- Before children arrive, set out the materials needed for early arrivers. Put materials for Exploration Stations and Circle Time in baskets or paper bags and set them in the areas in which children will work. Teachers may want to set up the stations before class time.
- Display posters and teaching reminders in suggested locations to remind you of the biblical focus for today.

2. OFFER ARRIVAL ACTIVITIES (5 MINUTES)

Offer two or three choices for preschoolers to explore:

- Find pictures of chickens and roosters in farm books.
- Draw a picture of someone who tells you about Jesus.
- Record children's voices as they tell about Jesus.

3. GET STARTED (5 MINUTES)

- Once children have arrived and done most of the arrival activities, call them together. Ask the children who looked at the farm and animal books: "Did anyone see a rooster? What sound does a rooster make?"
- When children make a rooster's sound, remark: "Nice rooster sound! Did you know that we hear about a rooster in today's Bible story?"
- Say: "In today's Bible story, Peter heard a rooster crow, and the sound made him remember something Jesus said. Let's go to our Exploration Stations and learn about Peter's experience."

4. GO TO EXPLORATION STATIONS AND CIRCLE TIME.

TOOLS

- books about farms and farm animals
- drawing paper, washable markers, colored pencils
- digital recording device

TEXT TRUTH

Love Jesus all the time.

BIBLE STORY

A SAD DAY FOR PETER

Matthew 26:69-75

PRESCHOOL VERSE

1 Peter 3:15

PACK ITEMS

- 1-10 Story Pictures from previous sessions (choose 6)
- 11 Story Picture: A Sad Day for Peter
- 17 Bible Markers B
- 29 Emotions Matching Cards

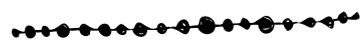
LEADER TIP!

Cut swim noodles ahead of time using a serrated or electric knife.

EXPLORATION STATIONS (45-60 MINUTES)

Set up at least three stations to provide choices of multisensory activities and movement for busy preschoolers.

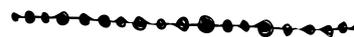
PLAY WITH SWIM NOODLES



Tools: Bible, Bible Markers B (Pack), foam swim noodles, permanent marker, wooden blocks

- Place today's marker in the Bible at 1 Peter 3:15.
- Cut noodles in 2- and 3-inch sections. On individual sections write the words of the Text Truth.
- Invite a preschooler to stack and build with the noodles and blocks.
- Say the word printed on a piece when a child discovers it. Suggest he locate other words to build a phrase.
- Read the Text Truth. Remark that Jesus wants us to love Him all the time.
- Open the Bible to the marker. Say the verse.

DESIGN A VERSE REMINDER



Tools: Bible, clear contact plastic, flower petals, Allergy Sign (Enhanced CD), stick-on labels with Preschool Verse printed on them

- Cut the plastic into 3-by-6-inch pieces. Cut two pieces for each child.
- Give a child one piece of plastic on which to arrange flower petals.
- Help the child lay a second piece of plastic over the first, sealing in the petals.
- Give the child a verse sticker to put on her reminder.
- Say: "You may put this in your Bible to remind you to tell others about Jesus."

SEND MESSAGES

Tools: Bible, toy phones or old cell phones (batteries removed), computer keyboard, notepads, pencils, paper, marker, Story Picture: A Sad Day for Peter (Pack)

- Arrange the materials on a table. Print the Preschool Verse on the paper and display it with the other materials.
- Invite preschoolers to use the phones and computer keyboard to send messages about Jesus. Children can also use the notepads and pencils to write messages.
- Point to the Preschool Verse on the paper and read the words. Comment: "Peter wrote these words to remind people to always be ready to tell about Jesus."
- Show children the Story Picture and remark that on this day, Peter did not tell people about Jesus.

**MAKE A HAPPY/SAD
COLLAGE**

Tools: Bible, Happy/Sad Faces (Enhanced CD), picture cutouts showing facial expressions, paper, glue, Emotions Matching Cards (Pack)

- Give each child a paper and glue to make a collage. Point out the pictures of happy and sad people.
- While the child glues pictures, comment that Peter felt sad one day. Say: "Peter loved Jesus, but he was afraid for people to know that. This made Peter sad."
- Talk with the child about times when she has felt sad, angry, confused, and afraid. Use the cutouts to prompt conversation about emotions.
- Invite a child to match the Emotions Matching Cards.
- Help the children find Matthew 26 in the Bible.

PLAY "I KNOW JESUS"

Tools: Bible, 6 Story Pictures (Pack) from recent sessions, Giant Inflatable Game Cube (LifeWay, 005630803) (or square cardboard box), toy microphone, tape

- Place the Story Pictures in the pockets of the Cube, or tape them to the sides of the cardboard box.
- Invite a preschooler to roll the cube across the floor. Direct him to look at the picture facing up.
- Use the toy microphone to recall something about Jesus. For example, say: "I know Jesus. He taught people at the temple."
- Invite the preschooler to toss the cube again, look at the picture facing up, then use the microphone to tell something about Jesus.
- Comment: "Peter knew Jesus, but he was afraid to tell people he knew Him. We should always be ready to tell about Jesus' love."

CIRCLE TIME (10-15 MINUTES, DEPENDING ON YOUR AGE GROUP)

LEADER TIP! USE THE BIBLE

Open a Bible to the Scripture passage while you tell the story. Doing this will help preschoolers know the story comes from the Bible.

CIRCLE TIME TOOLS

- several Bibles
- Activity Page

PACK ITEMS

- 11 Story Picture: A Sad Day for Peter
- 26 Bible-times Figures (Jesus and Peter)



LET'S GATHER.

- Blink the lights to get preschoolers' attention. Direct them to complete activities and move to the Circle Time area.
- As children are seated, say this rhyme:
*Are you looking right at me?
Are you looking? 1, 2, 3
Are you looking right at me?
If you're looking, touch your knee.*
- Repeat the rhyme, substituting "smile at me," "wave at me," and "let me see."
- Comment: "Today you have been busy exploring what the Bible says about Jesus and Peter. Can you remember some of what you have learned?"
- Listen to children's responses, then say: "Let's turn to Matthew 26 and hear the Bible story."



LET'S HEAR THE BIBLE STORY.

- Show children the Story Picture. Point to Peter. Ask children to suggest how Peter may have been feeling.
- Hold the Bible open to Matthew 26 and tell preschoolers to listen for certain things as you tell the story in your own words.
- Tell the Bible story in your own words.
- Show the Jesus and Peter figures to the children, then put them behind your back.
- Ask questions about the story. When a child answers correctly, show the correct figure.
- Ask questions such as:
Who was in a courtyard and talked to some people? (Peter)
Who said that a rooster would crow? (Jesus)
Who was very sad because of what he did? (Peter)
To whom did Peter say we should always show love? (Jesus)



LET'S PRACTICE BIBLE SKILLS.

- Distribute Bibles. Ask teachers in the circle to help children locate the Book of Matthew.
- Say: "Jesus' friend Matthew wrote about many things that happened to Jesus. Matthew wrote about Peter's sad day."
- Next, help preschoolers locate the Book of 1 Peter.
- Continue: "Peter also wrote about Jesus. Let's look at some words that Peter wrote."
- Guide children to find 1 Peter 3:15. Read the Preschool Verse.
- Say: "I wonder if Peter sometimes thought about that sad day. I think he might have remembered it when he wrote these words. Peter said that we should always be ready to tell about Jesus and His love."



LET'S PRAY TOGETHER.

- Invite preschoolers to name prayer requests. Encourage anyone who wants to pray to do so.
- Say a brief prayer, thanking God for the Bible. Thank God for helping us know to love Jesus and tell about Him.



LET'S EXPLORE MORE.

- Form small groups of two or three preschoolers and a teacher.
- In each small group, review the Bible story. Look at the Activity Page and guide the children to do the activity on the back.
- Help preschoolers repeat the Preschool Verse again.

**DON'T FORGET TO
GIVE THIS WEEK'S
ACTIVITY PAGE TO
PRESCHOOLERS!**



Session 12



JESUS IS WITH US

Matthew 28:1-15

Peter and other disciples left the mountain where Jesus had directed them to wait for Him. They returned to the fishing boats on the Sea of Galilee. Perhaps they did not anticipate Jesus giving them a new, larger task. Peter's decision to go fishing did not seem to be a mere recreational activity. Maybe he thought it was time to go back to the old ways. After all, Jesus had risen from the grave. Peter and the rest of the disciples likely believed Jesus would use this power to fulfill their idea of the Messiah's purpose and restore the kingdom to Israel (Acts 1:6). The disciples might not be needed.

The fact that Peter and several others of the group decided to go fishing as they waited on Jesus means they likely were near the place where Peter's father's boats were located. This seashore could have been where Peter, Andrew, James, and John had worked as professional fishermen when Jesus called them (Matt. 4:18-22).

The text recounts that Peter's group fished all night but caught nothing. As the morning dawned, the resurrected Christ stood on the shore and gave direction on how to catch fish. Following the miraculous haul, Peter dove into the water to get to Jesus quicker.

Jesus replicated the scene of Peter's original call (Luke 5:1-11). The disciples needed to understand that their purpose in life had not changed. Jesus wanted Peter, especially, to know his temporary weakness and denial of Christ had not disqualified him from Jesus' calling. Jesus still wanted Peter to be a fisher of men and a shepherd of the Lord's flock.

Perhaps Peter still stung from the shame and embarrassment of the denial during Jesus' trial. Now, however, Jesus graciously restored Peter, and Peter had a chance to confirm that he did indeed love the Lord and was willing to go where he needed to go. Just as Christ's death on the cross covered Peter's sin, it does the same for all who are willing to repent and have faith in Him.

SESSION FOCUS

CORE PASSAGE

Matthew 28:1-15

PRESCHOOL VERSE

John 21:12

PRESCHOOL TEXT TRUTH

Jesus returned to see His friends.

PRESCHOOL CONNECTION STORY PASSAGE

John 21:1-13

CHRIST IN CONTEXT

Everything God promised to His people in Old Testament times came true when He sent Jesus.

SESSION BRIEF

Though sad following Jesus' death, His disciples anticipated His return. They were surprised, however, when a man appeared on shore and gave them fishing advice.

In moments, John recognized Jesus, and Peter jumped out of the boat and swam to meet Jesus.

We, too, are excited to know Jesus is alive. He returned then, and He will return again. Jesus is with us today!

Help children grasp the wonder and joy of the disciples as they discovered their friend Jesus was alive and with them again, just as He had promised.

YOU CHOOSE!

Are your preschoolers ready to learn memory verses? Decide which wording of the Preschool Verse you want to use with your group.

From the Bible text:
The disciples knew it was the Lord. John 21:12

Preschool Verse Paraphrase:
The disciples knew the man was Jesus. John 21:12

TEXT TRUTH

Jesus returned to see His friends.

PRESCHOOL VERSE

John 21:12

CONNECT TO MATTHEW:**A SURPRISE FOR JESUS' FRIENDS****John 21:1-13**

After God made Jesus alive again, Jesus went to see His disciples. One time it was while Jesus' friends were fishing.

Peter and seven other disciples were together. Peter said, "I'm going fishing."

"We're coming with you," the friends said. So they got into their boat and sailed out into the water.

The men fished all night, but they did not catch any fish.

In the morning, the men looked at the shore. They saw a man. The man shouted to the fishermen, "You don't have any fish, do you?"

"No," the men replied.

Then the man on shore told them to throw their net on the right side of the boat. "You'll find some fish," the man said.

So that is what the disciples did. They caught so many fish they could not even get them on the boat!

Then John knew the man on the shore was Jesus, their friend! When Peter heard this, he jumped out of the boat and swam to the shore to see Jesus!

"Bring some of the fish you have caught," Jesus told the men. "Come, eat breakfast," Jesus said.

The men saw a campfire with bread and fish cooking. Jesus had cooked breakfast for the men.

What a wonderful surprise for Jesus' friends.

SET THE STAGE FOR EXPLORATION

1. PREPARE FOR TEACHING

- Review the teaching plan and practice using Bible-focused conversation. Pray for the preschoolers and their families.
- Before children arrive, set out the materials needed for early arrivers. Put materials for Exploration Stations and Circle Time in baskets or paper bags and set them in the areas in which children will work. Teachers may want to set up the stations before class time.
- Display posters and teaching reminders in suggested locations to remind you of the biblical focus for today.

2. OFFER ARRIVAL ACTIVITIES (5 MINUTES)

Offer two or three choices for preschoolers to explore:

- Form fish shapes with play dough.
- Bend chenille stems to make the letters in Jesus' name.
- Work a puzzle about Jesus and His friends.

3. GET STARTED (5 MINUTES)

- After preschoolers have arrived and participated in arrival activities, ring a bell to get their attention.
- Ask preschoolers to tell what they ate for breakfast. Talk about favorite breakfast foods.
- Remark: "In today's story, Jesus surprised His friends by making breakfast for them. Can anyone guess what Jesus cooked?" Listen to guesses, then reply: "Jesus cooked His friends a breakfast of fish and bread!"
- Describe today's Exploration Stations and direct children to choose what they would like to do first.

4. GO TO EXPLORATION STATIONS AND CIRCLE TIME.

TOOLS

- fresh play dough, fish-shaped cookie cutters
- chenille stems, card with Jesus' name printed in large letters
- puzzle *Breakfast with Jesus* (LifeWay, 001050968)
- jingle bell or handbell

TEXT TRUTH

Jesus returned to see His friends.

BIBLE STORY A SURPRISE FOR JESUS' FRIENDS

John 21:1-13

PRESCHOOL VERSE

John 21:12

PACK ITEM

12 Story Picture: A Surprise for Jesus' Friends

LEADER TIP!

Remember, parents have the final say when it comes to snacks. Post an Allergy Sign and consult with parents whenever food items are offered in an Exploration Station.

Respect parents' concerns about dietary restrictions, and suggest the families provide appropriate snacks to have on hand.

EXPLORATION STATIONS (45-60 MINUTES)

Set up at least three stations to provide choices of multisensory activities and movement for busy preschoolers.

TASTE TUNA



Tools: Bible, tuna (drained), salad dressing, crackers, paper plates, napkins, plastic forks, mixing bowl, large spoon, hand sanitizer, Allergy Sign (Enhanced CD)

- Ask preschoolers to help prepare a snack. Say: "Jesus cooked fish to share with His friends. Let's make and taste a fish snack together."
- Give children turns to pour tuna into the bowl and stir in a little dressing. Other children can distribute plates, forks, and napkins.
- Spoon a small amount of tuna mixture onto each child's plate. Add two crackers. Say a thank-you prayer before children eat.
- Open the Bible to John 21 as you tell the Bible story.

WORK PUZZLES WITH A FRIEND



Tools: Bible; LifeWay puzzles Bible Times Fishing (001276458), Breakfast with Jesus (001050968), and Jesus, A Special Friend (005160679); plastic bucket

- Put all the puzzle pieces in the bucket. Lay the frames side by side on a table.
- Invite two children to work together to put pieces in the correct frames.
- As the children work, comment on the pictures of Jesus, His disciples, the fishing boat and nets.
- Say: "Jesus found His friends on their fishing boat trying to catch fish. John and Peter were excited to see Jesus!"

CREATE NET ART

Tools: Bible, Activity Page, netted food bag, paper, masking tape, large crayons (wrappers removed), washable markers

- Cut pieces of netting about the size of the paper. Tape netting to a tabletop.
- Guide a child to place a sheet of paper over the netting and hold it in place.
- Tell the child to rub the side of the crayon over the paper to reveal a net design.
- When the child finishes his work, write the Text Truth on his paper. Suggest that the preschooler use the markers to draw fish in the net design.
- Show the picture on the Activity Page. Comment: "Jesus told the men to throw their fishnet over the side of the boat. Then they caught many fish."

BUILD A CAMPFIRE

Tools: Bible, several empty paper towel rolls, orange and red tissue paper, Story Picture: A Surprise for Jesus' Friends (Pack)

- Show children the Story Picture and point to the fire Jesus made.
- Remark: "Jesus cared about His friends. One day He surprised them when He stood on the shore and called to them."
- Open the Bible to John 21 as you tell the Bible story.
- Ask children to build a pretend fire and "cook" fish for their friends.
- Talk to the preschoolers about times they may have camped or their families cooked over a fire.
- Say: "Jesus loved His friends and He went back to see them."

SCOOP FISH OUT OF WATER

Tools: Bible, shallow plastic container, unused aquarium nets, foam fish shapes, plastic bucket, towels

- Spread a towel on the table. Add water to the container and drop the foam fish into the water.
- Show a net to a child and remark: "Jesus' friends used nets to catch fish. Here is a net people use to get fish from an aquarium. Would you like to try to catch fish with a net?"
- Guide the child to scoop the fish into the bucket. When he catches all the fish, direct him to return them to the water so a friend can have a turn.
- Hold the Bible and guide a child near you to find the Book of John. Say: "This is where we find this story. John told about Jesus, and Matthew did, too."

CIRCLE TIME (10-15 MINUTES, DEPENDING ON YOUR AGE GROUP)

LEADER TIP! USE THE BIBLE

Open a Bible to the Scripture passage while you tell the story. Doing this will help preschoolers know the story comes from the Bible.

CIRCLE TIME TOOLS

- Bible
- 3- or 4-inch rubber ball
- 8 colored cards, markers (Write individual words of the Preschool Verse and reference on the cards.)
- long strip of paper with Preschool Verse written on it
- Activity Page

PACK ITEMS

- 12 Story Picture: A Surprise for Jesus' Friends
- 17 Bible Markers B



LET'S GATHER.

- Announce: "If you are wearing shoes with laces, please come to Circle Time."
- Continue with other descriptions such as "have a pet dog," "like strawberry ice cream," "sleep in bunk beds" until everyone has arrived in the circle.
- Toss a small rubber ball to a child and ask her to tell you something she heard or did at church today. Give every child a turn to receive the ball and respond.
- Comment: "We have been busy learning about a special day when Jesus surprised His disciples. Let's hear that Bible story now."



LET'S HEAR THE BIBLE STORY.

- Hold up the Story Picture, then lay it in the center of the floor. Say: "Jesus' friend John wrote about that special day. The story is in the Bible at John 21."
- Open the Bible to the marker placed at the story reference.
- Tell the Bible story, making eye contact with boys and girls as you talk.
- Roll the ball over the picture. When it reaches a child, ask him to answer a question about the story.
- Ask questions such as:
Who was on the fishing boat? (Jesus' friends)
Where was Jesus? (on the shore)
What did Jesus tell the men to do? (throw their nets on the other side)
What did Jesus do for His friends? (cooked breakfast)



LET'S PRACTICE BIBLE SKILLS.

- Distribute the word cards to the preschoolers.
- Hold up the strip of paper and read the Preschool Verse.
- Say: "Some of you have cards with these words written on them. Let's help one another put the words in order."
- Direct friends without cards to help move the children into place to match the Preschool Verse written on the strip.
- Lead the preschoolers to say the Preschool Verse together.



LET'S PRAY TOGETHER.

- Pray in words preschoolers understand.
- Thank God for true stories from the Bible. Thank God that we can hear stories about Jesus from the Bible.



LET'S EXPLORE MORE.

- Form small groups of two or three preschoolers and a teacher. Look at today's Activity Page. Guide the children to do the activity on the back.
- Show preschoolers the picture on the Activity Page and help them recall the Bible story.
- Lead preschoolers to say the Preschool Verse again.

**DON'T FORGET TO
GIVE THIS WEEK'S
ACTIVITY PAGE TO
PRESCHOOLERS!**



Session 13



TELL EVERYONE!

Matthew 28:16-20

Too often we see the Great Commission merely as something we are supposed to do—a task to check off from our to-do list. Christ’s Commission is not about duty but delight, not about a project but a Person. This week’s study helps us see the focus is not merely on the activity of making disciples, but on the Person of the discipler—Jesus. We are not just disciples; we are Jesus’ disciples. Our joy is to introduce people to Jesus, Who can save people and transform their lives with purpose and power.

Jesus died on the cross, was buried, and rose on the third day. This simple statement declares the heart of the gospel (1 Cor. 15:3-4). The passion of Christ as He endured the cross surpasses the most eloquent proclamation. The silence of the tomb gave way after three days to the power of God in Christ’s resurrection (Rom. 1:4). Still, this was just the beginning of the story.

When the disciples saw Jesus, they understood He truly was the Messiah. He had risen from the dead and stood before them in Jerusalem. When Jesus met the disciples in Galilee that day, they recognized His identity as the Son of God and worshiped Him. This fact is significant because only God is worthy of worship (Matt. 4:10). Since Jesus received worship, He clearly was God the Son, not merely a prophet, teacher, or healer.

Jesus finished His task on earth and committed the good news of salvation to His disciples and through them, to us today. As He prepared to return to heaven, Jesus commissioned His followers to carry the gospel to all the people of the earth, making disciples wherever they went.

Our mission to the world takes place in the context of Jesus’ majesty. Witnessing and making disciples are not ends in themselves; they involve glorifying Christ.

SESSION FOCUS

CORE PASSAGE

Matthew 28:16-20

PRESCHOOL VERSE

Matthew 28:19-20

PRESCHOOL TEXT TRUTH

Jesus said to tell everyone He is alive.

PRESCHOOL CONNECTION STORY PASSAGE

Matthew 28:6-10,16-20

CHRIST IN CONTEXT

Everything God promised to His people in Old Testament times came true when He sent Jesus.

SESSION BRIEF

Here, there, everywhere! Jesus commanded His followers and all believers to spread the word, proclaiming the good news of salvation to every person. Jesus commanded believers to make disciples who will go throughout the world to tell about the Savior. Jesus' command is directed to all of us who love Him and want to serve Him.

During this session, help preschoolers learn they can tell everyone about Jesus, too. Help young boys and girls identify things they can do to help people know the good news that Jesus lives.

YOU CHOOSE!

Are your preschoolers ready to learn memory verses? Decide which wording of the Preschool Verse you want to use with your group.

From the Bible text:

Go, make disciples of all nations, teaching them everything I have commanded you. Matthew 28:19-20

Preschool Verse Paraphrase:

Go to all people and teach them about Jesus. Matthew 28:19-20

TEXT TRUTH

Jesus said to tell everyone He is alive.

PRESCHOOL VERSE

Matthew 28:19-20

LEADER TIP!

Tell preschoolers that to “make disciples” means to teach people what it means to be a follower of Jesus.

CONNECT TO MATTHEW:**NEWS FOR JESUS’ DISCIPLES****Matthew 28:6-10,16-20**

Jesus’ friends Mary Magdalene and Mary visited the place where Jesus’ body had been taken. But while they were there, an angel told them Jesus was alive! He was going to Galilee to see His disciples.

This was wonderful news. The women were so happy. They hurried to find Jesus’ disciples to tell them the good news.

Then Jesus met the women and said, “Good morning. Go tell My brothers to leave for Galilee. They will see Me there.”

The women looked for the disciples and told them the news.

When the disciples heard the women’s message and what Jesus had told them, they traveled to the mountain in Galilee where Jesus told them to go.

When the disciples saw Jesus, they worshiped Him.

Then Jesus spoke to the men. He said, “Go and make disciples everywhere. Baptize people and teach them to do everything I have told you.”

Jesus told the disciples that they should tell people everywhere that Jesus was alive.

“And remember, I am with you always,” Jesus said.

SET THE STAGE FOR EXPLORATION

1. PREPARE FOR TEACHING

- Review the teaching plan and practice using Bible-focused conversation. Pray for the preschoolers and their families.
- Before children arrive, set out the materials needed for early arrivers. Put materials for Exploration Stations and Circle Time in baskets or paper bags and set them in the areas in which children will work. Teachers may want to set up the stations before class time.
- Display posters and teaching reminders in suggested locations to remind you of the biblical focus for today.

2. OFFER ARRIVAL ACTIVITIES (5 MINUTES)

Offer two or three choices for preschoolers to explore:

- Draw pictures of friends.
- Learn to look at a globe and maps. Find Galilee and your town.
- Work puzzles about friends and the Bible.

3. GET STARTED (5 MINUTES)

- After preschoolers have had opportunity to do the arrival activities, get their attention by spinning the globe.
- Talk to preschoolers about places they have been. Where does their family go frequently? Say: “Jesus told people to go all over the world to do something important. We’re going to learn about that today.”
- Help children recall things they have learned about Jesus: Jesus taught people, He was baptized, people worshiped Him, Jesus helped people, He loved His friends, He died on a cross, Jesus is alive, and Jesus wants us to remember Him.
- Spin the globe again. Comment: “Jesus had a few more things He wanted to tell His disciples. Let’s go to Exploration Stations and find out what Jesus wanted the disciples to do.”

4. GO TO EXPLORATION STATIONS AND CIRCLE TIME.

TOOLS

- paper, colored pencils, crayons
- globe, electronic tablet or smart phone mapping app, child’s Bible atlas or other atlas, map showing your town
- puzzles *My Friends* (LifeWay, 005266977), *Bibles* (LifeWay, 001050998)

TEXT TRUTH

Jesus said to tell everyone He is alive.

BIBLE STORY NEWS FOR JESUS' DISCIPLES

Matthew 28:6-10,16-20

PRESCHOOL VERSE

Matthew 28:19-20

PACK ITEMS

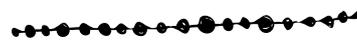
- 13 Story Picture: News for Jesus' Disciples
- 17 Bible Markers B
- 28 Road Pieces
- 33 Shape Board
- 34 Word Shapes



EXPLORATION STATIONS (45-60 MINUTES)

Set up at least three stations to provide choices of multisensory activities and movement for busy preschoolers.

FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS



Tools: Bible, Activity Page

- Place chairs in a circle and invite children to be seated. Show children the picture on the Activity Page. Mention that Jesus met His disciples in Galilee and gave them important instructions.
- Ask children to play a game involving instructions. Explain: "I will say a sentence. If what I say is true for you, stand up."
 - Say statements such as:
 - Stand up if you like carrots.*
 - Clap your hands if you like the color purple.*
 - Pretend to drive if you rode to church in a white car.*
 - Stand up if you can tell someone that Jesus is alive.*
 - Wave your hands if you can say a verse from the Bible.*

CREATE A MAP PICTURE



Tools: Bible, globe, thick paper, pages from an old atlas (cut into small squares), glue sticks, washable markers, index card with the word GO printed on it

- Direct a child to spin the globe. Point to some places on the globe.
- Talk about the use of globes and maps to know about our world. Say: "Jesus said to go all over the world to tell people about Him."
- Give the preschooler some paper and suggest that he create a picture using the map pieces and markers. Suggest he write the word GO on his paper.
- Tell the Bible story.

**SEARCH FOR BIBLE
WORDS**

Tools: Bibles; Bible Markers B (Pack); cards with words Go, Jesus, teach, Matthew printed on them; magnifiers; fresh play dough

- Lay the cards and magnifiers beside Bibles opened to Matthew 28.
- Read the words on the marker. Say: "These words are from the Bible. Let's see if we can find them."
- Lead the child to use a magnifier to look at Bible pages. Help him find the words printed on the cards.
- Say: "Jesus wanted His disciples to go everywhere—all over the world—and tell people about Him."
- Help a child use play dough to create letters to spell GO.

TALK AND TELL

Tools: Bible, Story Picture: News for Jesus' Disciples (Pack), sections of PVC pipe with T and elbow pieces, cardboard tubes, old cell phones, toy microphone

- As children notice the materials, remark that all of them can be used to amplify or enhance words we speak. Recall people or occasions when some of the items are used at church.
- Get a tube and say the words "Jesus is alive." Suggest a child use a different item to repeat the words.
- While children experiment with the PVC pieces, continue talking about today's Bible story and Text Truth.
- Show the Story Picture to the children and summarize the Bible story.

PLAY WITH TOY CARS

Tools: Bible, Road Pieces (Pack), masking tape, toy road signs, several small toy vehicles, Shape Board (Pack), Word Shapes (Pack), pictures of a mission team

- Encourage preschoolers to make roads using the tape and road pieces. Discuss locations for the road signs.
- While children pretend to drive cars, remark that today people travel by car, train, boat, airplane, bus, and other ways to go all over the world to tell about Jesus.
- Show children the pictures of a mission team. If the group is from your church, name the people. Comment: "Our friends love Jesus and want to tell everyone about Him. That is why they traveled to _____."
- While a child matches shapes and colors, read the words, relating them to the Bible and Jesus.

CIRCLE TIME (10-15 MINUTES, DEPENDING ON YOUR AGE GROUP)

LEADER TIP! USE THE BIBLE

Open a Bible to the Scripture passage while you tell the story. Doing this will help preschoolers know the story comes from the Bible.

CIRCLE TIME TOOLS

- several Bibles (different styles)
- globe
- Enhanced CD
- Activity Page

PACK ITEMS

- 13 Story Picture: News for Jesus' Disciples
- 17 Bible Markers B
- 22 Find-a-Bible Cards
- 23 Number Cube
- 24 Actions Cube



LET'S GATHER.

- Walk around the room and announce: "It's time to get ready for Circle Time. Please clean up and meet me in the circle."
- Welcome children as they arrive. Thank them for participating in activities and cleanup.
- Invite children to move their bodies. Use the Actions Cube and the Number Cube to cue children to movements and numbers of repetitions.
- After a few minutes, play the Enhanced CD and sing along with one or two songs about Jesus.
- Lead preschoolers to sway to the music and think about how much Jesus loves us.
- Direct children to be seated and prepare to listen to today's Bible story.



LET'S HEAR THE BIBLE STORY.

- Spin the globe and remark: "Jesus loved His disciples. Jesus loves everyone all around the world. That's why Jesus told His disciples to go and tell everyone about Him."
- Invite a child to hold the Bible as you open it to the marker at Matthew 28. Say: "Listen closely to this true story from the Bible."
- Tell the story with enthusiasm.
- Show children the Story Picture, then pass it around the circle.
- Say: "Let's play a game. I will say two things. You tell me which is more important."
- Ask questions such as:
Play outside or watch lots of TV?
Brush your teeth or eat lots of candy?
Do what you want or do what Jesus wants?



LET'S PRACTICE BIBLE SKILLS.

- Spread the Bibles in front of the preschoolers.
- Read questions from the Find-a-Bible Cards and guide children to locate Bibles fitting the descriptions.
- Comment: “These Bibles look different on the outside, but all of them tell about God and Jesus. God told people what to write. We can read the Bible and hear what God wants us to know about Jesus.”
- Turn to Matthew 28:19-20 and read the Preschool Verse. Lead preschoolers to say the verse with you.



LET'S PRAY TOGETHER.

- Ask preschoolers to share their prayer requests. Ask willing volunteers to pray.
- Finally, say a brief prayer asking God to help us be ready to tell everyone the good news about Jesus.



LET'S EXPLORE MORE.

- Form small groups of two or three preschoolers and a teacher.
- Ask teachers to show children the picture on the Activity Page and review the Bible story.
- Guide children to do the activity on the back of the Activity Page.
- Lead preschoolers to repeat the Preschool Verse again.

**DON'T FORGET TO
GIVE THIS WEEK'S
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COMING NEXT QUARTER

SUMMER 2017

PSALMS - The Book of Psalms is known as the songbook of the Bible. Its 150 psalms cover a variety of genres and themes. Preschoolers will study three genres: psalms of hope, psalms of praise, and psalms of righteousness.

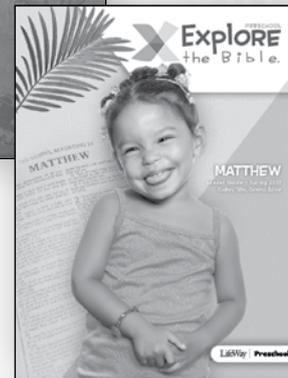
DATE	CORE PASSAGE	CONNECTION STORY PASSAGE	PRESCHOOL VERSE
June 4	Psalms 1:1-6	Ezra 7:6-10; Nehemiah 8:1-12	Psalms 1:6
June 11	Psalms 78:5-8,32-39	Deuteronomy 5:1-21; 6:5-25	Psalms 78:35
June 18	Psalms 23:1-6	2 Samuel 7:1-22,28-29	Psalms 23:1
June 25	Psalms 138:1-8	1 Kings 8:1-61	Psalms 138:1
July 2	Psalms 84:1-12	Luke 2:25-38	Psalms 84:4
July 9	Psalms 95:1-11	Exodus 14:29-31; 15	Psalms 95:6
July 16	Psalms 19:1-14	Genesis 1; 3:8	Psalms 19:1
July 23	Psalms 136:1-5,10-15, 23-26	Nehemiah 12:27-43	Psalms 136:1
July 30	Psalms 146:1-10	Genesis 32:1-11; 35:1-7	Psalms 145:18
Aug. 6	Psalms 51:1-17	2 Samuel 12:1-15	Psalms 86:11
Aug. 13	Psalms 32:1-11	John 4:1-42	Psalms 32:11
Aug. 20	Psalms 141:1-10	1 Kings 3:3-15	Psalms 141:8
Aug. 27	Psalms 42:1-11	Job 1:1-5,20-22; 2:11-13; 42:1-15	Psalms 42:8

TOOLS FOR DIGGING DEEP!

PRESCHOOL TOOL KIT

The resources you need to lead one class:

- One Preschool Leader Guide
- One set of Preschool Activity Pages
- One Preschool Leader Pack
- One Enhanced CD



LEADER GUIDE

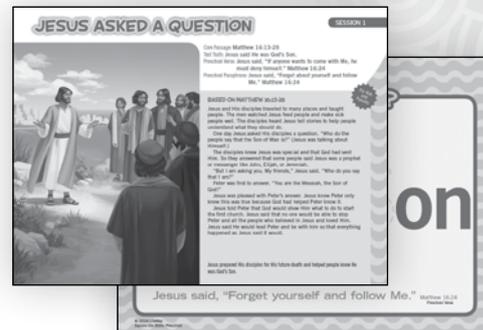
Help preschoolers dig into the Bible.

- Leader-friendly session plans for small- and large-group learning
- Sensory approach to exploring the Bible for pre-readers
- Exploration activities to encourage preschoolers to dig, explore, and discover Bible truths

ACTIVITY PAGES

Engage preschoolers in class and continue learning at home.

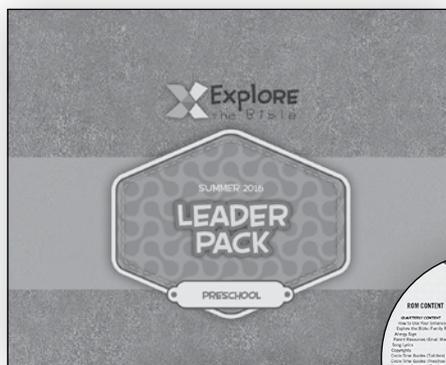
- Weekly Bible story pages with colorful illustrations
- Fun-to-do Bible-focused activities related to Bible content and application



LEADER PACK

Filled with leader-friendly resources that make teaching easy.

- Teacher helps
- Visual aids
- Story pictures
- Posters
- Games
- Bible memory tools



ENHANCED CD

- Bible-related songs
- Music for movement and rest time
- Printable teacher tools and session helps

PRESCHOOL TOOL KIT WITH WORSHIP

- Second-hour option
- Kid-friendly worship experience that reinforces every weekly session



For free online training on how to lead a group, visit ministrygrid.com/web/explorethebible.



THE GOSPEL

GOD'S PLAN FOR ME

The word *gospel* means “good news.” It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation.



GOD RULES. The Bible tells us God created everything, including you and me, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to recite Genesis 1:1 from memory or read it from his Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 and Colossians 1:16-17.



WE SINNED. Since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God (Romans 3:23). The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death (Romans 6:23).



GOD PROVIDED. Read John 3:16 aloud. God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read Ephesians 2:8-9.



JESUS GIVES. Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.



WE RESPOND. We can respond to Jesus. “The ABCs of Becoming a Christian” is a simple tool that helps us remember how to respond when prompted by the Holy Spirit to the gift Jesus offers.

ADMIT

Admit to God that you are a sinner. The first people God created chose to sin and disobey God. Ever since then, all people have chosen to sin and disobey (Romans 3:23). Tell God you messed up and you are sorry for doing your own thing and turning away from Him through your thoughts, words, and actions. Repent, turn away from your sin. (Acts 3:19; 1 John 1:9) *Repent* doesn't just mean turning from doing bad things to doing good things. It means turning from sin and even from your own good works and turning to Jesus, trusting only in Him to save you.

BELIEVE

Believe that Jesus is God's Son and receive God's gift of forgiveness from sin. You must believe that only Jesus can save you and you cannot save yourself from your sin problem—not even by praying to God, going to church, or reading your Bible. Your faith or your trust is only in Jesus and what He did for you through His life, death, and resurrection. (Acts 16:31; Acts 4:12; John 14:6; Ephesians 2:8-9)

CONFESS

Confess your faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Tell God and tell others what you believe. If Jesus is your Savior, you are trusting only in Him to save you. Jesus is also Lord, which means He is in charge and calling the shots in your life. You can start following Him and doing what He says in the Bible. You are born again into a new life and look forward to being with God forever. (Romans 10:9-10,13)

HELP KIDS NAVIGATE THE BIBLE!



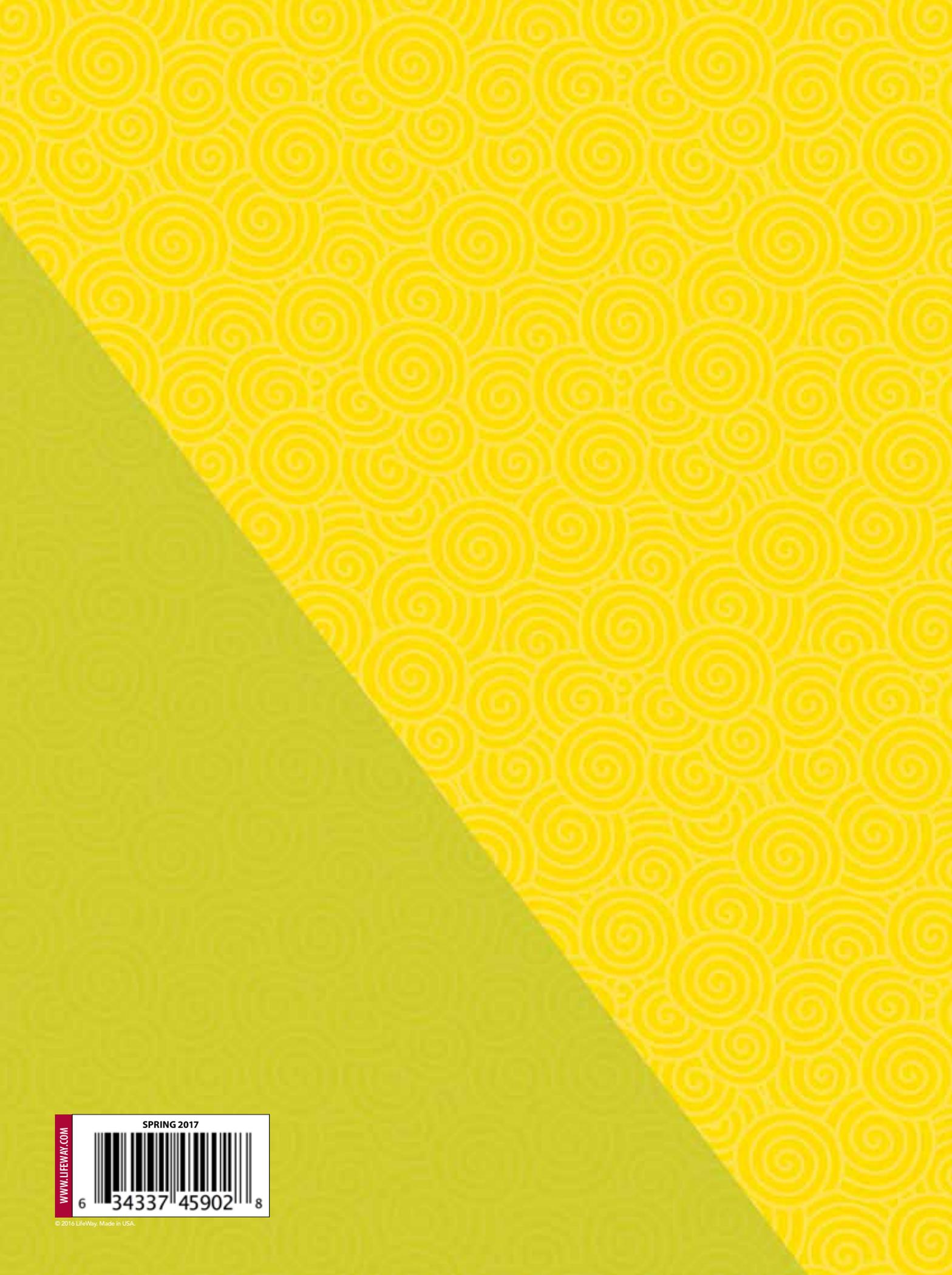
Explore the Bible: Books of the Bible Posters are a bright and colorful addition to any kids area! Kids will soak in interesting facts for each book, including author, audience, and purpose. Each book poster is color-coded according to the division of the Bible in which it belongs.

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