



Following Jesus
Through the
Research of
Dr. Luke!

REPRODUCIBLE

This 13-Session
Course Is Perfect for:

Preschool and Elementary Children

Second Hour, Midweek or
Summer Programming

Small and Large Churches

Gospel Light's
KIDS@TIME

TruthLab Investigations

Planning Resources,
Bible Lessons, Music and More!









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TruthLab Investigations

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How to Use This Guide

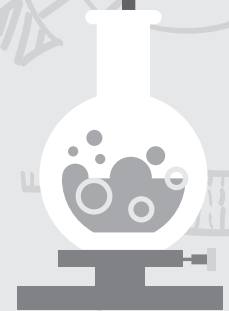
If you are a teacher or a small-group leader, follow these simple steps to lead your children in making Big Discoveries of what God says about His kids!

1. Read “TruthLab Investigations Overview” on pages 9–10 and the “TruthLab Investigations Scope and Sequence” on page 11 to get an understanding of the purpose and goals of this curriculum.
2. Look at “Advice and Answers for Schedule Planning” on pages 14–18, choose the schedule that best fits your situation and decide which centers you will include.
3. Read the teaching tips articles (pp. 33–41) for each center you will lead, taking note of the ways you can make each center an effective learning experience for the kids in your group.

If you are the children’s director or coordinator of TruthLab Investigations, follow the above steps and add a few more!

1. Pay special attention to “Getting and Keeping the Very Best Staff” on pages 19–20. Remember to start recruiting early—several months before *TruthLab Investigations* begins.
2. Read “Outreach Ideas,” “Partnering with Parents,” “Decorating Ideas” and “Theme Ideas” on pages 26–33 for exciting ideas to motivate interest in *TruthLab Investigations*, special ways to involve parents, eye-catching decorating ideas and more!
3. Print and photocopy the materials you need for each session and distribute to small-group leaders or teachers, or email the lessons to them.

Combining preschool and elementary children in one large group? Get advice for effective teaching of mixed ages by reading “Teaching Preschool and Elementary Children Together” on pages 24–25.



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CD-ROM

On the CD-ROM you will find all the music for *TruthLab Investigations* and valuable resources such as modifiable flyers, lessons ready to email, Big Discovery Visuals and more!



Coordinator Information

This section contains concise and practical information that can help you plan and lead the *TruthLab Investigations* program. Included in this section are an overview of the course, the scope and sequence, guidelines for recruiting and publicity suggestions, as well as tips for each of the activity centers in this program.

TruthLab Investigations Overview

Welcome to *TruthLab Investigations*, a 13-lesson adventure for children ages 3–12. The fun and excitement of a wacky research lab is combined with discoveries Dr. Luke—our Head Researcher—made into Jesus’ life. Through these stories, kids will discover what God says about each of us as His children.

The Purpose and Goals

The purpose of *TruthLab Investigations* is to help children develop an understanding of what it means to be a member of God’s family. As teachers and parents, we want our kids to know that their faith in God is grounded in the truth of the Bible. And while no one can guarantee that every question a child (or an adult!) asks about God can be answered in full detail, we know for certain that the truths we read in the Bible can help us gain God’s perspective on our life experiences—and understand what He says about us.

This course is designed to give both preschool and elementary children not only a knowledge of God’s Word but also applications of His truth as they live out their Christian faith every day.

Each session of *TruthLab Investigations* introduces kids to a discovery about something God says about each of us as individual members of His family. Dr. Luke will lead us in research each week to discover how Jesus’ life and the lives of those He changed illustrate these discoveries.

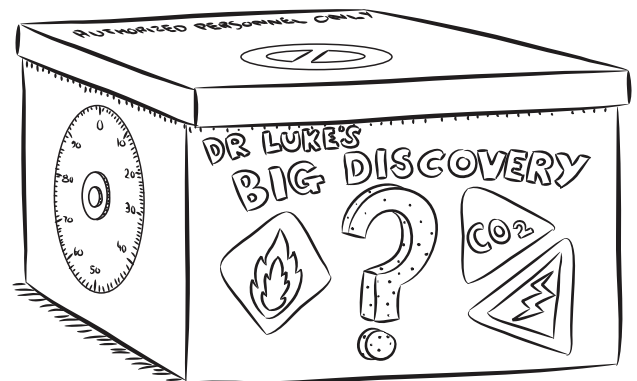
The Bible verse included in each lesson helps reinforce this point. (Note: Bible verses for elementary ages are taken from the *New International Reader’s Version (NirV)*. (These verses have been simplified for preschoolers.) A complete course overview can be found on page 11.

Dramatic stories about healing the sick, raising the dead, calming wild storms and stories Jesus told will keep kids captivated. They’ll begin to see through these stories how each session’s Big Discovery can work in their own lives. These Big Discoveries are more than just nice-sounding words; they are rock-solid principles on which children and adults can build their lives.

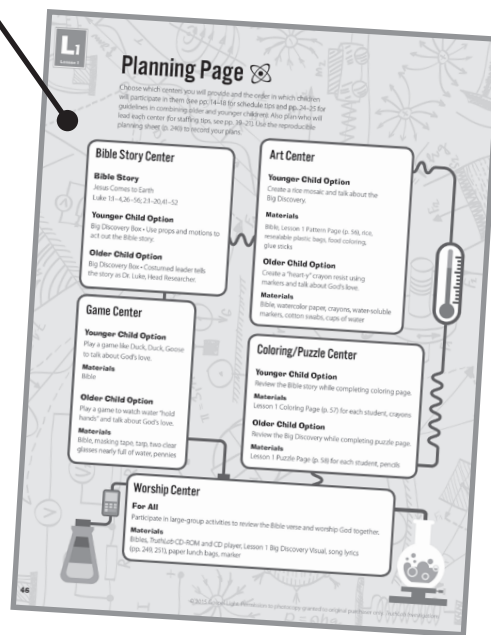
Special Features

- Each Bible story offers a creative storytelling technique to involve children in an active way. In addition, the Big Discovery Box in each lesson suggests items the teacher can use to help children visualize or participate in the telling of the lesson’s Bible story. (See pp. 34–35 for lists of these items.)
- Because children learn in diverse ways, *TruthLab Investigations* is filled with a variety of activities that appeal to children’s many learning styles. Each lesson offers active games and creative art activities that will help children express what they are learning.

	Title	Bible Story	Big Discovery	Bible Verse	Preschool Verse
1	I Am Loved	Jesus Comes to Earth @ Luke 1:3–4, 26–56; 29–32; 49–52	God says He loves me, no matter what. I am loved by God.	"How did God show His love for us? He sent His one and only Son into the world!" 1 John 4:9	God loved us and sent His Son. (See 1 John 4:9)
2	I Can Follow God	Jesus Calls Disciples @ Luke 24:21–22; 41–2:1–11; 11:27–31	God says He will guide my life. I can follow God.	"This God is our God for ever and ever. He will be our guide to the very end!" Psalm 48:14	God will always guide us. (See Psalm 48:14)
3	I Don't Have to See to Believe	The Centurion's Faith @ Luke 27:1–10	God says He will always do what He promises. I can rely on Him.	"Let us hold firmly to the hope we claim to have. The One who promised is faithful." Hebrews 10:23	God does what He promises. (See Hebrews 10:23)
4	I Am Secure	The Widow's Son @ Luke 21:1–17	God says He will always do what is best for me. I am secure.	"Remember that all things God works for the good of those who love Him. He appoints them to be used in bringing forth His purpose." Romans 8:28	God does everything for our good. (See Romans 8:28)
5	I Am Not Alone	Jesus Calms the Storm @ Luke 8:22–25	God says He will never leave me. I am never alone.	"God has said, I will never leave you, I will never desert you." Hebrews 13:5	God will never leave you. (See Hebrews 13:5)
6	I Can Have Hope	Jairus's Daughter @ Luke 8:40–56	God says He will help me in times of trouble. I can have hope.	"You are my hiding place. You will keep me safe from trouble." Psalm 32:7	God protects me from trouble. (See Psalm 32:7)
7	I Can Learn God's Word	Mary Listens to Jesus @ Luke 8:18–3; 10:38–42	God says His Word can help me. I can learn God's Word.	"Your word is like a lamp that shows me the way. It is like a light that guides me." Psalm 119:105	Your Word helps me know which way to go. (See Psalm 119:105)
8	I Am Heard	Jesus Teaches About Prayer @ Luke 11:1–13	God says He will answer my prayers. I am heard.	"God, I call out to you, because you will answer me. Listen to me. Hear my prayer." Psalm 17:6	God, answer my prayers. (See Psalm 17:6)
9	I Can Be Wise	Parable of the Rich Fool @ Luke 12:13–34	God says He will give me wisdom when I ask and trust. I can be wise.	"If any of you need wisdom, ask God for it. He gives it to you. God gives freely to everyone. He doesn't find fault." James 1:5	Ask God for wisdom. He will help. (See James 1:5)
10	I Can Be Forgiveness	Parable of the Lost Son @ Luke 15:11–24	God says that when I mess up, He forgives me when I ask. I can be forgiven.	"No God's faithful and obedient people that we have sinned, He will forgive us our sins. He will forgive every wrong thing we have done." 1 John 1:9	God forgives us when we ask. (See 1 John 1:9)
11	I Can Grow	Jesus Meets Zacchaeus @ Luke 19:1–10	God says that when I mess up, He forgives me when I ask. I can grow as God's child.	"I am sure that the One who began a good work in you will carry it on until it is completed." Philippians 1:6	God will finish His good work in you. (See Philippians 1:6)
12	I Can Join My Family	Jesus Dies and Lives Again @ Luke 22:34–34; 24:1–7	God says He will make me part of His family when I believe in Jesus. I can join God's family.	"Some people did accept Him. They believed in His name. He gave them the right to become children of God." John 1:12	All who believe in Jesus become children of God. (See John 1:12)
13	I Can Tell Others	Jesus' Commission @ Luke 24:45–53; Acts 1:1–11	God says He will help me share His love. I can tell others about Jesus.	"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you. Then you will be my witnesses... from one end of the earth to the other." Acts 1:8	God helps me tell others about Jesus. (See Acts 1:8)



- Every lesson features a Teacher & Parent Connection. This brief commentary found on the first page of each lesson gives a deeper perspective on the lesson focus. On the *TruthLab Investigations CD-ROM*, you will find a folder of these pages that can be distributed to parents (email, handouts, mail).
- The Worship Center provides ideas for worship and prayer as well as lively, kid-appealing games and songs.
- In each lesson, Bonus Theme Ideas are suggested to help create even more lab research fun for your kids and leaders—and to keep attendance and enthusiasm high. You'll find a variety of creative ideas such as engaging experiments, research activities, Family Fun suggestions, decorating hints and theme-related snacks.
- Get a quick overview of each lesson's activities by referring to the Planning Page. This page also functions as a convenient supply list to aid in quickly collecting the materials your leaders and teachers need.
- The *TruthLab Investigations CD-ROM* provides each lesson ready to email to teachers or print out—make as many copies as you need.
- Teaching resources such as the Big Discovery Visual for each lesson, the Pattern Page and the song lyrics are available on the *TruthLab Investigations CD-ROM*.
- Fresh and fun music is on the *TruthLab Investigations CD-ROM*. These songs will keep your kids singing all week long about the life-changing discoveries we can make as we follow Jesus. Make a copy for every child to take home!



Best of all, you'll appreciate the flexibility of this course! Every church and every group of children is different. Whether you are a large church with separate groups for each age level or a small church that combines preschool and elementary children together in one group, this curriculum easily adapts to meet your needs.

The activity and schedule choices provide you with the opportunity to customize each lesson to fit you and your church. You'll love the wealth of ideas that will help your team involve children and build relationships with them. *TruthLab Investigations* takes you beyond just leading kids in fun activities to guiding them in spiritual growth!



TruthLab Investigations Scope and Sequence

	Title	Bible Story	Big Discovery	Bible Verse	Preschool Verse
1	I Am Loved	Jesus Comes to Earth ● Luke 1:1–4, 26–56; 2:1–20, 41–52	God says He loves me, no matter what. I am loved by God.	"How did God show his love for us? He sent his one and only Son into the world." 1 John 4:9	God loved us and sent His Son. (See 1 John 4:9)
2	I Can Follow God	Jesus Calls Disciples ● Luke 3:16, 21–22; 4:1–2; 5:1–11, 27–31	God says He will guide my life. I can follow God.	"This God is our God for ever and ever. He will be our guide to the very end." Psalm 48:14	God will always guide us. (See Psalm 48:14)
3	I Don't Have to See to Believe	The Centurion's Faith ● Luke 7:1–10	God says He will always do what He promises. I can rely on Him.	"Let us hold firmly to the hope we claim to have. The One who promised is faithful." Hebrews 10:23	God does what He promises. (See Hebrews 10:23)
4	I Am Secure	The Widow's Son ● Luke 7:11–17	God says He will always do what is best for me. I am secure.	"We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him. He appointed them to be saved in keeping with his purpose." Romans 8:28	God does everything for our good. (See Romans 8:28)
5	I Am Not Alone	Jesus Calms the Storm ● Luke 8:22–25	God says He will not leave me. I am never alone.	"God has said, 'I will never leave you. I will never desert you.'" Hebrews 13:5	God will never leave you. (See Hebrews 13:5)
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8	I Am Heard	Jesus Teaches About Prayer ● Luke 11:1–13	God says He will answer my prayers. I am heard.	"God, I call out to you because you will answer me. Listen to me. Hear my prayer." Psalm 17:6	God, answer my prayers. (See Psalm 17:6)
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10	I Can Be Forgiveness	Parable of the Lost Son ● Luke 15:11–24	God says that when I mess up, He forgives me when I ask. I can be forgiven.	"But God is faithful and fair. If we admit that we have sinned, he will forgive us our sins. He will forgive every wrong thing we have done." 1 John 1:9	God forgives us when we ask. (See 1 John 1:9)
11	I Can Grow	Jesus Meets Zacchaeus ● Luke 19:1–10	God says He will finish the work He started in me. I can grow as God's child.	"I am sure that the One who began a good work in you will carry it on until it is completed." Philipians 1:6	God will finish His good work in you. (See Philipians 1:6)
12	I Can Join God's Family	Jesus Dies and Lives Again ● Luke 22–24:12	God says He will make me part of His family when I believe in Jesus. I can join God's family.	"Some people did accept him. They believed in his name. He gave them the right to become children of God." John 1:12	All who believe in Jesus become children of God. (See John 1:12.)
13	I Can Tell Others	Jesus' Commission ● Luke 24:45–53; Acts 1:1–11	God says He will help me share His love. I can tell others about Jesus.	"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you. Then you will be my witnesses. . . . from one end of the earth to the other." Acts 1:8	God helps me tell others about Jesus. (See Acts 1:8)

Leading a Child to Christ

Many adult Christians look back to their childhood years as the time when they accepted Christ as Savior. As children mature, they will grow in their understanding of the difference between right and wrong. They will also develop a sense of their own need for forgiveness and feel a growing desire to have a personal relationship with God.

Children of all ages are likely to be inconsistent in following through on their intentions and commitments. Therefore, they need thoughtful, patient guidance in coming to know Christ personally and continuing to grow in Him.

Pray



Ask God to prepare the students in your group to receive the good news about Jesus, and to prepare you to communicate effectively with them.

Present the Good News



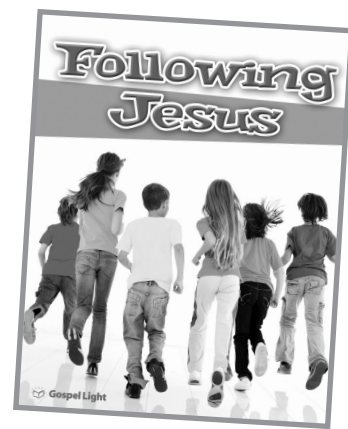
The younger the child is, the more limited he or she will be in understanding abstract terms. Use words and phrases that students understand. Avoid symbolic terms (“born again,” “ask Jesus to come into your heart,” “open your heart,” etc.) that will confuse these literal-minded thinkers. Remember that each child’s learning will be at different places on the spectrum of understanding.

Available from Gospel Light! *God Loves You!* and *Following Jesus* are booklets you can use with kids at *TruthLab Investigations*—and send home for parents to use, too. *God Loves You!* helps children understand what the Bible says about salvation and how to become a Christian. *Following Jesus* gives kids who are new believers practical tips on ways they can grow to become disciples of Jesus. Both booklets have a fresh look and feature engaging photos of real kids.

Discuss these points slowly enough to allow time for thinking and comprehending:

- A. God wants you to become His child. Why do you think God wants you in His family?** (See 1 John 3:1)
- B. You and I and every person in the world have done wrong things. The Bible word for doing wrong is “sin.” What do you think should happen to us when we sin?** (See Romans 6:23.)
- C. God loves you so much that He sent His Son to die on the cross to take the punishment for your sin. Because Jesus never sinned, He is the only One who can take the punishment for your sin. On the third day after Jesus died, God brought Him back to life.** (See 1 Corinthians 15:3–4; 1 John 4:14.)
- D. Are you sorry for your sin? Tell God that you are. Do you believe Jesus died for your sin? Tell Him that, too. If you tell God you are sorry for your sin and believe that Jesus died to take your sin away, God forgives all your sin.** (See 1 John 1:9.)
- E. The Bible says that when you believe that Jesus is God’s Son and that He is alive today, you receive God’s gift of eternal life. This gift makes you a child of God. This means God is with you now and forever.** (See John 1:12; 3:16.)

Give students many opportunities to think about what it means to be a Christian; expose them to a variety of lessons and descriptions of the meaning of salvation to aid their understanding.



Talk Personally with the Student



Talking about salvation one-on-one creates the opportunity to ask and answer questions. Ask questions that move the student beyond simple yes-or-no answers or recitation of memorized information. Ask open-ended, “What do you think?” questions such as these:

- ⦿ “Why do you think it’s important to . . . ?”
- ⦿ “What are some things you really like about Jesus?”
- ⦿ “Why do you think that Jesus had to die because of wrong things you and I have done?”
- ⦿ What difference do you think it makes for a person to be forgiven?”

When students use abstract terms or phrases they have learned previously, such as “accepting Christ into my heart,” ask them to tell you what the term or phrase means in different words. Answers to these open-ended questions will help you discern how much the student does or does not understand.

Offer Opportunities Without Pressure



Children naturally desire to please adults. This characteristic makes them vulnerable to the unintentional manipulation of well-meaning adults. A good way to guard against coercing a child to respond is simply to ask, “Would you like to hear more about this now or at another time?” Loving acceptance of the student, even when he or she is not fully interested in pursuing the matter, is crucial in building and maintaining positive attitudes toward becoming part of God’s family.

Give Time to Think and Pray



There is great value in encouraging a student to think and pray about what you have said before responding. Also allow moments for quiet thinking about questions you have asked.

Respect the Student’s Response



Whether or not a student declares faith in Jesus Christ, there is a need for adults to accept the student’s action. There is also a need to realize that a student’s initial response to Jesus is just the beginning of a lifelong process of growing in the faith.

Guide the Student in Further Growth



There are several important parts in the nurturing process.

- A.** Talk regularly about your relationship with God. As you talk about your relationship, the student will begin to feel that it’s OK to talk about such things. Then you can comfortably ask the student to share his or her thoughts and feelings, and you can encourage the student to ask questions of you.
- B.** Prepare the student to deal with doubts. Emphasize that certainty about salvation is not dependent on our feelings or doing enough good deeds. Show the student places in God’s Word that clearly declare that salvation comes by grace through faith. (See John 1:12; Ephesians 2:8–9; Hebrews 11:6; 1 John 5:11.)
- C.** Teach the student to confess all sins. This means agreeing with God that we really have sinned. Assure the student that confession always results in forgiveness. (See 1 John 1:9.) God’s forgiveness helps us want to do what’s right instead of what’s wrong.

The Preschool Child and Salvation



- ⦿ The young child is easily attracted to Jesus. Jesus is a warm, sympathetic person who obviously likes children, and children readily like Him. These early perceptions prepare the foundation for the child to receive Christ as Savior and to desire to follow His example in godly living. While some preschoolers may indeed pray to become a member of God’s family by accepting Jesus as their Savior, expect wide variation in children’s readiness for this important step. Allow the Holy Spirit room to work within His own timetable.
- ⦿ Talk simply. Phrases such as “born again” or “Jesus in my heart” are symbolic and far beyond a young child’s understanding. Instead, focus on how God makes people a part of His family.
- ⦿ Present the love of Jesus by both your actions and your words in order to lay a foundation for a child to receive Christ as Savior. Look for opportunities in every lesson to talk with a young child who wants to know more about Jesus.



Advice and Answers for Schedule Planning

Begin your planning for *TruthLab Investigations* by choosing when you will schedule the program. This 13-lesson curriculum can be used effectively for second-hour programs, midweek programs, Sunday School or summertime Sunday morning, weekday programs or home groups.

No matter when or where you teach *TruthLab Investigations*, there are two main format options—Self-Contained Groups and the Learning Center Plan. Read the following descriptions, and select the learning format that fits your needs.

Self-Contained Groups

If you are confined to a single room or have a small number of children, Self-Contained Groups may be your best option. In this format, groups of six to eight students are formed. Each group has a teacher who leads his or her group in the activities. (If the size of the group is larger, additional teachers or helpers are needed.)

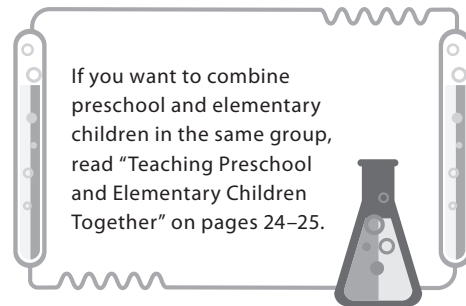
The greatest benefit of Self-Contained Groups is that teachers are able to form meaningful relationships with the students because they remain together during the entire session.

Self-Contained Groups are often a good option for small churches.

Learning Center Plan

The Learning Center Plan offers an exciting recruiting and schedule variation for *TruthLab Investigations*. In this plan, each teacher prepares and leads only one activity. Guides (adults, teenagers or even responsible seventh and eighth graders) lead groups of students to rotate between the centers (Bible Story, Art, Game, etc.). In other words, each teacher leads only one part of the lesson. Each teacher's responsibility for only one center simplifies teacher preparation and often improves teaching effectiveness, as well as makes it easier to recruit teachers. The Learning Center Plan also keeps inexperienced teachers from feeling overwhelmed. Teachers who don't enjoy leading games or who are apprehensive about telling Bible stories can leave those tasks to others more skilled in those areas.

The Learning Center Plan is often a good option for medium or large churches.



What Do Students Do and Who Leads Them?

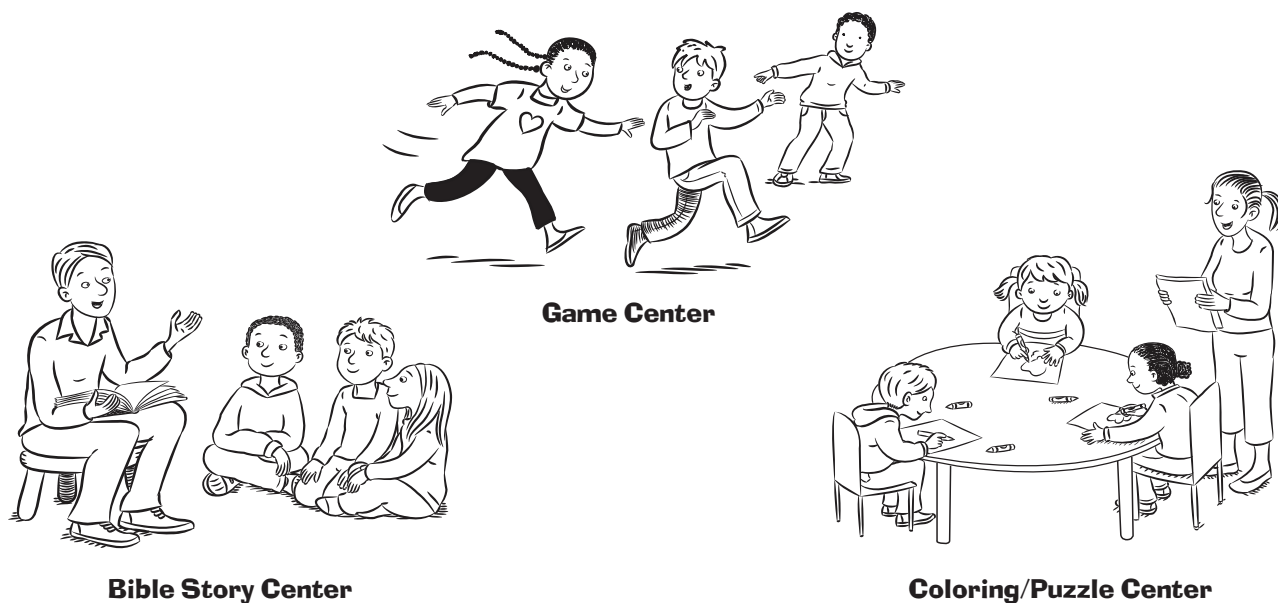
- Students are placed in small permanent groups (six to eight children is the best size). As much as possible, form groups with children of similar ages.
- Each group has at least one guide who leads the group to various centers. (Color-code name tags for easy group identification.)
- Each group, along with its guide(s), visits each center during each session. All groups participate at once in the Worship Center.
- If you have large numbers of children, two groups may participate in one center at the same time.

What Do Teachers Do?

- Each teacher takes responsibility for one center, remaining at the center and instructing each group as it visits the center. (Note: If both preschool and elementary children visit the same center, teachers modify activities as described in each lesson.)
- During the Worship Center, teachers (and guides) sit with students and participate with them in the activities.

What Are the Centers?

- One room or outside area is designated for each of the *TruthLab Investigations* learning centers. Post a large sign to identify each center.
- Decorate centers (see *Decorating Ideas* on pp. 29–32), and give centers fun names of areas that might be found in a research lab environment such as the BioSphere, Imaginarium, EcoDome, etc. Choose from the centers suggested in the following diagram:



Note: Bonus Theme Ideas for each session can be used as additional learning centers. BONUS INVESTIGATIONS found in Lessons 3, 6, 9 and 12, in place of Bonus Theme Ideas, may also become an additional center.



How Do I Plan the Time Schedule?

- The centers in *TruthLab Investigations* can be taught in any order, but each center should last the same amount of time. For example, in a one-hour program, groups would remain in each center for 15 minutes, and groups would be able to participate in three centers, in addition to the Bible Story. (Add 5 minutes to the first center each group attends to provide for a brief welcome time.)
- Allow 5 minutes for groups to move from center to center, following a preestablished route.

If you have more than one hour for each session, additional centers may be added or the time in each center may be lengthened (generally it is best to limit the time in each center to a maximum of 25 minutes in order to keep student interest high). If you have less than one hour for each session, use the Bible Story Center and one or two other centers of your own choosing.

Use the chart below as an example of how to schedule groups. As the number of children in your program grows, add teachers or helpers to each center to maintain a ratio of one leader for every six to eight children. You may also add duplicate centers.

How Do I Make the Learning Center Plan Run Smoothly?

- Predetermine the route each group will travel, including room and building entrances and exits. Ask guides to walk their routes in advance to become familiar with all locations.
- Establish a signal (bell, air horn, music, etc.) for notifying groups when it's time to move to the next center.
- Provide labeled tables or other areas where students may leave their projects and belongings during the session.
- Provide color-coded name tags and/or hand-held flags to identify each group.

	11:00-11:20	11:25-11:40	11:45-12:00
Group 1	Welcome and Bible Story Center	Worship Center	Game Center
Group 2	Welcome and Game Center	Bible Story Center	Worship Center



Schedule Options

You can adapt the sample schedule on page 16 to the needs and interests of your church. (See additional schedule options on p. 18.) Other centers can be added or substituted in order to meet the needs of younger or older students. In addition to the centers suggested in this course, many churches include centers for such things as snacks, recreational outdoor games (soccer, baseball, volleyball), children's choir and elective classes (cooking, woodworking, etc.).

When planning the schedule, remember to include a variety of activities in an order that will meet the needs of children. For example, if students have been sitting in the adult worship service before coming to *TruthLab Investigations*, plan an active center at the beginning of the session. If students attend *TruthLab Investigations* after being in Sunday School, you might want to provide a snack at the beginning of the session.

For help in planning each session's schedule, give each leader and teacher a copy of the Planning Page form on page 240 and on the *TruthLab Investigations CD-ROM*.

Planning Page
TruthLab Investigations

Date(s) _____

Lesson # and Title _____

Teaching Team _____

Time _____

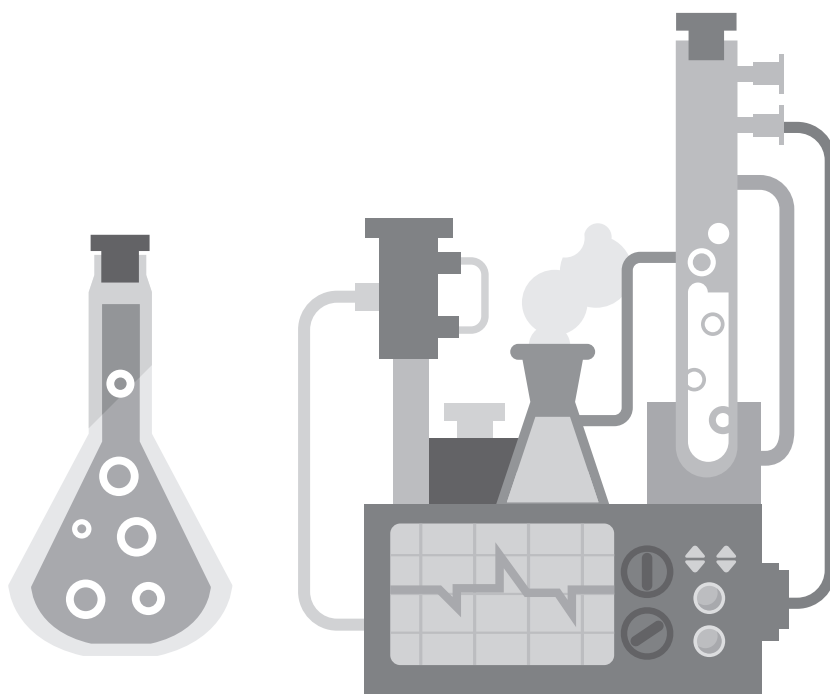
Center _____

Materials _____

Teachers _____

Helpers _____

240



Option 1

(45–60 minutes)

Worship Center

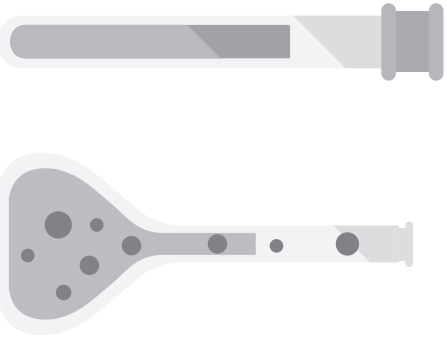
15–20 minutes

Bible Story Center

15–20 minutes

Game or Art Center

15–20 minutes



Option 2

(60–75 minutes)

Worship Center

15 minutes

Bible Story Center

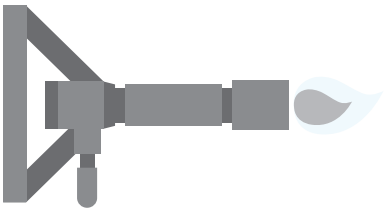
15–20 minutes

Game Center

15–20 minutes

Art Center

15–20 minutes



Option 3

(75–90 minutes)

Adult Worship Service

15 minutes

Game Center

15–20 minutes

Bible Story Center

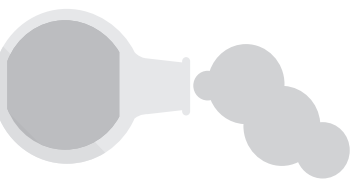
15–20 minutes

Art Center

15–20 minutes

Worship Center

15 minutes



Option 4

(75–90 minutes)

Game Center

15–20 minutes

Bible Story Center

15–20 minutes

Art Center

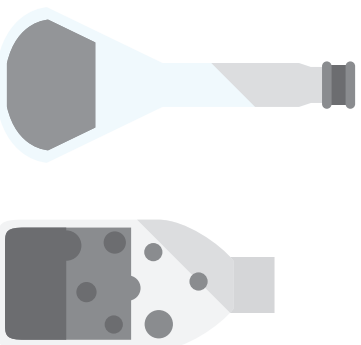
15–20 minutes

Worship Center

15 minutes

Snack Time

15 minutes



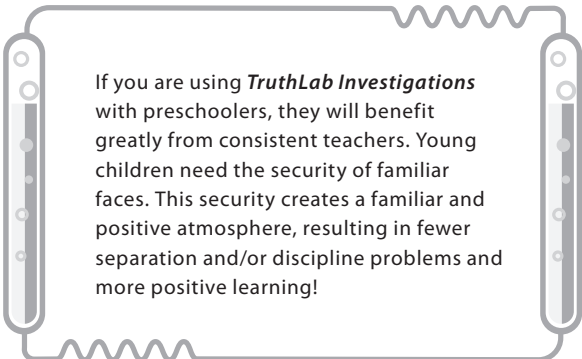
Note: If you are teaching only preschoolers, plan your centers for a maximum of 15 minutes and consider adding additional centers. If you are teaching only elementary children, consider expanding your centers from 20 to 25 minutes.

Getting and Keeping the Very Best Staff

One of the most important elements in staffing a successful program is planning how you will recruit and organize your staff. However you do it, keep in mind that the best learning and the most fun take place when there is a teacher or helper for every six to eight children.

The optimum plan for staffing is to have the same teachers in place for the entire course. Both teachers and children benefit from regular interaction. Having long-term teachers creates a wonderful opportunity for spiritual growth in students as they build relationships with adults who are faithful in demonstrating God's love.

While it may be easier to recruit teachers to teach one session at a time, such short-term staffing creates other problems. Many churches have found that rotating teachers frequently not only makes learning and growth difficult for children, but it also creates a heavy workload in administration (distributing curriculum, orienting a constant stream of new teachers, etc.).



If you are using *TruthLab Investigations* with preschoolers, they will benefit greatly from consistent teachers. Young children need the security of familiar faces. This security creates a familiar and positive atmosphere, resulting in fewer separation and/or discipline problems and more positive learning!

Here are some options if long-term commitment is difficult in your situation:

- Ask teachers to teach for a shorter time period—four weeks at a time instead of 13 weeks.
- Find two teams of teachers and helpers who will each teach for two weeks at a time. Then plan to rotate the two teams so that they alternate teaching two weeks at a time. During the course of the program, teachers and children become familiar with one another and can benefit from regular interaction.
- If you must rotate teachers on a weekly basis, make sure that you have a number of consistent people who can greet and interact with children and parents on a weekly basis.

Recruiting Tips



Recruiting teachers and helpers is one of the key tasks to making *TruthLab Investigations* an effective and fun learning experience for the children of your church and community. Keep the following tips in mind as you seek volunteers, and then match their talents to the tasks to be done:

- Pray for guidance in finding the people God wants to serve in this ministry.
- Start early—at least three months before the *TruthLab Investigations* program begins!
- Keep the leaders of all your children's ministries aware of and praying about staffing needs.
- Develop a written job description for each staff position, which includes all responsibilities, physical demands and commitments.
- Make a list of potential teachers and helpers. Consider a wide variety of sources for volunteers: church membership list, new members classes, suggestions from adult teachers or leaders, lists of previous and current teachers and survey forms. Get recommendations from present teachers. Don't overlook singles, senior citizens and high school and college students. Some churches ask parents to teach during the summer months, giving the school-year teachers a break. Be sure to follow your church's established policies and procedures for screening volunteers.
- Look for team members with interests and abilities in specific areas. For example, the teaching team for 24 children might consist of three adults: one who prepares and leads the Bible Story Center each week, one who prepares and guides the Game Center and a third who prepares and leads the Worship Center. While each team member has the primary responsibility to lead only one center, all team members are involved throughout the session as helpers.
- Recruit a separate team of teachers and leaders for each center. Each team might consist of two or more adults who enjoy teaching together, or consider asking a family with teenagers to work together to form a teaching team.
- Prayerfully prioritize your prospects list. Determine which job description best fits each person's strengths and gifts.



- Personally contact the prospects. Sending a personal letter, email or flyer (see p. 21 or *TruthLab Investigations CD-ROM*) to each prospect or calling the prospect is a good first step. Follow up to answer any questions or to see if the prospect has made a decision. Show the prospect the *TruthLab Investigations* manual and *TruthLab Investigations CD-ROM*. Ask the prospective volunteer what he or she would most enjoy doing as a leader or teacher in *TruthLab Investigations*.
- Provide new volunteers with all the needed materials, forms, helpful hints and training that will help them succeed. For all teachers and helpers, you may want to schedule one or more training meetings at which you distribute curriculum, review the schedule and procedures, sing the *TruthLab Investigations* songs together, etc. If your church is able, provide schedules and other training articles on your church website for volunteers to access at any time.
- During the volunteer's time of service, make sure the volunteer knows who will be available to answer questions or lend a helping hand. Look for specific actions and services contributed by the volunteer and offer your thanks!

- Plan a thank-you brunch or dinner for teachers and their families. Even if they don't attend, they'll be grateful for your appreciation!
- Create and regularly update a bulletin board display that shows pictures of volunteers leading activities with kids.

Recruiting Announcements



The team members who will be your *TruthLab Investigations* teachers and helpers will appreciate clear, concise information about the program—and a little added inspiration couldn't hurt! Attention-grabbing recruiting announcements are provided on the next page as well as on the *TruthLab Investigations CD-ROM*.



Lead Kids into Amazing Discoveries!

Join now for an exhilarating time as a Research Assistant or Lab Intern, leading kids (our Lab Assistants) into Big Discoveries through stories of Jesus found in Dr. Luke's research (also known as the Gospel of Luke and book of Acts)! We're now taking applications for leaders, team members and youth helpers who can show God's love to kids, use their imaginations and have fun helping kids understand what the Bible has to say about their faith and life!



TruthLab Investigations

starts on _____ and continues through _____

at _____ .

Contact _____

at _____ for more information.



Join Our Loopy LabWorks Team!

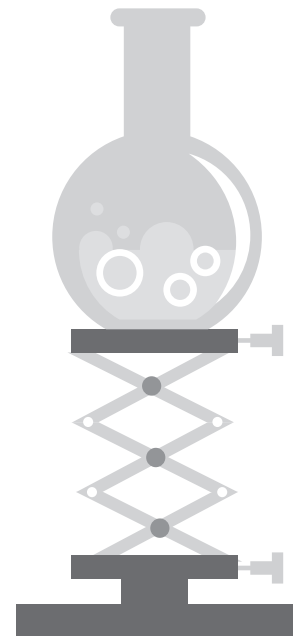


_____ (date) _____ (time)

Be a part of our team of Research Assistants and Lab Interns (leaders and helpers) who lead our Lab Assistants (kids) on a 13-week course of Big Discoveries of what God says about those who are members of His family!

TruthLab Investigations has fresh new songs, fun games, worship activities and great Bible stories of Jesus sourced from Dr. Luke's research (also known as the Gospel of Luke and book of Acts)! But that's not all! Our crazy lab fun will keep kids coming back for more adventures through awesome art projects, tasty snacks, wacky games and much more!

Act now to ensure your spot as one of our Research Assistants or Lab Interns!



Publicity Guidelines and Schedule

Well-planned publicity is critical to the success of any event, so take time to carefully schedule each part of your publicity plan. Publicity ideas are endless (bulletin board displays, banners, coloring contests, parent letters, etc.). But be sure to include these basics: church bulletin and newsletter announcements, posters and flyers. Here is a suggested publicity schedule:

Publicity Schedule

12 Weeks Before

- Determine the exact dates to release each publicity piece.
- Assign publicity tasks.

8 Weeks Before

- Print a teaser announcement on your church website or in your church bulletin and/or newsletter.

6 Weeks Before

- Display posters in well-traveled areas at your church facility and in your community.

4 Weeks Before

- Print information about *TruthLab Investigations* in your church newsletter, post information on your church website and mail flyers to children. Send mass emails if possible.
- Print announcements in church bulletin on a weekly basis.

1 to 3 Weeks Before

- Continue bulletin announcements.
- Make verbal announcements during worship services.

Publicity Ideas

Posters and Flyers

Use the posters and flyers on pages 241–243 to get the attention of children and families and invite them to participate in *TruthLab Investigations*. You may also use the art on pages 236–239 to make your own posters and flyers telling information about *TruthLab Investigations*. Display the posters in a variety of locations around your church and in your community.

Church Website

Add information about *TruthLab Investigations* to your church's website. Consider adding an online registration feature and a course outline and schedule that will help parents become familiar with the course. Create interest in *TruthLab Investigations* by adding a photo of several kids and teachers dressed as lab researchers (with lab coats, goggles, brightly colored beakers and other lab equipment, etc.).

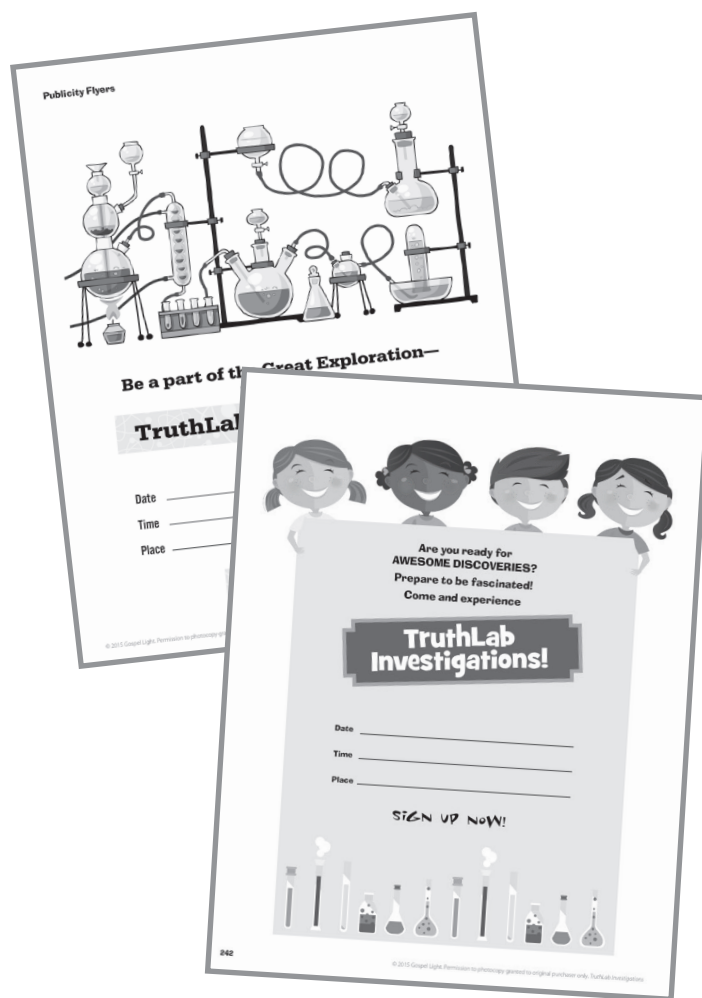
Information Booth

Decorate a booth or table in the church lobby from which to recruit teachers and helpers and preregister children. Decorate the booth or table as a lab experiment station (see "Decorating Ideas" on pp. 29–32) Prepare promotional flyers, registration forms and volunteer sign-up sheets for the booth.

Kickoff Event

Prepare for and publicize the upcoming *TruthLab Investigations* course with a kickoff event. Schedule the kickoff event two to three weeks before *TruthLab Investigations* begins. Invite children and their parents to discover what the fun is all about. Publicize the event by distributing flyers to families in your church and community. Transform your church parking lot or a large multipurpose room into a funny and engaging research lab. Set up three or four fun experiments and activities, and offer a snack or two. Choose ideas from the Bonus Theme Ideas or Bonus Investigations suggested for each lesson. Place a registration booth near the center of all the action so it is convenient for parents to register their children. Display flyers and posters at the booth.

- Each activity needs at least one adult or older teenager to be in charge. Encourage all adult and teen helpers to dress in theme-related clothing.



- Consider asking individual families in your church to sponsor activities. Each family would be responsible for purchasing supplies, setting up the activity and leading the activity during the event. In addition to having people who lead activities, have several helpers greet parents and encourage children to try an activity that is lacking participation.
- Each activity needs a designated area. In most situations, the activities can be set up outside, preferably on a lawn. One simple way to mark each area is to place stakes in each corner and then tie a rope from stake to stake, marking the boundaries of the area. If using a parking lot, draw boundaries for each area with chalk. Each activity area needs a large sign identifying it. Awnings and tents can also designate activity areas. Restrooms need to be open and clearly marked.



Teaching Preschool and Elementary Children Together

Whenever possible, it's recommended that you group preschool children (ages 3 to kindergarten) and elementary children (grades 1 to 6) separately for *TruthLab Investigations*. Teaching is most effective when children are grouped with others at similar developmental levels. While there is some benefit in mixing children of various ages together, it is difficult to prevent the oldest children from feeling that the activities are "baby stuff" because the younger kids are also involved. Even among children of similar ages, you are likely to find a variety of skills and abilities.

However, if there aren't enough children to form separate groups for preschool and elementary children, you may need to combine children of both age levels together. The tips and ideas in *TruthLab Investigations* will help you combine children from a wide variety of ages and still provide effective teaching.

Game and Art Center Tips

- Use the games and art activity ideas suggested for the age level of the majority of children in your class. If needed, modify the games and art activities as suggested in each lesson for either older (grades 1 to 6) or younger (ages 3 to kindergarten) children. The modifications use the same or similar materials so that you don't have to collect and prepare an entirely new set of materials. If you are using this material with younger preschoolers, additional modification to the games and art activities may be needed, depending on the skill level of the children in your class.
- Use the Bible memory verse that corresponds to the age of the majority of children in the group. In individual conversations with children, however, use the age-appropriate Bible memory verse, suggestions and discussion questions found in the lesson.
- Have the older children help lead the games, and have younger children cheer on teams as the older children play.

Bible Story Center Tips

- Even if children of varying ages are combined for art and game activities, consider keeping the Bible Story Center as a center through which small groups of children of similar ages rotate. Then the leader of the center can tailor the story to each group, ensuring that all children are taught the Bible story at their own level.
- If you have primarily elementary children, use the Bible Story Center Option for Older Children. However, provide for preschoolers the lesson's coloring page as a way to involve them and extend their interest in the story.
- If you have mostly preschoolers, use the Bible Story Center Option for Younger Children. Invite elementary children to participate by acting out the story or drawing Bible story murals.

Game Center
for older children Luke 1:1–4:26–56; 2:1–20,41–52

Collect
Bible, masking tape, tarp, two clear glasses nearly full of water, pennies.

Prepare
Lay a masking tape start line for a relay. For finish line, lay tarp. Set glasses of water on tarp, 6 feet (1.8 m) apart on tarp. Lay a pile of pennies beside each glass.

Do

- Students form two teams and line up across from water glasses. To put a penny into the glass, slide it down the inside of the glass. When the glass overflows, the game is over. Then we'll count to see which team had the most pennies in the glass. Most pennies in the glass wins!
- At your signal, first player runs to the glass, slides a penny into the glass and then runs back to tag next player.
- Team with the most pennies in the glass answers a question from the Talk About section—or selects someone to answer. Refill glasses with water to play again.

Talk About

- Why do you think you can get so many pennies into a glass of water that is already nearly full? (Water molecules hold hands.) That is, they form strong molecular bonds. Molecules stick together even as water rises above the rim of the glass.)
- Water molecules stick together to form molecular bonds. What are other strong bonds? (Glue, Electromagnets, Welding.)
- But we also have another kind of bond as people—love! Who are some people we love? (Friends, family.) What do you think is the STRONGEST bond anywhere in the universe? (God's love.)
- Today we heard Dr. Luke's account of the way God showed His love to us. What was it? (God sent Jesus.) What are other ways God shows us His love? (Kids tell.) Those are all good ways. But the very BEST way God showed His love was by sending Jesus so that we could join His family! Read 1 John 4:9 aloud.

Lead children in a brief prayer, thanking God for sending Jesus to be our Savior.

For Younger Children
Post a helper near water glasses to remind younger children to slide pennies down the inside of the glasses instead of plopping them on top, breaking the molecular bonds.

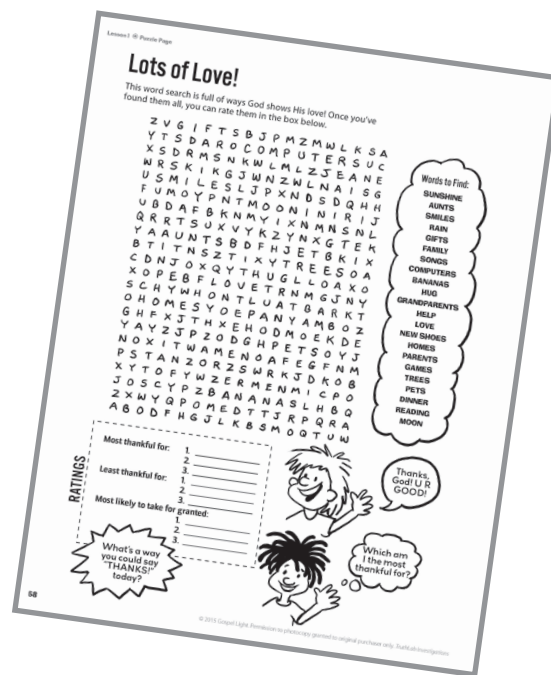
52
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Worship Center Tips

- While preschoolers are not likely to feel comfortable volunteering for the fun team games and other activities, they will still enjoy cheering for their teams.
- Make sure that the teachers and helpers of the preschoolers sit among the children to provide security and attention.
- Set aside space for preschoolers to sit at the front of the Worship Center area so that they are able to see.
- Make a copy of the music on the *TruthLab Investigations CD-ROM* for each child to take home. Familiarity with the songs will help preschoolers feel comfortable in the large-group setting. Although preschoolers may not be able to remember all the words of a song, they will easily catch on to and sing the song's chorus. They can still participate by doing the song's motions and/or by clapping or by playing rhythm instruments such as shakers or bells. If a song doesn't include motions or clapping, add them.



For Younger Children



For Older Children

Note: Every lesson includes both a coloring page for younger children and a puzzle page for older children. See page 40 for more information.



Outreach Ideas

Because *TruthLab Investigations* is packed with loads of exciting hands-on learning activities, you won't want any student to miss it! And because this program is also a great place for unchurched kids to learn about God in a relaxed, inviting atmosphere, you'll want to publicize it—even beyond your church! Here are ideas to help you not only plan to invite children to participate in *TruthLab Investigations* but also to follow up with visitors.

Invitation Ideas

- Keep accurate enrollment records for your ongoing children's programs. Several weeks prior to the beginning of *TruthLab Investigations*, send postcards or flyers (see pp. 241–243), or make phone calls to children who have either stopped attending your church or who have visited recently.
- Offer a small prize to any child who brings a friend to *TruthLab Investigations*. (Note: Adapt one of the flyers on pp. 241–243 for use as invitations children can give to friends.) Each week, be prepared to welcome visitors by having a greeter(s) who can help visitors find the appropriate classrooms, make name tags available and record contact information on registration forms. Consider recognizing visitors each session during the Worship Center. (Note: Prepare enough name tags so that visitors have same tags as other children.)
- Plan with the adult ministry coordinator to offer a parenting or other special-interest class at the same time children will be participating in *TruthLab Investigations*.
- Make a large outdoor banner or paint a large sign (see *TruthLab Investigations* logo pattern on p. 236), and hang it in a visible place outside your church.
- Mount flyers in businesses frequented by children and their families (grocery stores, laundromats, etc.) and on community bulletin boards.

Follow-Up

- Invite parents to attend a special celebration as part of the final *TruthLab Investigations* session (see invitations on p. 235). Children sing songs for their parents, families may tour classrooms, and everyone enjoys a snack or barbecue. Encourage teachers and leaders to make a special effort to introduce themselves to parents and look for natural opportunities to build friendships, answer questions about the church, etc.
- During the 13 weeks of *TruthLab Investigations*, encourage teachers and leaders to contact their students regularly, including absentees, visitors or irregular attendees. Provide already-stamped postcards, prepared mailing labels, and address, email and phone lists.
- Take one or more photos of children during *TruthLab Investigations*, and ask leaders and teachers to personally deliver photos to children's homes at the end of the program. You may also text or email photos to parents. (Obtain parent permission for use of photos.) Be sure to include an invitation to an upcoming family or children's ministry event.
- Make a *TruthLab Investigations* Memory CD with lots of photos showing the variety of activities in which children participated. Send each CD to children who attended, and include an invitation to other upcoming church programs.
- Pray for the teachers, leaders and helpers, and remind them to pray for the children in their groups, asking God to bring to their minds appropriate ways to keep in touch with the children and nurture them in Christ.



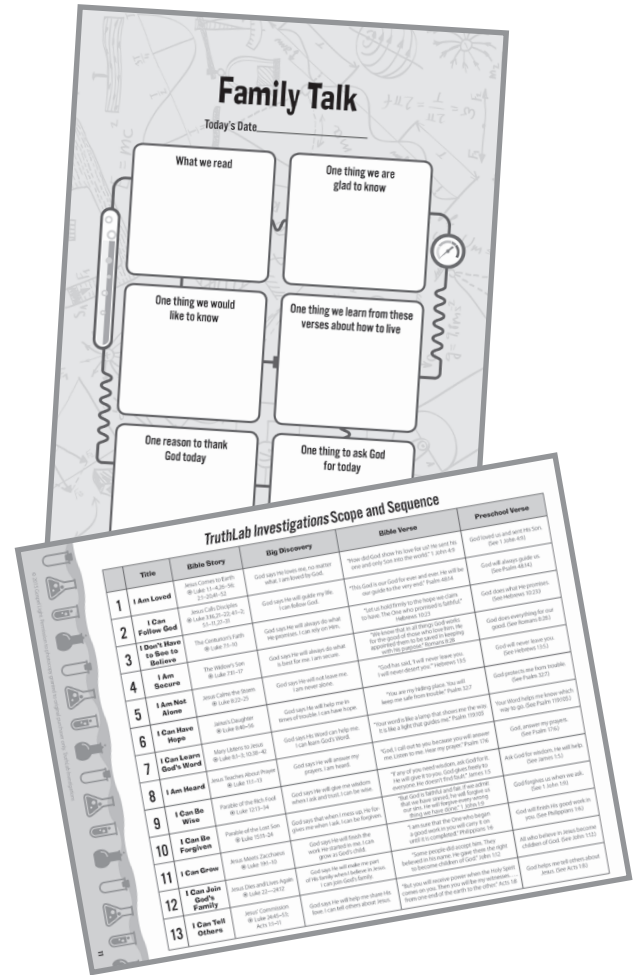
Partnering with Parents

In Deuteronomy 6:7, God commanded parents to teach their children about Him “when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.” The most important learning in life takes place not in churches, schools or scout troops but in families. The hours and days parents and children spend together are prime opportunities for building long-lasting spiritual foundations!

Choose one or more of the following ideas to help parents in their awesome responsibility of spiritually teaching their children.

- Send home a parent letter (example on p. 234 and on *TruthLab Investigations CD-ROM*) to each parent at the beginning of the program, and include a copy of the *TruthLab Investigations Scope and Sequence* (p. 11) so that parents are aware of the content and goals of this course.
- Offer a free or low-cost kid-friendly Bible to parents when they register their children for *TruthLab Investigations*. Especially if your program will attract visitors or unchurched children, it's wise not to assume that every family will have a kid-friendly Bible.
- Give or email each parent a copy of the first page of each session (also available on *TruthLab Investigations CD-ROM*). As parents read the Teacher & Parent Connection, they'll develop an understanding not only of the focus of the session but also of how they can talk with their children about the lesson's Big Discovery and live it out at home.

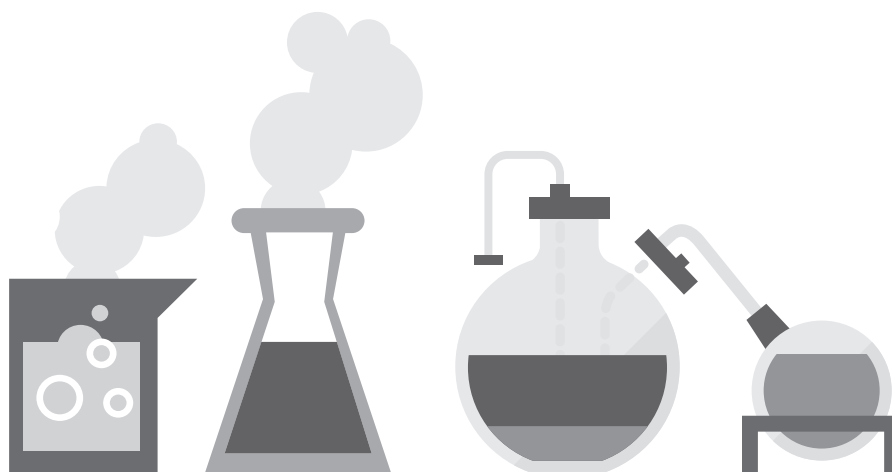
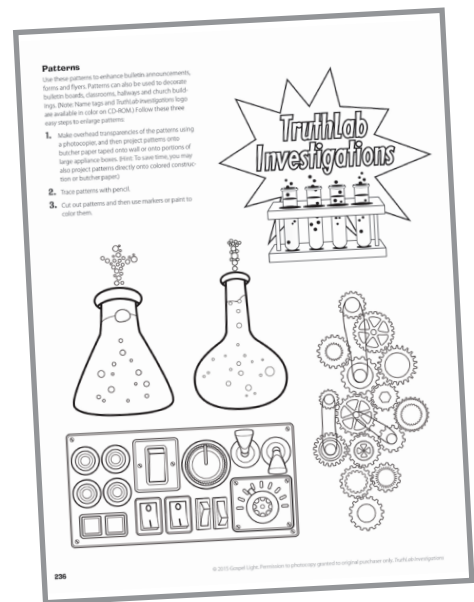
- If you don't use the coloring page or puzzle page in each session, send them home with children each week. Include an introductory letter with the first lesson's coloring page or puzzle, explaining that these pages provide an opportunity for parent and child to talk about how the Bible story, verse or Big Discovery can make a difference in each family's life.
- Give parents of elementary children a copy of the Family Talk page (p. 233) and the *TruthLab Investigations Scope and Sequence* page (p. 11). Encourage parents to use these with their children each week to read and study the session's Bible story references and/or the Bible verse. You may choose to give a small prize or candy to each child who brings a completed Family Talk page to each session.



- Make a copy of the music on the *TruthLab Investigations CD-ROM* for families to listen to at home or in the car.
- Ask parents to support *TruthLab Investigations* by providing a special snack or by preparing the materials for an art activity or game. Invite parents to join in on the fun! (See invitations on p. 235 and on *TruthLab Investigations CD-ROM*.) Observing the ways teachers and leaders talk with children about the session’s Bible content will model for parents effective ways of spiritual education. (Note: You may want to invite each parent to schedule a time to observe a full session with his or her child.)
- For the length of *TruthLab Investigations*, invite parents to attend a parent support and/or prayer group that meets together twice a month or weekly to pray for their children, their children’s teachers and one another. Enlist several parents to serve as hosts for this group. Hosts call parents to invite them to participate, arrange meeting space (homes, if possible), provide coffee, snacks, etc.
- Establish a group Bible memory verse contest in which all parents and children work together to memorize a certain number of the Bible verses from *TruthLab Investigations*. (It’s best to avoid identifying individual memory efforts.) If the goal is met, promise a party at which children create and eat snacks and play fun games (see Bonus Theme Ideas). Using the patterns on pages

236–239, make a fun poster on which to record the number of verses memorized (large sheet of paper to which each parent and each child who can say a verse adds a lab-themed sticker). Display the poster in a central area, and have several people serve as Bible verse listeners. During arrival or dismissal, parents and children repeat verses.

- Plan Family Fun events several times throughout the course. There is a suggested Family Fun event on the Bonus Theme Ideas page in Lesson 10.



Decorating Ideas

No matter where you choose to hold your program, decorating the rooms where the action will take place can add fun and excitement to the proceedings! A few simple decorations can transform an ordinary classroom into part of a super science lab. Children and teachers both will enjoy spending time in a theme-related atmosphere. Use a variety of real items and/or painted backdrops to create the perfect atmosphere for both fun and learning. Recruit people who love planning and preparing for a party as your decorating team.

Enlarge backdrop patterns (pp. 30–32 and on *TruthLab Investigations CD-ROM*) onto butcher paper, fabric, cardboard, muslin or wood. Talk with someone in your church or community who is familiar with painting backdrop scenes, and determine which material would work best for your backdrop and your facility. Paint and attach backdrop to a wall.

If you cannot leave decorations on the walls from week to week, you may attach painted backdrops to rolling bulletin boards to be brought in during the sessions. You may also make backdrops on large sheets of butcher paper. Roll up backdrops after each session.

Create a Place



Name and label one or more rooms as different areas of the research lab, especially if you are using a center method with this course. Places such as the BioSphere, Imaginarium, EcoDome, Space Center, etc. can create enthusiasm for this course. Decorate each room (or outdoor location) appropriately. Here are three ideas.

Physics Lab

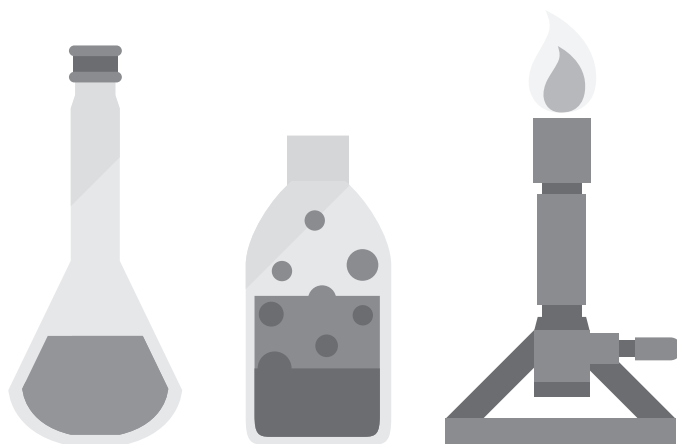
Write physics formulas on a whiteboard, and draw diagrams to illustrate principles. Hang five or more tennis balls or plastic balls securely from the ceiling to simulate a “Newton’s Pendulum” experiment. Screw a small eye screw into each ball. Cut identical lengths of string for each ball. Attach strings to the balls and then securely to the ceiling, aligning balls in a row so they will hit each other when one ball is pulled back and released. Set blocks in a corner, and prop one or two plastic rain gutters on blocks to form ramps. Provide balls or rolling toys for kids to roll down ramps. Set out a variety of mechanical toys, building sets and items that illustrate physics concepts such as levers, windmills, magnets, gears, pendulums, etc.

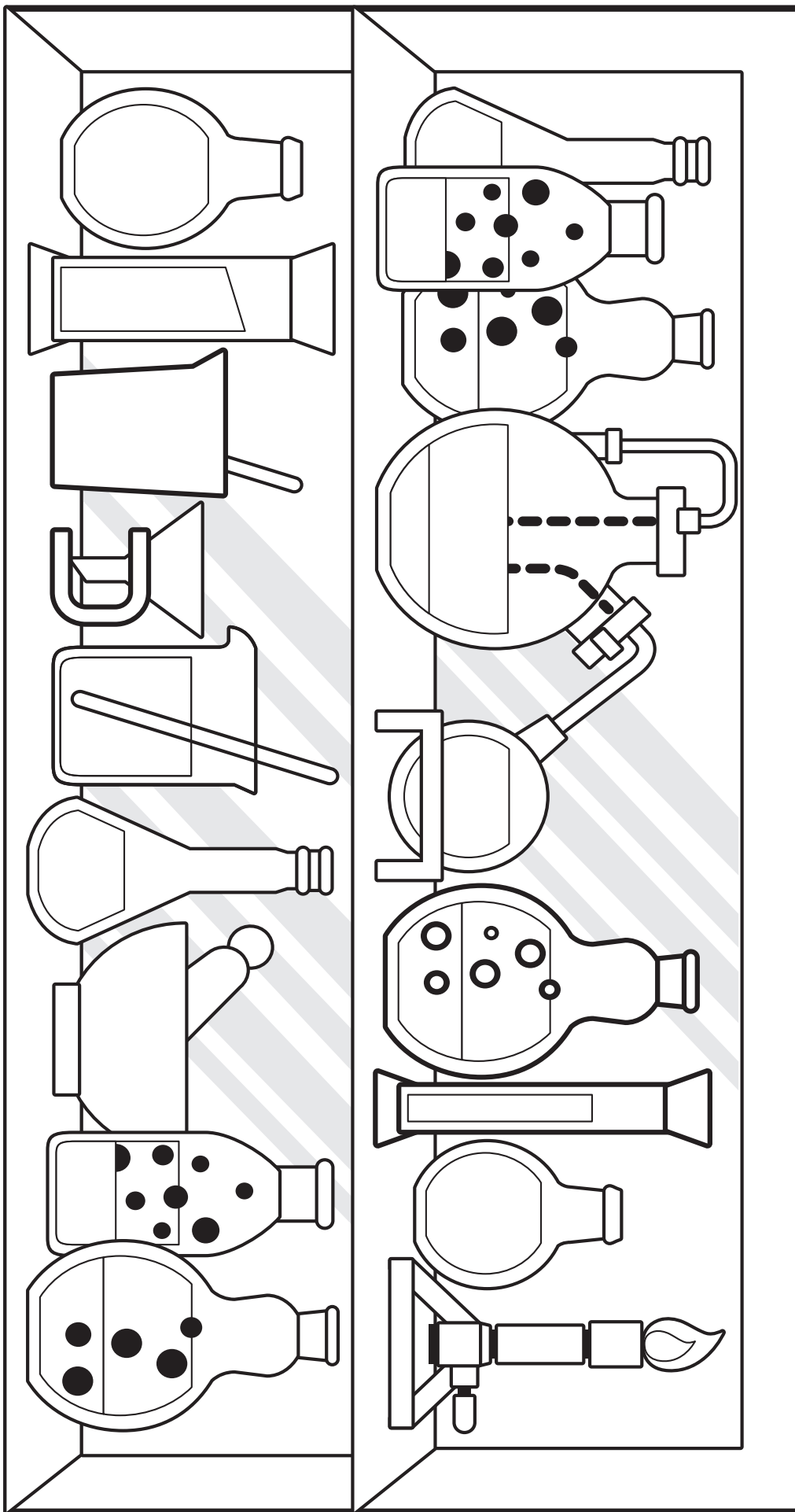
Chemistry Lab

Cover tables with laboratory tools: microscopes, flasks and beakers or plastic vases (holding colored water and some dry ice!), tweezers, eyedroppers, etc. On a table, set up a “chemistry experiment.” Fill clear containers with water dyed with food coloring. Place ends of clear plastic tubing into separate “solutions.” Add test tubes, pipettes or eyedroppers. Hang a lab coat on the wall. Set out additional chemistry tools such as goggles, plastic gloves, chemistry books, funnels, measuring utensils and periodic tables. On a table, set out chemical compounds (sugar, water, baking soda, salt, vinegar) in glass containers. Print out labels to identify these items.

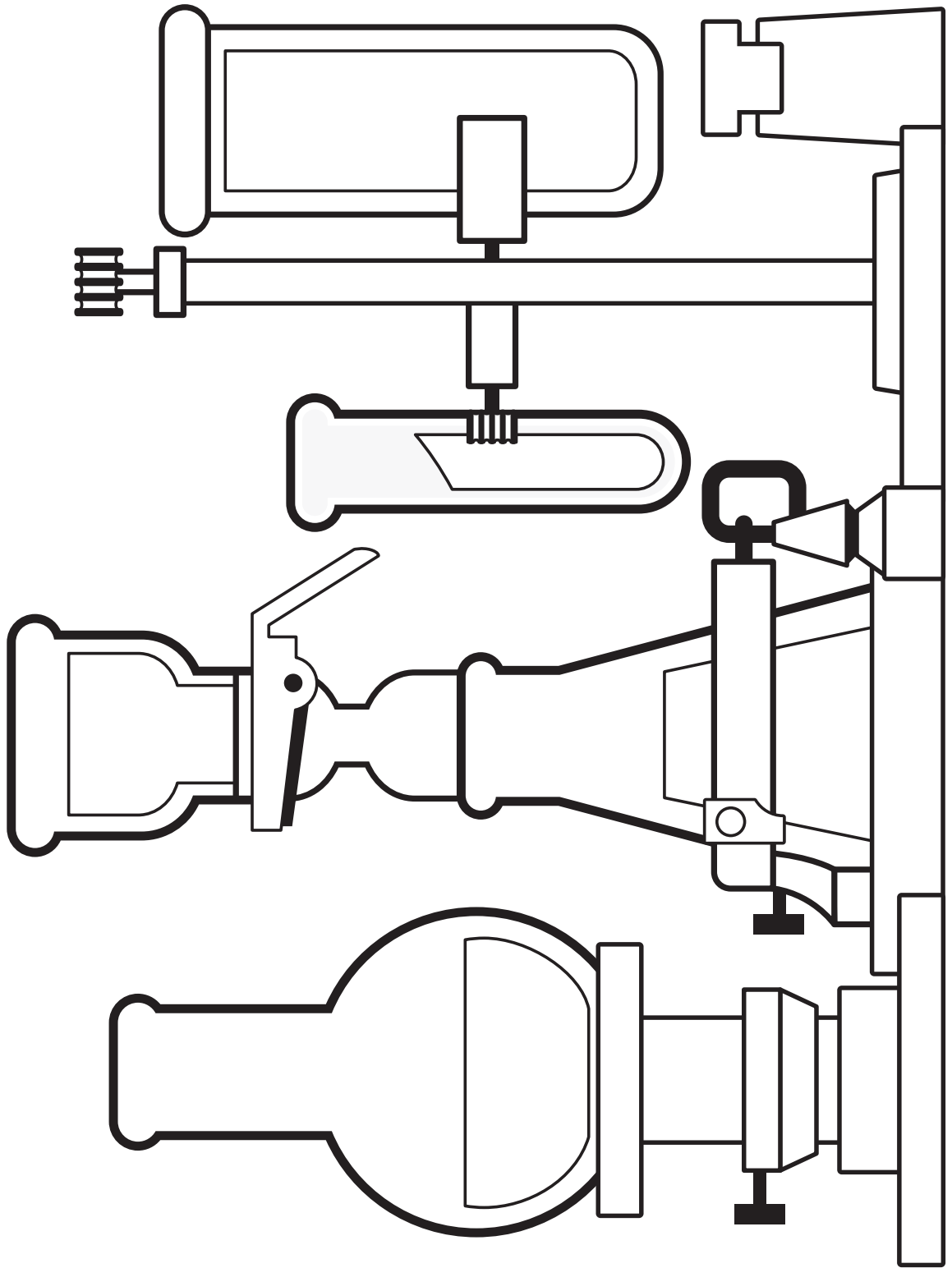
Inventor’s Lab

Search the Internet for pictures of inventions and inventors. Enlarge and print. Mount on construction paper and display on a wall. Put an old telephone, old TV, computer, etc. on a table to show how the item has been re-invented! Add a variety of broken electronics that are safe for kids to explore and dismantle. Provide screwdrivers, etc. Hang CDs and DVDs from the ceiling with fishing line.

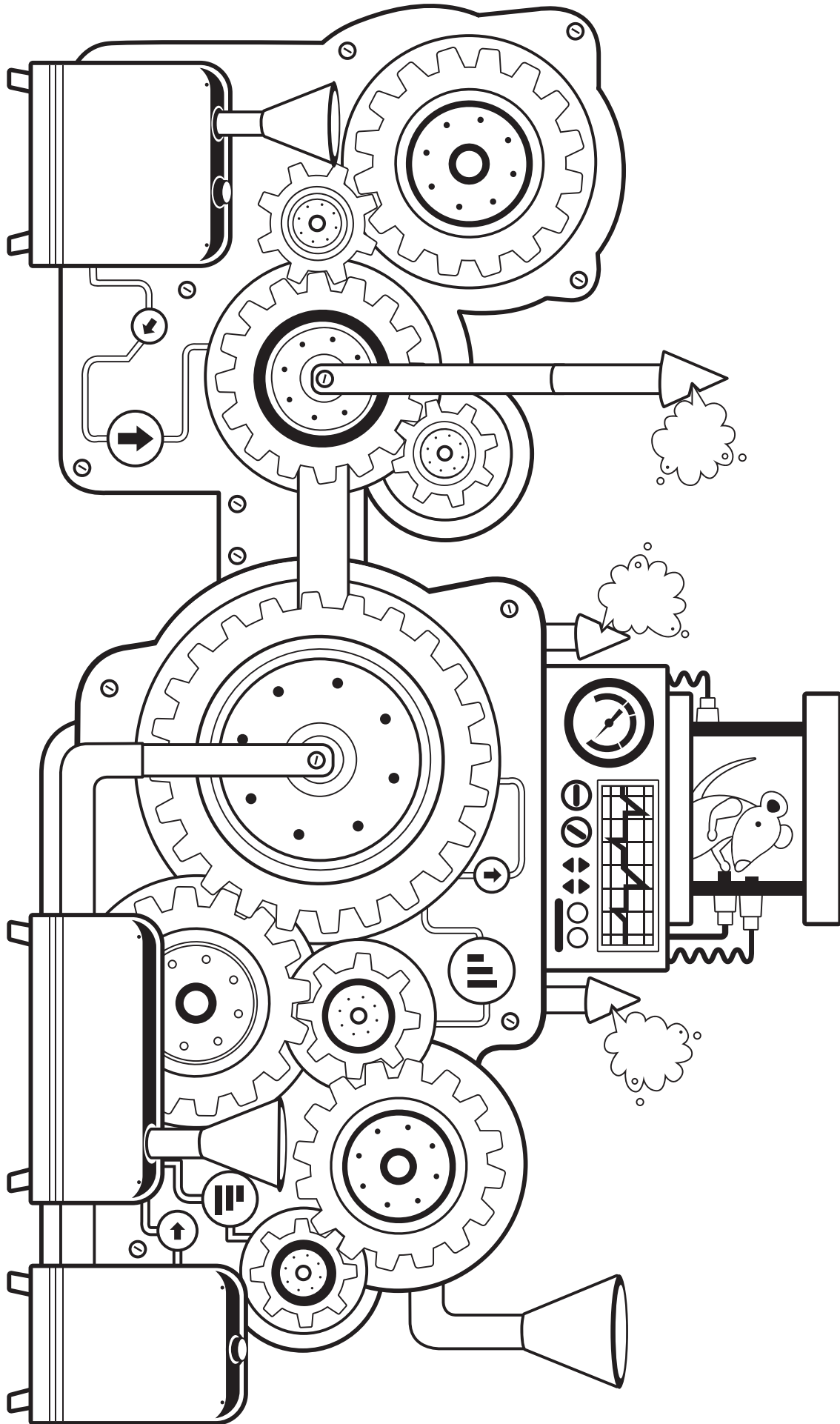




Lab Beakers Pattern



Mystery Machine Pattern



Theme Ideas

The Bonus Theme Ideas offered in every session will add an unforgettable dimension to *TruthLab Investigations*. Here are additional ways to fill your church with the sights and sounds of a wacky, fun research lab where BIG DISCOVERIES are made every day!

Scenery



Use the decorating ideas on pages 29–32 to decorate the classrooms and activity centers.

Set up a decorated entrance with items around the doorway where children enter every day as they arrive at *TruthLab Investigations*. Issue each child a cool research-lab name tag (see patterns on p. 236 for graphics to add).

Sounds



The *TruthLab Investigations CD-ROM* provides lively songs to help your students learn Bible truths. These memorable songs help students and adults alike make Big Discoveries about Jesus and great things God says about them in His Word.

Ask a volunteer to dress as Dr. Luke. At the beginning and end of each center segment, Dr. Luke may ring a bell, play a trumpet or blow an air horn to indicate this and other transition times in your schedule.

Groups of children will enjoy creating their own chants or cheers to say while moving between centers.

Special Days



Build interest and create enthusiasm for *TruthLab Investigations* by asking students, teachers and helpers to bring in or wear items to enhance the fun. Consider doing one or more of the following:

- **Hat Day** Children and leaders wear fun, funny and fantastic hats that they bring from home or that they make at *TruthLab Investigations* using a variety of art supplies.
- **Funny Hair Day** Encourage everyone involved in *TruthLab Investigations* to come up with his or her most outrageous hairstyle.

- **Lab Wear** Ask children and leaders to wear lab-related clothing (goggles, interesting accessories, etc.) or T-shirts that feature words and graphics related to research, space, nature, etc.
- **Color of the Day** Using the color of your choice, children and leaders wear the color of the day in their clothing or even their hair!
- **Wacky Sunglasses Day** Encourage everyone involved in *TruthLab Investigations* to wear sunglasses—the more colorful and silly the better!

Staff Names and Group Names

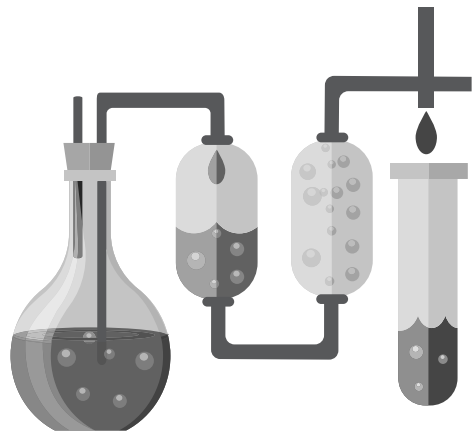


- Call your **Director** by a name such as The Professor, Biotech Bill, EcoDome Eric, Beaker Beth, etc.
- Call **teachers** Research Assistants. The **youth helpers** can be Lab Interns, and the **kids** can be Lab Assistants. Or, let teachers and helpers create their own lab-themed nicknames.
- **Group Names** Different natural items or scientific terms (Shining Stars, Creative Moons, Gravity Getters, Test Tubers, etc.). (Optional: Give each group a sheet of poster board to make a group sign. Groups carry signs as they rotate from center to center.)

Curriculum Resources



Familiarize yourself with the theme-related ideas provided throughout the curriculum. Each session includes a page of ideas for decorating, snacks, experiments, activities, etc.



Bible Story Center Tips

Most of us can still remember a childhood story told by a really good storyteller. What makes a good storyteller so memorable? A good storyteller draws listeners into the story, helping them imagine the story themselves and thus making it their own. You may not feel like one of the world's great storytellers, but fortunately, effective storytelling is a skill that you can develop by following the suggestions in this curriculum and by practicing a few simple principles. Here are some ideas and tips to help you become more confident and memorable!

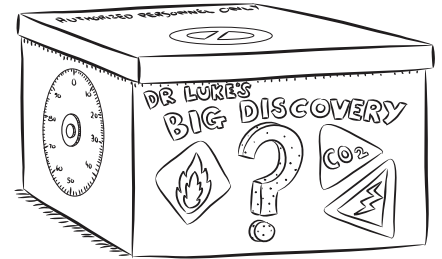
A Good Beginning and Ending



Because it is much easier to capture an audience than it is to recapture them after their attention has wandered, a good beginning is essential!

Dr. Luke's Big Discovery Box

To make the most of opening moments of the Bible story, each story begins with "Dr. Luke's Big Discovery Box." Letter the title on the side of the box—and of course, use a BIG box! Each lesson suggests items to be placed in the box, which you'll bring out either to introduce the story or to use during the story. You may wish to describe the items as clues Dr. Luke might have left for us. The story introductions include questions that help you introduce the Bible Story and the lesson's Big Discovery.



Suggested Materials for Younger Children's Big Discovery Box

For every lesson, place a Bible and the lesson's Big Discovery Visual (print from *TruthLab Investigations CD-ROM*) in the Big Discovery Box. In addition, place the following items:

- Lesson 1:** baby doll wrapped in a blanket or swaddler, yardstick
- Lesson 2:** fish net, sketchbook, pen
- Lesson 3:** medical thermometer
- Lesson 4:** six to eight paper plates with a happy or sad face drawn on each
- Lesson 5:** tablecloth, pool noodle cut in half, small plastic toy boat
- Lesson 6:** towel
- Lesson 7:** apron, bowl, wooden spoon
- Lesson 8:** loaf of bread
- Lesson 9:** stalks of grain, silk flowers, sketchbook, pen
- Lesson 10:** bag of coins
- Lesson 11:** tree branch, toy people
- Lesson 12:** Bible marked at Luke 24:2–3
- Lesson 13:** nothing

Suggested Materials for Older Children's Big Discovery Box

For every lesson, place a Bible and the lesson's Big Discovery Visual (print from *TruthLab Investigations CD-ROM*) in the Big Discovery Box. In addition, place the following items:

Lesson 1:	roll tape measure
Lesson 2:	Cue Cards, fish net
Lesson 3:	medical thermometer
Lesson 4:	marked Bible
Lesson 5:	nothing
Lesson 6:	Conversation Cards
Lesson 7:	snacks to share
Lesson 8:	marked Bible, loaf of bread
Lesson 9:	plastic coins
Lesson 10:	nothing
Lesson 11:	Conversation Cards
Lesson 12:	bag of coins, nail, strip of white cloth
Lesson 13:	large sketch pad, pen

Bible Story Conclusion

Each story also provides a conclusion. This conclusion is called God's Word and Me. The conclusion is a brief summary of how the Bible story connects to the lesson's Big Discovery—and how that Bible truth connects with kids' everyday lives. In the conclusion, a brief prayer is suggested. For elementary children, several discussion questions are provided for you to use in helping them express their understanding of the Bible story and the Bible verse. If the Bible story is told in a large group of more than 16 children, form small groups for the discussion time.

Storytelling Tips

- Practice telling the story aloud. Tell the story to yourself in front of a mirror, to someone in your family or even to your pet. Make notes or briefly outline the story.
- Have your open Bible at hand while you are telling the story. Tell older children in which book of the Bible the story is found. If appropriate, read some of the story directly from your Bible. Referring to the Bible reinforces that these accounts are found in the Bible. Frequently repeat that the Bible accounts are true and happened to real people.



- While the Bible story is being told, other teachers and helpers sit separately among the children. Encourage them to fully participate with children, reacting appropriately and having fun! Their listening presence will encourage children to listen attentively as well, and they can help redirect children's attention back to the storyteller if needed.
- Use dramatic facial expressions and vary your tone of voice according to the story action. When possible, add drama and excitement to the story by telling the story from the perspective of a person in Bible times, dressing in Bible-times costumes or painting or drawing symbols while telling the Bible story.
- If students indicate a familiarity with the story, ask volunteers to tell some of the story action. Be sure to clarify and supplement information as needed.
- Keep your story brief. A good rule of thumb is to limit your story to one minute for each year of the children's age. If you have more than one age level in your group, target for the middle of the group, but be ready to shorten the story if the younger ones are restless.
- Work at maintaining eye contact with your children throughout the story. Know your story well enough that you can glance at your Bible and your notes and then look up.

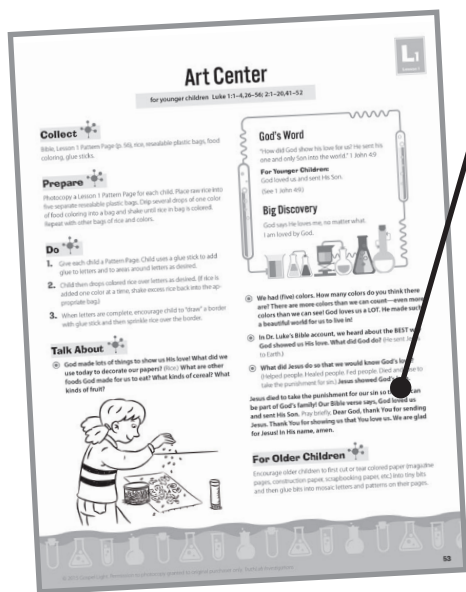


Art Center Tips

The Art Center is a place where children can become absorbed in a creative activity as a way of expressing their understanding of how the lesson's focus relates to their lives. Each art activity incorporates discussion of the Bible story and/or the Bible verse. In each art activity, the questions you ask and the comments you make will encourage students to apply Bible truth to everyday life. When students' hands are busy, they often talk freely!

Choose the Appropriate Activity

In each session, an art activity is provided for older children (elementary age) and for younger children (preschool age). Provide two centers, one for each age level. If you cannot provide two centers, choose the activity for which you have the most children. Each activity also includes a way to modify the activity (using the same or similar materials) for either younger or older children.



Before You Begin

Preparation is the key to making an art experience a joyful, creative one. No one enjoys a long stretch of waiting for a stapler or scissors. So make sure you have the following supplies on hand: newspapers or plastic tablecloth (to protect surfaces), scissors, glue bottles and glue sticks, markers, crayons and chalk, an adequate supply of tape and butcher paper or newspaper.

Before Every Activity

Before students arrive at your center, cover the work table(s) with newspaper or plastic table cover, securing it with masking tape if needed. Set out materials in an orderly fashion, making sure you have enough materials for the number of children who will visit the Art Center.

If table space is limited, set out materials on a nearby shelf or supply table. Allow students to get and return materials to the appropriate places.

If most of your students are younger, use older students as helpers (for distributing supplies, stapling, etc.) during the Art Center time.

As Children Create

While children are working on their art creations, look for natural opportunities to ask the questions listed in the Talk About section of each Art Center page to help children relate the Bible story and/or the Bible verse to their daily lives. As children create, they are relaxed and eager to talk. Guided discussion will take the activity beyond art to discovery of Bible truth.



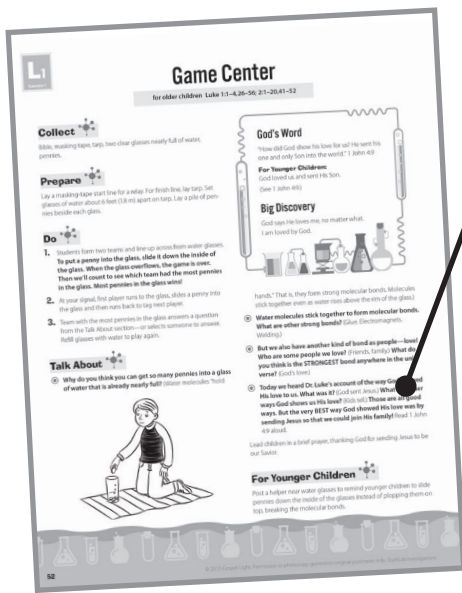
Avoid making value judgments as children create ("That's nice" or "How pretty!"). First, any child who then doesn't hear such a positive judgment will be crushed. Second and most important, focusing on the visual appeal of the artwork will not help children better understand the lesson. How a child's work *looks* is far less important than the child's *process* of creating that work and how the child can better understand the lesson. Comment on colors, lines and ideas you see represented. **Kyra, I see you used lots of colors in your drawing. Tell me about your work.** As you invite children to tell you about their work, many opportunities will arise for you to ask the questions in the Talk About section or to make comments that will help children understand the lesson focus.

Game Center Tips

The Game Center can be the perfect place for your students to let off steam, work out the wiggles and be open to guided discussion that relates the Bible story and/or Bible verse to their lives.

Choose the Appropriate Game

In each session, a game is provided for older children (elementary age) and for younger children (preschool age). Provide two centers, one for each age level. If you cannot provide two centers, choose the game for which you have the most children. Each game also includes a suggested modification (using the same or similar materials) for either younger or older children.



Creating a Play Area

Before leading a game, give yourself ample time to set up the play area. You may have little space in your classroom for a play area, so consider alternatives: outdoors, a gymnasium or a vacant area of the church from which sound will not carry to disturb other programs.

Once you have chosen the area, plan what you will need.

- Will you need to move furniture?
- Will you need to mark boundaries? Use chalk or rope outdoors; yarn or masking tape works indoors. (Remove masking tape from carpets after each session.)

- How much space will you need? Review game instructions to plan the amount and shape of space that will be needed.
- From time to time, take stock of your classroom. Is it time to remove that large table or unused bookshelf? Should the chairs be rearranged or the rug put in a different place? Small changes in arrangement can result in more usable space!

Forming Groups or Teams

To keep students' interest high and to keep cliques from forming, use a variety of ways to determine teams or groups.

- Group teams by clothing color or other clothing features (wearing blue, a sweater, sneakers, etc.).
- Place equal numbers of two colors of paper squares in a bag. Students shake the bag and draw out a square to determine teams.
- Group teams by birthday month (for two teams, January through June and July through December); adjust as needed to make numbers even.



- Group teams by the alphabetical order of first or last names.
- Group teams by telling them to stand on one foot: Those standing on a right foot form one team. Those standing on a left foot form the other team.

After playing a round or two of a game, announce that the person on each team who is wearing the most (red) should rotate to another team. Then play the game again. As you repeat this rotation process, vary the method of rotation so that students play with several different students each time.



Leading the Game



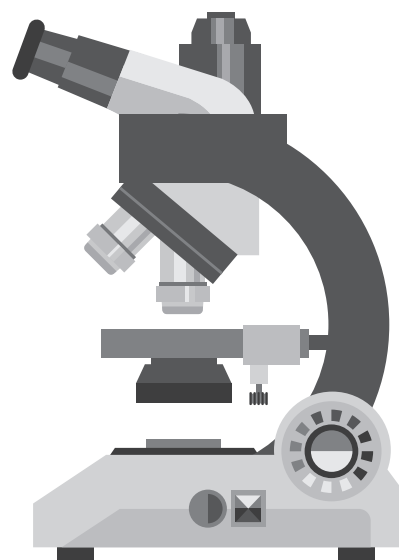
Explain rules clearly and simply. It's helpful to write out the rules to the game. Make sure you explain rules step-by-step.

When playing a game for the first time, play it a few times just for practice. Students will learn the game's structure and rules best by actually playing the game.

Guiding Conversation



Your comments and questions during the game can turn the game into Bible learning! Make use of the discussion questions provided in the Talk About section. You might ask team members to consult with one another and answer as a group or ask a game's winners to answer questions. You might discuss three questions between the rounds of a game or ask a question at the beginning of the round, inviting answers when the round is over.

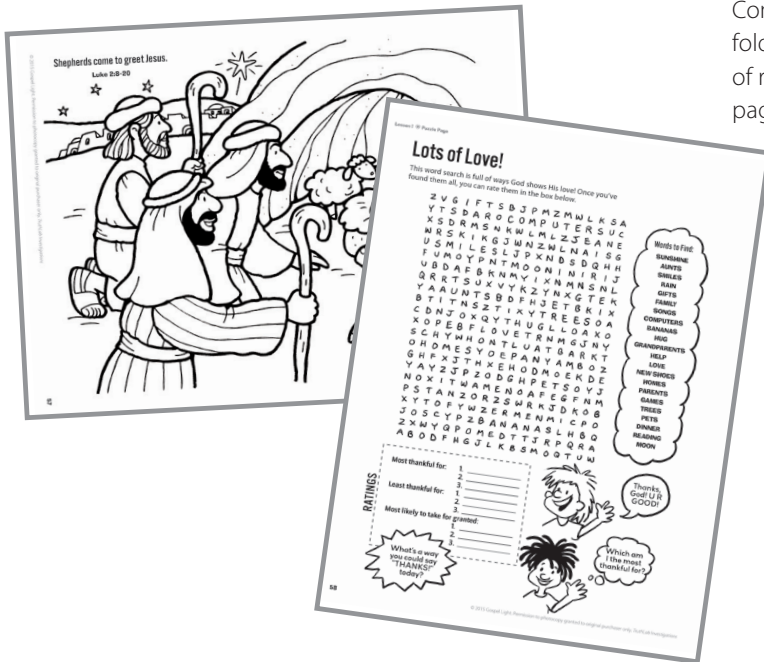


Coloring/Puzzle Center Tips

The coloring and puzzle pages available in each lesson in *TruthLab Investigations* provide an activity that you can use in several ways. These pages may be used as the basis of a separate activity center in which the youngest children (preschoolers and younger elementary) complete the coloring page and the older children (older elementary) work on the puzzle. The coloring pages illustrate the lesson's Bible story or verse. The puzzle pages help children think further about the lesson's Bible story, Bible verse or Big Discovery. Both pages lead to opportunities for discussion about the lesson's Big Discovery.

Alternatively, these pages can be used to supplement an existing center. For example, during the Bible Story Center, a coloring page can be provided for younger children to help them think and talk about the Bible story and Big Discovery. Or children who complete an art activity before others can be challenged to complete the coloring or puzzle page. Coloring and puzzle pages can also be kept for use when an activity runs short.

The coloring and puzzle pages may also be sent home with children on a weekly basis as a way of extending their Bible learning into the home. In addition, the coloring pages can be copied onto transparencies, projected and traced onto butcher paper and used for wall murals or bulletin boards.



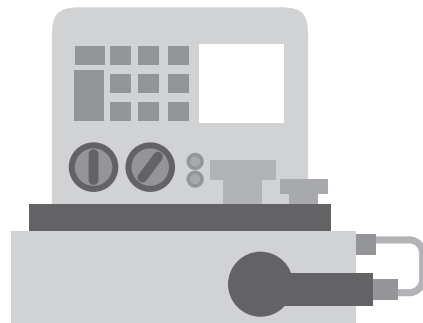
Preparation

- It's easiest to copy all pages at one time, rather than photocopying on a weekly basis. Store the pages in marked folders for easy use.
- If you plan to use markers, photocopy those pages onto heavier stock to avoid marker bleed-through.
- Provide a variety of art materials; in addition to crayons and markers, colored pencils and watercolors add interest.
- Have the puzzle answer sheets (pp. 244–247) available for children who are working on the Bible puzzle pages.

Discussion Opportunities

While students are coloring or working on the puzzles, continue to ask questions prompted by the content. Ask questions that will help you connect the coloring or puzzle activity to the Bible story or Bible verse. Encourage student participation by introducing each question with a statement such as **I'm looking for four students wearing red to answer this question.** Another way to attract the interest of students is to say, **Someone whose name begins with the letter J can answer this question.**

Consider storing each child's coloring and/or puzzle pages in a folder or in a binder. As time permits, refer to these pages as a way of reviewing past lessons. At the end of *TruthLab Investigations*, give pages to children to take home.

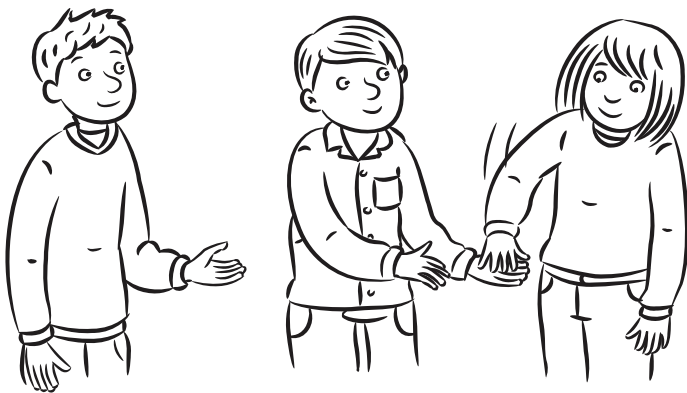


Worship Center Tips

The Worship Center is a large-group gathering time for preschool and elementary children that is best scheduled at the beginning or the end of each session. The goal is to help children participate in meaningful worship and build enthusiasm for the Big Discovery of what God says about each member of His family. Fun games, lesson-related music, saying or reading God's Word and prayer are all provided in the Worship Center.

Plan to have an enthusiastic youth-group-type leader guide the Worship Center activities. Ask him or her to dress in theme-related clothing to help establish his or her character. Consider giving a name to the leader (Experiment-AI, Bunsen Burner, etc.) to catch kids' attention.

Playing "God's Plan 4 U Is Jesus!" as the children gather for the Worship Center will help catch children's interest for *TruthLab Investigations*.



Games

Each week, a fun, icebreaker type of game is suggested that will catch everyone's attention and involve children in team-building camaraderie. Often the game requires representatives from two or more teams. The number of children on a team may vary, depending on group size. Although not all children (especially preschoolers) will feel comfortable getting up in front to lead or participate in a game, they will enjoy being part of a team and cheering for their teammates.

Worship Times

Adults sometimes see children's worship time as quasi-entertainment, occupying kids with frenzied, repetitious songs. Others may see it as simply teaching children to worship in the same way as adults do in church. But children need informal worship opportunities at their own level of understanding. Worship experiences designed to meet children's needs help them respond in love and praise to their heavenly Father.

Worship is indeed a time to show reverence and respect for God, but it doesn't mean always sitting still and being quiet. The activities offered in the Worship Center involve children and help them interact with one another and with teachers in singing praise to God and hearing His Word.

A Place of Worship

Worship is also enhanced by setting apart a place especially for praising God. To create a space in your classroom for the Worship Center, prayerfully consider the ages and abilities of the children in your group, the kind of worship experience appropriate for them and the time and space available.

Consider ideas such as displaying a contemporary picture of Jesus, spreading a rug on the floor upon which children sit and playing a theme-related song as a signal to begin worship.

If taking an offering, singing a particular response or placing candles on an altarpiece is part of your church's adult worship, occasionally add any of those elements to the Worship Center as well. Give a simple explanation to help children understand why each of these acts is part of worship.

Keep in mind that the Worship Center is not just a place for entertainment or observation; your goal is to see every child participate in a positive way that is in keeping with his or her development.

Music Just for You!

Consider making copies of the music on the *TruthLab Investigations* CD-ROM to help your students become familiar with the songs used during *TruthLab Investigations*. A variety of musical styles are represented, making it easy for you to customize your worship time to include your students' favorites.

Leading Songs

Each of the songs on the *TruthLab Investigations CD-ROM* is designed to help children be aware of Bible truths about God and Jesus and what it means to be a follower of Christ.

Children may participate by singing, clapping, playing rhythm instruments, holding up song lyrics, operating the overhead projector or adjusting the CD player. Help children understand that all these activities have one goal: to honor and praise God. Your example of sincere worship sets the tone—it is the strongest teaching about worship the children will receive.

Learning new songs can be difficult for some teachers. Listen to the song on the *TruthLab Investigations CD-ROM*. Then play the song again and sing along. Practice it several times (listen to it while driving in the car, while cooking, etc.). You may want to choose three or four favorite songs from the *TruthLab Investigations CD-ROM* and repeat them at each session, rather than teaching a variety of new songs. The younger the children are, the more repetition should be provided.

To teach a new song to children, print the words on a large chart or use the song lyrics in this book (pp. 248–256) to make a transparency to project on an overhead projector or to make PowerPoint slides. Project the words on a place where they may be easily seen by all the children.

As you play the song, sing along with the song, inviting children to join in with you. It is usually a good idea to sing only one stanza and/or chorus the first time through. Creating motions for some of the words or phrases in the songs will also help children learn the songs as well as participate in a meaningful way.

Choosing Additional Songs

If your church chooses to lead children in additional worship songs, select songs with the same prayer and sensitivity with which you'd plan adult worship. Choosing simple worship choruses and hymns from among your own church's favorites will prepare children for the transition to adult-level worship in a gradual, age-appropriate manner. In this way, children will become familiar with a body of songs used in adult worship.

Whatever songs you use, be sure to explain any words or concepts that are unfamiliar to children. If unfamiliar words are used, take the time to give a brief definition of the word. Use a children's Bible dictionary if needed. For example, **The word "holy" means to be chosen or set apart. When we sing that God is holy, it means that He is perfect and without sin.** If you cannot put the words or concepts of a song in terms a child can truly understand, recognize that the song is probably appropriate only for adult worship.

Bible Verse

The fun verse activity provided invites students' participation in hearing and/or repeating the Scripture in a creative way. While children may often memorize the verse as part of this activity, Bible verse memory is not the primary goal. Instead, the goal is simply to interact through reading, hearing and processing God's Word.

If reading abilities of children and number of teachers permit, children may find and read the verse in Bibles as part of this activity.

Consider printing out each week's verse on large paper for easy reading. If possible, use PowerPoint slides to display the verse. Copy stores can make posters on poster board for you.

Prayer Time


Prayer is an integral part of worship. Don't deny children this privilege because they seem unable to hold still with folded hands and bowed heads. Instead, involve children in ways that will help them understand that prayer is something they can do. Don't insist that students pray in a particular posture; keep prayer times short. Make them times of high involvement. Worship Center prayer activity ideas include inviting children to pray silently and aloud, say sentence prayers, record requests and answers in a prayer journal or list prayer requests (allow children to pray with eyes open so that they are able to read requests).

Remember that your prayers give the students in your class a model that they will follow. Keep your prayers brief and use simple words. Help children understand that God wants to hear from them!



TruthLab Investigations Lessons

**In this section are each lesson's instructions.
Before each session, print, photocopy and
distribute the lesson to each teacher and leader.
Or you may email the lessons to teachers and
leaders (a PDF version of each lesson is available
on the *TruthLab Investigations CD-ROM*).**



I Am Loved

Jesus Comes to Earth © Luke 1:1-4,26-56; 2:1-20,41-52

God's Word

"How did God show his love for us? He sent his one and only Son into the world." 1 John 4:9

For Younger Children:

God loved us and sent His Son.

(See 1 John 4:9.)

Big Discovery

God says He loves me, no matter what.
I am loved by God.



Teacher & Parent Connection

Love—it's what everyone needs, right? We often think about love in terms of romance ("I'm so in love!"), in terms of family ties ("Blood's thicker than water"), in terms of loyalty to friends ("Gotta love 'em. I've known them since I was five"). But when it comes to ourselves being loved by our Creator, God Himself, we can have a hard time. We may say to ourselves, "Sure, God loves me. He loves everyone. It's His job."

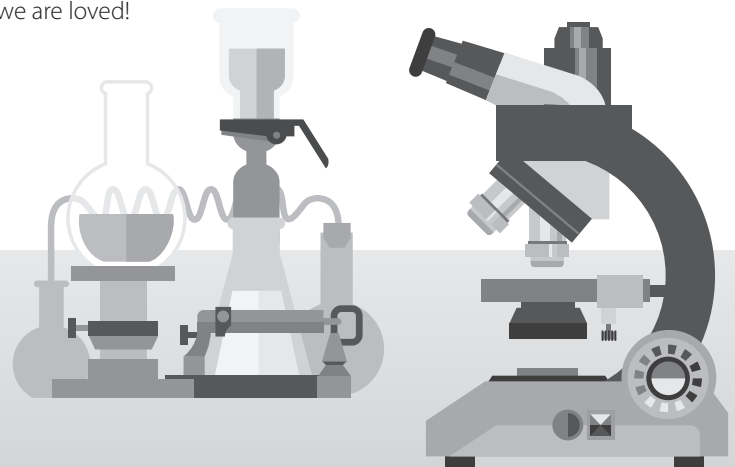
It's easy to remember that God is big and perfect and holy—and that we are small and so very imperfect and unholy. When we sin, we blow it, we get angry at our kids over the dumbest things, we know in our deepest selves that we don't deserve such love. Frankly, it confuses us—that's not the way the world works!

But God has never based His love on anything we do or don't do. We can't do anything to make Him love us less—or do anything to make Him love us more! Because loving us *isn't* God's "job"—it's His nature, something that burns

within Him. He is eternal, holy Love! And His love isn't some general love for the human population or the created universe. No, this wildly passionate love is here, now, for you, as if you were the only person on Earth.

"Grace" is the theological word for this powerful love—God's favor on us undeserving humans. It can seem a little scary! Unlike human love, His love holds no conditions on our part—it's not about what we do or don't do. It's about who He is. And because of that, we can rest in that love instead of run from it!

Brennan Manning often said that on Judgment Day, Jesus will ask only this: Did you believe I loved you? Because when we can answer that question with a yes, it changes everything in our lives. We realize that we can rest in His love, delight in His love, respond to His love—freely and securely, because His love is unconditional. And we are loved!



Planning Page

Choose which centers you will provide and the order in which children will participate in them (see pp. 14–18 for schedule tips and pp. 24–25 for guidelines in combining older and younger children). Also plan who will lead each center (for staffing tips, see pp. 19–21). Use the reproducible planning sheet (p. 240) to record your plans.

Bible Story Center

Bible Story

Jesus Comes to Earth

Luke 1:1–4,26–56; 2:1–20,41–52

Younger Child Option

Big Discovery Box • Use props and motions to act out the Bible story.

Older Child Option

Big Discovery Box • Costumed leader tells the story as Dr. Luke, Head Researcher.

Art Center

Younger Child Option

Create a rice mosaic and talk about the Big Discovery.

Materials

Bible, Lesson 1 Pattern Page (p. 56), rice, resealable plastic bags, food coloring, glue sticks

Older Child Option

Create a “heart-y” crayon resist using markers and talk about God’s love.

Materials

Bible, watercolor paper, crayons, water-soluble markers, cotton swabs, cups of water

Game Center

Younger Child Option

Play a game like Duck, Duck, Goose to talk about God’s love.

Materials

Bible

Older Child Option

Play a game to watch water “hold hands,” and talk about God’s love.

Materials

Bible, masking tape, tarp, two clear glasses nearly full of water, pennies

Coloring/Puzzle Center

Younger Child Option

Review the Bible story while completing coloring page.

Materials

Lesson 1 Coloring Page (p. 57) for each student, crayons

Older Child Option

Review the Big Discovery while completing puzzle page.

Materials

Lesson 1 Puzzle Page (p. 58) for each student, pencils

Worship Center

For All

Participate in large-group activities to review the Bible verse and worship God together.

Materials

Bibles, *TruthLab* CD-ROM and CD player, Lesson 1 Big Discovery Visual, song lyrics (pp. 249, 251), paper lunch bags, marker



Bonus Theme Ideas

Bonus Theme Ideas can be used at any time during this session: as an additional activity center, to extend the session for a longer time or for added theme excitement.

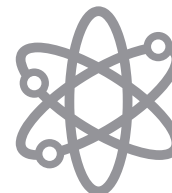
New-View Relay

Add a science-exploration twist to a simple relay race game: Halfway between the start and finish lines, set a basket containing various kinds of eyeglasses (3-D glasses, prescription, magnifiers, sunglasses, etc.). Each student must stop at the basket and put on a pair of glasses before moving to the goal. On the way back, student replaces glasses in basket before returning to tag the next player in line. To increase the challenge for older players, add a lab coat to put on and remove.



High Security!

Post a "SCAN TO ENTER" sign outside your "laboratory" door. Simply write the words on poster board and draw a hand shape in the center, or make an elaborate permanent sign, if you like! As each kid arrives, he or she lays a hand on the print to open the lab door (which a helper inside the door "automatically" opens)!



Crazy Cupcakes!

To kick off an exciting series of "edible experiments," frost cupcakes, and then offer a wild assortment of items with which to decorate them—gummy worms, cereal bits, licorice laces, unusual candies, etc. Encourage kids to create molecule maps, strange robot faces or whatever crazy combinations they like!



Post a note alerting parents to the use of food. Also, check registration forms for possible food allergies.

Bible Story Center

for younger children Luke 1:1–4,26–56; 2:1–20,41–52

Big Discovery Box



Before class, print out Lesson 1 Big Discovery Visual from *TruthLab* CD-ROM. Place in the Big Discovery Box with a Bible, a baby doll wrapped in a blanket or swaddler and a yardstick.

Introduction



Welcome each child by name, shaking hands. **Welcome, Sophie!** Invite children to shake each other's hands whenever you do so.

Look at this BIG box! It says, "BIG DISCOVERY." I think Dr. Luke left this here. I wonder what's in it? Open box. **Why do you think THESE things are in our Big Discovery Box?** Remove items. Hold up yardstick. **What is this? This can help us measure how tall we grow.** Hold yardstick up beside one or two children to measure them, and then show doll and measure it, too. Hold up Bible. **Look! Our story today comes from THIS! We call it the Bible. It's God's Word and it is true. Listen to our story to hear about the most IMPORTANT baby ever and how that baby grew!** Lead children in motions indicated in story.

Tell the Story



One day God sent an angel to talk with a young lady named Mary. The angel came to tell her that God had chosen her to be the mother of a very special baby! This baby would be God's own Son. Mary was glad to do this. Then God sent the angel to Mary's husband-to-be, Joseph. The angel told him to name the baby Jesus. Jesus is the Savior God had promised to send, long ago.

When it was almost time for Jesus to be born, the king ordered people to go to their hometowns to be counted. Joseph and Mary walked all the way to Bethlehem. (Walk in place.) They were tired when they got to Bethlehem. It was SO crowded that the only place they could sleep was where animals were kept!

But while they were there, Jesus was born! (Show doll.) God put a BRIGHT star in the sky. He sent angels to announce His Son's birth to some shepherds. Jesus was a very special baby—the baby God had promised for many, MANY years! (Nod.)

Jesus grew and grew. (Show yardstick.) He learned new things just as you are learning new things. When He was 12, Jesus made a special trip with His family. They walked to Jerusalem for the holiday called Passover. (March feet.) Passover was the time God's people remembered how God had saved them from being slaves. During Passover week, people ate special food. (Pretend to eat.) They visited with friends. (Shake hands with a child.) And Jesus and His foster father, Joseph, went to the Temple to worship God. (Pretend to pray.)

When the week was over, Mary and Joseph and all their neighbors began to travel home. No one noticed that Jesus wasn't with them. (Shake head no.) When it was time to stop to sleep, Mary and Joseph couldn't find Jesus. (Shade eyes; look left and right.) Where could He be? Mary asked people, "Have you seen Jesus?" But no one had seen Jesus. (Shake head no.)

Mary and Joseph walked all the way back to Jerusalem. They must have asked everyone, "Have you seen Jesus?" (Walk in place; tap child on shoulder.) When they got back to the Temple, THERE was Jesus! He was talking with the teachers. The teachers were amazed. Jesus was teaching the teachers about God, His Father!

When Jesus saw Mary and Joseph, He said, "Didn't you know I had to be in My Father's house?" Jesus knew God had important work for Him to do. He felt at home in the Temple, God's house.

But Jesus wanted to obey God. So He said goodbye to the teachers. He went home with Mary and Joseph. He grew and grew some MORE. (Show yardstick.) He learned and learned. Everyone loved Him! Mary remembered all the surprising things she had seen and heard since before Jesus was born. She knew Jesus is God's Son. God sent Jesus to show us His love!

God's Word & Me



Today's Big Discovery is "I am loved by God!" Show Big Discovery Visual and read it aloud. **God shows us love in many ways. He made the moon and sun. He gave us families and food. But the BEST way He showed His love was by sending Jesus. Let's thank God for sending Jesus to show us His love.** Pray, **Dear God, thank You for sending Jesus to show Your love. We love You! In Jesus' name, amen.**

Bible Story Center

for older children Luke 1:1–4,26–56; 2:1–20,41–52



Big Discovery Box

Before class, print out Lesson 1 Big Discovery Visual from *TruthLab* CD-ROM. Place in the Big Discovery Box with a Bible and a roll tape measure.

Invite a male team member to dress in Bible-times clothing and tell the story, introducing himself as Dr. Luke, the head researcher of the materials that will be studied during this course. He should read aloud Luke 1:1–4 as part of his introduction.

And so, Jesus was born! He was born in a stable in the exact town where God had said He would be born, hundreds of years before. Even though Jesus was born in a stable, this was still the BIGGEST birthday of all time! So God used a bright star, a blinding FLASH of light and a whole TROOP of angels to announce Jesus' birth!

Of course, Jesus didn't stay a baby. (Stretch out tape measure.) He came to Earth to experience everything every other human experiences! He spent most of His years with His family in Nazareth. As Jesus grew, He learned things that any other kid would learn in a small village at that time in history—how to keep a garden, how to care for animals, how to work in Joseph's carpenter shop and maybe reading and writing.

When He was 12, Jesus was considered old enough to join the men in the Temple during the holiday called Passover. (Stretch out tape measure farther.) The Temple had a special area where only grown men could go to pray. This was a milestone in the life of any young man who grew up in Israel at that time.

Now, every year in Israel, Passover was a HUGE national holiday! It was the time of year when God's people had a special celebration to remember how God had saved them from being slaves in Egypt. Practically everyone came to Jerusalem to worship, feast and visit with friends. It was required for grown men—and Jesus was now one of them!

So Jesus' family went to Jerusalem, along with most of the people of Nazareth. Jesus went with Joseph into the Temple to worship God there. When the week was over, Mary and Joseph and all their neighbors began to travel home. There was a mob of people on the road, and no one noticed that Jesus wasn't among them. But when it was time to stop for the night, Mary and Joseph couldn't find Jesus. No one else had seen Him, either!

Puzzled and maybe a little panicked, Mary and Joseph began working their way back to Jerusalem. They must have asked everyone they passed, "Have you seen Jesus? He's about this tall . . ." But no one on the road had seen Him. No one at the gate had seen Him. Where could He have GONE?

They must have retraced their steps, everywhere they'd gone, every house they'd visited. But still no one had seen Jesus. They finally worked their way back to the Temple.

Mary and Joseph began to walk through the public parts of the Temple—and that's where they saw Jesus! He was talking with the

Introduction



I'd like to introduce Dr. Luke, our head researcher. Dr. Luke bows, waves. **He researched the accounts we'll be hearing every week!** Open Big Discovery Box as you speak. **I think there are some things in this box that he might have left.** Show Bible. **Ah! Our source document, also known as the Bible. And why do you think we have a tape measure?** Students guess. **Is this a story about building something? About measuring carpet for a floor? Dr. Luke, please explain!**

Tell the Story



Long ago, back in the very beginning, Adam and Eve lived in a perfect world. But one day, they chose to disobey God's one rule. That's when sin came between people and God. But even back then, God promised that He'd send Someone who would make things right again. And God ALWAYS keeps His promises!

Now fast forward—hundreds and HUNDREDS of years passed! But at just the right time, God sent His Son, Jesus. God sent an angel to tell a young lady named Mary that God had chosen her to be the mother of this very special baby! He would not be like any other baby ever born—He would be God's own Son, the Savior God had promised to send! Mary was glad to do this. Then God sent the angel to Mary's husband-to-be, Joseph. The angel told him to name the baby Jesus.



teachers, sitting with them as if He belonged there! The teachers were sitting around Him, amazed at Jesus' questions—and even MORE amazed at His answers! They couldn't understand how someone so young could know so much about God!

When Mary saw Jesus, she said, "We were worried! We've been looking all over for You!"

Jesus looked at Mary and Joseph. He calmly said, "Why were you even looking for Me? Didn't you know I had to be in My Father's house?" Jesus wasn't worried about getting back to Nazareth. THIS place was where He felt most at home! He already was teaching these teachers about God, His Father!

Mary and Joseph didn't understand what He meant. But even so, Jesus knew that He needed to obey His mother and foster father. By obeying them, He honored His REAL Father, God. One important part of what Jesus was doing on Earth was living in complete obedience to God, His Father. So He said goodbye to the teachers at the Temple and went back to Nazareth to live with Mary and Joseph until He was grown.

The Bible tells us that Jesus grew up not only physically but He also grew in wisdom and in favor with God and with the people around Him. This kid who knew so much about God that He could talk with the religious leaders in Jerusalem seems to have made everyone happy with Him!

Mary remembered all the surprising things she had seen and heard since before Jesus was born. The angel visit, the fulfilled prophecies, the amazing star in the sky, Jesus' own words—the Bible says she treasured these things in her heart. She knew Jesus is God's Son, the One God promised for so long, the One God sent to show us His love!

God's Word & Me



God wants us all to know that we are loved by Him! Show Big Discovery Visual. **God gave us a beautiful world to live in. He gave us families and friends and many wonderful gifts.** Read 1 John 4:9 aloud from your Bible. **But this verse reminds us that even though God showed us love in many ways, the BIGGEST way He showed His love is by sending Jesus to Earth! Jesus did many amazing things—but the way He showed love to us was by dying to take the punishment for our sins. Then He came alive again so we can live as members of God's family!** (Invite children interested in knowing more about becoming members of God's family to talk with you or another teacher after class. See "Leading a Child to Christ" on p. 12.)

- **Why did God promise that Jesus would come?** (To make things right again between God and people.)
- **What are ways God shows us His love?** (Hears our prayers. Is with us. Gives us good things. Gave us the world to live in. Gave us family and friends.) **What's the BIGGEST way God has shown us His love?** (Sent Jesus to take the punishment for our sin. Made it possible to join His family.)
- **How does it make you feel to know God loves you? What difference does it make in your life?** (Makes me feel good. Makes me feel brave. Helps me know that I matter to God.)

Pray with children, thanking God for sending Jesus as the most important way He has shown His love to us.



Game Center

for younger children Luke 1:1–4,26–56; 2:1–20,41–52

Collect



Bible.

Prepare



Seat children in a circle indoors or outdoors.

Do



1. Be the first volunteer to demonstrate the game so that children who are not familiar with Duck, Duck, Goose may learn the mechanics of the game. Children sit in a circle. Walk around the outside of the circle, touching each child on the head as you say one word of the following: "God . . . loves . . . me."
2. When you want to choose the runner, say, "God . . . loves . . . YOU!" and then begin running. The object is for you to make it to that child's place in the circle before being tagged. If you are tagged, you sit in the center of the circle.
3. Child who either tagged you or beat you to the spot becomes the new It. He or she repeats, "God . . . loves . . . me" while touching heads until changing to "God . . . loves . . . YOU!"



God's Word

"How did God show his love for us? He sent his one and only Son into the world." 1 John 4:9

For Younger Children:

God loved us and sent His Son.
(See 1 John 4:9.)

Big Discovery

God says He loves me, no matter what.
I am loved by God.



Talk About



- **When we play our game, what are we saying?** (God loves me. God loves you.) **Why are we saying that?** (Because we are loved by God! God DOES love each of us.)
- **What are other ways we know that God loves us?** (Gives us food. Gives us homes, families, pets.)
- **Our Bible verse says God loved us and sent His Son. What is the biggest way God showed us His love?** (He sent Jesus to Earth.) **What did Jesus do that helps us know God's love?** (Helped people. Healed people. Fed people.) **Jesus showed God's love. He died to take the punishment for our sin so that we can be part of God's family!**

Pray briefly, **Dear God, thank You for sending Jesus to show us Your love for us. We are glad for Him! In His name, amen.**

For Older Children



Invite older children to sit with a little more space between them in the circle. Increase the challenge for them by requiring them to move only by hopping on one foot or tiptoeing instead of running.

Game Center

for older children Luke 1:1–4,26–56; 2:1–20,41–52

Collect



Bible, masking tape, tarp, two clear glasses nearly full of water, pennies.

Prepare



Lay a masking-tape start line for a relay. For finish line, lay tarp. Set glasses of water about 6 feet (1.8 m) apart on tarp. Lay a pile of pennies beside each glass.

Do



1. Students form two teams and line up across from water glasses. **To put a penny into the glass, slide it down the inside of the glass. When the glass overflows, the game is over. Then we'll count to see which team had the most pennies in the glass. Most pennies in the glass wins!**
2. At your signal, first player runs to the glass, slides a penny into the glass and then runs back to tag next player.
3. Team with the most pennies in the glass answers a question from the Talk About section—or selects someone to answer. Refill glasses with water to play again.

Talk About



- Why do you think you can get so many pennies into a glass of water that is already nearly full? (Water molecules “hold



God's Word

“How did God show his love for us? He sent his one and only Son into the world.” 1 John 4:9

For Younger Children:

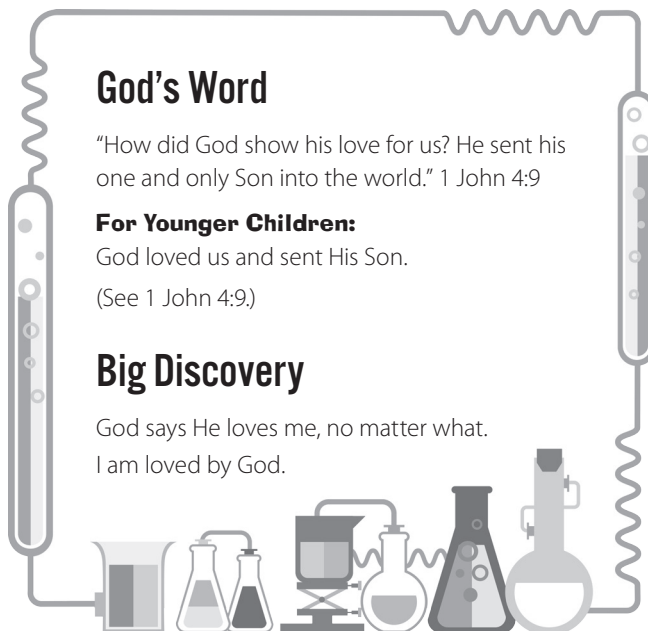
God loved us and sent His Son.

(See 1 John 4:9.)

Big Discovery

God says He loves me, no matter what.

I am loved by God.



hands.” That is, they form strong molecular bonds. Molecules stick together even as water rises above the rim of the glass.)

- Water molecules stick together to form molecular bonds. What are other strong bonds? (Glue. Electromagnets. Welding.)
- But we also have another kind of bond as people—love! Who are some people we love? (Friends, family.) What do you think is the STRONGEST bond anywhere in the universe? (God's love.)
- Today we heard Dr. Luke's account of the way God showed His love to us. What was it? (God sent Jesus.) What are other ways God shows us His love? (Kids tell.) Those are all good ways. But the very BEST way God showed His love was by sending Jesus so that we could join His family! Read 1 John 4:9 aloud.

Lead children in a brief prayer, thanking God for sending Jesus to be our Savior.

For Younger Children



Post a helper near water glasses to remind younger children to slide pennies down the inside of the glass instead of plopping them on top, breaking the molecular bonds.

Art Center

for younger children Luke 1:1–4,26–56; 2:1–20,41–52

Collect



Bible, Lesson 1 Pattern Page (p. 56), rice, resealable plastic bags, food coloring, glue sticks.

Prepare



Photocopy a Lesson 1 Pattern Page for each child. Place raw rice into five separate resealable plastic bags. Drip several drops of one color of food coloring into a bag and shake until rice in bag is colored. Repeat with other bags of rice and colors.

Do



1. Give each child a Pattern Page. Child uses a glue stick to add glue to letters and to areas around letters as desired.
2. Child then drops colored rice over letters as desired. (If rice is added one color at a time, shake excess rice back into the appropriate bag.)
3. When letters are complete, encourage child to “draw” a border with glue stick and then sprinkle rice over the border.

Talk About



- **God made lots of things to show us His love! What did we use today to decorate our papers? (Rice.) What are other foods God made for us to eat? What kinds of cereal? What kinds of fruit?**



God's Word

“How did God show his love for us? He sent his one and only Son into the world.” 1 John 4:9

For Younger Children:

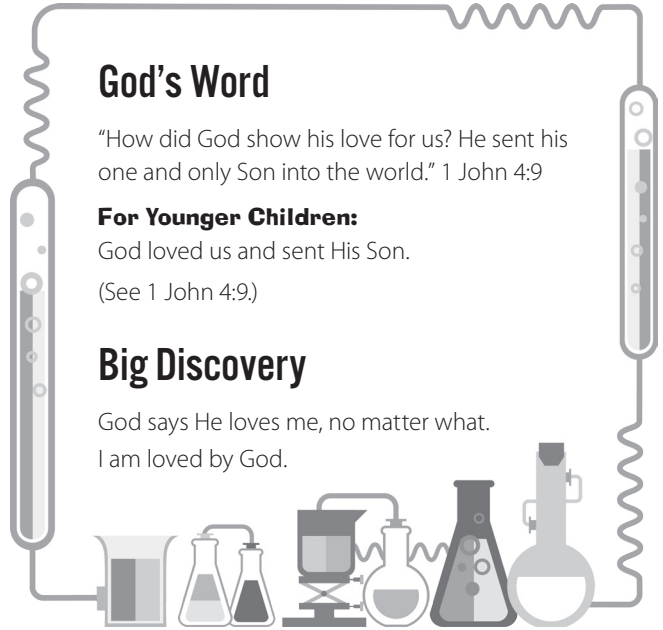
God loved us and sent His Son.

(See 1 John 4:9.)

Big Discovery

God says He loves me, no matter what.

I am loved by God.



- **We had (five) colors. How many colors do you think there are? There are more colors than we can count—even more colors than we can see! God loves us a LOT. He made such a beautiful world for us to live in!**
- **In Dr. Luke's Bible account, we heard about the BEST way God showed us His love. What did God do? (He sent Jesus to Earth.)**
- **What did Jesus do so that we would know God's love? (Helped people. Healed people. Fed people. Died and rose to take the punishment for sin.) Jesus showed God's love.**

Jesus died to take the punishment for our sin so that we can be part of God's family! Our Bible verse says, God loved us and sent His Son. Pray briefly, Dear God, thank You for sending Jesus. Thank You for showing us that You love us. We are glad for Jesus! In His name, amen.

For Older Children



Encourage older children to first cut or tear colored paper (magazine pages, construction paper, scrapbooking paper, etc.) into tiny bits and then glue bits into mosaic letters and patterns on their pages.

Art Center

for older children Luke 1:1–4,26–56; 2:1–20,41–52

Collect



Bible, watercolor paper, crayons, water-soluble markers, cotton swabs, cups of water; optional—blow-dryer.

Prepare

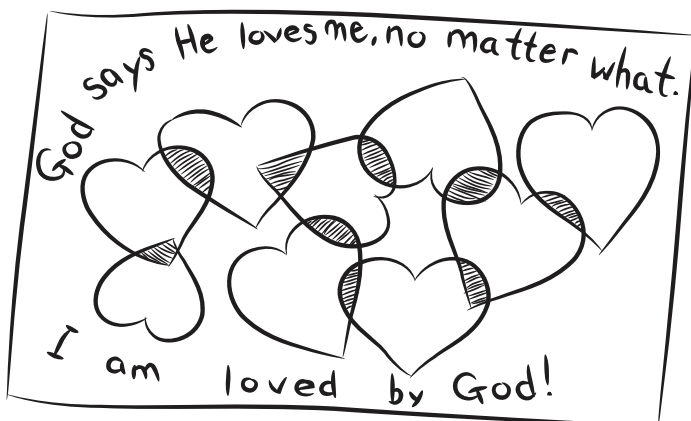


Make a sample of the project, following the directions below. Set out materials.

Do



1. Give each child a sheet of watercolor paper. Child draws with crayon as many hearts as desired, randomly overlapping and facing hearts in different directions.
2. Around the outside edge, student writes lesson's Bible verse or Big Discovery.
3. Child colors in portions of the heart outlines with marker to create interesting shape and color combinations.
4. Child then dips a swab in a small amount of water and dabs colored-marker areas to create a watercolor effect.
5. If time is limited, use a blow-dryer on warm setting to dry.



God's Word

"How did God show his love for us? He sent his one and only Son into the world." 1 John 4:9

For Younger Children:

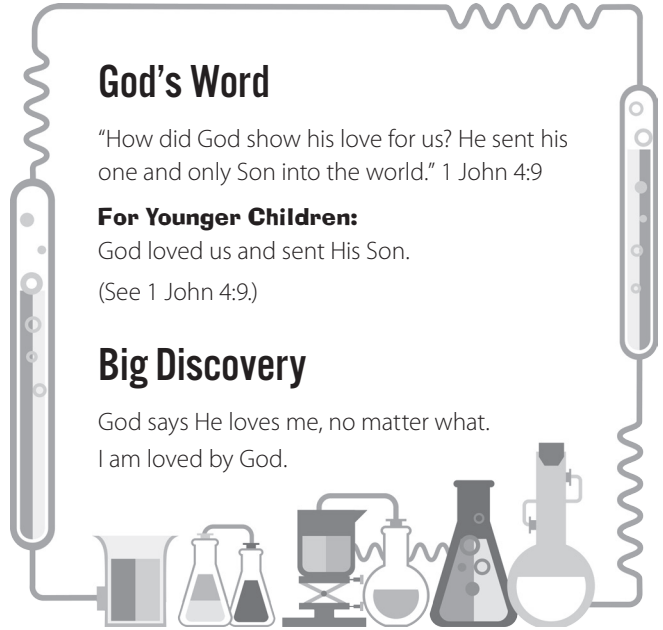
God loved us and sent His Son.

(See 1 John 4:9)

Big Discovery

God says He loves me, no matter what.

I am loved by God.



Talk About



- How many shades of (green) can you see around you? How many shades of (green) do you think God made? (More than we can see!)
- What do you think is the coolest color God made? How else did God show His love for us? (Created a beautiful world. Gave us friends, family, food, etc.)

Those are all good ways. But the very BEST way God showed His love was by sending Jesus so that we could join His family! 1 John 4:9 says, "How did God show his love for us? He sent his one and only Son into the world." Lead children in a brief prayer, thanking God for sending Jesus to be our Savior.

For Younger Children



For younger children who can't draw hearts, adults draw hearts, or children draw other shapes and then use markers, water and cotton swabs. Older children or adults letter "I am loved by God!" on papers of younger children.

Worship Center

Luke 1:1–4,26–56; 2:1–20,41–52

Collect

Bibles, *TruthLab* CD-ROM and CD player, Lesson 1 Big Discovery Visual, song lyrics (pp. 249, 251), paper lunch bags, marker.

Prepare

On a series of lunch bags, write out two or three words of 1 John 4:9. Lay unopened lunch bags in various places around the room.

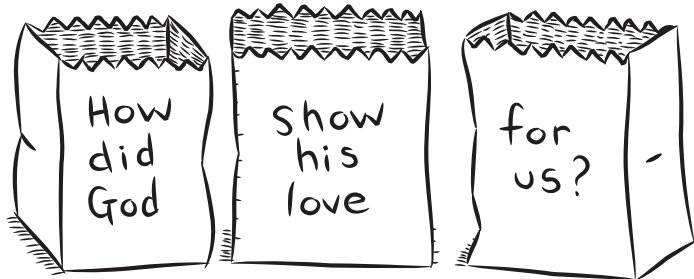
Team Game

Let's play a game to find some things about us that are the same. First, find someone who likes the same kind of pizza as you do. Stand next to that person and put your hands up.

Students continue to form groups based on likes (sport, video game, ice cream flavor, etc.) or other similarities (grade, have a dog, play soccer, etc.). To end the game, say, **Now find the person who has most things in common with you!**

Bible Verse Game

Repeat 1 John 4:9 aloud with children. Then challenge them to find the lunch bags around the room. Students who find bags snap them open and then listen to the group's directions for order in which to stand bags. Group then reads the verse aloud together. If there is time for another round, those who found the bags hide them while others close eyes.




God's Word

"How did God show his love for us? He sent his one and only Son into the world." 1 John 4:9

For Younger Children:
God loved us and sent His Son.
(See 1 John 4:9.)

Big Discovery

God says He loves me, no matter what.
I am loved by God.



Song

You, or another leader, lead children in singing "God's Plan 4 U Is Jesus!" adding motions and/or clapping if desired.

Prayer

Today we talked about the BEST way God showed us His love. Show Big Discovery Visual. **What's our Big Discovery? Let's shout it!** (Students shout, "God says He loves me, no matter what! I am loved by God!") **This is a BIG discovery that can make a BIG difference in our lives! Sometimes people are not kind to us. Sometimes even our families make us feel sad. But no matter WHAT, God loves YOU! And YOU!** Point to every child in the group, if possible. Invite kids to say sentence prayers of thanks to God, and then close by thanking God for sending Jesus to show us how much He loves us!

Song

You, or another leader, lead children in singing "J-E-S-U-S," adding motions and/or clapping if desired. **God showed us His great love by sending Jesus. Let's try to remember every day this week to thank Him for loving us!**



GOD
LOVES
ME!



Shepherds come to greet Jesus.

Luke 2:8-20



Lots of Love!

This word search is full of ways God shows His love! Once you've found them all, you can rate them in the box below.

Z V G I F T S B J P M Z M W L K S A
 Y T S D A R O C O M P U T E R S U C
 X S D R M S N K W L M L Z J E A N E
 W R S K I K G J W N Z W L N A I S G
 U S M I L E S L J P X N D S D Q H H
 F U M O Y P N T M O O N I N I R I J
 U B D A F B K N M Y I X N M N S N L
 Q R R T S U X V Y K Z Y N X G T E K
 Y A A U N T S B D F H J E T B K I X
 B T I T N S Z T I X Y T R E E S O A
 C D N J O X Q Y T H U G L L O A X O
 X O P E B F L O V E T R N M G J N Y
 S C H Y W H O N T L U A T B A R K T
 O H O M E S Y O E P A N Y A M B O Z
 G H F X J T H X E H O D M O E K D E
 Y A Y Z J P Z O D G H P E T S O Y J
 N O X I T W A M E N O A F E G F N M
 P S T A N Z O R Z S W R K J D K O B
 X Y T O F Y W Z E R M E N M I C P O
 J O S C Y P Z B A N A N A S L H B Q
 Z X W Y Q P O M E D T T J R P Q R A
 A B O D F H G J L K B S M O Q T U W

- Words to Find:
- SUNSHINE
 - AUNTS
 - SMILES
 - RAIN
 - GIFTS
 - FAMILY
 - SONGS
 - COMPUTERS
 - BANANAS
 - HUG
 - GRANDPARENTS
 - HELP
 - LOVE
 - NEW SHOES
 - HOMES
 - PARENTS
 - GAMES
 - TREES
 - PETS
 - DINNER
 - READING
 - MOON

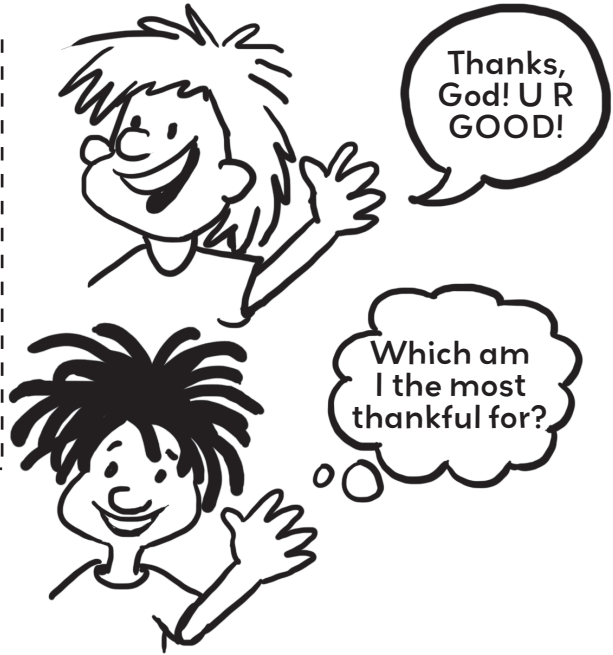
RATINGS

Most thankful for: 1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____

Least thankful for: 1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____

Most likely to take for granted: 1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____

What's a way you could say "THANKS!" today?



I Can Follow God

Jesus Calls Disciples © Luke 3:16,21-22; 4:1-2; 5:1-11,27-31

God's Word

"This God is our God for ever and ever. He will be our guide to the very end." Psalm 48:14

For Younger Children:

God will always guide us. (See Psalm 48:14.)

Big Discovery

God says He will guide my life.
I can follow God.



Teacher & Parent Connection

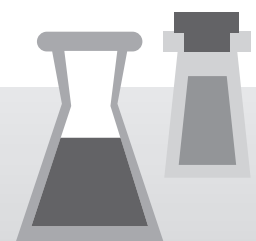
Independent. Autonomous. Self-sufficient. Our culture admires these traits! By contrast, being called "easily led" or "guided like a bunch of sheep" is usually considered negative name-calling! In many ways, following Jesus is a lifelong learning curve of realizing that what we are brought up to believe in our culture is opposite of what God says. According to God's Word, being easily led is a positive trait—the important thing is who we're following!

Jesus called some friendly fishermen to reconsider all they'd held as true. In Luke's account, we read how they had to lay down their previously held ideas about who the Messiah is and what He was doing in their little fishing village!

Remember Peter's later revelation, that Jesus is the Son of the living God? He followed that by saying something that made Jesus retort, "Get behind me, Satan!" (Matthew 16:23). Peter was still in the process of learning that his ideas didn't agree with God's! Peter's own self-image as the

Tough Protector of the Messiah had to change, one painful experience at a time. But when he later became the Easily Led, Obedient Disciple, he was ready for a worldwide leadership position under the power and direction of God's Holy Spirit!

It's a painful process for us to trade in our long-held ideas, too. But how much better it is to replace them with the truth of what God says about us! He says that He will guide our lives if we will be humble and dependent on Him, slow to "do it our way" and alert to our Father's voice. Just as Jesus completely obeyed His Father and fully depended on His guidance, so we also grow in Him as we become not more independent but more fully dependent on God in every area of our lives. Our culture may say that being a "follower" is a sign of weakness—but it's actually the source of true power!



Planning Page

Choose which centers you will provide and the order in which children will participate in them (see pp. 14–18 for schedule tips and pp. 24–25 for guidelines in combining older and younger children). Also plan who will lead each center (for staffing tips, see pp. 19–21). Use the reproducible planning sheet (p. 240) to record your plans.

Bible Story Center

Bible Story

Jesus Calls Disciples • Luke 3:16,21–22; 4:1–2; 5:1–11,27–31

Younger Child Option

Big Discovery Box • Draw simple sketches during the story.

Older Child Option

Big Discovery Box • Use Cue Cards (p. 70) during the story.

Art Center

Younger Child Option

Experience guidance while creating with play dough.

Materials

Bible, play dough, paper plates, scissors, straws

Older Child Option

Create a reminder to trust God's guidance.

Materials

Bible, newspaper, flat river rocks, acrylic paints, brushes; optional—permanent markers or crayons

Game Center

Younger Child Option

Play a path-following game and talk about God's guidance.

Materials

Bible, yarn, scissors

Older Child Option

Play a game like Sharks and Minnows and talk about God's guidance.

Materials

Bible, masking tape

Coloring/Puzzle Center

Younger Child Option

Review the Bible story while completing coloring page.

Materials

Lesson 2 Coloring Page (p. 71) for each student, crayons

Older Child Option

Review Bible story while completing puzzle page.

Materials

Lesson 2 Puzzle Page (p. 72) for each student, pencils

Worship Center

For All

Participate in large-group activities to review the Bible verse and worship God together.

Materials

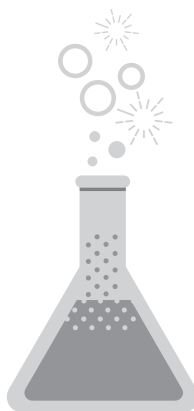
Bibles, CD-ROM and CD player, Lesson 2 Big Discovery Visual, song lyrics (pp. 248, 250), whiteboard and marker

Bonus Theme Ideas

Bonus Theme Ideas can be used at any time during this session: as an additional activity center, to extend the session for a longer time or for added theme excitement.

Find My Palms!

Kids form pairs of even height and stand facing each other. Holding out their hands at shoulder height, they touch their palms together. At your signal, they close their eyes and bend elbows to pull their palms straight back at shoulder height. Both partners then spin around once with eyes still closed. Without peeking, can they touch their partner's palms again? Repeat as time permits—and increase the challenge by increasing the number of spins each time!



Triangle Challenge!

Provide toothpicks and mini marshmallows, gumdrops or soaked, whole dried peas. Display photos of various kinds of constructions that feature triangle-based concepts (geodesic domes, truss bridges, pyramids, etc.). Challenge young scientists to construct their own triangle-based constructions. Display these as the engineering marvels that they are, and keep materials at hand for a fascinating quiet activity that engages engineering minds at all age levels!



Edible DNA Models

Provide red licorice, toothpicks and mini marshmallows. For each "DNA strand," slide 3 marshmallows onto a toothpick. Insert either end of the toothpick into a red licorice piece. Repeat until you have a "ladder" of marshmallow-filled toothpicks in the licorice. Twist to look like DNA, admire—and then eat!



Post a note alerting parents to the use of food. Also, check registration forms for possible food allergies.

Bible Story Center

for younger children Luke 3:16,21–22; 4:1–2; 5:1–11,27–31

Big Discovery Box



Before class, print out Lesson 2 Big Discovery Visual from CD-ROM. Place in the Big Discovery Box with a Bible, a fish net, a sketchbook and a pen.

Introduction



What do you think is in our BIG DISCOVERY box today? Remove printout and net. **Why do you think we have a fish net? Let's find out!** Remove Bible. **This is the Bible! It is going to tell us what happened with some fish nets.** Show sketchbook and pen. **Listen while I draw some pictures of things in our story!**

Tell the Story



After Jesus grew up, He was baptized by John. Jesus did this to show that Jesus is the One God promised to send. John also told people that God sent Jesus to take away the sin of the world. Peter, Andrew, James and John were John's friends. They met Jesus. They had spent time with Jesus. (Draw a stick figure; add four more around it.)

But then, Jesus went out alone in the desert. (Write, "40 days.") He spent time praying and listening to His Father, God. While He was gone, Peter, Andrew, James and John went home to work. They were fishermen.

When Jesus came back from the desert, He came to the town where Peter lived. THEN came a very IMPORTANT day. It was the day when Jesus' new friends learned that Jesus is the One to follow—ALL of the time!

Here's what happened: Peter, Andrew, James and John had fished all night long—and caught NO fish! The next morning, they were in their boats, cleaning up from their night of fishing and not catching any fish at all.

Jesus came down to the water. A BIG crowd was around Him. Jesus couldn't be heard by all the people! So Jesus asked Peter to let Him get into his fishing boat to teach. (Draw a boat.) Jesus got in,

and Peter anchored a little way from the shore. Now everyone could hear Jesus!

After Jesus had sent the people home, He said to the fishermen, "Move into deep water. Let down your nets. You'll get a LOT of fish." (Draw Xs inside a half-circle for net.) **What do you suppose these tired fishermen thought?**

Peter said, "We fished all NIGHT. We got NO fish! But Jesus, if You say so, I'll throw out the nets."

So they threw out the nets. BAM! Fish FILLED the nets! There were SO many fish, the nets began to break! (Draw fish shapes in net.) Peter called James and John's boat over to help. Soon BOTH boats were FULL of fish! They were AMAZED. Peter saw that this was a MIRACLE. Jesus was NOT like anyone else! Peter knelt before Jesus. He felt as if he wasn't good enough to be around Jesus!

But Jesus told Peter, "Don't be afraid! From now on, you will catch people." So the fishermen pulled their boats to the shore. They left their boats—and followed Jesus!

Soon, Jesus saw Matthew at a tax table. Matthew was a tax collector. (Draw circles for coins.) Jesus said, "Follow Me." Matthew DID! Jesus asked others to join Him, too. Finally, there were 12. (Add stick figures to first drawing to make 12.) These men began to understand Jesus' GOOD NEWS: God the Father loves us. He wants us to believe in Jesus and follow Him. Then God will guide us in the very BEST way, every day!

God's Word & Me



Jesus invited His friends to follow Him. He guided some friends to catch lots of fish and He showed all of His friends the very best way to live.

Show Big Discovery Visual and read it aloud. **God says He will guide us, too. When we follow Jesus, we can trust God to guide us in the very BEST way, every day!**

Pray, **Dear God, thank You that You will guide us. Help us trust You and follow Jesus. In His name, amen.**

Bible Story Center

for older children Luke 3:16,21-22; 4:1-2; 5:1-11,27-31



Big Discovery Box

Before class, print out Lesson 2 Big Discovery Visual from CD-ROM. Cut apart Cue Cards (p. 70). Place in the Big Discovery Box with a Bible and a fish net.

You may invite a male team member to dress in Bible-times clothing and tell the story each time, introducing himself as Dr. Luke, the head researcher of the materials.

Show Cue Cards and practice cues before telling the story (see below).

After Jesus left the desert, He began teaching around the Sea of Galilee. He taught in the synagogues where people gathered on the Sabbath. But He also taught outdoors—because big crowds began to follow Him and listen to Him! Now He was teaching where Peter, Andrew, James and John lived. (Show “YAY!” Cue Card.)

Then Jesus did something that PROVED He is more than an important rabbi or a great teacher. On that day, Jesus’ friends understood that they needed to follow Him—ALL of the time! Here’s what happened.

Peter, Andrew, James and John had been fishing all night long—and they had caught NO fish! Not one! (Show “AWW . . .” Cue Card.) The next morning, they were still in their boats cleaning up when Jesus came down to the water. A BIG crowd was following Him. So MANY people were trying to get close, He couldn’t be heard! And He was probably about to be pushed right into the water! So Jesus got into Peter’s boat. Peter anchored the boat a little way from the shore. Then everyone could hear Jesus!

Later, when Jesus had sent the crowds home, Jesus told Peter, “Move out into deep water. Let down your nets for a catch of fish.” (Show “HUH?” Cue Card.)

Peter must have thought Jesus didn’t know much about fishing! He said, “Master, we fished ALL NIGHT LONG. We got NOTHING. But if You say so, I’ll throw out the nets.”

When the nets were tossed out, BAM! So MANY fish filled those nets that they began to BREAK! Peter called James and John’s boat over to help—and they filled BOTH boats so full of fish that the boats nearly sank! (Show “WOW!” Cue Card.)

The four men were all AMAZED—but Peter realized that this was something more than a lucky catch of fish. It was a MIRACLE! Jesus had MADE this happen! Jesus had GIVEN them all these fish!

Peter fell to his knees. He felt as if he wasn’t good enough to be around Jesus!

He said to Jesus, “Go away from me, Jesus! I’m too bad a sinner to be around YOU!” (Show “AWW . . .” Cue Card.)

But Jesus replied, “Don’t be afraid! From now on, you will catch people.” Jesus wanted them all to follow Him, all the time. Jesus was willing to guide them into the best life EVER! (Show “YAY!” Cue Card.) So the four fishermen became Jesus’ full-time followers, or disciples, from that day on, walking with Jesus, learning from Him and being guided by Him every day!

Introduction



Open Big Discovery Box as you speak. **I wonder if there’s anything in this box that Dr. Luke might have left?** Show Bible. **Ah! Here’s our source document again, also known as the Bible.** Show fish net. **I wonder what THIS is for?** Read Big Discovery Visual aloud. **God says He will guide us. Listen today to find out how Jesus made SURE His disciples would want HIM to guide them!**

And here’s YOUR part! Show and practice cues written on Cue Cards. Students read cards and respond as directed in the story.

Tell the Story



Jesus grew up and was baptized by John. Jesus did this to show that Jesus is the promised Savior! John had also told his followers that Jesus is the One God had sent to take away the sin of the world. (Show “WOW!” Cue Card.) That made some of John’s friends VERY curious to meet Jesus! Peter, Andrew, James and John were four of John’s friends who met Jesus and spent time with Him.

But then, Jesus was gone for over a month. (Show “HUH?” Cue Card.) For 40 days, He was in the desert, listening to His Father, fasting and praying. Meanwhile, Peter, Andrew, James and John, who were all fishermen, went home to Capernaum and back to fishing. Peter’s family lived in Capernaum, right on the water.



Soon after, Jesus invited a tax collector named Matthew to follow Him. Matthew got up from his desk at the tax office and never looked back! (Show “WOW!” Cue Card.)

As these disciples continued to travel and learn from Jesus, others joined them—until there were 12 of them in all. They began to understand Jesus’ GOOD news: God loves everyone and wants them to follow His Son, Jesus. He can be trusted to guide us ALL into the BEST way to live! (Show “YAY!” Cue Card.)

God’s Word & Me

Jesus’ disciples saw what Jesus did, and they realized He can do ANYTHING! That made them glad to have Jesus guide them and teach them. We can invite Jesus to guide our lives, too—by spending time with Him. We can talk to Him in prayer. We can listen to Him and learn from Him by reading God’s Word. We can follow Jesus, too!

Read Psalm 48:14 aloud from your Bible. **God loves us. He is willing to guide us our whole lives long. He’ll show us the very best way to live. Of course, the VERY best way to live starts with joining God’s family!** (Invite children interested in knowing more about becoming members of God’s family to talk with you or another teacher after class. See “Leading a Child to Christ” on p. 12.)

- **Why do you think Jesus brought all of those fish into the nets?** (To show He is God. To show He can take care of people’s needs. To give His friends plenty of fish so their families would have what they needed while the men were gone with Jesus.)
- **Why do you think Peter told Jesus, “Go away from me, Lord! I am a sinful man!”** (Realized Jesus is God’s Son. Was amazed at the miracle. Felt he was not good enough to be around Jesus.)
- **Why do you think Jesus told Peter, “Don’t be afraid. From now on you will catch people”?** (So Peter would know it was OK for him to be around Jesus. To help Peter know Jesus had a job for him.)
- Show Big Discovery Visual. **God tells us that He will guide His kids into the very best way to live. What are some ways a kid who is part of God’s family gets guidance from God?**
- **What might be some ways we could tell that a kid is following God’s guidance?**

Pray with children, thanking God for His promise to guide us and for inviting us to join His family so we can follow Jesus and have God guide us to live in the very BEST way, every day!



Game Center

for younger children Luke 3:16,21-22; 4:1-2; 5:1-11,27-31

Collect



Bible, yarn, scissors.

Prepare

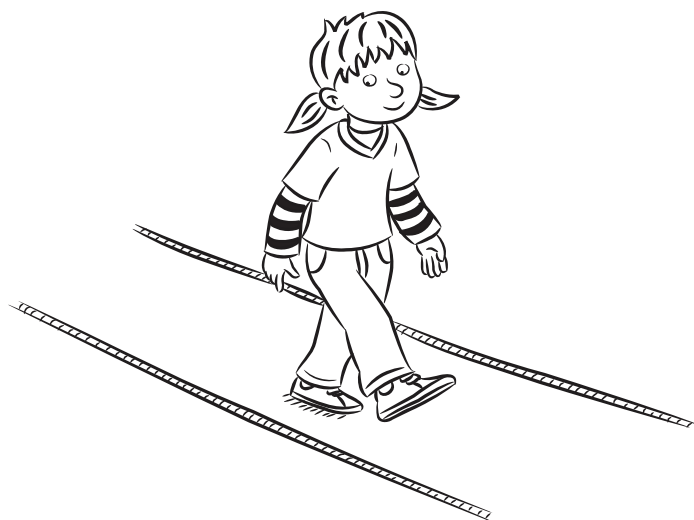


Unroll yarn across playing area in a curvy line. Cut yarn. Then lay another length beside it with space between to form a pathway.

Do



1. Children line up at one side of playing area. Leader stands at the far end of the path.
2. Leader calls out a child's name and a way to move (walk, tiptoe, slide, etc.). Child moves down the path in the way described.
3. Leader high-fives child when path is completed.
4. Repeat game as time and interest allow, inviting a child to be the Caller. Increase interest by calling several children at a time, calling children by a color they're wearing or telling them to move like an animal you choose.



God's Word

"This God is our God for ever and ever. He will be our guide to the very end." Psalm 48:14

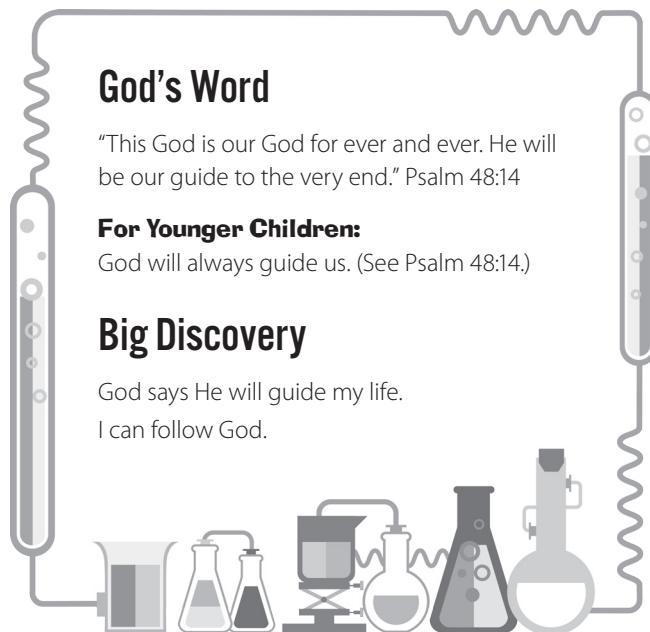
For Younger Children:

God will always guide us. (See Psalm 48:14)

Big Discovery

God says He will guide my life.

I can follow God.



Talk About



- **Lydia, how did you know which way to go?** (Could see the path.) **What do you think would happen if we tried to walk the path with our eyes closed? How else could we be guided?**
- **In Dr. Luke's Bible account, we heard about the time Jesus' friends followed Him. Jesus guided them and taught them. Who says He will guide us?** (God.)

Our Bible says that God will always guide us. Pray briefly, Dear God, thank You for loving us. Thank You for guiding us. Help us remember You will help us know the very best way to live!

For Older Children



Older children walk on only one length of yarn instead of between the pieces, walking the yarn line to complete the path. Or challenge older children to walk backward on the path.

Game Center

for older children Luke 3:16,21-22; 4:1-2; 5:1-11,27-31

Collect



Bible, masking tape.

Prepare



Lay two masking-tape lines about 20 feet (6 m) apart.

Do



1. Play a game like Sharks and Minnows. Students form two equal teams, one of "hydrogen" molecules and one of "oxygen." Each team stands behind its line.
2. To start, students move toward each other as you call out either "hydrogen" or "oxygen." If you call "oxygen," students on the oxygen team try to tag the hydrogen molecules before hydrogen molecules return to their line (and the opposite if you call "hydrogen"). Tagged molecules join the other team.
3. At the end of the round, ask questions from the Talk About section. Play several rounds.

Talk About



- **When we add hydrogen to oxygen, what do you think happens?** (Make water. Make hydrogen peroxide.)
- **What if we had here a bottle of hydrogen peroxide and a bottle of water, with no labels? How could we tell which was which?** (Not sure. Would need guidance or a way to test.)



God's Word

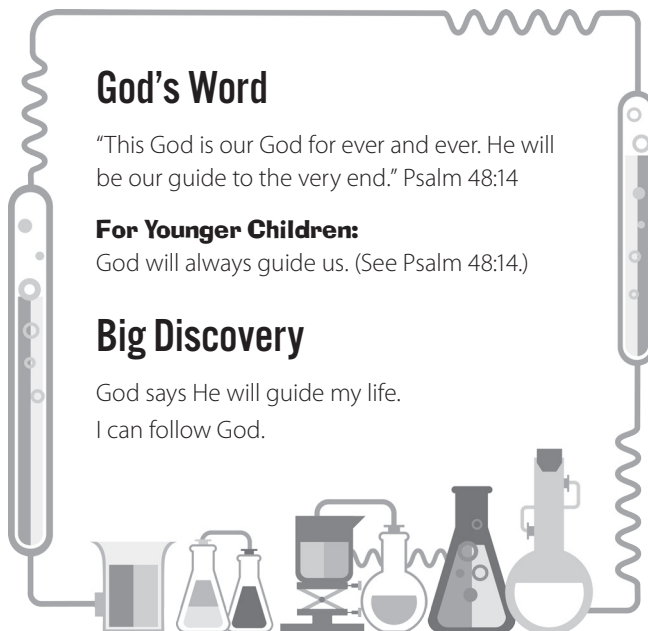
"This God is our God for ever and ever. He will be our guide to the very end." Psalm 48:14

For Younger Children:

God will always guide us. (See Psalm 48:14.)

Big Discovery

God says He will guide my life.
I can follow God.



We could pour both over a cut or skinned knee. What would happen? (Peroxide would bubble and clean the cut. Enzymes in blood make it bubble. Water wouldn't bubble.)
We'd know which is which. That would be guidance!

- **Why do you think God says He will give us guidance for our lives?** (He loves us. He wants what is best for us.)
- **The Bible tells us that Jesus ALWAYS asked God what to do. He always followed God's guidance. How do we get God's guidance?** (The same way. We ask Him. Read His Word. Listen to people who know and love God.) Repeat Psalm 48:14 together. **God loves us. He says we can trust Him to guide us to live in the very BEST way, every day!**

Lead children in prayer, thanking God for being trustworthy and able to guide us.

For Younger Children



If older children move too quickly for the very youngest, challenge older children to move only on tiptoe.

Art Center

for younger children Luke 3:16,21-22; 4:1-2; 5:1-11,27-31

Collect



Bible, play dough, paper plates, scissors, straws.

Prepare



Put a fist-sized ball of dough on each paper plate, one for each child. Cut straws into lengths of about 3 inches (7.5 cm).

Do



1. Children play with dough as they like, but invite them to join you in guided play to make a boat. **Let's make something together. I will show and tell you what to do.**
2. **Make a ball. Then use your thumbs to press the ball into a bowl shape.**
3. **Pinch two places across from each other. This makes a boat shape.**
4. **Stand a straw section in the center for a mast. You have a boat!**
5. Children may make other items they might see on a boat (anchor, fish, etc.) or create other items as desired.

Talk About



- ⦿ **When have you been in a boat? What did you like about it? What did Jesus do in a boat?** (Taught people on shore. Helped His friends have LOTS of fish.)



God's Word

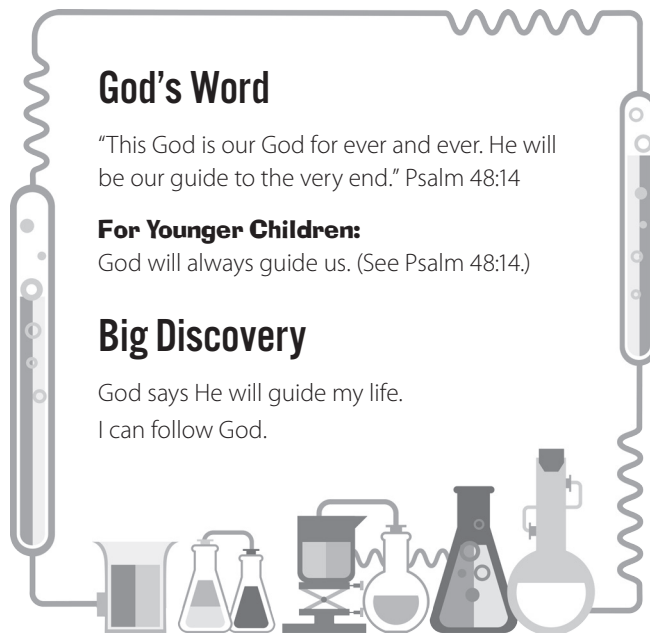
"This God is our God for ever and ever. He will be our guide to the very end." Psalm 48:14

For Younger Children:

God will always guide us. (See Psalm 48:14.)

Big Discovery

God says He will guide my life.
I can follow God.



- ⦿ **When you watched me make a boat, was it easier or harder to do?** (Easier. It helps us to be guided.)
- ⦿ **In Dr. Luke's Bible account, we heard about the time Jesus' friends followed Him. Jesus guided them and taught them. Who does our Bible verse say will guide us?** (God.)
- ⦿ **When we need God to guide us, what can we do?** (Ask God for help. Remember Bible verses. Ask parents, grandparents, teachers.) **God knows the very best way to guide us. He loves us!**

Our Bible says that God will always guide us. Pray briefly, Dear God, thank You for loving us. Thank You for guiding us. Help us remember we can trust You to help us live in the very best way, every day!

For Older Children



Encourage older children to lead another activity in which they guide younger children and show them how to make animals or other simple objects.

Art Center

for older children Luke 3:16,21-22; 4:1-2; 5:1-11,27-31

Collect



Bible, newspaper, flat river rocks, acrylic paints, brushes; optional—permanent markers or crayons.

Prepare



Cover tables with newspaper; set out materials.

Do



1. Give each child a rock. Child uses paints and brushes to write a reminder message on rock ("Trust God!" "God guides me!" "Follow Jesus!" etc.). Optional—use markers or crayons to write messages or to draw finer details.
2. Children decorate around the words on the rocks using materials provided.
3. Let rocks dry until the end of the session.

Talk About



- **What ARE rocks?** (Hardened pieces of common minerals.) **Scientists classify rocks according to the way they are made. Rocks made from layers of minerals are called sedimentary. Rocks made in hot places like volcanoes are called igneous. Rocks made when high pressure meets**



God's Word

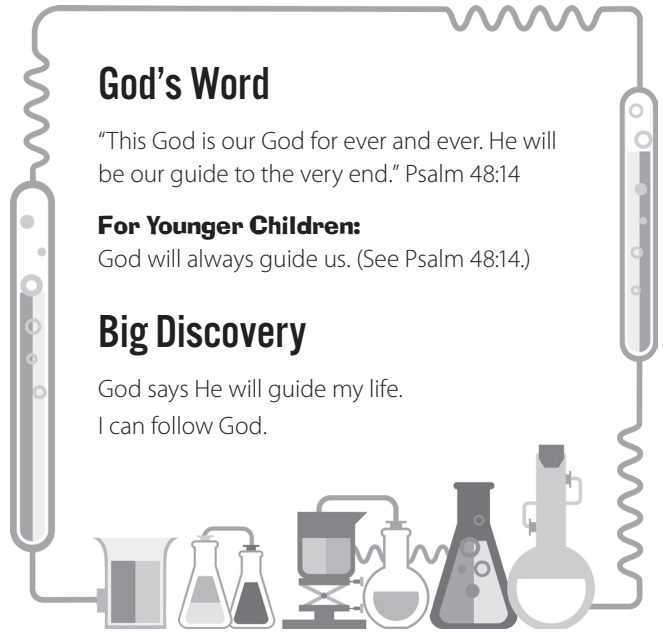
"This God is our God for ever and ever. He will be our guide to the very end." Psalm 48:14

For Younger Children:

God will always guide us. (See Psalm 48:14.)

Big Discovery

God says He will guide my life.
I can follow God.



chemical changes, making them into something new, are called metamorphic. God guides even the smallest details of the ways rocks are made!

- **Why do you think we can trust God to guide our lives?** (Because He knows all the details of our lives. He loves us. He can do anything. He always keeps His promises.)
- **The Bible tells us that Jesus ALWAYS obeyed God's guidance. How do we get God's guidance?** (The same way Jesus did. We ask Him! We can also read His Word. Ask people who know and love God.) **God loves us. He says we can trust Him to guide us to live in the very BEST way, every day!** Repeat Psalm 48:14 together.

Pray briefly, thanking God for being trustworthy and able to guide us, and asking for help to remember to ask Him for guidance.

For Younger Children



Adult writes a younger child's chosen message on rock with permanent marker. Provide crayons or markers to use in decorating.

Worship Center

Luke 3:16,21-22; 4:1-2; 5:1-11,27-31

Collect



Bibles, CD-ROM and CD player, Lesson 2 Big Discovery Visual, song lyrics (pp. 248, 250), whiteboard and marker.

Prepare



Write out the words and reference for Psalm 48:14 on a large whiteboard.

Team Game



Everyone find a partner. One partner, close your eyes for 30 seconds while the other partner guides you across the room. The goal is for the seeing partner to guide the non-seeing partner without bumping into anything. Ready? Start walking together! Pairs walk until you signal them to stop, and then partners switch assignments for another 30 seconds. Who didn't bump into anyone or anything? Why is a seeing partner important? Yes! When we can't see where to go, we need GUIDANCE!

Bible Verse Game



Read Psalm 48:14 aloud with children. Students stand facing each other in two lines where they can easily see the whiteboard. Each line takes a turn to repeat a word or phrase of the verse in order until whole verse is repeated. Repeat several times, then switch assignments.



God's Word

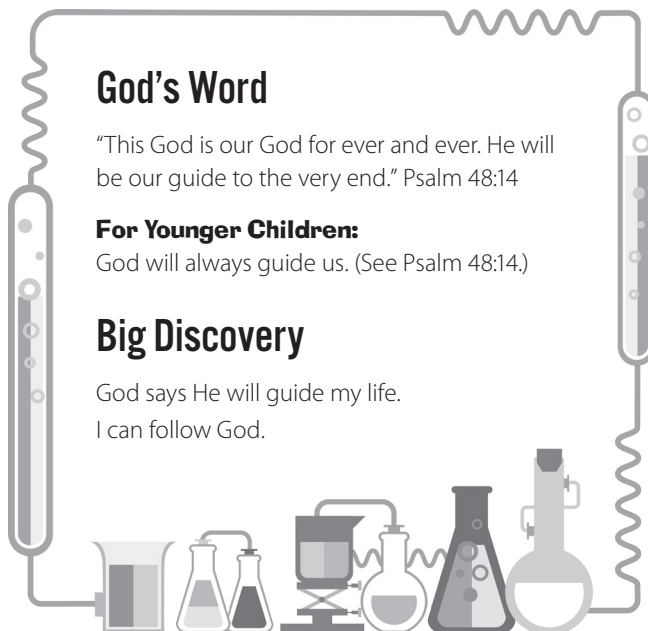
"This God is our God for ever and ever. He will be our guide to the very end." Psalm 48:14

For Younger Children:

God will always guide us. (See Psalm 48:14.)

Big Discovery

God says He will guide my life.
I can follow God.



Song



You, or another leader, lead children in singing "Following Jesus," adding motions and/or clapping if desired.

Prayer



Today we talked about the time when the disciples decided to follow Jesus after they trusted His guidance to catch all those fish! Show Big Discovery Visual. What's our Big Discovery? Shout it with me! (Students shout, "God says He will guide my life! I can follow God!") This BIG discovery reminds us that we can ALWAYS do what Jesus did. We can ask God to guide us. We can read His Word for guidance, too. Then lead children in prayer, thanking God for being trustworthy and for promising to guide us. Ask His help to remember to look for His guidance, in the same way Jesus did.

Song



You, or another leader, lead children in singing "I Worship You, Lord," adding motions and/or clapping if desired. God says He will guide our lives. This week, let's take time to worship Him and ask Him to guide us every day!

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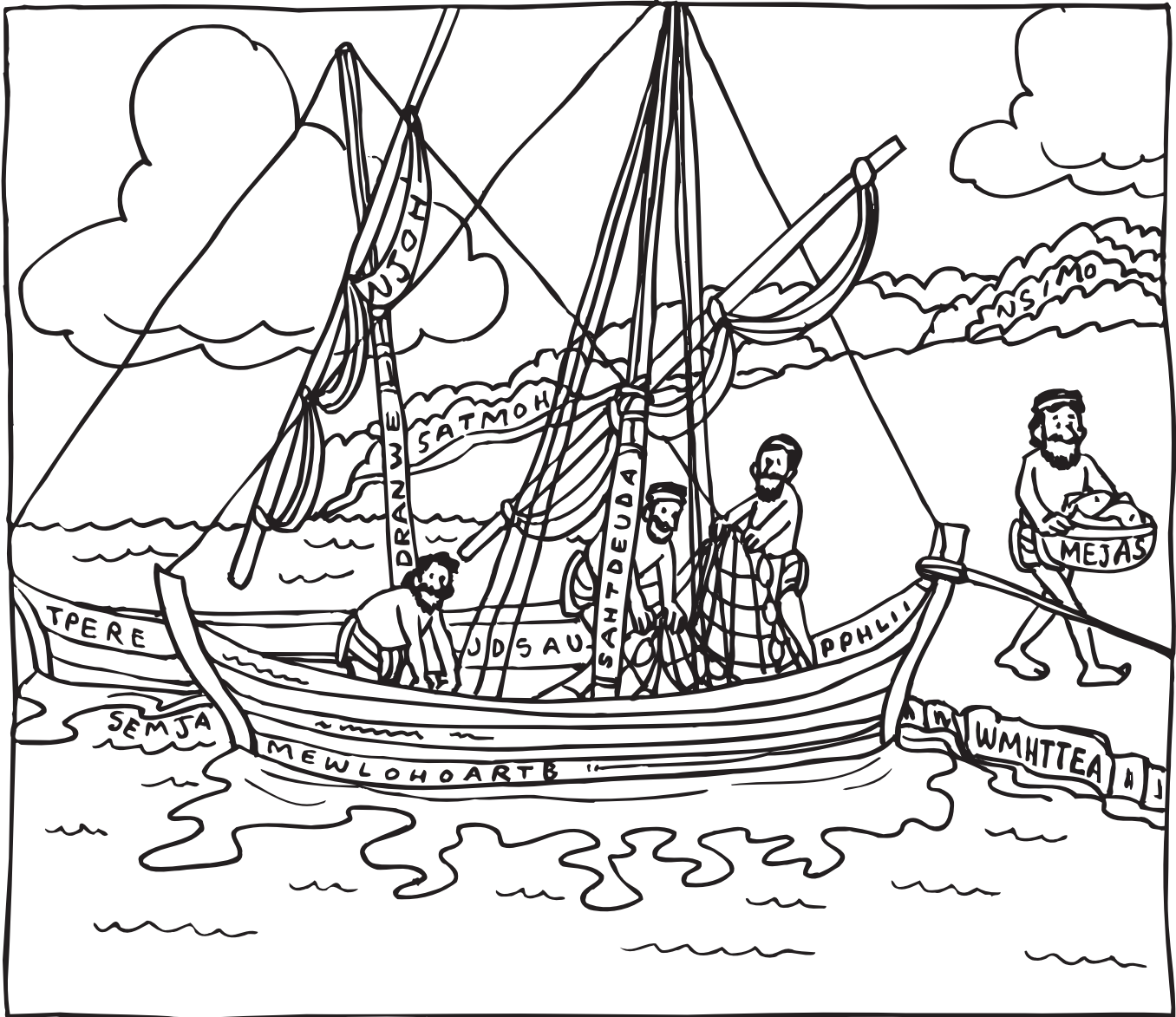
Jesus asks His friends to follow Him.

Luke 5:1-11



Scrambled Sea Scene

Find and unscramble the names hidden in the picture. Write the names of the 12 disciples. Then color the scene!



Read Matthew 10:2-4 to check your answers!

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

I Don't Have to See to Believe

The Centurion's Faith © Luke 7:1-10

God's Word

"Let us hold firmly to the hope we claim to have. The One who promised is faithful."
Hebrews 10:23

For Younger Children:

God does what He promises. (See Hebrews 10:23.)

Big Discovery

God says He will always do what He promises.
I can rely on Him.



Teacher & Parent Connection

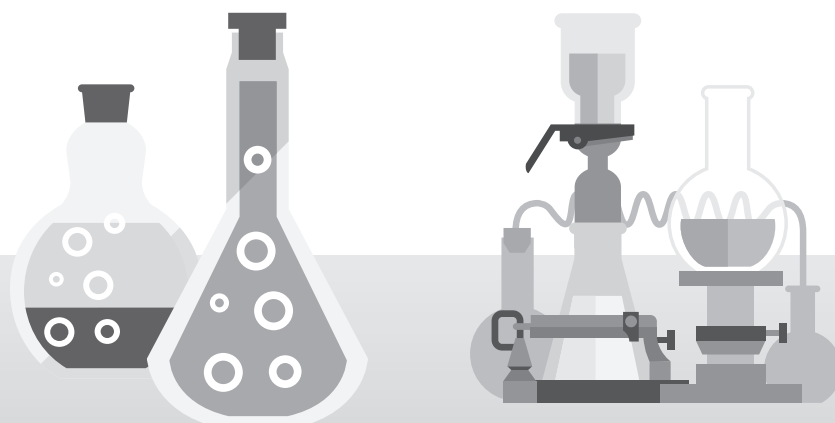
Seeing is believing. Isn't that what they say? It's human nature to believe what we see. (In fact, some cite this as a reason why so many crimes are committed to resemble an aspect of a movie or video game.) But modern technology is making this old saying less and less true! We now see movies full of special effects and view dozens of altered photos. Where Photoshop collides with phone cams, we quickly learn *not* to believe what we see!

It's probably best not to trust what we see anymore without investigation. But when it comes to real people, right in front of us, we always hope that what we see is truly what we get. The pain of being deceived "to your face" is just as bad as it ever was!

The Roman centurion in Luke's account had already done his research. He didn't have to see Jesus to send his one request: to heal his valued servant. Because he was so confident that Jesus could do this, he sent another message: Jesus didn't need to come to his house. As a Roman officer

in command over a hundred or more Roman soldiers, he understood authority. When he told a soldier to go, the soldier went! He knew that Jesus had full authority to tell the sickness to leave, and it would go! Jesus turned to the people following Him and said, "I tell you, even in Israel I have not found anyone whose faith is so strong" (Luke 7:9).

We can have such great faith—if we place our faith in the right Person! Faith is more than a vague hope that things will be OK. No, we've done our research! We know it's true—God keeps His promises. He is able to take care of any situation! So no matter how the "picture" in front of us may be altered (bad, scary or beautiful), we know that we can rely on Him. He can change the picture if we'll keep our eyes on Jesus—He's the Way, the Truth and the Life! (See John 14:6.)



Planning Page

Choose which centers you will provide and the order in which children will participate in them (see pp. 14–18 for schedule tips and pp. 24–25 for guidelines in combining older and younger children). Also plan who will lead each center (for staffing tips, see pp. 19–21). Use the reproducible planning sheet (p. 240) to record your plans.

Bible Story Center

Bible Story

The Centurion's Faith • Luke 7:1–10

Younger Child Option

Big Discovery Box • Salute when the word "officer" is heard.

Older Child Option

Big Discovery Box • Pantomime story actions.

Art Center

Younger Child Option

Make a reminder banner about relying on God.

Materials

Bible, masking tape, string, markers, paper, stapler, collage materials, glue sticks

Older Child Option

Create a reminder spinner about relying on God.

Materials

Bible, Spinner Pattern (p. 84), card stock, markers, scissors, hole punch, thread or fishing line

Game Center

Younger Child Option

Move through an obstacle course and talk about relying on God.

Materials

Bible, low step stool and other items for obstacle course (blocks, table, large pillow, chairs, etc.)

Older Child Option

Play a game to line up by matching colors and talk about relying on God.

Materials

Bible, colored paper, scissors, bag

Coloring/Puzzle Center

Younger Child Option

Review the Bible story while completing coloring page.

Materials

Lesson 3 Coloring Page (p. 85) for each student, crayons

Older Child Option

Review the Bible story while completing puzzle page.

Materials

Lesson 3 Puzzle (p. 86) for each student, pencils

Worship Center

For All

Participate in large-group activities to review the Bible verse and worship God together.

Materials

Bibles, CD-ROM and CD player, Lesson 3 Big Discovery Visual, song lyrics (pp. 256, 249), whiteboard and marker



Bonus Investigation!

Use this investigation at any time during this session: as an additional activity center, to extend the session for a longer time or for added theme excitement.

Elephant Toothpaste!

Got your safety glasses? Lab coats?

Here's a science experiment to do with your kids. Let's go!

For each child (or to do one experiment for the group), you need:

- 16-ounce (470 ml) plastic bottle (narrow-necked works best)
- foil cake pan with 2-inch (5 cm) sides
- funnel
- 3–4 drops food coloring
- 4 ounces (120 ml) of 20-volume (6%) hydrogen peroxide (from beauty supply store)
- Squirt of dishwashing liquid
- 1 teaspoon (5 ml) yeast dissolved in about 2 tablespoons (30 ml) of very warm water

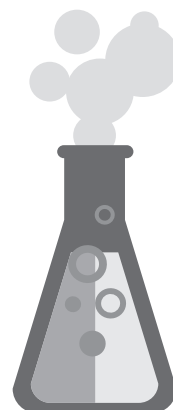
Here's what you do:

- Don the glasses and coats!
- Stand the bottle in the center of the cake pan.
- Put the funnel into the bottle opening.
- Add the food coloring to the peroxide, and then pour it through the funnel into the bottle.
- Add the dishwashing liquid, and then pour the yeast mixture into the bottle.
- Quickly remove the funnel, and stand back to see the result!

Here's why it works:

Invite kids to touch the bottle. **Is it warm or cool? This is called an exothermic reaction. That means it produces heat! The yeast is called a catalyst. It makes the peroxide molecules release their oxygen atoms faster—that's what is making all that foam!**

The foam is basically soap and water, so it's OK for kids to touch. Just wash hands afterward!



Bible Story Center

for younger children Luke 7:1–10



Big Discovery Box

Before class, print out Lesson 3 Big Discovery Visual from CD-ROM. Place in the Big Discovery Box with a Bible and a medical thermometer.

Introduction



What do you think is inside our Big Discovery Box today? Open box. Remove items. Show thermometer. **What is this? When does your mom use this?** Children tell. Hold up Bible. **What is this? Yes! The Bible! It will tell us more about what happened to someone who was VERY sick.**

And you have a job! Your job is to SALUTE every time you hear me say the word “officer.” Let’s practice. Say “officer” several times so children may practice saluting.

Tell the Story



Jesus was in Capernaum. His friend Peter had a house there. Most people in Capernaum were Jews. But these Jews knew one Roman. He was an army **officer**. He was in charge of the soldiers nearby.

Now, Jews didn’t usually LIKE the Romans. But they liked this **officer**! He cared about the people in Capernaum. He had built a house of prayer for their town. It was a VERY important place. People prayed there. They learned about God there. The people were glad for the **officer** and his kindness. They cared about him, too!

Now, the **officer** had a problem. His servant was very sick. He was SO sick that the **officer** thought the servant might die! The **officer** cared about his servant. He didn’t want him to die!

The **officer** had heard about Jesus. He had heard how Jesus made sick people WELL! So the **officer** talked to some leaders in the town. He asked them to go to Jesus to ask Jesus to heal his very sick servant!

The Jewish leaders were glad to help their Roman friend. So off they went to find Jesus! When they found Jesus, they asked Jesus to come with them to the **officer**’s house and heal the servant. They told Jesus about the **officer**. They told how he had spent his own money to build their house of prayer. They really wanted Jesus to help him!

So Jesus walked with the leaders to the **officer**’s house. But before they got there, some men came to talk with them. They had a message from the **officer** for Jesus: “Lord, You don’t have to come to my house. Just tell the sickness to go away. Then my servant will be healed.”

The **officer** was VERY SURE that Jesus could heal his servant—just by saying so! The **officer** also said that when he told his soldiers what to do, they did it! In the same way, the **officer** knew Jesus was in charge of everything. He could tell the sickness to leave. The sickness would have to obey Jesus! Then his servant would be well!

Jesus listened to the **officer**’s message. Then He turned to the people with Him. He said, “I haven’t seen anyone with such great faith!” The **officer**’s trust amazed JESUS!

The **officer** KNEW Jesus could heal his servant! He didn’t have to SEE Jesus or have Jesus come to his house. When the **officer**’s friends went back to his house, what do you think they found? OF COURSE! The servant was now WELL! Jesus is in charge of everything. He had told the sickness to GO—and it LEFT!

God’s Word & Me



The officer didn’t have to SEE Jesus to know that Jesus could make his servant well. Show Big Discovery Visual and read it aloud. **We don’t have to SEE Jesus to know that He can help us. All we need to do is ask for His help when we pray!**

Pray, **Dear God, thank You that we don’t have to see Jesus to trust Him. We are glad to know He will help us when we ask Him for help. In His name, amen.**

Bible Story Center

for older children Luke 7:1–10



Big Discovery Box

Before class, print out Lesson 3 Big Discovery Visual from CD-ROM. Place in the Big Discovery Box with a Bible and a medical thermometer.

You may invite a male team member to dress in Bible-times clothing and tell the story each time, introducing himself as Dr. Luke, the head researcher of the materials.

Now, the Jews didn't want ANY Romans in their country. They did NOT like having the Romans rule over them! But THIS Roman, the centurion, was not like other Romans. He really cared about the people in his area. He even had built a synagogue for the people of Capernaum! A synagogue was the MOST important part of a Jewish town. People gathered there to pray and to learn about God. The people of Capernaum were grateful for the centurion's kindness. They cared about the centurion, too!

Now, the centurion had a servant who was very sick—SO sick that it looked like the servant would DIE! The centurion cared about his servant very much! (Centurion stands and servant lies at house.) He did NOT want him to die.

Now, the centurion had heard about Jesus and how He had been healing sick people! So the centurion talked to some of the Jewish leaders of the town. (Leaders move to Centurion.) He asked the leaders to do him a favor: to go to Jesus and ask Jesus to heal his very sick servant! The Jewish leaders were happy to help him. Off they went to find Jesus! (Leaders move to Jesus.)

When they found Jesus, the leaders asked Him to come and heal the centurion's servant. In fact, they BEGGED Jesus to help him! They told Jesus all about how the centurion had spent his own money to build the synagogue. The leaders really wanted Jesus to help this Roman!

So Jesus began walking with the leaders to the centurion's house. (Jesus, Peter and Leaders walk.) But as they got near the house, several of the centurion's friends came to meet them. (Centurion's Friends move to Jesus.)

They had another message for Jesus from the centurion. He said, "Lord, don't trouble Yourself to come to my house. I don't deserve to have You come! I don't even deserve to be near You. Instead, just say the word. Then my servant will be healed."

Wow, the centurion was really SURE that Jesus had the power to heal his servant—just by saying so!

But there was more to the centurion's message to Jesus. He said, "I am also a person with authority. I have soldiers under me. When I tell one to go, he goes. If I tell another one to come, he comes. They do what I say."

The centurion was in charge of his soldiers and servants. He told them what to do, and they did exactly what he said to do. The centurion knew that Jesus had MUCH more authority and power!

Introduction



Open Big Discovery Box as you speak. **I wonder what Dr. Luke might have left us today?** Show Bible. **Ah! Here's our source document again—the Bible.** Show thermometer. **I wonder why THIS is in our box? When do we use this?** Students tell. Read Big Discovery Visual aloud. **God says He will always do what He promises. We can rely on Him. Listen to find out how one man showed how much he relied on Jesus!**

And here's YOUR part! Designate two areas: Capernaum and centurion's house. Volunteers move as directed and then pantomime actions of Jesus, Leaders, Friends, Servant and Centurion.

Tell the Story



Jesus had just come into Capernaum. Capernaum seemed to be one of His favorite towns! His friend and disciple Peter had a house there, so Jesus often spent time there. (Jesus and Peter stand at Capernaum.)

In Capernaum, just about everyone was a Jew. But at least ONE Roman lived nearby. He was a centurion—an important army officer, in charge of at least 100 soldiers. The soldiers acted as the Roman police force in the countryside at the north end of the Sea of Galilee.



The centurion knew that Jesus is in charge of EVERYTHING! He could simply command the sickness to go, and it would have to obey Him. Then his servant would be healed!

When Jesus heard the centurion's message, He turned to the people following Him. He said, "I haven't seen a person with such great faith, not even among the people of Israel!" The centurion's trust in Him amazed JESUS. Not even one of Jesus' own disciples had shown THIS much trust in Him!

The centurion's friends went back to the house. (Friends return to Centurion.) What do you think they found when they got back to the centurion's house? (Servant stands, jumps up and down.) OF COURSE! The servant who had been about to DIE was now completely well! The centurion didn't have to see Jesus to believe that Jesus could heal his servant! The centurion relied on and trusted the Great Healer—and simply by speaking, Jesus healed the servant completely!

God's Word & Me



Jesus didn't have any problem healing the centurion's servant, did He? Jesus doesn't have to touch someone to make a person well. And just like the centurion, we don't have to SEE Jesus to know He can do amazing things in our lives, right now, today!

Read Hebrews 10:23 aloud from your Bible. **This verse tells us that we can always be hopeful. Why? Yes! God is faithful! That**

means He keeps His promises. But some of His promises are made only to those who join God's family! (Invite children interested in knowing more about becoming members of God's family to talk with you or another teacher after class. See "Leading a Child to Christ" on p. 12.)

- **Why did the leaders in Capernaum want Jesus to heal the centurion's servant?** (Centurion cared about them. Had used his own money to build them a synagogue.)
- **Why did the centurion tell Jesus that He didn't need to come to his house?** (Knew Jesus had power and authority to tell the sickness to leave. Did not have to see Jesus to know He was able to heal the servant.)
- **What did Jesus say about the centurion?** (He had more faith than anyone Jesus had met! He relied on Jesus to heal his servant. He didn't have to see.)
- Show Big Discovery Visual. **God says He will always do what He promises. The big word for that is "faithful." It means we can rely on Him. He is trustworthy!**
- **When are times a kid might need to know he or she can rely on God? What are things we can do to help ourselves remember to rely on God?**

Pray with children, thanking God for always doing what He says He will do, and asking His help to remember that we can rely on Him!

Game Center

for younger children Luke 7:1–10

Collect



Bible, low step stool and other items for obstacle course (blocks, table, large pillow, chairs, etc.).

Prepare



Arrange step stool and other items to create an obstacle course.

Do



1. Demonstrate how to complete the obstacle course, leading everyone to say Hebrews 10:23 as you step onto the step stool.
2. Stand beside the step stool to assist younger children in stepping on and off the stool.
3. Children take turns to complete the obstacle course, repeating the Bible verse each time they step onto the step stool.
4. Children rearrange the obstacle course and play again.



God's Word

"Let us hold firmly to the hope we claim to have. The One who promised is faithful."
Hebrews 10:23

For Younger Children:

God does what He promises. (See Hebrews 10:23.)

Big Discovery

God says He will always do what He promises.
I can rely on Him.



Talk About



- Chase, what part of the obstacle course do you like best? What do you think would happen if you stepped on the stool and it broke? (Could get hurt. Would fall.) When we step on the stool, we trust it to hold us up. Another word for trust is "rely." We rely on the stool.
- In Dr. Luke's Bible account, we heard about the time when the army officer trusted, or relied on, Jesus. He knew Jesus could heal his servant.
- Our Bible says that God will always do what He promises. We can rely on Him.

Pray briefly, Dear God, thank You that we don't have to see You to know You will help us. Thank You that we can trust You. In Jesus' name, amen.

For Older Children



Add more challenges to each station in the obstacle course: older children must walk around an item three times, must pick up and set down another item, must step over an item backward, etc.

Game Center

for older children Luke 7:1–10

Collect



Bible, colored paper, scissors, bag.

Prepare



Cut sheets of colored paper into bookmark-sized pieces, at least two for each child. Place pieces in a bag.

Do



1. Each student takes two pieces of paper in different colors from the bag and holds one piece of paper in each hand.
2. Say, **Let's see how quickly we can line up by matching our colors.**
3. Children line up, with each student standing next to another child who is holding a matching color in the hand next to that child's. For example, child holding blue in left hand stands next to child holding blue in right hand.
4. When lined up, children on the ends of the line complete this sentence: **I can rely on God because . . .** Or, children repeat the Bible verse.
5. Students replace papers, mix them up, take two others and then play a new round. Play several rounds.

Talk About



- **What are the colors of the rainbow?** (Red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, violet.) **Do you know the funny name**



God's Word

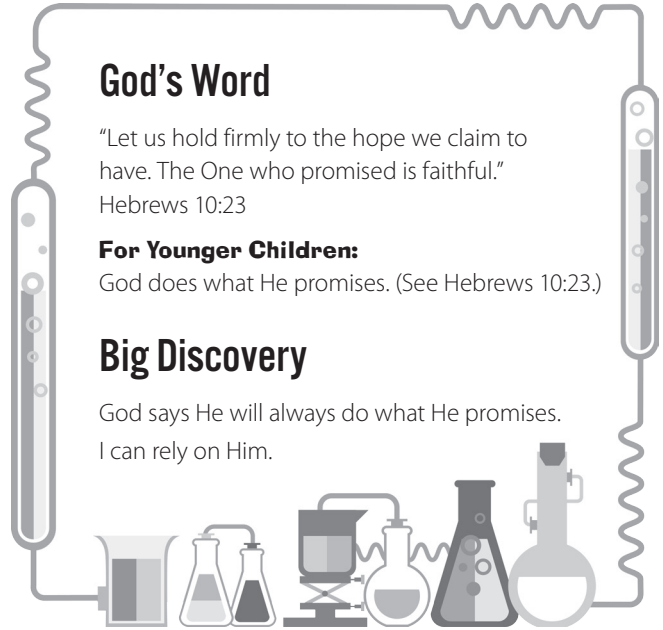
"Let us hold firmly to the hope we claim to have. The One who promised is faithful."
Hebrews 10:23

For Younger Children:

God does what He promises. (See Hebrews 10:23.)

Big Discovery

God says He will always do what He promises.
I can rely on Him.



that helps us remember the colors in a rainbow? (ROY G. BIV. It's a funny name made from the first letter of each color's name: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, violet.)

- **To decide who should stand beside you, what did you have to do?** (Rely on sense of sight to see which colors others held.)
- **In Dr. Luke's account, how did the centurion show he trusted or relied on Jesus?** (Said he didn't need for Jesus to come to his house. Didn't need to see Jesus to know He could heal. Knew Jesus could tell the sickness to go and it would go.)
- **What are some ways a kid your age can show he or she relies on Jesus like that?** (Children tell.) **Our Bible verse reminds us to hold on tight to what we know about God because He is faithful. That means we can always trust and rely on Him because He always keeps His promises!** Repeat Hebrews 10:23 together.

Lead children in prayer, thanking God that we don't have to see Him to trust Him.

For Younger Children



Younger children should be able to participate; challenge older students to help younger ones if they need help.

Art Center

for younger children Luke 7:1-10

Collect



Bible, masking tape, string, markers, paper, stapler, collage materials, glue sticks.

Prepare



Use masking tape to attach string across an open corner of the room. In large, open letters write, "RELY ON GOD," writing one letter on each sheet of paper. Leave space at the top for each paper to be folded over and stapled onto string. (If group is large, add the words, "I CAN"). Set out collage materials and glue sticks. Give stapler to an adult helper.

Do



1. Give each child a paper on which you have drawn a letter. **Each of your letters is part of a bigger message. Let's color and cover our letters with collage materials.**
2. Children color and glue collage materials to each letter as desired.
3. When children have finished, adult helps them staple the letters in order so that banner reads, "RELY ON GOD."

Talk About



- ⦿ **What parts of our bodies did we use while we decorated our banner?** (Eyes to look. Mind to think. Fingers to glue, etc.)



God's Word

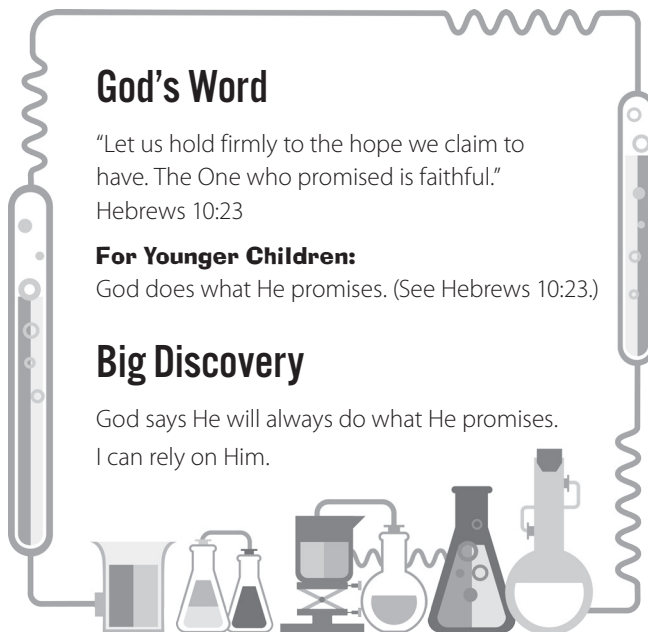
"Let us hold firmly to the hope we claim to have. The One who promised is faithful."
Hebrews 10:23

For Younger Children:

God does what He promises. (See Hebrews 10:23.)

Big Discovery

God says He will always do what He promises.
I can rely on Him.



- ⦿ **We used our eyes to make our banner! In Dr. Luke's Bible account, the army officer's servant was sick. Who did he want to have heal his servant?** (Jesus.)
- ⦿ **When Jesus got close to the officer's house, what did the officer send his friends to tell Jesus?** (Did not need to use his eyes to see Jesus. Knew Jesus could tell the sickness to leave.) **The officer relied on Jesus to help his servant. WE can rely on God. We don't have to SEE Him to know He does what He says He will do!**

Our Bible says that God does what He promises. Pray briefly, Dear God, thank You for sending Jesus to show us what You are like. Thank You that You do what You say You'll do. Help us to rely on You. You can do anything! In Jesus' name, amen.

For Older Children



Invite older children to make another banner for the words of the Big Discovery or to decorate extra papers that can be hung between the words.

Art Center

for older children Luke 7:1-10

Collect



Bible, Spinner Pattern (p. 84), card stock, markers, scissors, hole punch, thread or fishing line.

Prepare



Photocopy one Spinner Pattern onto card stock for each child. Make a sample following the directions below.

Do



1. Give each child a Spinner Pattern.
2. Child colors the words around outer circle and draws a self-portrait in the inner circle.
3. Child cuts out both circles and punches holes where indicated.
4. Be ready to help children insert a loop of thread through both holes and tie so that center circle spins. Help with cutting thread and tying knots.

Talk About



- **What makes this spinner spin?** (Air movement. Wind.) **Can we see the wind?** (No.) **How can we tell that air IS moving?** (By seeing the effect or result.) **We can't see the air, but we can see what it DOES! So we made something we can SEE that shows us something we CAN'T see!**



God's Word

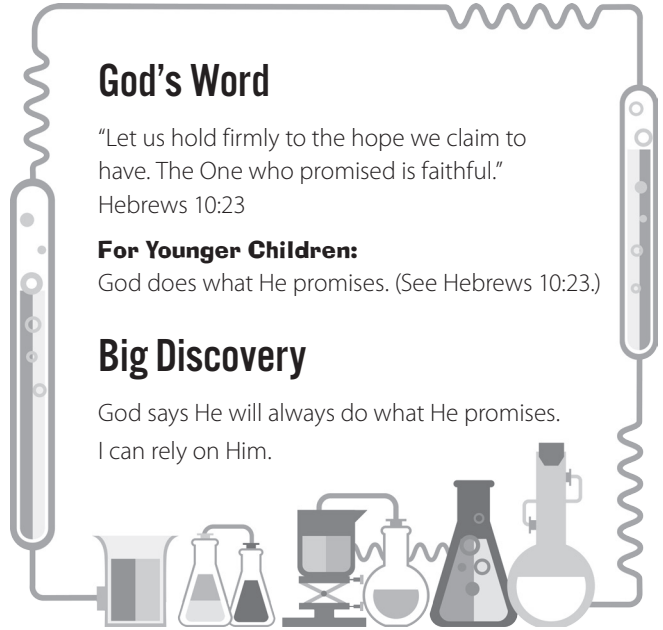
"Let us hold firmly to the hope we claim to have. The One who promised is faithful."
Hebrews 10:23

For Younger Children:

God does what He promises. (See Hebrews 10:23.)

Big Discovery

God says He will always do what He promises.
I can rely on Him.



- **How did the centurion show he trusted or relied on Jesus?** (Said Jesus didn't need to come to his house. Did not need to see Jesus to know He could tell the sickness to go.)
- **We don't have to see Jesus, either. What are some ways a kid your age can show he or she relies on Jesus?** (Children tell.) **Our Bible verse reminds us to hold on tight to what we know about God because He is faithful. That means He always keeps His promises. So we can always trust and rely on Him!** Repeat Hebrews 10:23 together.

Lead children in prayer, thanking God that we don't have to see Him to trust Him.

For Younger Children



Younger children color spinner pattern and draw a self-portrait in the center. With adult help, each one cuts along the outer circle, glues it to a paper plate and punches hole in plate. An adult ties thread for a hanger.

Worship Center

Luke 7:1–10

Collect



Bibles, CD-ROM and CD player, Lesson 3 Big Discovery Visual, song lyrics (pp. 256, 249), whiteboard and marker.

Prepare



Write out the words and reference for Hebrews 10:23 on a large whiteboard.

Team Game



Everyone find a partner about as tall as you are. Sit on the floor, back to back. Pairs sit with backs touching, knees up. Now, see if you and your partner can lock elbows. Then try to slowly stand up. You may have to practice a few times. As pairs stand, ask, **What did you have to do to stand?** Successful pairs give ideas to others for how to stand. **To stand up together, what did you need to do? Yes! You had to lean on each other. You RELIED on each other. You also relied on the advice of people who'd done it. That's our word today: RELY! I can RELY on God!**

Bible Verse Game



Read Hebrews 10:23 aloud with children. Each student thinks of a motion for a word or phrase of the Bible verse. Children take turns to play a game like Charades, making motions for others to guess a word or phrase. Use some of the motions created as you repeat the verse three times!



God's Word

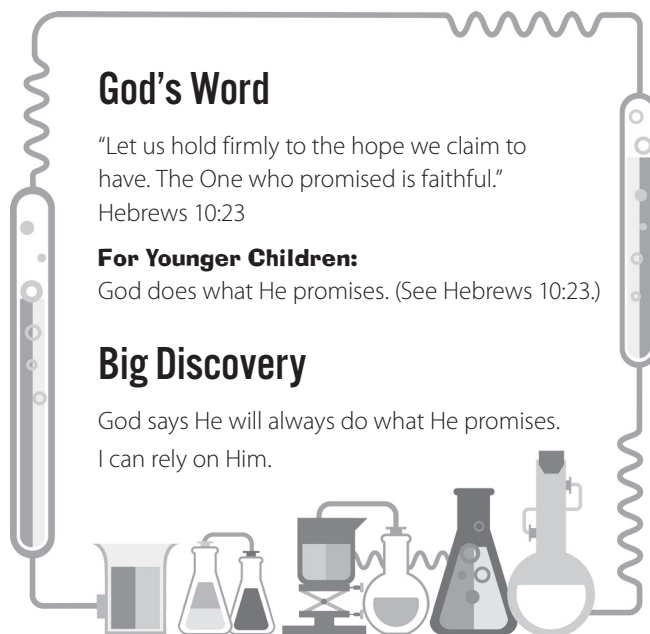
"Let us hold firmly to the hope we claim to have. The One who promised is faithful."
Hebrews 10:23

For Younger Children:

God does what He promises. (See Hebrews 10:23.)

Big Discovery

God says He will always do what He promises.
I can rely on Him.



Song



You, or another leader, lead children in singing "Trust in the Lord," adding motions and/or clapping if desired.

Prayer



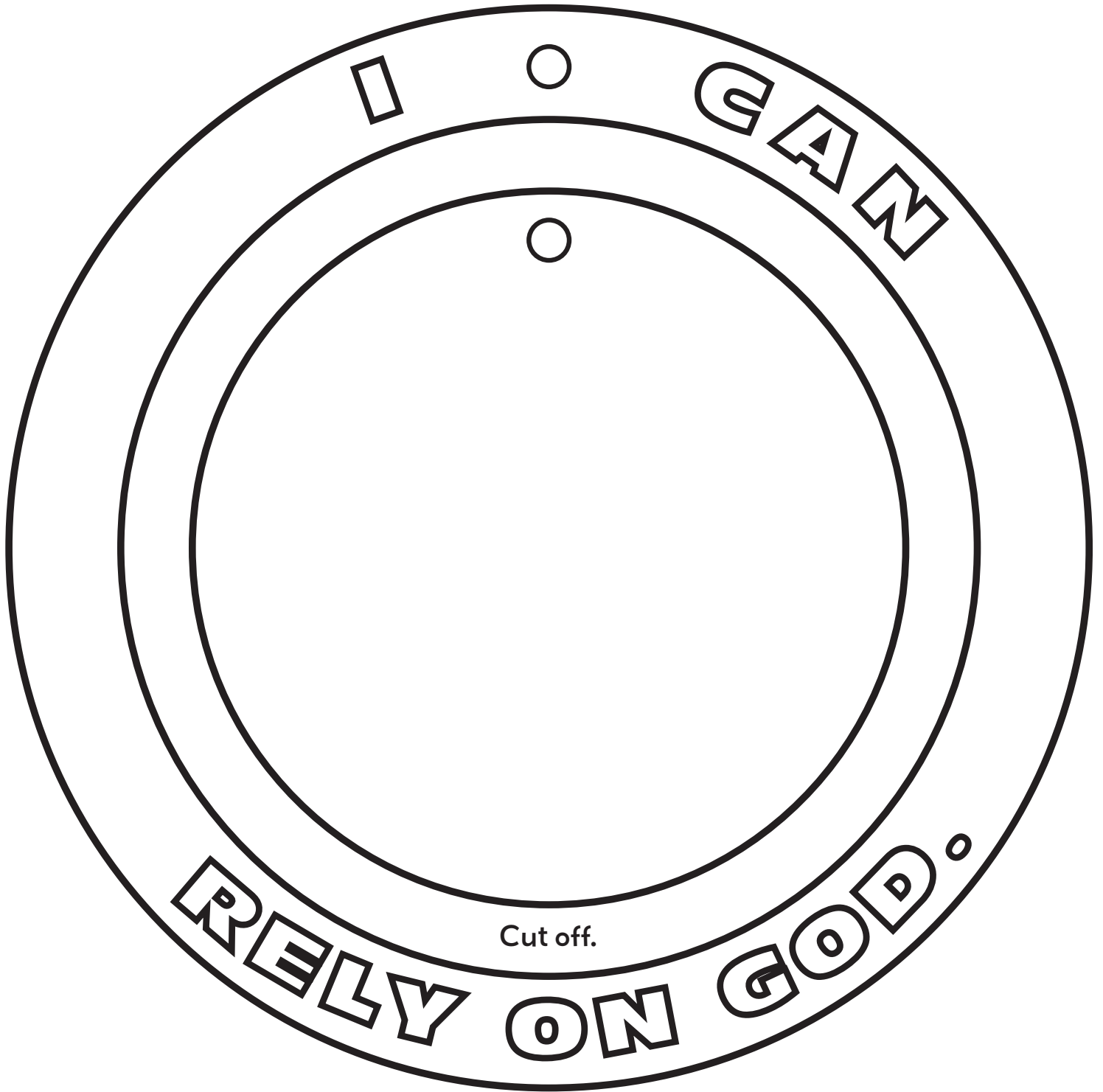
The centurion showed he relied on Jesus. He didn't have to see Jesus to know Jesus could heal his servant. Show Big Discovery Visual. **What's our Big Discovery? Shout it!** (Kids shout, "God says He will always do what He promises! I can rely on Him!") **This BIG discovery reminds us that we don't have to see God to see what He does! We can RELY on God.** Then lead children in prayer, thanking God that He is reliable and asking His help to remember we can rely on Him, even though we can't see Him.

Song



You, or another leader, lead children in singing "God's Plan 4 U Is Jesus!" adding motions and/or clapping if desired. **God says we can rely on Him because we know He keeps His promises. We don't have to see to believe. Be sure to rely on Him every day this week!**





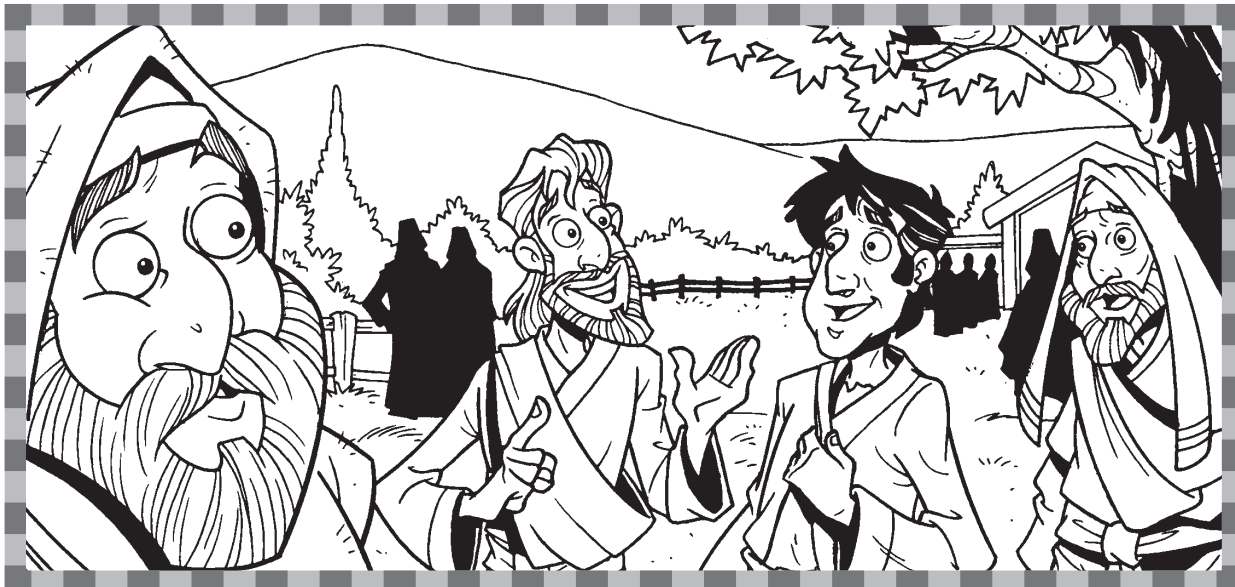
The centurion's servant is made well.

Luke 7:1-10



Believing Without Seeing!

Start on the left to discover Hebrews 10:23 and get to the centurion in his house.



The
we claim
firmly to
promised
is
faithful.”
who
the hope
One
“Let us
hold
to have.

START

I Am Secure

The Widow's Son © Luke 7:11-17

God's Word

"We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him. He appointed them to be saved in keeping with his purpose." Romans 8:28

For Younger Children:

God does everything for our good.
(See Romans 8:28.)

Big Discovery

God says He will always do what is best for me. I am secure.



Teacher & Parent Connection

Much of what we do relates to our security! Security systems (or at least locks for our doors) protect our homes and businesses. We dutifully squirrel away money in 401Ks, IRAs and old socks. We stockpile food and water. Our actions say that we value our lives and property. We want to be protected from harm—and from the awful feeling of being vulnerable and defenseless that comes with it!

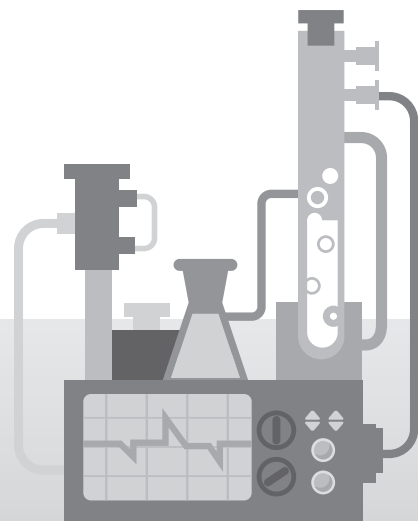
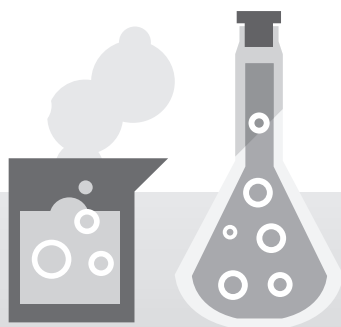
Yet anyone who's ever had a bike stolen knows that a lock won't stop a thief. Anyone who lived through the financial crises of the early 2000s can tell how future assets can evaporate in a moment. Anyone who's lost a job or a home can tell you that what they'd imagined would remain a secure, long-term investment, wasn't.

The widow in today's Bible account was likely the most desperately insecure person in her society. At that time, a woman's needs were all met through her husband. If the man died and little was left to a widow, she could only hope that a son or a male relative might take care of her.

But this widow's only son had just died—and with him, her hope for survival had died, too. Without him, her security for the future was likely nonexistent.

Just as we might look to our 401Ks, the widow had set her security on her (living!) son. But then, Jesus came—and did the impossible to show her that He, who can bring the dead to life, offers real security! And just as she did, we discover throughout life that there is no income, no person, no investment that provides security. Only in God (who says He works every scary, insecure circumstance for good in the lives of His children) do we find true security!

Want real security? Join God's family!



Planning Page

Choose which centers you will provide and the order in which children will participate in them (see pp. 14–18 for schedule tips and pp. 24–25 for guidelines in combining older and younger children). Also plan who will lead each center (for staffing tips, see pp. 19–21). Use the reproducible planning sheet (p. 240) to record your plans.

Bible Story Center

Bible Story

The Widow's Son • Luke 7:11–17

Younger Child Option

Big Discovery Box • Use happy and sad paper-plate faces during the story.

Older Child Option

Big Discovery Box • Use prepared Bibles to read verses aloud.

Art Center

Younger Child Option

Explore using salt with paint and talk about God's care.

Materials

Bible, newspaper, tempera paints thinned with a little water, containers, cotton swabs, heavy paper, salt

Older Child Option

Create a group collage about worries and God's care.

Materials

Bible, masking tape, butcher paper, markers, magazines or glossy ads, scissors, glues sticks

Game Center

Younger Child Option

Play a game to find happy faces and talk about today's Bible verse.

Materials

Bible, six to eight paper plates, marker

Older Child Option

Play a tossing game and talk about today's Bible verse.

Materials

Bible, Game Cards (p. 98), masking tape, several round plastic lids for each team

Coloring/Puzzle Center

Younger Child Option

Review the Bible story while completing coloring page.

Materials

Lesson 4 Coloring Page (p. 99) for each student, crayons

Older Child Option

Review the Bible story while completing puzzle page.

Materials

Lesson 4 Puzzle Page (p. 100) for each student, pencils

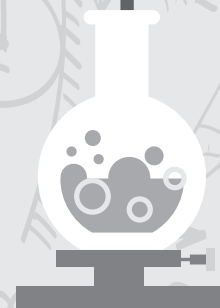
Worship Center

For All

Participate in large-group activities to review the Bible verse and worship God together.

Materials

Bibles, CD-ROM and CD player, Lesson 4 Big Discovery Visual, song lyrics (pp. 256, 253), whiteboard and marker, foam ball

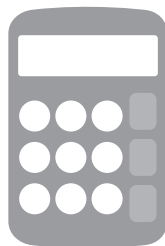


Bonus Theme Ideas

Bonus Theme Ideas can be used at any time during this session: as an additional activity center, to extend the session for a longer time or for added theme excitement.

Human Graphing!

Kids line up according to height and then determine who is in the middle of the line. **How many people are taller than that person? How many are shorter?** Measure middle person's height to find the median height of the group. Kids group themselves according to straight or curly hair and then count to see which group has more members. Do the same with eye color, birthday, etc. For more fun, tape butcher paper to the wall and use colored markers to create a colorful graph of these human traits!



Pool Noodles!

Use pool noodles as the basis for more fun experiments! Split them lengthwise to make ramps and tracks for small rolling toys to do gravity/distance experiments. (Some people have even created a Hot Wheels-style track with pool noodle halves, a ladder and duct tape.) Use them for air-blowing experiments. Poke holes in one with an ice pick, plug the end and put a hose in the other to create an outdoor sprinkler that kids can jump through!



Fossil Cookies

Cut packaged or homemade sugar cookie dough into rounds. Use one of a variety of clean items (plastic dinosaurs, shells, acorns, etc.) to make one fairly deep imprint in each cookie. When cookies are baked, each one should still show its "fossil" imprint!



Post a note alerting parents to the use of food. Also, check registration forms for possible food allergies.

Bible Story Center

for younger children Luke 7:11–17



Big Discovery Box

Before class, print out Lesson 4 Big Discovery Visual from CD-ROM. Place in the Big Discovery Box with a Bible and six to eight paper plates on which you have drawn either a happy or a sad face.

Introduction



What do you think is in our Big Discovery Box today? Remove printout and paper plates. **Why do you think we have these faces? Let's find out!** Remove Bible. **This is the Bible! It is going to tell us who was happy and sad.** Give paper-plate faces to volunteers. **While I tell the story, listen for "happy" or "sad" to find out who was sad and happy. Show your plate when you hear the right word. If you don't have a paper-plate face, use your very own face!**

Tell the Story



Jesus and His friends were walking from town to town. Jesus was teaching people about God, His Father. A big crowd of people followed Jesus, too. Many of these people were people Jesus had healed or helped! They must have been **happy** as they walked along and talked with Jesus.

This crowd of people came to a town called Nain. The little town had a wall all the way around it. There was a gate in the wall. Everyone went in and out there. As Jesus and His friends got close to this gate, another crowd was coming OUT! It was a BIG crowd. Many people from Nain were walking together. And it was a very **sad** crowd. They were on their way to bury someone who had died.

Some **sad** men carried the dead person's body in a big box on their shoulders. A very **sad** woman walked beside the big box. The person in the coffin was her SON. This woman was a widow. In those days, a woman whose husband had died had no one to help her unless she had a son or a brother. Her husband had already died. And her son had taken care of her then. But now, her son—her ONLY son—was dead. Probably NO ONE was left who would take care of her now!

The **sad** widow missed her son. And she also knew that she could not be SURE that anyone would care for her now. In Bible times, women did not have jobs to make money. A woman who did not have a husband or son to take care of her might STARVE!

Jesus SAW the widow. He knew she was **sad**—and He cared VERY much! He walked up to her and told her not to cry. She must have been SURPRISED! STOP crying? Of course she was going to CRY—her son had died!

But Jesus wanted the woman to stop crying so she could SEE what He was going to DO next. So as the widow sniffled and wiped her eyes, Jesus walked up to the big box where her son's body lay. He touched the big box.

He said, "Young man, I say to you, get up!" **What do you think happened next?**

The young man sat up and started TALKING! Jesus gave him back to his mother. **How do you think everyone felt THEN?**

There must have been a LOT of hugging and jumping and laughing going on! All of the crying and **sad** faces turned into **happy** faces! People were laughing and praising God!

The people of Nain SAW that Jesus has power to make dead people live again! Maybe the **happy** crowd with Jesus joined the funeral crowd that was now **happy**! It must have been one HUGE praise party! Soon, people for miles around Nain knew about this AMAZING miracle. Jesus helped this **sad** woman become a **happy** woman! Now she would be secure! Jesus can do ANYTHING!

God's Word & Me



Jesus made the sad woman's son alive again! Now she did not have to worry. Show Big Discovery Visual and read it aloud. God says He will do what is best for us. We are secure. That means we are safe. We don't have to worry. We can trust God to do the VERY best thing for us!

Pray, **Dear God, thank You that You always do what is best for us. Help us trust You. Please help us remember to talk to You when we are worried. In Jesus' name, amen.**

Bible Story Center

for older children Luke 7:11–17



Big Discovery Box

Before class, print out Lesson 4 Big Discovery Visual from CD-ROM. Mark four Bibles with Post-it Notes at the verses listed in **bold**. Place printout and Bibles in the Big Discovery Box.

You may invite a male team member to dress in Bible-times clothing and tell the story, introducing himself as Dr. Luke, the head researcher of these materials.

Distribute marked Bibles to volunteers before telling the story.

But on this day, the people of Nain probably DIDN'T notice Jesus and the crowd coming. You see, something else was going on. ANOTHER crowd was coming OUT of the gateway to the little town.

Read Luke 7:12 to find out what was going on!

A funeral in a small town like this involved practically everyone. So a big crowd was coming INTO town—and a big crowd was going OUT of town. And at the front of the crowd coming out, men were carrying a coffin!

Beside the coffin, a weeping, brokenhearted woman walked along. She was a widow. This meant that her husband had died—but it meant a lot more than that. Women in that culture did not have jobs outside their homes. They worked hard, but only at HOME! So when a woman did not have a husband or son or brother to take care of her, she pretty much had no way to survive. Unless her husband had left her a lot of money, there wasn't much in a widow's future that would make her feel secure! Her future could look very bleak.

You can imagine how crushed this widow was. Her son had been taking care of her since her husband had died. And now her son, her ONLY son, was dead. She not only missed her son, whom she must have loved dearly, but she also knew she would probably have no one to care for her now. **Read Luke 7:13 to see how Jesus reacted.**

Jesus CARED about the widow. He knew just what He was going to do when He walked up to her and said, "Don't cry."

Now, Jesus' words might seem kind of silly in the middle of a FUNERAL! The widow had lost her only son! She was brokenhearted! It was his FUNERAL! Of COURSE she would cry! But Jesus wanted the widow to stop crying so she could SEE what He was going to DO!

Leaving the sniffing, surprised widow, Jesus walked up to the coffin. Jesus touched the young man's coffin and then said, "Young man, I say to you, get up!" What do you think happened? **Read Luke 7:15 to find out!**

Suddenly, this young man sat up and started TALKING! Maybe he was finishing the conversation he'd been having when he died! Jesus helped the young man up and gave him back to his mother. There must have been a whole lot of hugging, laughing and dancing going on with that mother and son!

Introduction



Open Big Discovery Box as you speak. **I wonder what Dr. Luke might have left us!** Show Bible. **Ah! Here's our source document! What's it called? Yes! "Bible" means "book." It's God's book!** Remove marked Bibles. **Wait. What's this? Here are four MORE source documents! I think I need help!** Distribute marked Bibles. Show Big Discovery Visual. **God says He will always do what is best for us. We are secure. Listen to find out how Jesus helped a woman who was very INSECURE become secure—in a very amazing way!**

Tell the Story



Jesus was traveling, walking from town to town, but He wasn't alone! Walking along with Jesus, listening to Him and watching Him, were His disciples. And there were others! Jesus had a large crowd of people walking along with Him! So whenever Jesus and His friends entered a small town, that big crowd entering all at once was likely the town's biggest news of the week!

On this day, Jesus, His disciples and the crowd were coming to the town of Nain. Now, most towns had a wall around them to keep out enemies and wild animals. A single road led into the town through a gate or an archway. Usually a cloud of dust told people in a town that someone was coming—in this case, a CROWD!



Now, WHAT do you do at a funeral when everyone is crying and wailing on the way to the graveyard—and suddenly, there is NO BODY to bury? There must have been an explosion of JOY! Suddenly, all the crying turned into laughing and praising God! **Read Luke 7:16–17 to find out what the funeral crowd said about Jesus.**

This crowd of people had just seen Jesus bring a dead man back to life! Certainly, the crowd going IN and the crowd going OUT must have joined in to have a HUGE party—maybe you could call it a “not-funeral” party! And of course, the story of this AMAZING miracle and this enormous party were soon big news in every little town for miles around Nain!

Jesus’ great compassion had caused Him to bring the widow’s son back to life. Her future, which had looked SO frightening before, was now secure! Jesus always does what is best. Not everyone has a loved one brought back to life—it’s not the BEST solution in every case. But in this case, it was the BEST solution!

God’s Word & Me

The widow’s future looked very insecure—scary and horrible—until Jesus showed up! Jesus did the VERY best thing He could do for her. He gave her back her son. Jesus didn’t raise EVERY relative back to life while He was here on Earth. It’s not the BEST thing in every situation. But He showed the widow—and everyone—that we can trust Him to do what is BEST for us. Why? Because He loves us more than anyone else does!

Read Romans 8:28 aloud from your Bible. **We KNOW that in HOW many things God works for our good? He tells us He will do what is the BEST thing for those who are “saved in keeping**

with his purpose.” That means being part of His family. So the VERY best thing to do is to join God’s family! (Invite children interested in knowing more about becoming members of God’s family to talk with you or another teacher after class. See “Leading a Child to Christ” on p. 12.)

- **Why do you think Jesus brought the young man back to life?** (To show He is God. To help the widow. To give her a secure future. It was the best thing for her and her son.)
- **What are some reasons people might be worried or scared about the future?** (Afraid bad things will happen. Worried about money. Worried about sick family members.)
- **What might make a kid your age feel worried or insecure?** (Bully at school. Parents fighting. Bad grades. Not understanding math.) **What can a kid do about those worries?** (Remember what God said. Tell God our worries. Ask Him for wisdom—a smart way to handle a problem.)
- **Why can we trust God to always do what is best for us?** (He said He would. He loves us. He wants what is best for us. He knows what is best for us. He sees our future.)
- Show Big Discovery Visual. **God says that He will always do what is best for each member of His family. We are secure—safe and protected in Him. People who are part of God’s family don’t have to worry about the future—or anything else! God will take care of our worries when we pray and ask Him to help us!**

Pray with children, thanking God for promising to do what is best for us and for inviting us to join His family so that we never have to worry or feel insecure!



Game Center

for younger children Luke 7:11–17

Collect



Bible, six to eight paper plates, marker.

Prepare



NOTE: If you prepared the paper-plate faces for the Bible story, use them for this game. If not, draw happy and sad faces on the fronts of plates. Lay plates facedown on the floor a short distance from where children will stand.

Do



1. Children line up at one side of playing area. Each child takes a turn to walk to plates.
2. Child turns over a plate. If the plate contains a happy face, all children repeat the Bible verse.
3. Child returns plate to facedown position and returns to line.
4. Children continue to take turns, repeating the Bible verse every time a happy face shows. Play several rounds, mixing up the order of the plates each time.

Talk About



- ⦿ **What are some reasons we might be happy?** (Children tell.)
What are some reasons we might be sad?



God's Word

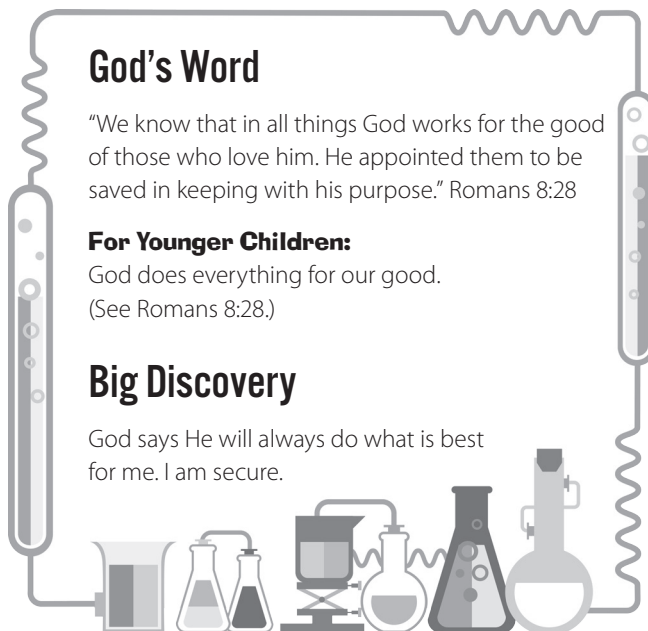
"We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him. He appointed them to be saved in keeping with his purpose." Romans 8:28

For Younger Children:

God does everything for our good.
(See Romans 8:28.)

Big Discovery

God says He will always do what is best for me. I am secure.



- ⦿ **In Dr. Luke's Bible account, we heard about a time when Jesus helped a very SAD woman. She was a widow. Why was she sad?** (Son had died. She was worried. Did not know who would take care of her.)
- ⦿ **How did Jesus help the sad woman?** (Made her son alive again.) **That was the BEST thing Jesus could do for this woman. Why doesn't Jesus make everyone who dies alive again?** (It's not the BEST thing for each person. He does what is BEST for each of us.)

Our Bible says that God does everything for our good. Pray briefly, **Dear God, thank You that You love us more than anyone else does. Thank You for always doing what is best for us. In Jesus' name, amen.**

For Older Children



Challenge older children to turn over two plates at a time. If faces match, older children repeat their age level's version of the Bible verse.

Game Center

for older children Luke 7:11–17

Collect



Bible, Game Cards (p. 98), masking tape, several round plastic lids for each team.

Prepare



Prepare Game Cards. Lay them in a widely spaced grid in an open area. Lay a masking-tape line about 6 feet (1.8 m) from cards. Set lids where each team will line up, and station a helper near the card grid who will retrieve lids.

Do

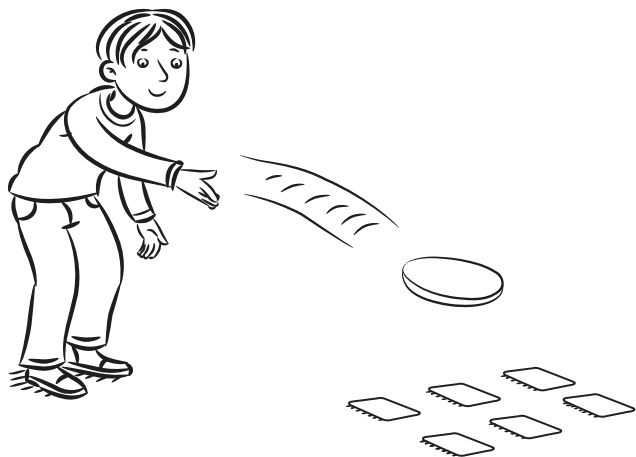


1. What does “Eureka” mean? (“I found it!”) That’s a word scientists use when they make a discovery! So when you toss your lid, if it lands on a card, yell, “EUREKA!” and pick it up.
2. Students form two teams. First student in line tries to toss a lid or lids onto a card.
3. Student yells, retrieves card and then returns to line.
4. Game ends when all cards are gone from floor. Students then work together to put verse cards in order and answer a question from the Talk About section. Play several rounds.

Talk About



- Let’s discover something about AIR. Air pushes against things all the time! What happens if we throw these lids in



God’s Word

“We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him. He appointed them to be saved in keeping with his purpose.” Romans 8:28

For Younger Children:

God does everything for our good.
(See Romans 8:28.)

Big Discovery

God says He will always do what is best for me. I am secure.



the same way as we throw a ball? (Don’t fly well. Too much surface area pushes against the air.)

- The air’s pushing is called resistance. What motion works better to fly a lid? (Toss like a Frisbee.) Why does this work better than the other way? (Edge of lid encounters less resistance.)
- This verse says God works all for the good of which people? (Those who love Him. Those who are saved. God’s family.)
- When we are worried or insecure about the future or about something happening right now, what do we need to remember? (God will work everything for our good, even when it doesn’t look like it now. God knows more than we do. We need to be part of God’s family.) God says we don’t have to worry. We can be secure! Repeat Romans 8:28 together.

Lead children in prayer, thanking God for His promise to work things out for good for those who love Him.

For Younger Children



Lay a second masking-tape line nearer to grid for younger children to stand on as they toss the lids.

Art Center

for younger children Luke 7:11–17

Collect



Bible, newspaper, tempera paints thinned with a little water, containers, cotton swabs, heavy paper, salt.

Prepare



Cover table with newspaper. Pour small amounts of thinned paint into containers. Set out paint containers and swabs.

Do



1. Give each child a sheet of heavy paper. **We're going to paint on our paper. When we are finished, we will experiment with putting salt on our painted papers.**
2. Children paint on paper as desired.
3. When a child has finished painting, he or she sprinkles salt over the paper. **What happens?**
4. Watch and talk about the way the salt absorbs the water and then makes crystal patterns in the paint as it dries.

Talk About



- ⦿ **What are some reasons we might be sad? What do we sometimes do when we are sad?** (Cry.)
- ⦿ **Do you know what is in our tears? Salt! We put salt on our painted papers, and there is salt like that in the tears we cry!**



God's Word

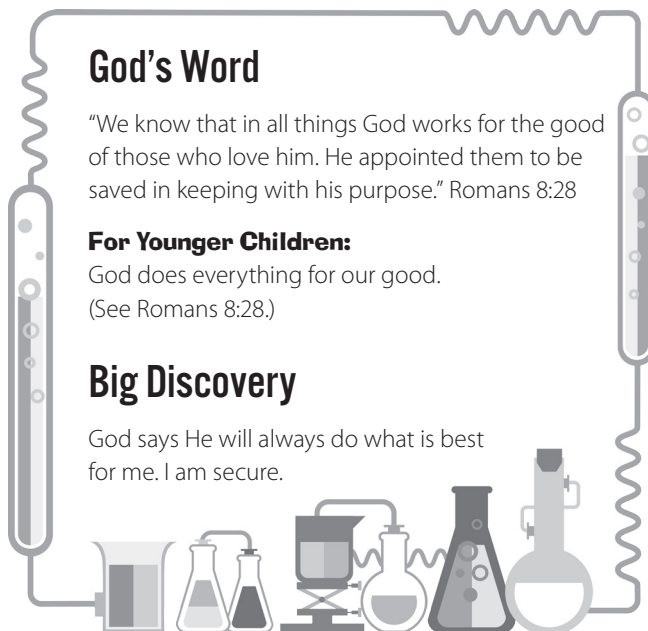
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For Younger Children:

God does everything for our good.
(See Romans 8:28.)

Big Discovery

God says He will always do what is best for me. I am secure.



- ⦿ **In Dr. Luke's Bible account, we heard about someone who was crying. Who was it? (Widow.) Why was she crying?** (Son had died. She was sad and maybe scared and worried.) **How did Jesus help make this very SAD woman into a very HAPPY woman?** (Made her son alive again.)
- ⦿ **Our Bible says that God does what is best for us. We can talk to Him about any time we are sad or worried.**

Pray briefly, **Dear God, thank You that You love us more than anyone. Thank You that we can tell You about whatever makes us sad. Thank You that we don't have to worry! In Jesus' name, amen.**

For Older Children



Encourage older children to paint or write words from the Bible verse or the Big Discovery on their papers. Provide other kinds of salt (kosher, rock salt) for them to try to see the differences in effect. Challenge them to tell why they think the salt changes the paint.

Art Center

for older children Luke 7:11–17

Collect



Bible, masking tape, butcher paper, markers, magazines or glossy ads, scissors, glues sticks.

Prepare



Use masking tape to post a length of butcher paper to a wall at students' eye level.

Do

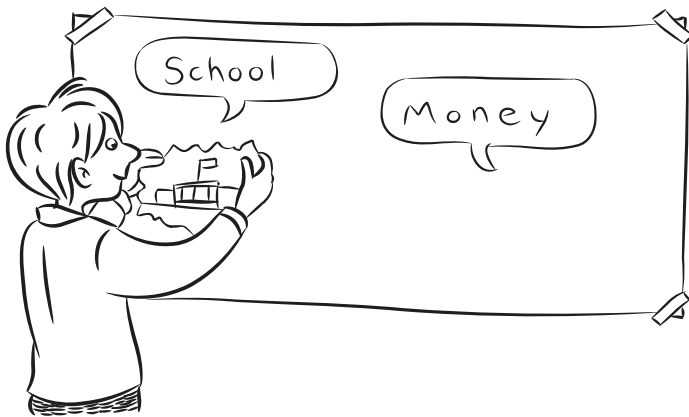


1. Talk with children about worries people have.
2. Kids illustrate reasons people worry, first drawing and writing in thought or conversation balloons as desired.
3. Students then find magazine or ad photos to make collage, illustrating reasons people worry.
4. As students finish adding to the collage, write across the top in large, open letters, "I don't need to worry. God will do what is best for me!" Children may color in the letters or may add messages of their own about God's care and wisdom.

Talk About



- **If we took a survey, what do you think people would say they worry most about?** (Kids tell.) **People spend a lot of**



God's Word

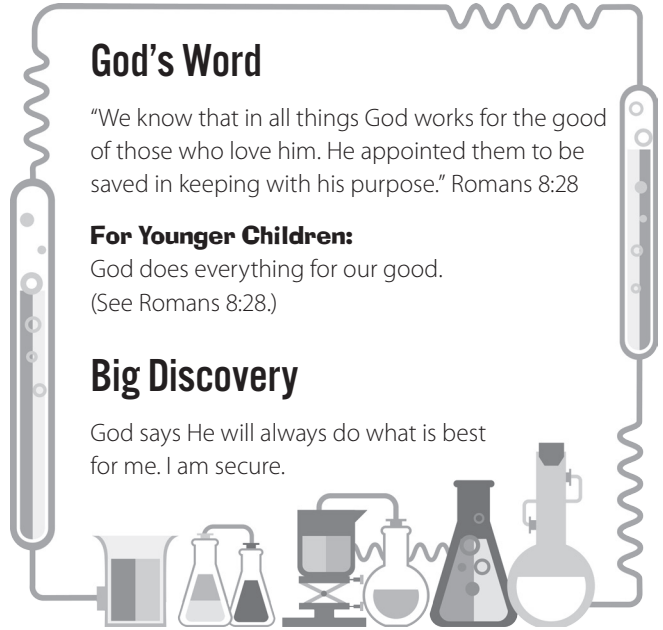
"We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him. He appointed them to be saved in keeping with his purpose." Romans 8:28

For Younger Children:

God does everything for our good.
(See Romans 8:28.)

Big Discovery

God says He will always do what is best for me. I am secure.



energy on worrying! It's a funny thing, but did you know that most of what we worry about never happens?

- **What can we do besides worry about future problems?**
(Tell God. Trust Him to help. Write worries in a prayer journal. Look at it later and write down the way God answered.)
- **When we are worried or insecure about the future or even about what's happening now, what can we remember?**
(That God will work everything for our good, even when it doesn't look like it now. That God knows more than we do. That we need to be part of God's family.) **God says we don't have to worry. If we are part of His family, we can be secure!**
Repeat Romans 8:28 together.

Lead children in prayer, thanking God for His promise to work things out for good for those who love Him.

For Younger Children



Younger children tear and cut out pictures to help older children. If they want to make individual collages, add them to the outside edge of the group collage.

Worship Center

Luke 7:11-17

Collect



Bibles, CD-ROM and CD player, Lesson 4 Big Discovery Visual, song lyrics (pp. 256, 253), whiteboard and marker, foam ball.

Prepare



Write out the words and reference for Romans 8:28 on a large whiteboard.

Team Game



Students form two groups. **First group, stand in a circle facing outward. Second group, stand in a circle around the first circle, facing inward.** Students walk in opposite directions in their circles as you play “Trust in the Lord.” Stop music as a signal to freeze. **Tell the person in front of you one thing people worry about.** Continue, asking students to tell each other one thing that makes them happy, one thing that makes them sad and one thing that makes them feel secure.

Bible Verse Game



Read Romans 8:28 aloud with children. Say the first word of the verse, and then toss a foam ball to an older child. Child says the next word of the verse and then tosses the ball to another kid and so on, until the entire verse has been repeated. Do this several times, challenging students to move more quickly each time!



God’s Word

“We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him. He appointed them to be saved in keeping with his purpose.” Romans 8:28

For Younger Children:

God does everything for our good.
(See Romans 8:28.)

Big Discovery

God says He will always do what is best for me. I am secure.



Song



You, or another leader, lead children in singing “Trust in the Lord,” adding motions and/or clapping if desired.

Prayer



Today we heard how Jesus helped a woman who was probably VERY worried about her future. Show Big Discovery Visual. **What’s our Big Discovery?** (Kids shout, “God says He will always do what is best for me! I am secure!”) **This BIG discovery reminds us that God does what is best for each one of us—and it’s not the same thing for all of us! But we are secure—safe in Him. Why can we trust God to always do what is best for us?** (He loves us. He knows what is best. He loves to give us what is best!)

Lead children in prayer, thanking God that He knows and gives what is best, and asking His help to remember to pray our worries to Him.

Song



You, or another leader, lead children in singing “Look Up to Jesus,” adding motions and/or clapping if desired. **God says He will do what’s best for us. This week, let’s be sure to look up and ASK His help, and then thank Him!**

"We know that

in all things

God works for

the good of

He appointed them

to be saved

in keeping with

his purpose."

those who love him.

Romans 8:28

Jesus stops a funeral.

Luke 7:11-17



It's a Dog's Life!



Romans 8:28

Uh-oh. The dog has torn up the Bible verse. Put the pieces together, and then memorize the verse!

God works
know
his
He
"We
to be
with
saved
that in
good of those
in
who love him.
appointed
keeping
purpose."
them
all things
for the

I Am Not Alone

Jesus Calms the Storm © Luke 8:22-25

God's Word

"God has said, 'I will never leave you. I will never desert you.'" Hebrews 13:5

For Younger Children:

God will never leave you. (See Hebrews 13:5.)

Big Discovery

God says He will not leave me.
I am never alone.



Teacher & Parent Connection

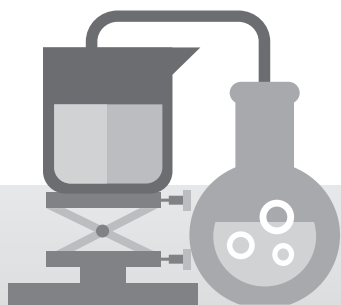
Many studies have been done to rate our greatest fears: public speaking, the unknown, pain, failure—we're a fearful lot. Some fears rate higher than others in some studies, and some studies note that the fear of death isn't as severe as some other fears—apparently because we all know that death is coming, but we work hard to live in denial of it!

One fear we all face is the fear of being left alone. Even sitting on a crowded beach in a tropical paradise, we can feel alone. It's not a matter of place, but of relationship (or lack of it!).

Jesus was in close and constant relationship with His disciples. They traveled together, ate together—they weren't alone then! But as the disciples tried to keep their boat afloat in a fierce wind that whipped up huge waves on the lake, threatening to sink their boat, they must have felt alone and desperate for help! They must have wondered, *Where's Jesus when we NEED HIM?*

But Jesus was showing them exactly how to respond to a crisis of fear and feeling alone and helpless: He took a nap, supremely confident in His Father's presence and ability to care for Him. The storm that terrified His friends rocked Him into a sound sleep! Of course, when they screamed at Him, He got right up and told the wind to stop—which it did. Their Help and Hope was right there in the boat all the time that they were frantically working and panicking!

Our Father is just as available to us as Jesus was to His friends in that storm. We can rest our anxious hearts and our troubled minds in Him when we remember that God is WITH us (present, as well as on our side in wanting what's best for us). We're not alone. He waits for us to ASK and then TRUST that He can do anything!



Planning Page

Choose which centers you will provide and the order in which children will participate in them (see pp. 14–18 for schedule tips and pp. 24–25 for guidelines in combining older and younger children). Also plan who will lead each center (for staffing tips, see pp. 19–21). Use the reproducible planning sheet (p. 240) to record your plans.

Bible Story Center

Bible Story

Jesus Calms the Storm • Luke 8:22–25

Younger Child Option

Big Discovery Box • Use half a pool noodle and toy boat to show story action.

Older Child Option

Big Discovery Box • Make sound effects during the story.

Game Center

Younger Child Option

Play game to blow a packing peanut and talk about God being with us.

Materials

Bible, masking tape, two packages of straws, packing peanuts, two chairs

Older Child Option

Play a sticky-hand relay to talk about how God sticks with us.

Materials

Bible, two rolls of masking tape, large bowl, craft pom-poms

Art Center

Younger Child Option

Experience floating a boat made in class to talk about remembering God is with us.

Materials

Bible, heavy-duty scissors, markers, straws, craft foam, dish tub, water, towels; for each child—a scrubbing sponge

Older Child Option

Create art about God being with us.

Materials

Bible, newspaper, watercolor paper, ballpoint pens, masking or painter's tape, water-based markers, swabs, water in small containers

Coloring/Puzzle Center

Younger Child Option

Review the Bible story while completing coloring page.

Materials

Lesson 5 Coloring Page (p. 113) for each student, crayons

Older Child Option

Review the Bible story while completing puzzle page.

Materials

Lesson 5 Puzzle Page (p. 114) for each student, pencils

Worship Center

For All

Participate in large-group activities to review the Bible verse and worship God together.

Materials

Bibles, CD-ROM and CD player, Lesson 5 Big Discovery Visual, song lyrics (pp. 253, 255), whiteboard and marker; for each child—Bingo Page (p. 112), pen or pencil

Bonus Theme Ideas

Bonus Theme Ideas can be used at any time during this session: as an additional activity center, to extend the session for a longer time or for added theme excitement.

Jet Propulsion Lab!

Air does more wonderful things than just keeping our lungs inflated. For a Jet Propulsion Challenge, give kids small balloons (water balloons work at least once). Standing on a line, they all inflate their balloons and at your signal release balloons to see which one goes farthest straight ahead! Note which ones go crooked or spiral to the ground. Talk about why that might be. Play as long as you have functioning balloons!



CD Décor!

An easy and fun way to decorate your lab space is to use up those old CDs that are lying around. Use permanent markers to color patterns on the blank sides, string them with fishing line (string two or three together, with space between them so that they twirl easily). Attach CDs to ceilings for a fun and flashy decoration that gives a retro vibe!



Molecular Fruit Models

Remember those molecular models from high school—colored spheres held in a structure by dowels? Provide melon balls, red grapes, cheese balls, toothpicks and paper plates. Invite kids to make and then name their own molecular models—before they eat them, of course!



Post a note alerting parents to the use of food. Also, check registration forms for possible food allergies.

Bible Story Center

for younger children Luke 8:22–25



Big Discovery Box

Before class, print out Lesson 5 Big Discovery Visual from CD-ROM. Place in the Big Discovery Box with a Bible, a tablecloth, half of a pool noodle and a small plastic toy boat.

Introduction



What do you think is in our Big Discovery Box today? Remove printout, tablecloth, pool noodle and boat. **Why do you think we have a tablecloth? A pool noodle? A little boat? Let's find out!** Remove Bible. **Here's the Bible. It will tell us what happened.** Spread tablecloth. **Let's pretend this is our boat.** Children sit on tablecloth. Invite a volunteer to hold pool noodle and another to hold boat. **Listen to find out when we will need to use these two things!**

Tell the Story



Jesus and His friends were together a LOT. They walked together. They talked together. They ate together. They did everything together! And wherever they went, lots and LOTS of people followed Jesus and His friends. So Jesus and His friends were hardly ever ALONE! But ONE time, Jesus' friends felt VERY scared and alone!

Jesus had been teaching many people, every day. They often sat by the big lake called Galilee. Jesus taught the people about God's kingdom. He told them stories to help them know what God is like. Jesus' friends stayed nearby. They listened, too.

One day, Jesus said to His friends, "Let's go across the lake to the other side." So they got into a small boat. They pulled on the ropes and put up the sail. They set the sail so that the breeze would move their boat to the other side of the lake. (Children rock gently.) Jesus lay down in the back of the boat. He went to sleep as the boat rocked along on the gentle waves. (Child sets boat on floor in front of you.)

But while Jesus slept, the breeze became a wind. (Child with pool noodle blows through noodle to try to move boat. Other children rock.) The wind got stronger and stronger. The waves in the lake got bigger and BIGGER.

The boat began to rock back and forth! (Children sway back and forth.) And the big waves began to splash over the sides of the boat. The boat was getting full of water! Jesus' friends tried to scoop out the water. (Children pretend to scoop.) But the waves kept splashing and pouring. The boat got more and MORE full of water—and now, it was SINKING!

Jesus' friends were afraid! They felt ALONE! Where was JESUS? Why wasn't He HELPING them? They were in TROUBLE! So, finally, Jesus' friends ran to wake Jesus.

They yelled, "Jesus! Jesus! Wake up! We're going to drown!"

Jesus got up. He looked around. He said to the wind and waves, "Stop it! Be still!"

And do you know what happened? The wind stopped—just like that! (Children sit still.) The big waves went back to being little ripples again—just like that! Jesus' friends were AMAZED! Jesus had been there all the time, ready to help!

Jesus looked at His friends. He asked, "Where is your faith in Me? Don't you know you can TRUST Me to take care of you?"

Jesus' friends looked at one another. They were AMAZED. They said, "Wow! Jesus tells even the WIND and the WAVES what to do, and they OBEY Him!"

They were glad to know that even when they were afraid, they were NOT alone. Jesus was RIGHT THERE! Jesus was with them. And Jesus can do ANYTHING!

God's Word & Me



Even when they FELT alone, Jesus' friends were not alone. Jesus was right there! He got up and stopped the storm. Show Big Discovery Visual and read it aloud. **God says He will not leave us. He is with us—we're never alone!**

Pray, **Dear God, thank You that You are with us. Please help us remember that when we feel alone. Help us trust You! In Jesus' name, amen.**

Bible Story Center

for older children Luke 8:22–25



Big Discovery Box

Before class, print out Lesson 5 Big Discovery Visual from CD-ROM. Place in the Big Discovery Box with a Bible.

You may invite a male team member to dress in Bible-times clothing and tell the story each time, introducing himself as Dr. Luke, the head researcher.

Practice sound effects before telling the story (see below).

Introduction



Open Big Discovery Box as you speak. **I wonder what Dr. Luke left in this box today?** Show Bible. **Ah! We have our source document—the Bible!** Show Big Discovery Visual. **Hmm. God says He is always with us. We're never alone! There are times I'm sure GLAD to know that's true!**

Today you all are the audio effects department. Practice a sound effect for each of the following: walking (pat thighs), wind (blow), waves (clap softly), amazed men (say, "WOW!"). Students respond as directed in the story. **Listen for cues to make the sound effects!**

Tell the Story



Jesus spent a lot of time teaching and healing people, often in the area around the Sea of Galilee. Galilee is a big lake in the northern part of the country of Israel.

Jesus and His friends were together a LOT. (Walking sound.) They walked and talked together. They ate together. They did everything together! And everywhere they went, there were lots and LOTS of people who followed Jesus and His friends. So Jesus and His friends were hardly ever ALONE! But there was ONE time when Jesus' friends felt scared AND alone! Here's what happened.

In Bible-times, fishing boats weren't very big. They were maybe twice as long as a rowboat. On this particular day, Jesus said to His friends, "Let's go to the other side."

So they got into their little boat and pulled on the ropes to set the sail. (Soft wind.) The breeze would push the boat along to just the place they wanted to go—just as it always did! Meanwhile, Jesus lay down. While they sailed, He fell fast asleep.

Suddenly, a great gust of wind told the men they were in for some trouble! (Big wind.) The Sea of Galilee has a deep valley on one side and some cliffs on the other. When the wind comes blowing through, it can stir up some wild waves! (Bigger wind!)

The wind whipped up the waves. (Wave sounds, louder and louder.) They came whooshing up, slapping the boat sideways. It was awful! The men took down the sail and began to use buckets to bail out that water, but the faster they bailed, the faster the waves filled their little boat! They were bailing out buckets of water as fast as their arms would go! But they weren't fast enough—the boat was sinking! It was about to go DOWN!

And guess who was ASLEEP through all of this? Jesus! With all the noise, the wind, the rocking and the waves, you might think He'd wake up. But no, He just kept on sleeping! His friends must have felt VERY alone and scared. WHY was Jesus asleep when they needed Him? How could He sleep at a time like THIS? They were in a panic, feeling helplessly ALONE!

Finally, Jesus' friends yelled at Him, "Master! Master! We're going to DROWN!"

And what do you think Jesus did? He got up. He stood up. He said to the wind, "STOP IT!" And it STOPPED. The waves went flat.

His friends must have sat there just staring at Jesus with their mouths open. He had stopped the wind and the waves—and everything was perfectly calm! (Amazed sounds.)

Jesus looked at them. "Where is your faith?" He asked them. They had been around to hear all He'd said. They had seen all He'd done! And yet, they still didn't seem to know that they could trust Jesus to take care of them!

He had not left them alone. They had gotten caught up in the panic of the wind, the waves and the possibility of the boat sinking! It took them a while to realize—*WAIT! Jesus is RIGHT HERE!* They'd never been alone!

Jesus proved to His friends that even when they didn't SEE Him, He was right there! He can take care of ANY problem! Even though bad things happen sometimes, Jesus is always with us! He wants us



to trust HIM. That means we go to HIM and tell HIM whenever there is anything that makes us worried, scared or lonely! And then, we TRUST that He CAN do what needs to be done and that He WILL do what is best for us, because He's WITH us—nearby, on our side, full of love for us!

God's Word & Me

Jesus' disciples were terrified when the crazy wind made wild waves that put them in danger! They felt alone, scared and helpless. But Jesus was THERE! He was completely able to take care of the problem! Read Hebrews 13:5 aloud from your Bible.

God says that He will not leave us. When we are part of God's family, we have His promise that we are never alone, even when we feel scared, sad or lonely. That's ANOTHER reason it's so important to join God's family! (Invite children interested in knowing more about becoming members of God's family to talk with you or another teacher after class. See "Leading a Child to Christ" on p. 12.)

- **Why do you think Jesus lay down and went to sleep?** (Was tired. Wasn't worried about anything. Was trusting God, His Father, to take care of Him.)

- **Why do you think Jesus' disciples waited until they were about to sink to wake Jesus?** (Thought they could solve their own problem. Didn't think of Him. Didn't want to bother Him. Didn't want to look weak or scared.)
- **Why do you think Jesus asked them, "Where is your faith?"** (They had been with Jesus. They had seen Him do miracles. They knew He could do anything. They had not asked His help until the boat was about to sink.)
- Show the Big Discovery Visual. **God tells us that He will not leave us. We're never alone. Sometimes we feel like those disciples, scared and alone, but Jesus is always just a prayer away—that's very close! And Jesus can do ANYTHING!**
- **When might a kid your age feel alone? What are some reasons that a person who feels alone might be glad to know Jesus is with him or her?**

Pray with children, thanking God that He is always with us and asking His help to remember that when we're feeling alone and scared, we can rest (as Jesus did), knowing He's with us.



Game Center

for younger children Luke 8:22–25

Collect



Bible, masking tape, two packages of straws, packing peanuts, two chairs.

Prepare



Lay masking-tape start and finish lines about 6 feet (1.8 m) apart. Lay a package of straws and a packing peanut where each team will line up. (Keep extras on hand.) Set a chair opposite where each line will stand.

Do



1. Children form two teams. Teams line up at start line. First child in line takes a straw from the package.
2. First child uses straw to blow the peanut around the chair and then back to the line in any way he or she chooses.
3. Each child takes a turn until all players have gone. First team to finish sits. Players keep their straws to play another round.
4. After each round, ask questions from the Talk About section. Repeat game as time and interest allow.



God's Word

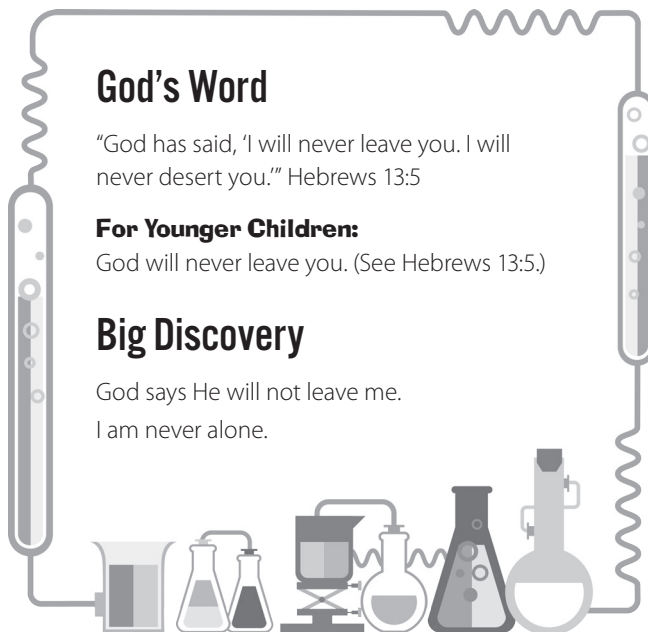
"God has said, 'I will never leave you. I will never desert you.'" Hebrews 13:5

For Younger Children:

God will never leave you. (See Hebrews 13:5.)

Big Discovery

God says He will not leave me.
I am never alone.



Talk About



- **What was moving the packing peanut?** (Air from our lungs.)
- **In Dr. Luke's Bible account, we heard about the time a LOT of air moved the water. What is that kind of air called?** (Wind.) **Jesus' friends were scared by the big waves the wind made! They felt alone. But who was with them?** (Jesus.) **Where was Jesus?** (There in the boat, sleeping.)
- **What did Jesus do when they woke Him?** (Told the wind to stop and it did.)
- **Our Bible says that God will never leave us. He will always be with us.**

Pray briefly, **Dear God, thank You for loving us. We are glad we are not alone. You are with us! Help us remember to ask You for help. In Jesus' name, amen.**

For Older Children



Challenge older children to repeat the Bible verse before and after blowing packing peanut.

Game Center

for older children Luke 8:22–25

Collect



Bible, two rolls of masking tape, large bowl, craft pom-poms.

Prepare



Lay a start line and finish line about 10 feet (3 m) apart. Lay a roll of masking tape where each team will line up. Set bowl containing pom-poms at finish line.

Do



1. Students form two equal teams. Each team lines up behind start line.
2. First player on each team wraps tape with sticky side out around his or her hand several times to make a “sticky hand.”
3. Player runs to press sticky hand into bowl, trying to stick as many pom-poms as possible to hand while teammates count to five. After count, player returns to tag next player.
4. Play continues until all have run. Teams count pom-poms. Team with the most pom-poms wins. At the end of the round, ask questions from the Talk About section. Play several rounds.

Talk About



- **Tape is amazing. Why doesn't tape stick to itself? Why does it stick to the pom-poms?** (Tape has a glue that sticks when pressed on but doesn't stick too tightly to be removed.)



God's Word

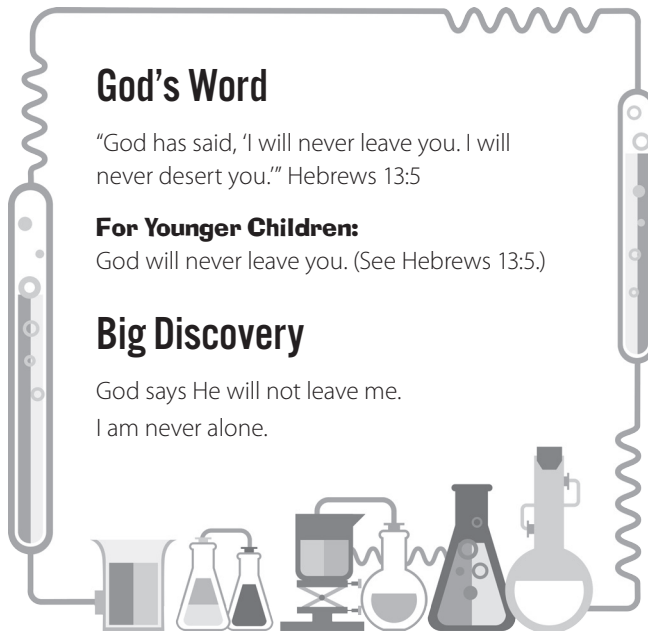
“God has said, ‘I will never leave you. I will never desert you.’” Hebrews 13:5

For Younger Children:

God will never leave you. (See Hebrews 13:5.)

Big Discovery

God says He will not leave me.
I am never alone.



- **Dr. Luke's account told about a time when Jesus' friends felt alone and scared. How did Jesus respond?** (Got up. Stopped the wind. Asked why they did not believe He could help them.)
- **Sometimes we feel scared and alone. What does God say about that?** (We're not alone. He won't leave us.)
- **When might a kid your age be glad to know God is with him or her?** (Kids tell.) **I'm glad that God sticks with us always—He's not like tape or glue. He is WITH us, just as Jesus was with His friends in the boat!** Repeat Hebrews 13:5 together.

Lead children in prayer, thanking God that He will not leave us alone and that we can trust Him to help us.

For Younger Children



Station a helper at each line to help put a “sticky hand” on a younger child.

Art Center

for younger children Luke 8:22–25

Collect



Bible, heavy-duty scissors, markers, straws, craft foam, dish tub, water, towels; for each child—a scrubbing sponge.

Prepare



Cut a point at the end of each sponge to make the bow of the boat. Use marker to mark a hole for the straw on the spongy side. Use one side of the scissors to make a hole at the mark. Cut straws in half. Cut craft foam into triangles or rectangles for sails, and cut two small slits in each piece for straw “mast” to slide through. Set tub of water on several towels to catch drips.

Do



1. Child chooses a sponge and a sail and then decorates both with markers as desired.
2. With help, child slides a straw through both slits in sail.
3. Child pushes straw into sponge at marked hole.
4. Children test their boats in the tub of water.

Talk About



- In Dr. Luke’s Bible account, we heard about a time when Jesus’ friends felt scared and alone. What did they do? (Tried to get water out of the boat. Woke Jesus.)



God’s Word

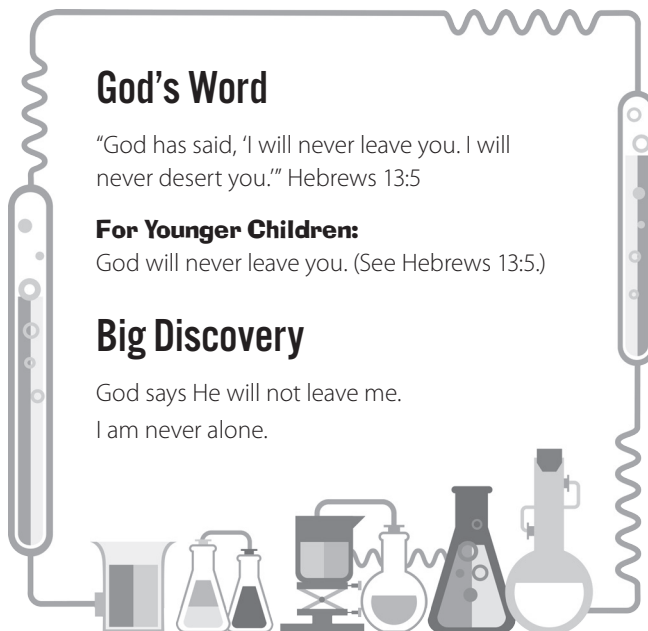
“God has said, ‘I will never leave you. I will never desert you.’” Hebrews 13:5

For Younger Children:

God will never leave you. (See Hebrews 13:5.)

Big Discovery

God says He will not leave me.
I am never alone.



- **Where was Jesus?** (He was with them. He was in the boat, taking a nap.) **How did Jesus help them?** (Told the wind to stop—and it did!)
- **When we feel alone or scared, what can we do?** (Remember God says He is with us. Ask God for help.)
- **Our Bible says that God will never leave us. Even when we FEEL alone, God is with us.**

Pray briefly, **Dear God, thank You that You are with us. We are glad You will help us remember to talk to You when we feel scared or alone. You will help us!**

For Older Children



Older children cut the pieces for their own boats. Encourage them to help younger children assemble and float their boats.

Art Center

for older children Luke 8:22–25

Collect



Bible, newspaper, watercolor paper, ballpoint pens, masking or painter's tape, water-based markers, swabs, water in small containers.

Prepare



Cover tables with newspaper; set out materials.

Do

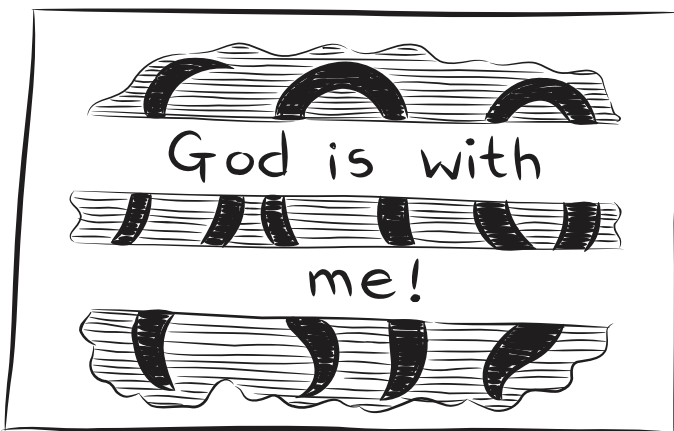


1. Give each child a sheet of watercolor paper.
2. Child uses a pen to write the Bible verse, Big Discovery or other reminders in lines across paper.
3. Child covers lines of writing with masking or painter's tape.
4. Child colors over page with markers and swabs water as desired to create a watercolor effect.
5. After paper dries, child removes the tape to reveal the words.

Talk About



- What makes the tape work? Why doesn't tape stick to itself? It sticks to the paper, but it can be pulled off. Why? (Kids tell ideas.) **Tape has an adhesive or glue on one side. It**



God's Word

"God has said, 'I will never leave you. I will never desert you.'" Hebrews 13:5

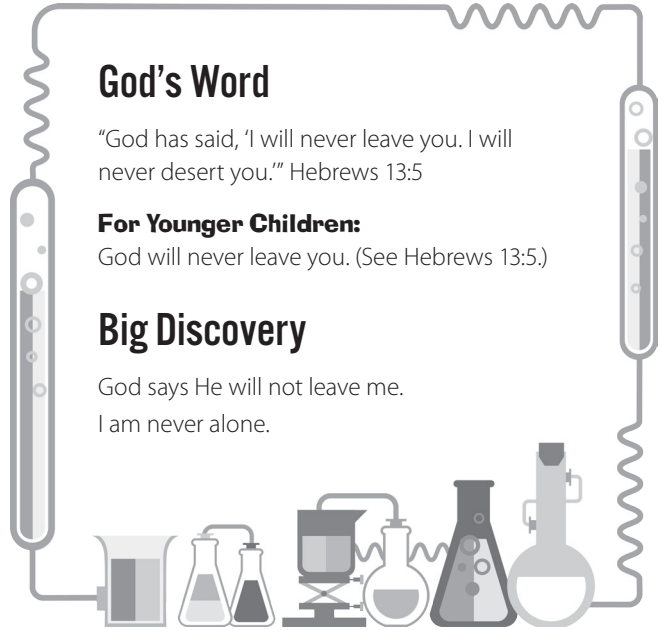
For Younger Children:

God will never leave you. (See Hebrews 13:5.)

Big Discovery

God says He will not leave me.

I am never alone.



works when we press on it. But the molecules in the glue move around a lot. The moving molecules make the adhesive not stick too tightly, so the tape can be removed. I'm glad that God isn't like that. He sticks with us all the time! The Bible tells us He will never leave us alone.

- Why do you think Jesus asked His friends, "Where is your faith?" (They had seen Jesus do miracles. They knew He could do anything. They woke Him only when they didn't know what else to do.)
- Sometimes we feel scared and alone, too. But Jesus is only a prayer away! He can do ANYTHING—and He sticks with us! Repeat Hebrews 13:5 together.

Pray briefly, thanking God for being with us, and asking His help to remember to ask His help whenever we have a problem.

For Younger Children



Younger children dictate words that a helper writes. They may use crayons instead of markers and water, but remind kids that if they color too hard over the tape, it may be harder to remove.

Worship Center

Luke 8:22–25

Collect



Bibles, CD-ROM and CD player, Lesson 5 Big Discovery Visual, song lyrics (pp. 253, 255), whiteboard and marker; for each child—Bingo Page (p. 112), pen or pencil.

Prepare



Write out the words and reference for Hebrews 13:5 on a large whiteboard.

Team Game



Team a younger child with an older child. Each child or team takes a Bingo Page and pen or pencil. **Let's find out more about one another. When you find a person who fits one of these descriptions, have that person sign the box on your page!** Children walk around and sign pages. Call time after several minutes. Person or team with the most signed boxes wins. **Getting to know others can help us enjoy being with them. That's true about God, too!**

Bible Verse Game



Read Hebrews 13:5 aloud with children from the whiteboard. Then erase a word or phrase. Students repeat verse each time you remove a word or phrase. Challenge them to repeat the verse aloud together after all of the words have been erased!



God's Word

"God has said, 'I will never leave you. I will never desert you.'" Hebrews 13:5

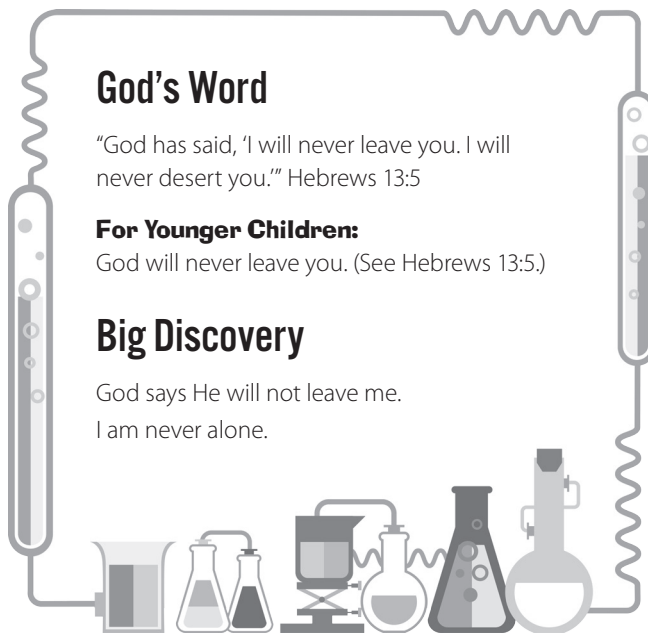
For Younger Children:

God will never leave you. (See Hebrews 13:5.)

Big Discovery

God says He will not leave me.

I am never alone.



Song



You, or another leader, lead children in singing "Look Up to Jesus," adding motions and/or clapping if desired.

Prayer



Today we talked about how the disciples felt alone and scared in the storm. But Jesus was there! Show Big Discovery Visual. **What's our Big Discovery? Let's shout it!** (Students shout, "God says He will not leave me! I am never alone!") **This BIG discovery reminds us that no matter WHAT is going on in our lives, God is with us. We are NEVER alone. We can talk to God about any little thing—or any big, scary thing.** Then lead children in prayer, thanking God for His love for everyone and His promise to be with the people in His family.

Song



You, or another leader, lead children in singing "Pray!" adding motions and/or clapping if desired. **Remember that God is with us—He's on our side and He is only a prayer away! This week, take time to pray about something you have not prayed about before. He's waiting to hear from you!**

**I have a
brother.**

**I won
a pet
fish.**

**I know
words in
Spanish.**

***I have a
birthday
in July.***

**I DON'T
HAVE A
FAVORITE
COLOR.**

***I love
pizza!***

**I like
math.**

**I'M
GOOD
AT
ART.**

**I love
to build
things.**

**I am
wearing
sneakers.**

**I have
a bike.**

**I like
school.**

**I like
to run.**

**I LIKE TO
PLAY VIDEO
GAMES.**

**I
HAVE
A
SISTER.**

**I like
to play
soccer.**

Jesus calms a storm.

Luke 8:22-25



Stormy Weather!

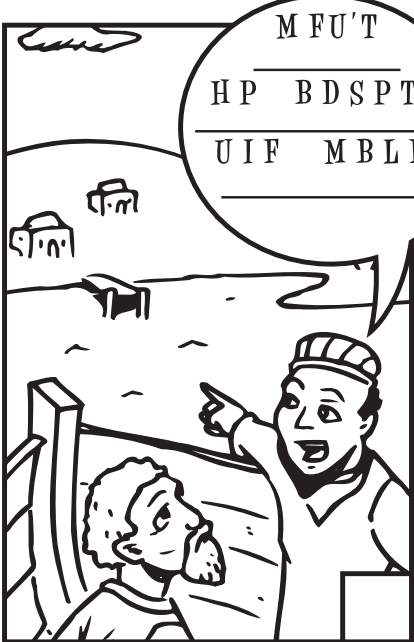
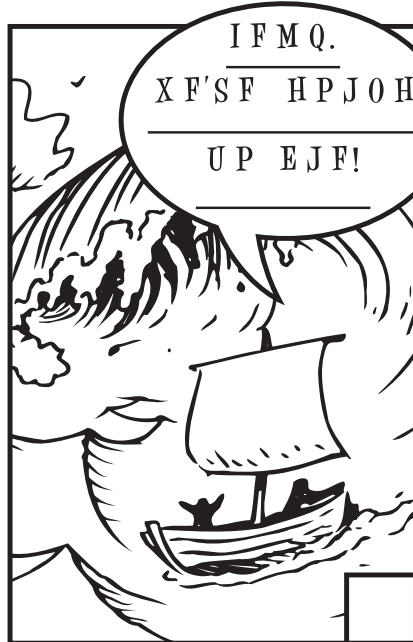
The Challenge

Luke 8:22-25

Jesus is calming the storm. Break the code to tell the story!

Code: D O Z

Replace with: A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z



The Super Challenge

Now that you've broken the code, put the story panels in the right order. Write the correct number of the panel in each bottom right corner.

I Can Have Hope

Jairus's Daughter © Luke 8:40-56

God's Word

"You are my hiding place. You will keep me safe from trouble." Psalm 32:7

For Younger Children:

God protects me from trouble.
(See Psalm 32:7.)

Big Discovery

God says He will help me in times of trouble. I can have hope.



Teacher & Parent Connection

There's nothing so heart-stopping as seeing your own child in trouble. When your child lies limp in a hospital bed or nearly unconscious with fever or crumpled by the road with an oddly bent limb—THAT kind of trouble calls on our desperation—and our need to ACT!

Jairus and his wife experienced that kind of desperation—and Jairus took action. His little girl was in dire trouble, and he knew where Jesus was! It took determined desperation to push his way through the crowd so that he could beg Jesus to come and heal his dying child. But imagine his hopelessness when, as he tried desperately to get Jesus BACK through that crowd, their progress was stopped! A hopeless woman (who'd spent all she had on doctors who did not help her) had touched Jesus' robe. Touching Jesus' clothing in faith had healed her! Considered perpetually unclean, unfit to be around others, SHE who had no hope was restored—but her healing seemed to be keeping Jesus from saving Jairus's dying child!

When the men arrived to tell Jairus that the girl was dead, his heart must have nearly stopped from hopelessness. But Jesus kept on moving toward Jairus's house! He'd heard the men's words. But He wasn't intimidated. Jesus' way is to look the impossible in the face and go toe-to-toe with death—because "nothing is impossible with God" (Luke 1:37).

JESUS kept on walking beside Jairus. JESUS was on His way to touch the child, no matter what He'd heard! And Jesus looked at Jairus and said, "Don't be afraid. Just believe" (Luke 8:50). What powerful, hope-giving words! Even in the worst moments, our Living Hope moves on with us through the fear and chaos. He gives us reason to hope and to look for His hand in even hopeless, heart-stopping moments!



Planning Page

Choose which centers you will provide and the order in which children will participate in them (see pp. 14–18 for schedule tips and pp. 24–25 for guidelines in combining older and younger children). Also plan who will lead each center (for staffing tips, see pp. 19–21). Use the reproducible planning sheet (p. 240) to record your plans.

Bible Story Center

Bible Story

Jairus's Daughter • Luke 8:40–56

Younger Child Option

Big Discovery Box • Use a towel to portray characters during the story.

Older Child Option

Big Discovery Box • Use Conversation Cards (p. 126) during the story.

Art Center

Younger Child Option

Experience color mixing while talking about God's protection.

Materials

Bible, newspaper, card stock, water-based markers, water in spray bottles, paper towels

Older Child Option

Create a pocket book and talk about God's protection in trouble.

Materials

Bible, white paper, markers, construction paper, scissors, staplers

Game Center

Younger Child Option

Play a game bouncing a beach ball and talk about God's protection.

Materials

Bible, sheet, beach ball

Older Child Option

Play a relay game and talk about God's help in hopeless situations.

Materials

Bible, masking tape, bucket of small items in various colors, buckets in same colors as items

Coloring/Puzzle Center

Younger Child Option

Review the Bible story while completing coloring page.

Materials

Lesson 6 Coloring Page (p. 127) for each student, crayons

Older Child Option

Review the Bible story while completing puzzle page.

Materials

Lesson 6 Puzzle Page (p. 128) for each student, pencils

Worship Center

For All

Participate in large-group activities to review the Bible verse and worship God together.

Materials

Bibles, CD-ROM and CD player, Lesson 6 Big Discovery Visual, song lyrics (pp. 248, 250), whiteboard and marker, beach ball

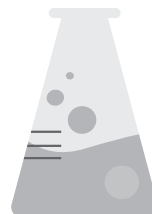


Bonus Investigation!

Use this investigation at any time during this session: as an additional activity center, to extend the session for a longer time or for added theme excitement.

A Shining Reaction!

Got silver? Here's a fun and dramatic way to clean it without rubbing! Get out your protective gear and impress the kids!



You need:

- a dish tub or a disposable aluminum baking pan
- tarnished pieces of silver small enough to set inside the tub (spoon, nut dish, etc.)
- aluminum foil (if not using an aluminum pan, since silver must be in contact with aluminum)
- water (enough to cover the items you'll be de-tarnishing)
- a way to heat the water (electric kettle, hot plate)
- oven mitts to protect hands from hot water
- baking soda, about 1 cup (240 ml) for every gallon (3.76 L) of water you heat

Prepare:

If you're not using an aluminum pan, lay a sheet of aluminum foil in the bottom of the dish tub. Set the silver objects on the foil.

Here's what you do:

- Heat the water to boiling.
- Set the hot water container in a sink or on a folded towel and add baking soda. (The mixture may bubble and spill over a bit.)
- Pour the water and baking soda mixture over the tarnished silver, covering it completely.

(Badly tarnished silver may need for the solution to be reheated and poured again.)

WHAT HAPPENS to the SILVER?

Here's why it works:

Silver forms a compound with sulfur in the air. It's a black compound called silver sulfide—which we call "tarnish."

Aluminum (as in the foil or a pan) can also form a sulfide with sulfur. In fact, the sulfur "likes" the aluminum better than it does the silver. (Or, in science-speak, the sulfur has a "greater affinity" for aluminum than it does for silver.) So, the sulfur atoms are attracted to the aluminum foil and away from the silver!

The baking soda and hot water solution actually carries the sulfur from the silver to the aluminum. You may even see tiny yellow flakes of sulfur in the bottom of the pan.

The silver must touch the aluminum because a tiny electric current flows between the metals during the reaction! That makes this an electrochemical reaction. Amazing!

Bible Story Center

for younger children Luke 8:40–56

Big Discovery Box



Before class, print out Lesson 6 Big Discovery Visual from the CD-ROM. Place in the Big Discovery Box with a Bible and a towel.

Introduction



What do you think could be in our Big Discovery Box today?

Remove printout, Bible and towel. **Here's the Bible! It is going to tell us what happened when someone had BIG trouble!** Show and read aloud Big Discovery Visual. **God says He will help us when we're in trouble. We can have hope! Show towel. Why do you think we have a towel?** (Children tell.) **It wasn't because someone went swimming. Listen to find out!**

Tell the Story



One day a large crowd of people watched as a boat came across some water. When the boat arrived at the shore, Jesus and His helpers got out of the boat. The crowd of people pushed in eagerly around Jesus. (Drape towel from shoulder to represent Jesus.) They all wanted to see Him.

There was an important man in the crowd. His name was Jairus (JAI-rus). (Wrap towel around head to represent Jairus.) Jairus squeezed through the crowd to get to Jesus. When he reached Jesus, he bowed down. (Bow head.)

Jairus begged, "Jesus, my little girl is dying. Please come quickly to my house. If You come and touch her, she will not die."

Jesus immediately began to walk with Jairus to his house. But it wasn't easy! Everyone in the crowd was still trying to get as close to Jesus as they could get! Jesus and His friends had to push their way through the crowd of people.

(Drape towel over head for sick woman.) Suddenly, a woman who had been sick for a LONG time pushed through the crowd. She reached out and touched Jesus' clothes. (Hold towel in one hand; touch it with the other.) She was HEALED! YAY! Jesus knew someone

had touched Him. MANY people were crowding around Him! Jesus' friends said, "We can't tell who touched You!"

But Jesus asked again. This was important, even though Jairus was waiting! Soon the woman came and knelt at Jesus' feet. He stopped to talk with her.

But while Jesus was still talking to the woman, some men came through the crowd. They came to Jairus. "Don't bother Jesus anymore," they said. "Your daughter is dead."

Poor Jairus! He must have been SO SAD. It was too late! But Jesus kept right on walking to Jairus's house!

Jesus looked at Jairus and said, "Don't be afraid, Jairus. Just believe."

When they got to the house, it was FULL of people! They were all crying and wailing loudly.

Jesus called out, "Why all this crying? This girl is not dead. She is just asleep." Jesus knew the girl would live again. But the people laughed at Him. They knew the girl was DEAD! They didn't think Jesus could do anything.

Jesus went to the room where the girl's body lay. Many neighbors and friends were there. Jesus asked them all to leave. Jesus, a few of His friends and the girl's parents stayed in the room where her body was on the bed. (Drape towel over face for dead girl.)

Jesus took her hand and said, "Little girl, get up."

(Remove towel.) Just like that, the girl opened her eyes! She sat up. Then she got out of bed and walked around the room. She was alive! Her mom and Jairus were so happy! Even in BAD trouble, even when someone was DEAD, Jesus gave Jairus hope—because Jesus can do ANYTHING!

God's Word & Me



Jesus helped Jairus's family when they were in trouble. Show Big Discovery Visual and read it aloud. **God says He will help us in times of trouble, so we can always have hope!**

Pray, **Dear God, thank You that we can have hope because You love us and help us. In Jesus' name, amen.**

Bible Story Center

for older children Luke 8:40–56

Big Discovery Box



Before class, print out Lesson 6 Big Discovery Visual from the CD-ROM. Prepare Conversation Cards (p. 126). Place in the Big Discovery Box with a Bible.

You may invite a male team member to dress in Bible-times clothing and tell the story each time, introducing himself as Dr. Luke, the head researcher of the materials.

Distribute Conversation Cards before telling the story (see below).

Jesus could help his daughter! So he must have had great hope when Jesus started walking with him toward his house.

But Jesus and Jairus had LOTS of company! The whole CROWD moved with them, jostling and bumping one another! And as they walked, someone else pushed through the crowd! A sick woman had joined the crowd, hoping Jesus could heal her. She'd been sick for 12 YEARS. She'd spent all her money on doctors. But no one could help her.

Now Jesus was walking away with Jairus! What could she DO? The woman thought, *If I can just touch Jesus' clothes, I'll be healed!* So she pushed through, and when she was finally close enough, she reached out and touched the edge of His clothes. Just like that, she KNEW that she was completely well! Jesus stopped. (Volunteer reads Conversation Card #2.)

Jesus' friends were stunned. People were EVERYWHERE! ALL of them were touching Jesus! But Jesus kept looking around. Even though Jairus's little girl needed help, THIS was important. That's when the woman realized that she HAD to tell Jesus—and thank Him! She knelt at Jesus' feet, trembling. Jesus looked down at her. (Volunteers read Conversation Card #3 and #4.)

But while Jesus was still talking to the woman, some OTHER people came pushing through the crowd. They were friends of Jairus, who was still waiting anxiously for Jesus to come home with him! (Volunteer reads Conversation Card #5.)

Oh no! This was just what Jairus had FEARED! But Jesus looked at Jairus. Maybe He put a hand on Jairus's shoulder. (Volunteer reads Conversation Card #6.)

Would Jairus believe his friends or Jesus? Jesus kept on walking to Jairus's house, and Jairus walked on with Jesus!

Jesus and Jairus arrived at Jairus's house, where people were crowded inside, weeping and wailing and crying loudly. Here's what Jesus told them. (Volunteer reads Conversation Card #7.)

But the crowd just laughed at Him—they KNEW she was dead.

Jesus shooed them all outside. Then He took His friends Peter, James and John, along with Jairus and his wife, into the room where the girl's lifeless body lay. Jesus took the girl's hand. (Volunteer reads Conversation Card #8.)

Introduction



Open Big Discovery Box as you speak. **I wonder what Dr. Luke might have left here today!** Show Bible. **Ah! We have our source document again.** Show Big Discovery Visual. **God says He will help us in times of trouble, so we can have hope. Listen today to find out how Jesus turned a couple of HOPELESS situations into HAPPY situations!**

And here's YOUR part! Give Conversation Cards to volunteers. Volunteers read cards aloud as directed in the story.

Tell the Story



Jesus and His friends had just sailed from the far side of the Sea of Galilee. When they pulled the boats up on shore, a big crowd was already gathered to welcome them!

Through that crowd of people, one man was pushing his way toward Jesus. He was desperate! Jairus (JAI-rus) was an important man in town, in charge of the town's synagogue, the place where everyone gathered to worship and learn about God. So Jairus was kind of like the mayor of the town. **Listen to find out what he wanted.** (Volunteer reads Conversation Card #1.)

What do you think your parents would do if you were so sick that they thought you might die? Jairus clearly believed that



The girl opened her eyes. She was ALIVE! She sat up, then got up. Then she walked around! Jesus told her parents to get her something to eat. Her parents must have stared with their mouths open, completely ASTONISHED!

The girl really had been dead; but now, because of Jesus' words, she was ALIVE—and not sick anymore! She was completely well!
What do you think those people who were wailing and waiting outside said when they saw the girl alive again? WOW! They had laughed at Jesus, but now they knew: Jesus can turn any HOPELESS situation into a HOPE-FILLED one!

God's Word & Me

Jesus met two VERY hopeless people on this day. They both had BIG troubles. But Jesus showed that He is COMPLETELY able to turn the biggest trouble and the most hopeless situations into hopeful ones!

Read Psalm 32:7 aloud from your Bible. **King David, who lived LONG before Jesus, wrote these words. He describes God as a place to hide when trouble comes. God protects and helps us when trouble comes. Of course, the VERY best way to hide in God's safety starts with joining God's family!** (Invite children interested in knowing more about becoming members of God's family to talk with you or another teacher after class. See "Leading a Child to Christ" on p. 12.)

- **In Dr. Luke's account, who pushed through the crowd to get to Jesus?** (Jairus. Sick woman. Jairus's friends.) **Why did each of them come to Jesus?** (Students tell.)
- **What did Jesus tell Jairus when Jairus heard that his daughter was dead?** (Don't be afraid. Just believe.) **Why do you think He said that?** (Jesus wanted Jairus to believe, even when it looked hopeless.)
- **Jesus could have told Jairus, "Your daughter is healed" and healed her that way. Why do you think Jesus went to the house instead?** (Students give ideas.)
- Show Big Discovery Visual. **Everyone, everywhere, has trouble and bad times. Even kids who are part of God's family might feel hopeless when there's too much trouble. But God says that He will help us when trouble comes. That gives us great hope!**
- **What are words you might say to another kid who's feeling hopeless? What could you say that might help the kid have hope?**

Pray with children, thanking God that He will protect and help us in times of trouble and give us hope when we think we're in a hopeless situation!



Game Center

for younger children Luke 8:40–56

Collect



Bible, sheet, beach ball.

Do

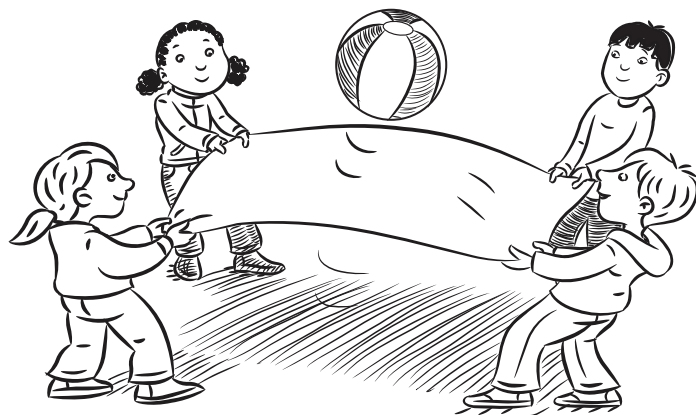


1. Children stand around sheet, each one holding onto an edge or corner.
2. Set beach ball in the center of the sheet. Children practice bouncing the ball by pulling on the sheet. (For very young children, this will be enough of a challenge.)
3. If children are able to keep the ball bouncing, call out two children's names. Those children duck under the sheet to trade places.
4. Repeat with different names or descriptions ("kids wearing red"), as time and interest allow, challenging children to keep the ball bouncing even while people are moving underneath the sheet.

Talk About



- Was it easy or hard to keep the ball bouncing? What are some other things that are hard to do?
- In Dr. Luke's Bible account, we heard how Jairus's daughter died. Jairus had no hope! What did Jesus say to him? (Don't be afraid. Just believe.) What did Jesus do? (Made the girl alive again.)



God's Word

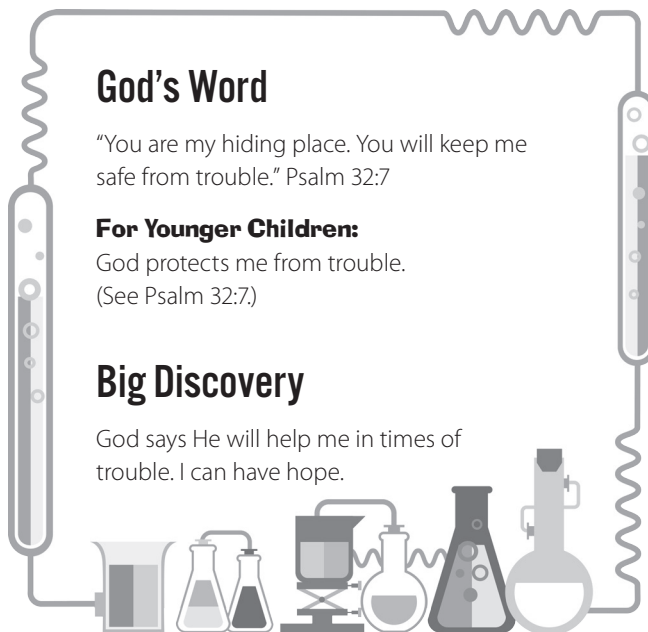
"You are my hiding place. You will keep me safe from trouble." Psalm 32:7

For Younger Children:

God protects me from trouble.
(See Psalm 32:7)

Big Discovery

God says He will help me in times of trouble. I can have hope.



- Going under the sheet feels like being in a hiding place! The Bible says God is where we can hide and feel safe. Our Bible says that God protects us from trouble. Even when trouble is bad and we don't feel hopeful, we can ask God's help.

Pray briefly, **Dear God, thank You for protecting us. When we are in trouble, please help us remember that You will help and protect us!**

For Older Children



For older children, mark two beach balls ("1" and "2"). Place both on the sheet. Designate half of the children as team 1, other half as team 2. Each tries to bounce the other team's beach ball off the sheet, while keeping own team's ball on the sheet.

Game Center

for older children Luke 8:40–56

Collect



Bible, masking tape, bucket of small items in various colors, buckets in same colors as items.

Prepare



Lay two masking-tape lines about 20 feet (6 m) apart. Set bucket at finish line, and set out colored containers behind bucket.

Do



1. Students form two equal teams and line up behind start line.
2. First player runs to bucket, grabs an item from it and then must place it in the bucket of matching color before running back to tag next player in line.
3. Play continues until one team finishes. Between rounds, ask questions from the Talk About section. Play several rounds.

Talk About



- **How could you tell what bucket to put your item in?** (Can see colors. Can tell which color matches the item.)



God's Word

"You are my hiding place. You will keep me safe from trouble." Psalm 32:7

For Younger Children:

God protects me from trouble.
(See Psalm 32:7)

Big Discovery

God says He will help me in times of trouble. I can have hope.



- **Some people are color-blind. In fact, many males are at least a little bit color-blind. Some people are VERY color-blind. How could we sort those items if we were color-blind? How could we tell when a traffic light was green or red? Would that be a big problem or a little problem? Why or why not?** (Kids tell.)
- **Jairus had a BIG problem. What was it?** (Daughter died.) **His BIG problem became a NO-HOPE problem! What did Jesus tell him when Jairus heard this news?** (Don't be afraid. Just believe.)
- **What are some hopeless situations a kid your age might have?** (No friends. Bully at school. Mean brother or sister.) **The Bible says God is a safe place, a hiding place. He will help us when trouble comes!** Repeat Psalm 32:7 together.

Lead children in prayer, thanking God for His protection and help in trouble, even when situations look hopeless.

For Younger Children



To help younger children play this game successfully, demonstrate game action or team each one with an older child for the first round.

Art Center

for younger children Luke 8:40–56

Collect



Bible, newspaper, card stock, water-based markers, water in spray bottles, paper towels.

Prepare



Cover tables with newspaper. Set out materials.

Do

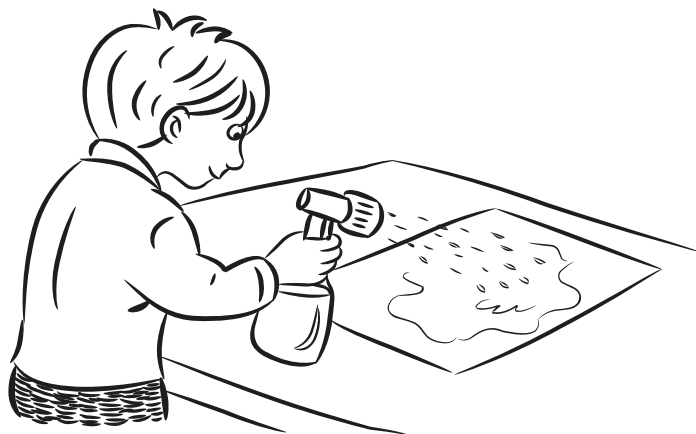


1. Give each child a piece of card stock. If you want to add an umbrella shape to pictures, draw it with permanent marker.
2. Child draws and colors with markers as desired.
3. Each child takes a turn with a spray bottle, lightly and quickly “raining” on artwork to watch the colors bleed and mix.
4. Children may also blot pictures with paper towels to see the effect.

Talk About



- **When it rains, what do we like to have?** (Umbrella. Raincoat. Hat. Shelter.)
- **When we are under an umbrella, it protects us from getting wet. God says He will protect us from trouble. How does that make you feel?** (Glad. Hopeful.) **In Dr. Luke’s Bible account, we heard how Jairus’s daughter died. Jairus was**



God’s Word

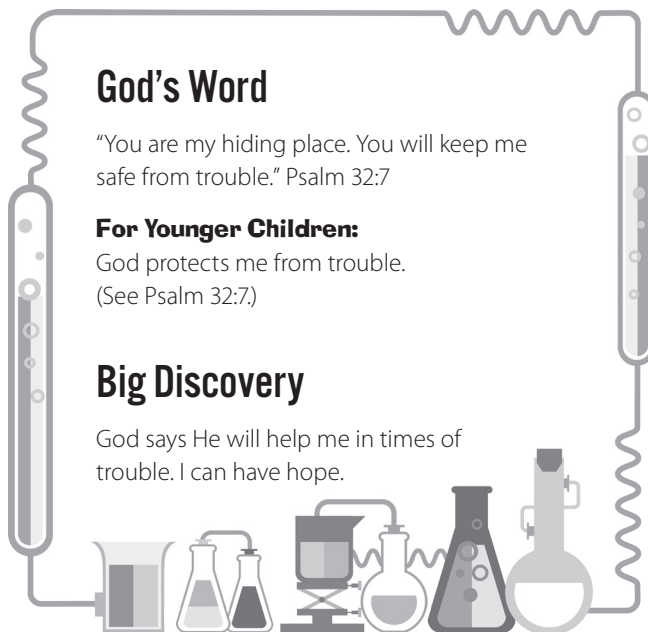
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For Younger Children:

God protects me from trouble.
(See Psalm 32:7)

Big Discovery

God says He will help me in times of trouble. I can have hope.



SAD. He had no hope! What did Jesus say to him? (Don’t be afraid. Just believe.) **What did Jesus do?** (Made the girl alive.)

- **Being under an umbrella makes us feel safe from getting wet in the rain. The Bible says God is where we can feel safe. Our Bible says that God protects us from trouble.** Repeat Psalm 32:7 together, clapping on “God,” “me” and “trouble.” Repeat several times.
- **Even when trouble is bad and we don’t feel hopeful, we can ask God’s help.**

Pray briefly, **Dear God, thank You for loving us. Thank You for protecting us. Please help us remember that we can ask You for help!**

For Older Children



Encourage older children to draw umbrella shapes in permanent marker on their papers, and then to write the Bible verse in crayon or permanent marker beneath the umbrella shapes before they color with water-based markers.

Art Center

for older children Luke 8:40-56

Collect



Bible, white paper, construction paper, scissors, staplers, markers.

Prepare

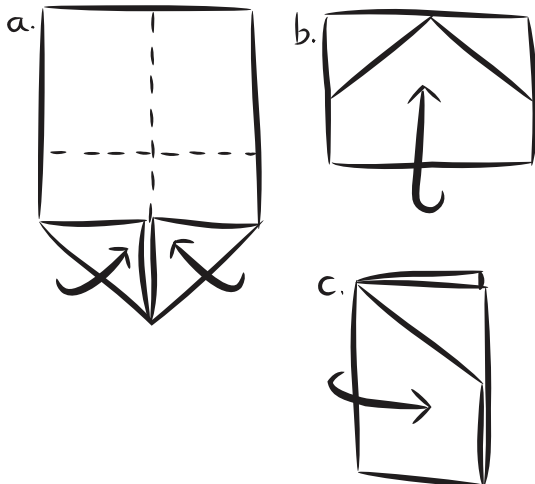


Make a sample pocket book following the directions below.

Do



1. Give each child a sheet of paper. Child folds paper into fourths and opens paper. Child folds a corner to long center crease. Repeat with other corner (sketch a).
2. Child then folds paper, bringing point of the two triangles to opposite edge so that folded corners are inside (sketch b). Child folds at center crease again. This makes one page of a pocket book (sketch c). Child repeats process as desired to make more pocket pages.
3. Child cuts and folds construction paper to cover book. Child then opens construction paper and lays open edges of pages together into fold. Child closes cover and staples to bind pages into a pocket book.
4. Using other paper, child cuts slips on which to write or draw about situations that make a kid feel hopeless or in need of protection. Child tucks those into a book pocket. Into another pocket, child tucks prayers, Bible verses, etc. that remind him or her of God's protection.



God's Word

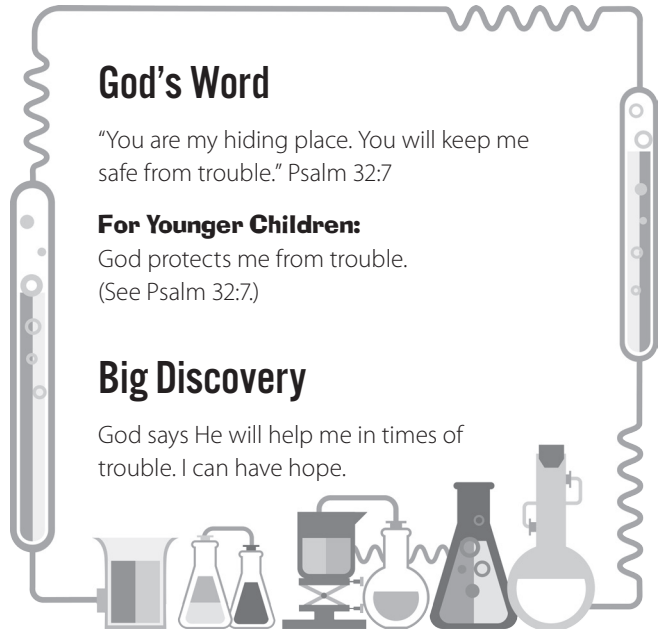
"You are my hiding place. You will keep me safe from trouble." Psalm 32:7

For Younger Children:

God protects me from trouble.
(See Psalm 32:7)

Big Discovery

God says He will help me in times of trouble. I can have hope.



Talk About



- **Lots of things might cause us to be troubled or to be IN trouble! The weather can cause trouble. Cars can cause trouble. What are some things that cause trouble for a kid your age?** (Children respond. Write responses on paper.)
- **Jairus had big, NO-HOPE trouble. What was it?** (Daughter was sick, then died.) **What did Jesus tell him when Jairus heard this news?** (Don't be afraid. Just believe.)
- **What word picture is in our Bible verse?** (God is like a hiding place. God protects us like that.) **The Bible says God is a safe place, a hiding place. He will help us when trouble comes!** Repeat Psalm 32:7 together.

Lead children in prayer, thanking God for His help that gives us hope.

For Younger Children



Help younger children fold papers for each pocket page and staple books together. Provide magazines from which they may cut pictures that remind them of situations or of God's protection.

Worship Center

Luke 8:40-56

Collect



Bibles, CD-ROM and CD player, Lesson 6 Big Discovery Visual, song lyrics (pp. 248, 250), whiteboard and marker, beach ball.

Prepare



Write out the words and reference for Psalm 32:7 on a large whiteboard.

Team Game



Group forms two teams. Teams stand facing each other. **Work together to tap the beach ball back and forth. See if you can keep the volley going. But once you've touched the ball two times, you must sit down. Let's see whose team is all seated first!** Toss the beach ball. Students tap the ball and keep the volley going. Team seated first wins!

Bible Verse Game



Read Psalm 32:7 aloud with children from whiteboard. Assign a word or phrase to groups of children (kids wearing sneakers say, "hiding place," for instance). When all words and phrases are assigned, each group stands to say part and then sits. After doing this several times, repeat the entire verse together.



God's Word

"You are my hiding place. You will keep me safe from trouble." Psalm 32:7

For Younger Children:

God protects me from trouble.
(See Psalm 32:7)

Big Discovery

God says He will help me in times of trouble. I can have hope.



Song



You, or another leader, lead children in singing "Following Jesus," adding motions and/or clapping if desired.

Prayer



Today we talked about Jairus's trouble and how he must have felt hopeless. Show Big Discovery Visual. What's our Big Discovery? (Students shout, "God says He will help me in times of trouble! I can have hope!") **This BIG discovery reminds us that even when things look bad, even hopeless, God will protect us. He's ready to help us. That gives us HOPE!** Then lead children in prayer, thanking God for His promise to help us in trouble and for giving us hope.

Song



You, or another leader, lead children in singing "I Worship You, Lord," adding motions and/or clapping if desired. **God says He will protect us and help us when we're in trouble. This week, when trouble comes, let's remember God is ready to help us, no matter how bad things seem! He is our hiding place from trouble!**

Conversation Card #1

"Rabbi! Master!
Please, come to my house!
I'm begging You to heal my little
daughter! She is my only daughter!
She's only 12 years old!
And she's DYING!"

Conversation Card #2

"Who touched
My clothes? Someone
touched Me. Power has
gone out from Me."

Conversation Card #3

"Oh Rabbi! Sir! I only
touched the edge of
Your clothes! And Look!
I am WELL!"

Conversation Card #4

"Daughter, your
faith has healed you.
Go in peace."

Conversation Card #5

"Don't bother
the rabbi anymore.
Your daughter
is dead."

Conversation Card #6

"Don't be afraid,
Jairus. Just believe.
She will be healed."

Conversation Card #7

"Stop your
wailing! She is not
dead but asleep."

Conversation Card #8

"Little one, get up!"

Jesus heals Jairus's daughter.

Luke 8:40-56

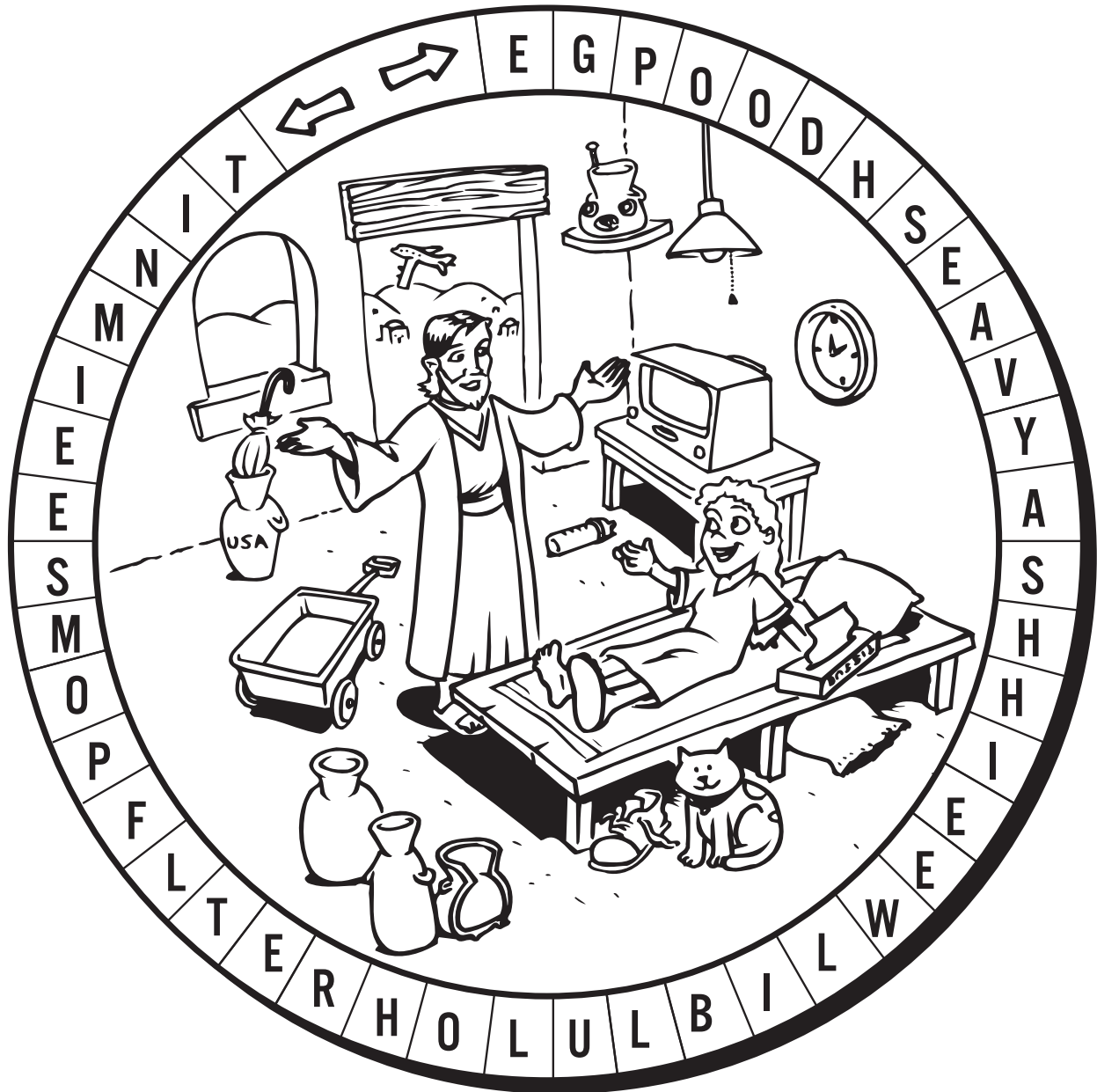


Going in Circles!



Luke 8:40-56

When Jairus's daughter got sick, Jairus asked Jesus for help. Start at the G and go around the circle clockwise, skipping every other letter as you go; go in the opposite direction when you get to the arrow. On the blank lines, write each letter you hit, until you use all the letters. You'll find today's Big Discovery!



Circle all the things wrong in this picture.

I Can Learn God's Word

Mary Listens to Jesus © Luke 8:1-3; 10:38-42

God's Word

"Your word is like a lamp that shows me the way.
It is like a light that guides me." Psalm 119:105

For Younger Children:

Your Word helps me know which way to go.
(See Psalm 119:105.)

Big Discovery

God says His Word can help me.
I can learn God's Word.



Teacher & Parent Connection

We Christians are often encouraged to "get involved" in more good activities. In our attempts to show Jesus our love, we might volunteer to do more social good. We might sign up for church-related activities. Our culture generally affirms these efforts as a great thing.

But sometimes, people who choose to follow Jesus are encouraged from the beginning to quickly "stuff themselves" with good activities offered at local churches to the point that they "burn out on church" before they've ever had much chance to grow spiritually!

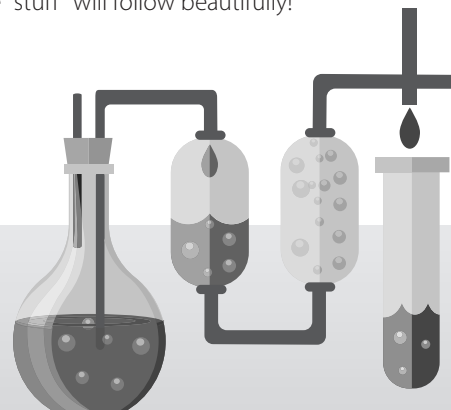
There is no "Christian" activity (no matter how good) that can take the place of spending time one-on-one with Jesus. Spending time reading God's Word, praying and listening to Him is the "soul food" of our spiritual lives—there isn't any substitute. We WILL starve spiritually without it! (That's the reason the often-heard complaint, "I'm not being fed at church" misses the point: If I starve myself by not eating nutritious meals available to me daily at home,

why should I complain about the inability of a local restaurant to satisfy my hunger?)

Martha was expressing her love for Jesus by doing practical "stuff" she was led to do. Cooking for a big group must have been her love language! But sweating and hustling, she saw Mary as not **DOING** anything! Martha's expression of love in cooking was great—but her judgment missed the point.

Mary had discovered the value of "soul food." She was taking in the Word of God, directly from Jesus (the Living Word)! NO meal on Earth compared to that! And Jesus told His beloved friend Martha, "Mary has chosen what is better."

So before we run to fill our schedules with more good things, let's "stuff check" our list of things to do: when we put time with God's Word, spending time with the Living Word, at the **TOP** of that list—the rest of the "stuff" will follow beautifully!



Planning Page

Choose which centers you will provide and the order in which children will participate in them (see pp. 14–18 for schedule tips and pp. 24–25 for guidelines in combining older and younger children). Also plan who will lead each center (for staffing tips, see pp. 19–21). Use the reproducible planning sheet (p. 240) to record your plans.

Bible Story Center

Bible Story

Mary Listens to Jesus • Luke 8:1–3; 10:38–42

Younger Child Option

Big Discovery Box • Use an apron, a bowl and a wooden spoon to help tell the story.

Older Child Option

Big Discovery Box • Make motions in response to words in the story.

Art Center

Younger Child Option

Make a sun catcher and talk about God's Word.

Materials

Bible, hole punch, clear plastic deli lids, scissors, tissue paper, brushes or swabs, white glue in shallow dishes, yarn

Older Child Option

Create a decorated version of the Bible verse.

Materials

Bible, newspaper, CDs, permanent markers in a variety of colors

Game Center

Younger Child Option

Play a listening game to talk about listening to God's Word.

Materials

Bible, masking tape, objects that can make noise (spoons, pans, blocks, etc.)

Older Child Option

Play a flashlight tag game to learn the Bible verse.

Materials

Bible, flashlight

Coloring/Puzzle Center

Younger Child Option

Review the Bible story while completing coloring page.

Materials

Lesson 7 Coloring Page (p. 141) for each student, crayons

Older Child Option

Review the Bible story while completing puzzle page.

Materials

Lesson 7 Puzzle (p. 142) for each student, pencils

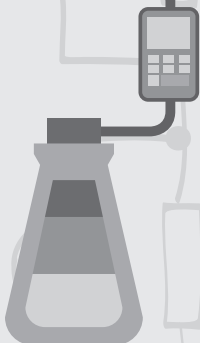
Worship Center

For All

Participate in large-group activities to review the Bible verse and worship God together.

Materials

Bibles, CD-ROM and CD player, Lesson 7 Big Discovery Visual, song lyrics (pp. 251, 254), Bible Verse Cards (p. 140)



Bonus Theme Ideas

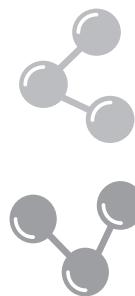
Bonus Theme Ideas can be used at any time during this session: as an additional activity center, to extend the session for a longer time or for added theme excitement.

Pull-Up Sticks!

Instead of playing Pick-Up Sticks, try this fun activity: Across a table, lay masking-tape lines in a “pile” that looks something like a pile of spilled pick-up sticks. The game’s challenge is to decide which piece of tape to pull off first, second, etc.—without disturbing the other pieces. It’s a simple game that involves several kinds of strategy and has multi-age appeal!

Live Science!

Got a formicarium? No lab is complete without one! Ant farms (formicariums) are ant habitats designed for watching ant behavior. They can be purchased, of course, but for a DIY version you need only an empty 2-liter bottle, scissors, another smaller bottle, tape, soil and ants. Cut off the top portion of the 2-liter bottle and set the smaller bottle inside. Fill the remaining space between bottles with soil. Ants can be purchased, but they’re easy to find. Dig up a colony, set them inside, tape the top portion of the bottle back on—and the ants will do the rest!



Geology Snack!

Empty an 18-ounce package of chocolate sandwich cookies into a resealable plastic bag and seal. Roll with a rolling pin to make crumbs. Mix 8 ounces of whipped cream cheese with the crumbs until well blended. Chill for at least 2 hours. Pinch off bits of dough, roll into “stone” shapes and roll them in powdered sugar. Makes 3–4 dozen.



Post a note alerting parents to the use of food. Also, check registration forms for possible food allergies.

Bible Story Center

for younger children Luke 8:1–3; 10:38–42

Big Discovery Box



Before class, print out Lesson 7 Big Discovery Visual from the CD-ROM. Place in the Big Discovery Box with a Bible, an apron, a bowl and a wooden spoon.

Introduction



What do you think is in our Big Discovery Box today? Remove printout, apron, bowl and wooden spoon. **Why do we have an apron, a bowl and a wooden spoon? Let's find out!** Remove Bible. **This is the Bible! It is going to tell us what two sisters did to get ready for some visitors.**

What do you do to get ready for visitors at your house? Give one volunteer the bowl and spoon. Tie apron on another volunteer. **Listen to find out how two sisters welcomed their visitors!**

Tell the Story



Jesus and His disciples traveled from town to town. They mostly walked. The roads were hot and dusty. In every town, Jesus told people the good news of God's kingdom. Sometimes He fed people. Other times, He healed sick people! Many people Jesus healed came along with Him as He traveled. One group of women Jesus had healed were glad and thankful, so they helped Jesus! They used their own money to buy food and things Jesus and His friends needed. These friends were glad to help Jesus do what God had sent Him to do!

Jesus had other friends, too. These friends were Lazarus and his sisters Mary and Martha. When Jesus was nearby, He usually stopped at their house. He loved His friends and they loved Him. On this day, Jesus and His disciples were walking to visit them.

(Ask child with bowl and spoon to pantomime opening a door.) Martha opened her door. Hot, hungry, dusty, thirsty people were there—Jesus and His friends! She invited them in. **What do you think needed to be done?**

Dusty people needed water to wash feet and hands! They probably needed more seats, more pillows, more stools! They needed food put on plates and set on the table. Bread had to be cooked. There was a LOT of work to do!

(Child in apron stands beside child with spoon.) Normally, Martha's sister Mary would help her with the work. But she was NOT helping. Was she gone? No! Was she sick? No! **Why do you think Mary didn't help?**

JESUS was THERE! And Mary was sitting by His feet. She wanted to hear EVERY WORD Jesus had to say. She forgot all about cooking! God's Son was in her house. She could LISTEN to HIM talk about God! NOTHING else mattered that much!

But Martha still had LOTS of things to do. She felt upset. She asked Jesus, "Don't You care that my sister has left me with ALL the work myself? Tell her to HELP me!"

Jesus must have smiled. He said kindly, "Martha, Martha! You're worried and upset about a lot of things. But there's only ONE thing anyone needs. Mary has chosen that. It's something even better than food."

Jesus loved His dear, generous friend Martha. She was trying SO hard to please Him! But even though food and drink are important, food and drink are NOT as important as JESUS. People eat a meal, and then it's gone. Mary had chosen to do something BETTER than help cook even the BEST meal. Because as Mary listened to Jesus' words, she knew Jesus better. The words she heard Jesus say about God would never disappear, as the dinner on the table would. Mary would ALWAYS have Jesus' words—FOREVER. And no one could take that away from her!

God's Word & Me



Jesus was glad for Martha's kindness. But Mary chose to do something even better than cook for Jesus. She listened to Jesus! Show Big Discovery Visual and read aloud. God says His Word will help us know Him, just as Mary got to know Jesus. We can listen to God's Word, the Bible!

Pray, **Dear God, thank You for Your Word, the Bible. Please help us listen to Your Word and remember it. In Jesus' name, amen.**

Bible Story Center

for older children Luke 8:1–3; 10:38–42



Big Discovery Box

Before class, print out Lesson 7 Big Discovery Visual from the CD-ROM. Place in the Big Discovery Box with a Bible and snacks to share.

You may invite a male team member to dress in Bible-times clothing and tell the story each time, introducing himself as Dr. Luke, the head researcher of the materials.

So when Martha opened her door to a crowd of hot, hungry, tired, dusty, thirsty people, they were all glad for her gracious hospitality. It was a welcome gift to all of them!

When hot, hungry, tired, dusty, thirsty people filled the house, what do you think had to be done? There were feet and hands to wash—that meant getting more water! There were jars of supplies to open. There were pans and dishes to find. There was food to chop and cook and prepare. Bread had to be made. And all of it had to be put on the table! (Share snacks with students.)

Normally, Martha's sister Mary helped her with the work when guests arrived. Martha must have looked around and wondered, *What happened to MARY? Where is she now?*

Mary wasn't gone. Was she sick? No, Mary was sitting at Jesus' feet! She was listening with complete concentration. Because she was so glad that Jesus was there and so happy to hear what He had to say, she FORGOT about cooking—or ANYTHING else! JESUS was there at her own house. God's own Son was talking—and SHE COULD LISTEN TO HIM!

But Martha still had LOTS of work to do to get everything done and everyone fed. And Martha would NEVER have asked her guests or her brother to help. In Bible times, men sat and talked while the women worked to put the meal on the table. Women often served the food and then left the room. But on THIS day, Mary was sitting at Jesus' feet. She ignored the men. She ignored everything else! Nothing else mattered—JESUS was there!

So Martha finally exploded. She asked Jesus, "Don't You CARE that my sister has left me with ALL the work to do by myself? Tell her to HELP me!"

Jesus said kindly, "Martha, Martha! You're worried and upset about a lot of things. But there's only ONE thing anyone needs. Mary has chosen that. It's something even better than eating a great meal!"

Jesus loved His dear, generous friend Martha. She was trying SO hard to please Him with her hospitality! But even though everyone was hot, hungry and thirsty, neither the food nor the drink nor the comfort was the MOST important thing. The fact that JESUS was there was the MOST important thing!

Jesus gently reminded Martha that what Mary had chosen to do was an even BETTER thing to do than to cook a great meal, serve a

Introduction



Open Big Discovery Box as you speak. **I wonder if there's anything in this box that Dr. Luke might have left? Show Bible. Ah! Here's our source document again. What is it called? Show Big Discovery Visual. God says His Word can help us.**

To find out who listened to Jesus and heard God's words, here's what you're going to do! Divide group into two teams. One team listens for the name "Mary," and other team listens for "Martha." Whenever children hear the correct name, they respond with team's chosen motion (for instance, pretending to stir food for "Martha" or cupping both hands to ears for "Mary").

Tell the Story



Jesus and His disciples traveled from town to town, walking along hot, dusty roads. In every town, Jesus told people the good news of God's kingdom, fed some people and healed sick people! Many people Jesus healed then traveled with Him. One group of women Jesus had healed were so thankful that they used their own money to buy food and things Jesus and His friends needed. These friends were determined to help Jesus do what God had sent Him to do!

Jesus had other friends, too—three of them lived in Bethany, a little village that wasn't far from Jerusalem. Jesus and His disciples often stopped there to visit Lazarus, Martha and Mary. From other parts of the Bible, we know that all three were close friends of Jesus.



cool drink of water or make sure everyone was comfortable—because what Mary was getting from listening to Jesus could never be taken away from her.

Even the best dinner gets eaten and forgotten. But as Mary listened to Jesus' words, her life was changed! Knowing Jesus better, learning from Him and hearing His words would never disappear—Mary would be able to remember His words forever!

God's Word & Me

Mary spent every possible moment listening to Jesus. Remember, she didn't have a Bible to read! But today, we have God's Word to help us know more about Jesus and learn to follow Him. The trouble is, we can easily be more like Martha—we can get busy doing lots of good things and forget to do the BEST thing: taking time to be with God and to read His Word. When we spend time reading His Word and talking with Him, we know Him better—and we are changed, too! The things we learn can never be taken away from us!

Read Psalm 119:105 aloud. **God wants us to know what He has to say. His Word, the Bible, shows us the best way to go!**

Of course, the FIRST thing to do if we really want to know God and understand His Word is to join His family! (Invite children interested in knowing more about becoming members of God's family to talk with you or another teacher after class. See "Leading a Child to Christ" on p. 12.)

- **What did Martha do to show Jesus her love?** (Made a meal. Made sure everyone had water and a place to sit.)
- **Why didn't Mary help Martha?** (Jesus was there. She needed to listen to Jesus. She didn't think food mattered as much as listening to Jesus.)
- **When Jesus told Martha, "Mary has chosen what is better. And it will not be taken away from her," what do you think He meant?** (Mary would always be able to remember Jesus' words.)
- Show Big Discovery Visual. **God tells us that His Word can help us. We can learn God's Word. What are some ways a kid might learn God's Word?** (Read. Listen. Sing Bible verse songs. Write or draw pictures after reading or hearing God's Word for help to remember what it says.)
- **What are some ways you think a kid who reads God's Word might be different from a kid who doesn't?** (Knows more about who God is. Is guided by God's Word. Has peace inside from trusting God. Knows the right thing to do.)

Pray with children, thanking God for His Word and for His promise to help us know the best way to go by knowing His Word!



Game Center

for younger children Luke 8:1–3; 10:38–42

Collect



Bible, masking tape, objects that can make noise (spoons, pans, blocks, etc.).

Prepare



Lay masking-tape start and finish lines about 10 ft (3 m) apart. At finish line, lay noisemaking objects.

Do



1. Children line up at start line. Adult stands at finish line and makes a simple sound pattern (tap a pan three times and hit two blocks together, etc.).
2. First child in line runs to line, repeats the sound pattern and returns to end of line.
3. Play a practice round, repeating a sound pattern until a child imitates it. That child then makes a pattern for the next child to imitate.
4. In between rounds, ask questions from the Talk About section.



God's Word

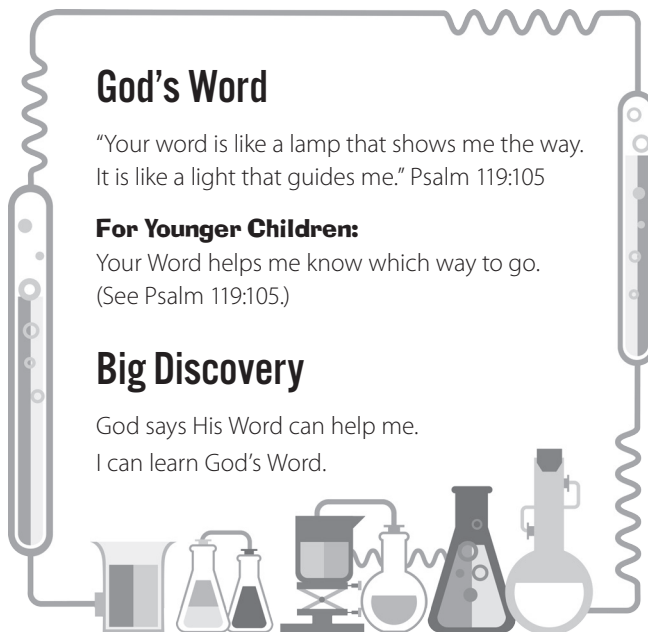
"Your word is like a lamp that shows me the way. It is like a light that guides me." Psalm 119:105

For Younger Children:

Your Word helps me know which way to go. (See Psalm 119:105.)

Big Discovery

God says His Word can help me.
I can learn God's Word.



Talk About



- **What part of our bodies do we need to play this game?** (Ears.) **What are other times we need to use our ears?**
- **In Dr. Luke's Bible account, we heard about the time Jesus' friend Mary listened carefully to hear all Jesus had to say. What are times we can listen to learn from God's Word, the Bible?** (At church. At home when parents read Bible stories. When we watch videos about Bible stories.)
- **Our Bible says that God's Word, the Bible, helps us. God's Word helps us know which way to go!**

Pray briefly, **Dear God, thank You for the Bible. Thank You that we can listen to learn about You. In Jesus' name, amen.**

For Older Children



For an older child's turn, make a more complex pattern to imitate; then ask older children to take turns to make the sound patterns for the younger children.

Game Center

for older children Luke 8:1–3; 10:38–42

Collect



Bible, flashlight.

Prepare



Dim lights in the room so that flashlight's ray is easily seen.

Do

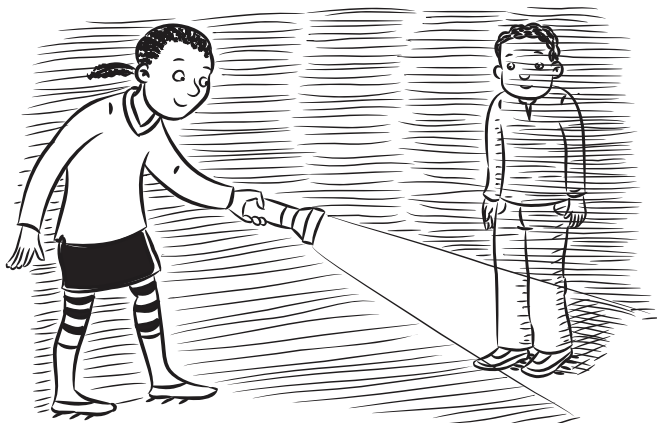


1. Players line up at one side of the playing area. One player is chosen to be "It." It stands at the opposite side of the area with back to the group, lit flashlight in hand.
2. To start, It begins to repeat, "Your word is like a LAMP ..." while players move toward It. On "lamp," It turns around and players must freeze and say, "that shows me the way" as It sweeps the flashlight across the area. Any student touched by the light moves back to start line.
3. Round ends when a player reaches It and becomes the new It. Play several rounds. Between rounds, ask questions from the Talk About section.

Talk About



- ⦿ **When we play this game, what do we have to do?** (Listen. Pay attention to what It says.)
- ⦿ **What if you couldn't hear?** (You wouldn't know when to freeze. You could still see the light when it sweeps around.)



God's Word

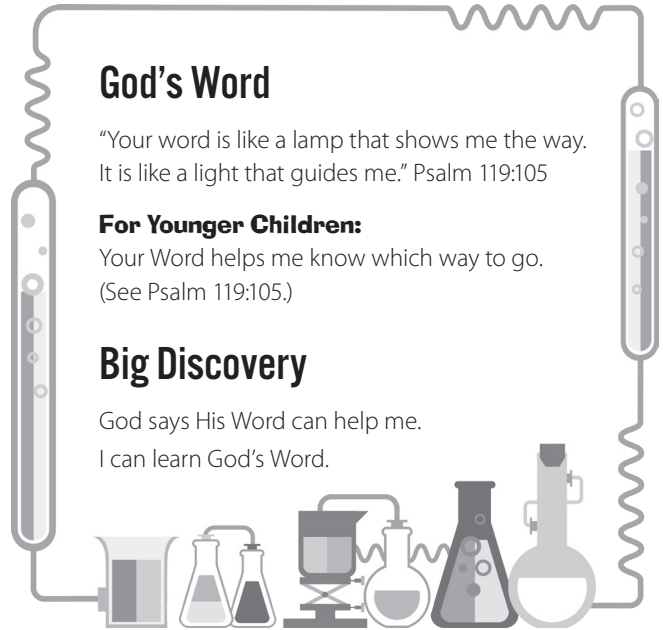
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For Younger Children:

Your Word helps me know which way to go. (See Psalm 119:105.)

Big Discovery

God says His Word can help me.
I can learn God's Word.



- ⦿ **In today's account from Dr. Luke, what did Mary do to know more about God?** (Listened. Used her ears.) **What do you think is the best reason to listen to God's Word? To read God's Word?** (Students tell.)
- ⦿ **Sometimes we are like Martha—we do a lot of good things, but we can miss the BEST thing. What do you think might help a kid your age take time to read God's Word?** (Make a special place. Set an alarm. Choose to listen on music player.) **God wants us to know Him by reading His Word. It shows us the way to go!** Repeat Psalm 119:105 together.

Lead children in prayer, thanking God for His Word and for helping us make time to read it or listen to it.

For Younger Children



This game should work well for younger children, too. If a child is too young to be It, team him or her with an older partner to help with saying the words or sweeping the flashlight.

Art Center

for younger children Luke 8:1–3; 10:38–42

Collect



Bible, hole punch, clear plastic deli lids, scissors, tissue paper, brushes or swabs, white glue in shallow dishes, yarn.

Prepare



Punch a hole at the edge of each lid. Cut or tear tissue paper into small pieces. Set out materials.

Do



1. Give each child a lid with which to make a sun catcher. Child brushes glue onto his or her lid.
2. Child presses tissue paper onto glued areas of the lid to make any pattern he or she desires.
3. When finished, an adult helps cut a length of yarn for a hanger and helps tie yarn.

Talk About



- **What do we need to make our sun catchers look really pretty?** (Sun or light to shine through them.)
- **Today we talked about God's Word. It is like a light. What does light help us do?** (Shows us which way to go. Helps us know where things are.)
- **In Dr. Luke's Bible account, we heard about Jesus' friend**



God's Word

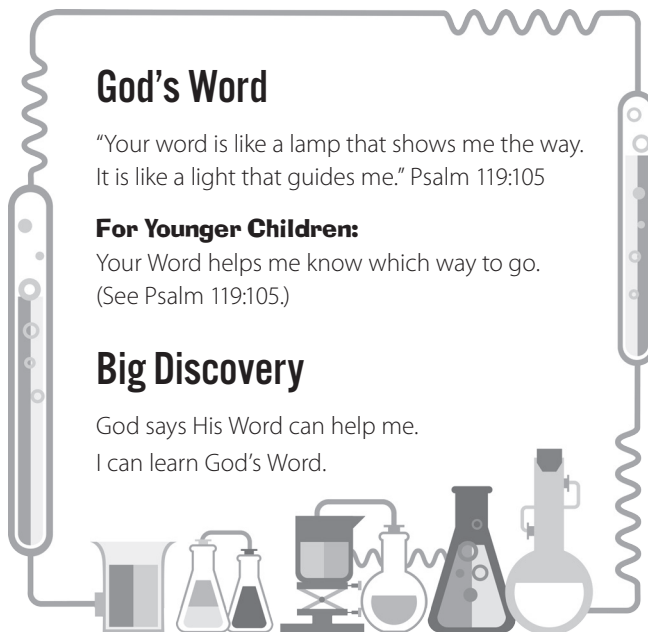
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For Younger Children:

Your Word helps me know which way to go. (See Psalm 119:105.)

Big Discovery

God says His Word can help me.
I can learn God's Word.



Mary. She listened to Jesus. What can we do to find out more about Jesus? (Listen to Bible stories. Listen to people who know God. Listen at church.)

- **God says His Word can help us. What are things it helps us know?** (To ask God for help. To be kind. To help others.) **God wants us to know what is in His Word, the Bible. It is the story of how much He loves us!**
- **Our Bible says, Your Word helps me know which way to go. Let's say our Bible verse together.** Repeat verse, clapping on "Word," "know," "which" and "go."

Pray briefly, **Dear God, thank You for loving us. Thank You for Your Word, the Bible. Help us learn what it says! In Jesus' name, amen.**

For Older Children



Older children write the words of the Bible verse in permanent marker on one side of the lid and let it dry before adding glue and tissue paper to the other side.

Art Center

for older children Luke 8:1-3; 10:38-42

Collect



Bible, newspaper, CDs, permanent markers in a variety of colors.

Prepare



Cover tables with newspaper; set out materials.

Do



1. Give each child a CD. Child uses marker to draw a spiraling pattern around the CD (as if it were on a turntable) on the reflective side.
2. Child then writes the words of the Bible verse along the spiral path.
3. Child decorates words and spaces using other colors of marker, filling in all or nearly all spaces with color.

Talk About



- ⦿ **Holding up your CD to the light makes it look really cool! What happens to the light to make that happen?** (The light bounces around in the grooves on the CD.)
- ⦿ **What are other reasons light is important?** (To see where we're going. To keep Earth warm. To grow plants.)



God's Word

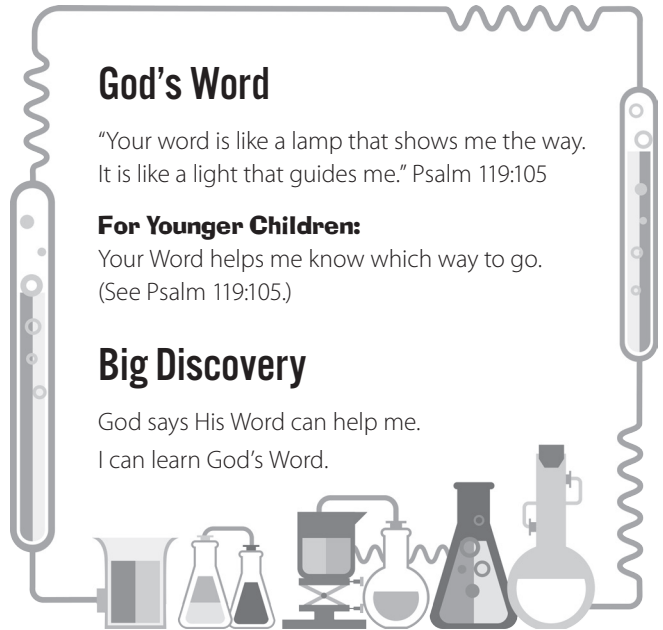
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For Younger Children:

Your Word helps me know which way to go. (See Psalm 119:105.)

Big Discovery

God says His Word can help me.
I can learn God's Word.



- ⦿ **What do you think would happen to our world without light?** (Earth would freeze. We would die.) **The Bible calls God's Word a "light." That means it's VERY important! God wants us to learn His Word so that we know which way to go in life!** Repeat Psalm 119:105 together.

Pray briefly, thanking God for His Word and asking His help to learn and remember what He says.

For Younger Children



A younger child may decorate CD in any way desired. A helper writes the version of the Bible verse for younger children on the opposite side, along with the child's name.

Worship Center

Luke 8:1–3; 10:38–42

Collect



Bibles, CD-ROM and CD player, Lesson 7 Big Discovery Visual, song lyrics (pp. 251, 254), Bible Verse Cards (p. 140).

Prepare



Prepare Bible Verse Cards and hide them around the room.

Team Game



Let's play another listening game. Even if you think Simon Says is easy, we're going to find a way to make it more challenging!

Play Simon Says, starting out slowly and simply. Those who miss sit down. As fewer players are left, increase the speed of the words and the complexity of the motions. **Wow. You all showed what good listeners you are!**

Bible Verse Game



Read Psalm 119:105 aloud from the Bible. Leave Bible open where students may consult it. At your signal, challenge students to find all ten Bible Verse Cards in 30 seconds. As students find cards, they lay cards in Bible verse order on the floor. Read verse aloud together several times. Those who found cards hide cards again for other students to find and order. Play several rounds. (Note: For two teams, copy cards onto two different colors of paper.)



God's Word

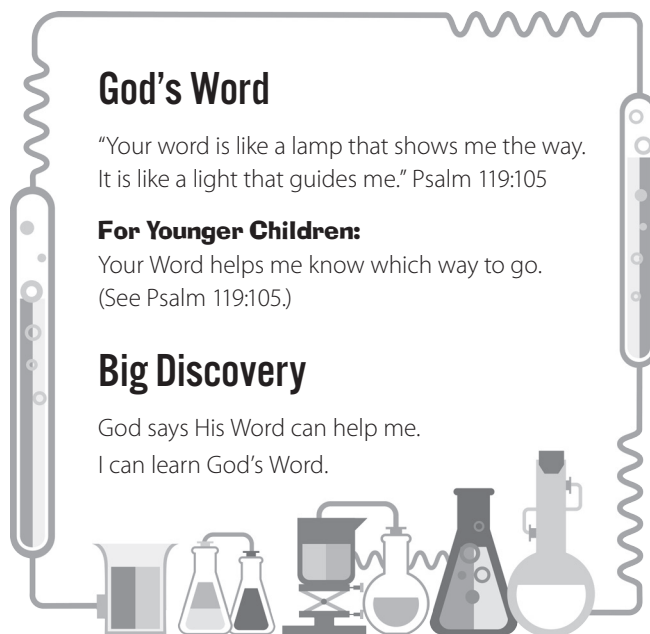
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For Younger Children:

Your Word helps me know which way to go. (See Psalm 119:105.)

Big Discovery

God says His Word can help me. I can learn God's Word.



Song



You, or another leader, lead children in singing "J-E-S-U-S," adding motions and/or clapping if desired.

Prayer



Today we talked about how Jesus' friend Mary really listened to what He said. Nothing else mattered more to her! Show Big Discovery Visual. What's our Big Discovery? Shout it! (Students shout, "God says His Word can help me! I can learn God's Word!") **This BIG discovery reminds us that God's Word, the Bible, is the BEST place to learn about God. We want to know which way to go in life, and the better we know God's Word, the easier it is to know that!** Then lead children in prayer, thanking God for His Word, and asking for help in taking time to read it and help in understanding God's "love letter" to us.

Song



You, or another leader, lead children in singing "Love the Lord," adding motions and/or clapping if desired. **When the Bible tells us to love the Lord, that's what we want to do. This week, look for ways to learn more about God through His Word, the Bible!**

"Your word

is like

a lamp

that shows

me the

way. It

is like

a light

that guides

me." Psalm 119:105

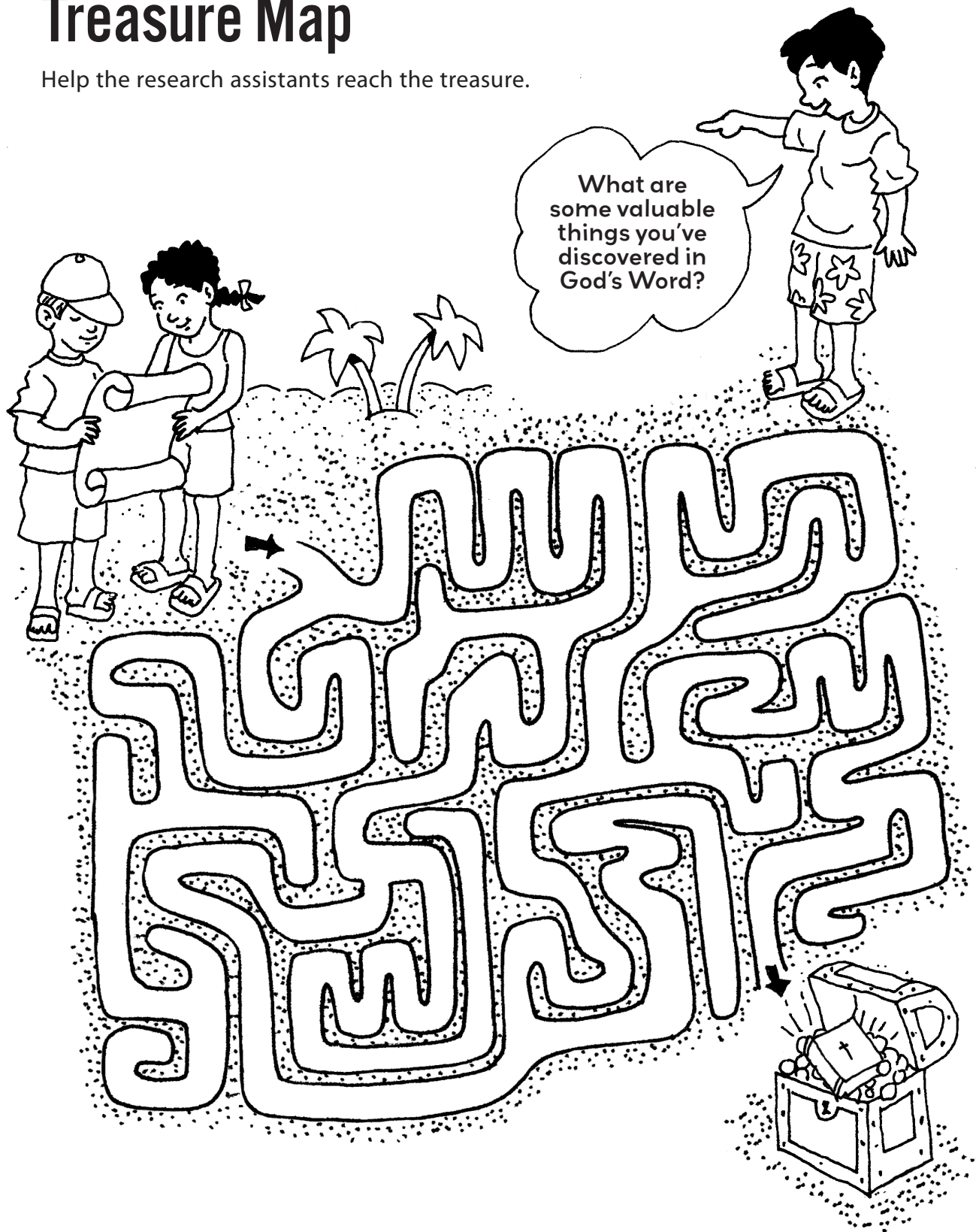
Mary listens to Jesus.

Luke 10:38-42



Treasure Map

Help the research assistants reach the treasure.



I Am Heard

Jesus Teaches About Prayer © Luke 11:1-13

God's Word

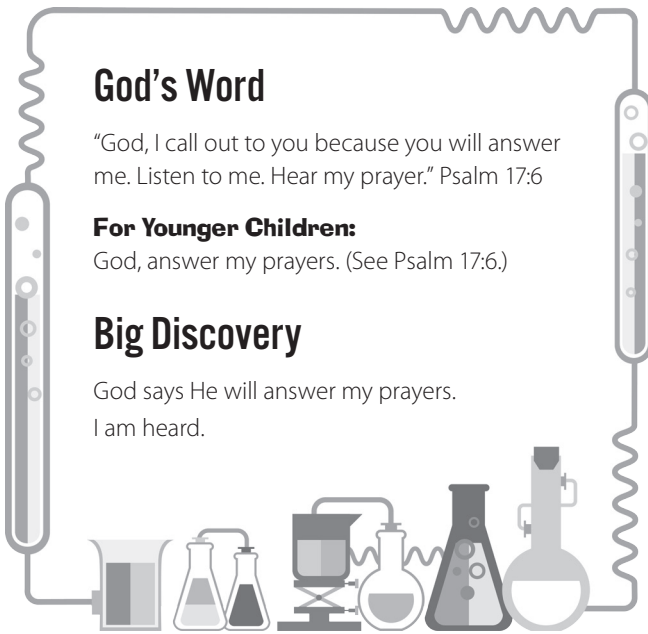
"God, I call out to you because you will answer me. Listen to me. Hear my prayer." Psalm 17:6

For Younger Children:

God, answer my prayers. (See Psalm 17:6.)

Big Discovery

God says He will answer my prayers.
I am heard.



Teacher & Parent Connection

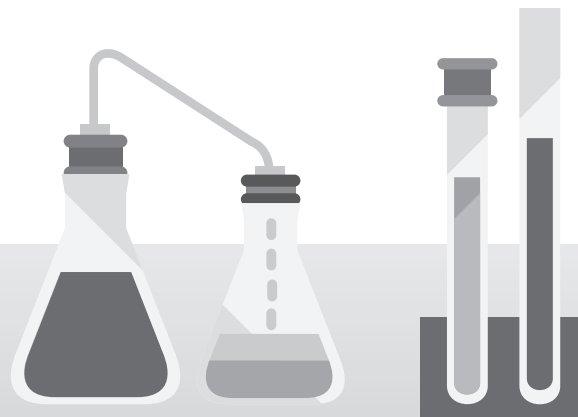
It's been said that being heard is so close to being loved that, for most of us, both feel the same. Try this: Call to mind someone who really listened to you, someone who looked at you and responded to your words in a way that said, "I hear you. What you said matters to me!" Now think about how that person's response made you feel. It's pretty accurate, isn't it?

Jesus wanted His friends to understand that prayer is not some sort of agonized writhing we do before God in order to get His attention or His interest. In His opening address to God, He modeled taking a position of deep trust and secure relationship: He called God "Our Father." Since we now think of this term as routine, don't let the power of it be lost on you! Until that time, proper address of God was "Blessed Lord God, the Ruler of the Universe" (a term of awesome respect, but not much intimacy). To call Him "Father" signaled an intentional act of stepping into a personal relationship! And it isn't a distant father-child re-

lationship. It is a relationship full of simple trust and expectancy: "My Daddy loves me. He listens to me! He will be good to me! Here is what I need. Thank You!"

Prayer can never be too simple. It can never be too trusting. Our Father in heaven wants to hear from us—and whenever we take time to talk to Him, He LISTENS! That makes prayer a joyful, expectant and even (dare we say it?) FUN thing to do!

We're heard. God never ignores us, never puts us off. Even when it seems we're not getting the answer we expect (which is most of the time!), it's because He is at work to bring about a better answer than we ever could have imagined. He's worthy of our full trust!



Planning Page

Choose which centers you will provide and the order in which children will participate in them (see pp. 14–18 for schedule tips and pp. 24–25 for guidelines in combining older and younger children). Also plan who will lead each center (for staffing tips, see pp. 19–21). Use the reproducible planning sheet (p. 240) to record your plans.

Bible Story Center

Bible Story

Jesus Teaches About Prayer • Luke 11:1–13

Younger Child Option

Big Discovery Box • Make simple motions as you tell the story.

Older Child Option

Big Discovery Box • Use a marked Bible and a loaf of bread during the story.

Art Center

Younger Child Option

Make an ant craft and talk about praying to God anywhere.

Materials

Bible, glue dots, black or red plastic spoons, black or red pipe cleaners, wiggle eyes

Older Child Option

Create prayer boxes for prayer prompts.

Materials

Bible, Prayer Box Pattern (p. 154), white card stock, scissors, ribbon, markers, stickers, hole punch, small individually wrapped candies

Game Center

Younger Child Option

Play a game to listen for instructions and talk about prayer.

Materials

Bible, CD-ROM and CD player, yarn, scissors

Older Child Option

Play a jumping game and talk about prayer.

Materials

Bible, masking tape

Coloring/Puzzle Center

Younger Child Option

Review the Bible story while completing coloring page.

Materials

Lesson 8 Coloring Page (p. 155) for each student, crayons

Older Child Option

Review the Bible story while completing puzzle page.

Materials

Lesson 8 Puzzle Page (p. 156) for each student, pencils

Worship Center

For All

Participate in large-group activities to review the Bible verse and worship God together.

Materials

Bibles, CD-ROM and CD player, Lesson 8 Big Discovery Visual, song lyrics (pp. 255, 251), whiteboard and marker

Bonus Theme Ideas

Bonus Theme Ideas can be used at any time during this session: as an additional activity center, to extend the session for a longer time or for added theme excitement.

Beanbag Catapult!

Here is another easy and endlessly fun physics installation! Create a catapult from something as simple as a BBQ spatula and block. Lay the spatula handle across the block as a fulcrum. Place a beanbag on the “burger” end of the spatula, and simply step on the handle! What happens? Why? Will a foam block fly farther? How about adding a target on the floor or the wall? The variations both on the ways to create a catapult and the ways to experiment are infinite!



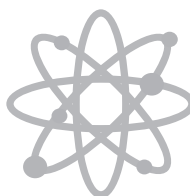
Group Mural!

Time for a little decorating pick-me-up as you head into the homestretch of TruthLab Investigations? Recruit your lab assistants to make a colorful group mural. Together, brainstorm some ideas for things to draw and color. Each kid decides which part to draw and be in charge of completing. Post a large sheet of butcher paper on a wall where kids can reach all of it easily. Kids draw, color or use tempera paint to cover large areas of the paper, adding a punch of color and interest to your classroom!



Scoop of Snacks

Provide a waffle cone for each child and a variety of cut-up fruit (banana slices, berries, melon chunks, etc.). Place each kind of fruit in a separate bowl with a spoon. Child selects fruit, fills cone and then tops it with vanilla yogurt. Yummy and satisfying! (Use spoons or just eat away—and of course, geometry geeks can talk about the amazing cone shape!)



Post a note alerting parents to the use of food. Also, check registration forms for possible food allergies.

Bible Story Center

for younger children Luke 11:1–13

Big Discovery Box



Before class, print out Lesson 8 Big Discovery Visual from the CD-ROM. Place in the Big Discovery Box with a Bible and a loaf of bread.

Introduction



What do you think is in our BIG DISCOVERY Box today? Remove printout and bread. **Why do you think we have a loaf of bread? Let's find out!** Remove Bible. **The Bible will tell us who needed bread and who we can ask for EVERYTHING!**

Today, watch and listen. Do what you see me doing! Do motions in parentheses throughout the story.

Tell the Story



Jesus spent a lot of time telling people about God's wonderful love. He made sick people well, too. But ONE thing Jesus loved to do was to be alone and pray to God, His Father! Jesus' friends knew Jesus prayed often. They asked Jesus to teach them how to pray. (Clasp hands.)

First, Jesus SHOWED His friends how to talk to God. He prayed a prayer for them to follow. It went something like this: "Our Father in Heaven, we love You. Your name is important. We want You to always be our King. Give us the things we need today. Forgive us for the wrong things we do. We forgive people who have done wrong things to us. Please protect us. Help us do what is right. You are the strongest, best King forever. Amen."

But then, Jesus TOLD His friends a story to help them KEEP ON praying! Here is what Jesus said: One night, very late, a man's friend arrived at his house. His friend was hungry. But the man didn't have ANY bread! So he walked over in the dark to his neighbor's house. (Walk in place.)

It was late, so the man knocked softly on the door. (Knock quietly on a table or floor.) Knock, knock, knock. Nobody answered. So the man knocked a little louder. (Knock louder.) Knock, knock, KNOCK. (Cup hands around mouth.) His neighbor quietly called, "Go away! It's late. I'm in bed!"

But the man called back, "I need some bread! My friend is hungry. I have no bread."

The neighbor said, "I can't help you. My babies are asleep. The door is locked."

Knock, KNOCK, KNOCK. (Knock louder.) The man didn't give up. He knocked again. He asked again. And even though it was late at night, the neighbor got up. He opened the door and gave the man all the bread he needed! (Show loaf of bread. Pass out samples.)

Jesus said God is NOT like that neighbor. God is NEVER too busy. He's never too sleepy! (Shake head no.) Jesus told His friends that it's OK to be like the man who knocked—we can keep on praying! We can ask God for what we need. We can know that He will help us!

Jesus also said that God is like the very best dad EVER. When a boy asks his dad for a fish to eat, his dad gives him a fish, right? (Nod.) A good dad would not give him a snake! (Shake head no.)

Jesus told His friends, "God is BETTER than the very BEST father! He always hears His children. He always gives them what they need." God wants us to pray and ask Him for what we need. We can talk to Him anytime. We can talk to Him anywhere. He loves us! (Clap and cheer.)

God's Word & Me



Jesus wants us to know that we can talk to God about everything. He wants to hear from us! He is MORE loving than the BEST and most loving father—God is the MOST loving Father EVER! We can talk to Him anywhere, at any time, no matter what is going on.

Show Big Discovery Visual and read it aloud. **God says He will answer when we pray. We can pray anytime. He hears us!**

Pray, **Dear God, thank You that You hear us when we pray. We love You! In Jesus' name, amen.**

Bible Story Center

for older children Luke 11:1–13



Big Discovery Box

Before class, print out Lesson 8 Big Discovery Visual from the CD-ROM. Prepare one Bible by marking with Post-it Notes the following passages: Luke 11:2–4, Luke 11:9–10 and Luke 11:13. Place in the Big Discovery Box with a Bible, printout and a loaf of bread.

You may invite a male team member to dress in Bible-times clothing and tell the story each time, introducing himself as Dr. Luke, the head researcher of the materials.

Jesus must have smiled! Of COURSE He wanted them to know how to pray to God, their Father! So first, He said a prayer to help them pray in this new way. It was not so much a prayer to memorize, like prayers they already knew. This prayer was a sample, a model of a real conversation a person could have with God. **Let's listen to this prayer.** (First volunteer reads Luke 11:2–4, then passes Bible.)

Calling God "Father" was NEW to the disciples! They used impressive names for God in their memorized prayers. But they hadn't EVER called God their Father! Jesus' praying was different from the prayers they knew, right from the start!

The rest of the prayer was different, too! Jesus showed the disciples that when they prayed, the first thing to think about was God Himself! He is worthy for us to honor and obey and love! After that, they could ask their good Father for whatever they needed, just as a little child asks a loving parent for lunch!

Jesus said that all people needed to ask for forgiveness for their sins, but they ALSO needed to forgive anyone who had done wrong to them. Finally, He told the disciples to ask for God's protection from evil or from doing wrong.

But Jesus also wanted His friends to know that when they prayed in this new way, they could be BOLD. They didn't have to be afraid to tell God what they needed! Jesus wanted them to know that when they asked God for something, they could KEEP ON praying until they had God's answer! So He told His friends this story:

One night, a man had a visitor who came VERY late—at MIDNIGHT! The man had no food to feed his guest! But he knew his neighbor had bread. So he went to his neighbor's house. He banged on the door. (Knock on table.) The man asked his neighbor, "Please give me bread!"

The man's neighbor did NOT want to get up and give him bread. It was late. Everyone was ASLEEP! But the man kept right on knocking. He KNEW his neighbor had bread and could help. So, finally, the neighbor got up and gave the man bread. (Distribute samples of bread to children.)

Jesus was saying this: "If your cranky, sleepy neighbor will help you when you ask boldly, how much more will your loving Father help you? God is never sleepy. He's kind and compassionate. He cares about you! He WANTS to help you!"

Let's find out what Jesus said next. (Volunteer reads Luke 11:9–10.) When we pray, we can KNOW that God will answer. The answer

Introduction



Open Big Discovery Box as you speak. **I wonder what Dr. Luke might have left us?** Show Bible. **Ah! Here's our source document again, with a bunch of sticky notes on it. I wonder why?** Show loaf of bread. **What's this for, I wonder?** Show and read Big Discovery Visual. **Hmm. God says He will answer our prayers. We are heard. I REALLY like it when someone LISTENS to me. How about you?**

I need three volunteer readers. Give marked Bible to first volunteer, who will pass it on after reading first portion. **Listen to find out what Jesus had to say about being heard!**

Tell the Story



The disciples were with Jesus a LOT—eating, traveling, watching. They noticed that Jesus often went off by Himself to pray. One day while Jesus was praying, it occurred to one disciple that Jesus did NOT pray in the same way as they prayed!

You see, in Israel everyone prayed in exactly the same way. They memorized the right prayers to say or sing for every occasion! But Jesus prayed differently. John the Baptist, who had baptized Jesus, had prayed differently, too. John had taught his own disciples to pray—but not all of Jesus' disciples had learned this!

So they said to Jesus, "Would You teach us to pray?"

may NOT be what we expect—in fact, it is OFTEN not what we expect! But God ANSWERS!

Jesus wanted to be sure His disciples understood.

So Jesus asked, “Dads, if your son asked you for fish to eat, would you give him a snake? If he asked for an egg, would you give him a scorpion? Of course not!”

(Volunteer reads Luke 11:13.) God loves us SO MUCH more than we know. He will always do what is best for us. He sent His Holy Spirit to help us depend on Him. He will answer our prayers in the very best way!

God's Word & Me



Jesus wanted His disciples to understand that they didn't have to remember special words for their prayers. They could tell God everything and talk to Him anywhere. They could talk to God as they'd talk to a loving father—because He is!

Read Psalm 17:6 aloud from your Bible. **God loves us. He is willing to answer us when we pray. Of course, to really KNOW God the Father, we need to be part of His family!** (Invite children

interested in knowing more about becoming members of God's family to talk with you or another teacher after class. See “Leading a Child to Christ” on p. 12.)

- **Why did Jesus' friends want Him to teach them to pray?** (Jesus prayed differently. He didn't say memorized prayers. He talked to God as His Father.)
- **What are some things Jesus said to pray about?** (For God to be honored. For food. For forgiveness. For help.)
- **What did Jesus tell them about praying and not giving up?** (To be like the man who needed bread. To keep on asking. To trust that God is better than the best dad. God answers in the best way.)
- Show Big Discovery Visual. **God tells us He will answer our prayers. We are heard because we are loved! What are some things a kid your age might ask God?**
- **When has God answered your prayer? A prayer of someone you know? How did He answer?**

Pray with children, thanking God for His love and for His promise to listen to us when we pray to Him!



Game Center

for younger children Luke 11:1–13

Collect



Bible, CD-ROM and CD player, yarn, scissors.

Prepare



Cut yarn into three lengths to make three circles, each big enough for several children to stand inside—one small, one medium and one large.

Do



1. Play "Pray!" (track 8 on CD-ROM) as children move freely around the playing area.
2. Stop the music and call out an instruction such as, "If you are wearing blue, put a foot inside the small circle. If you are wearing red, stand inside the big circle."
3. Continue to play, starting and stopping music, calling out a color, a number of children or common interests ("Children wearing red, go to the big circle," "Two boys, go to the medium circle," "Kids who like pizza, put your hand in the large circle," etc.). Play as time and interest allow. In between rounds, ask questions from the Talk About section.



God's Word

"God, I call out to you because you will answer me. Listen to me. Hear my prayer." Psalm 17:6

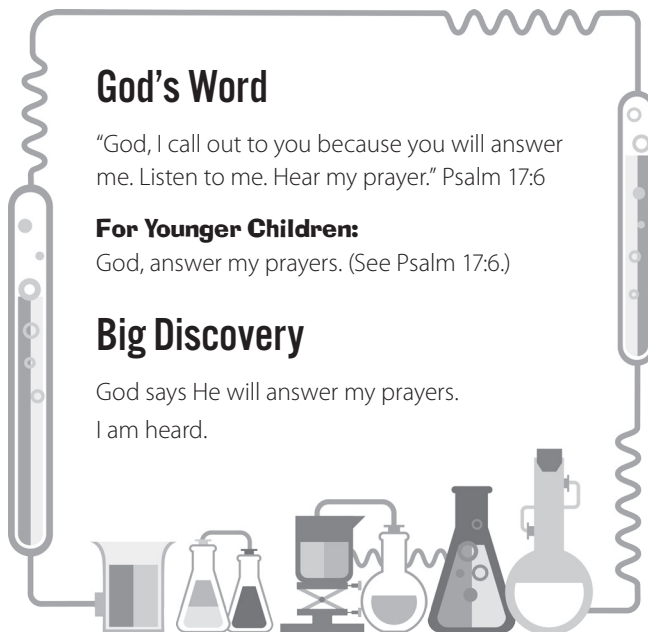
For Younger Children:

God, answer my prayers. (See Psalm 17:6.)

Big Discovery

God says He will answer my prayers.

I am heard.



Talk About



- **What did we use to hear instructions? What did we use to know which circle to go to? God is good! He gave us ears and eyes and minds!**
- **In Dr. Luke's Bible account, we heard about the time Jesus showed and told His friends about praying. Who is the best Father EVER? (God.)**

Our Bible says that we can ask God to answer our prayers. Say with me, "God, answer my prayers." Repeat several times, and then pray briefly, Dear God, thank You for loving us. Thank You that You hear our prayers. We love You. In Jesus' name, amen.

For Older Children



Call out more complicated instructions for older children ("If you are older than five, turn around three times and then put a hand in the smallest circle." "If you are taller than Zoe, stand in the big circle, facing outward.").

Game Center

for older children Luke 11:1–13

Collect



Bible, masking tape.

Prepare

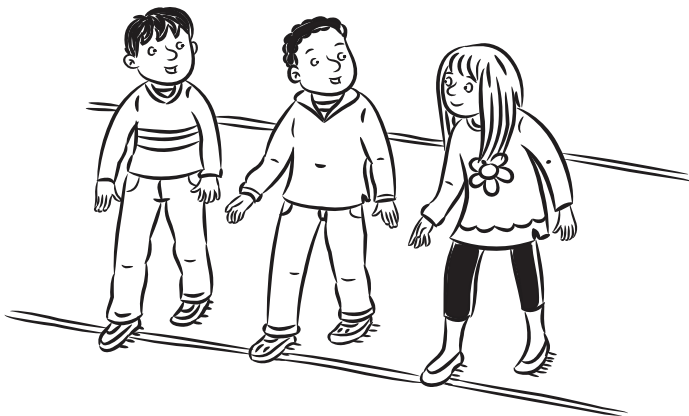


Make two parallel lines with tape approximately 4 to 6 feet (1.2 to 1.8 m) apart. Adjust the line distance according to the jumping ability of players. For large groups, lay several sets of parallel lines.

Do



1. All players line up on either line facing each other. The lines represent “the banks” of the river. The middle represents “the river.”
2. At your signal, players jump in the river (“In the river!”) or jump to the opposite bank (“On the bank!”), depending on the command given. Players who make a mistake are out and must sit in the “lake” at the end of the river.
3. Occasionally repeat the command “In the river!” while players are still in the river. Vary commands by saying, “with one foot!” or “with both feet!” Occasionally call out, “In the ocean!” Players move only when you say “In the river!” or “On the banks!” Continue until most players are out.
4. At the end of the round, ask questions from the Talk About section. Play several rounds.



God’s Word

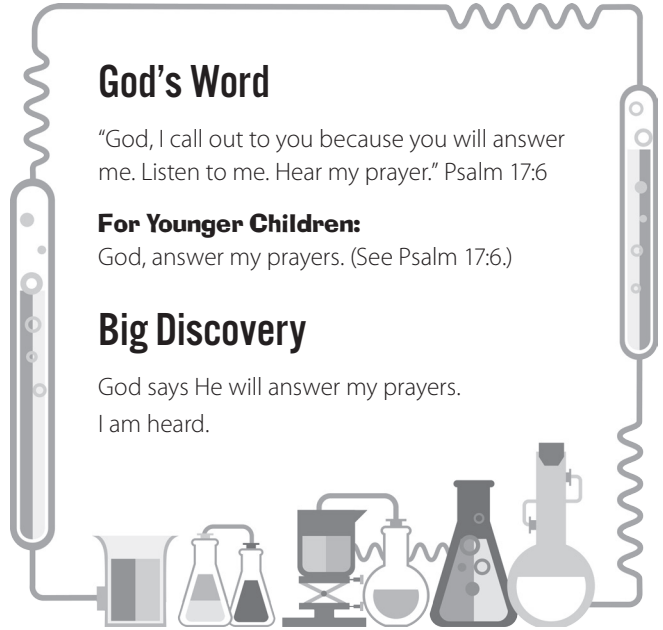
“God, I call out to you because you will answer me. Listen to me. Hear my prayer.” Psalm 17:6

For Younger Children:

God, answer my prayers. (See Psalm 17:6.)

Big Discovery

God says He will answer my prayers.
I am heard.



Talk About



- **What lives in rivers?** (Fish. Clams. Snails. Crayfish.)
- **If you had to get a message across a big river, how could you do that without a phone?** (Smoke signal. Shout. Make a sign.)
- **When we pray, we don’t we have to shout. Why? We don’t have to stand in one place to be heard. Why?** (God can hear us anywhere. We can even pray silently.)
- **The Bible tells us God hears and answers our prayers. How can we tell when a prayer is answered?** (God does something. Sometimes it is not what we expect!) **God loves us. He answers our prayers in the way that is best for us!** Repeat Psalm 17:6 together.

Lead children in prayer, thanking God for listening to us and for loving us.

For Younger Children



This game works well for younger children. Don’t eliminate younger children. Simply say, “Oops! Try again!”

Art Center

for younger children Luke 11:1–13

Collect



Bible, glue dots, black or red plastic spoons, black or red pipe cleaners, wiggle eyes.

Prepare



Lay several glue dots on the handle of a spoon. With rounded end of spoon at opposite end, lay another handle on top of glue dots (see sketch). Prepare one ant body for each child.

Do

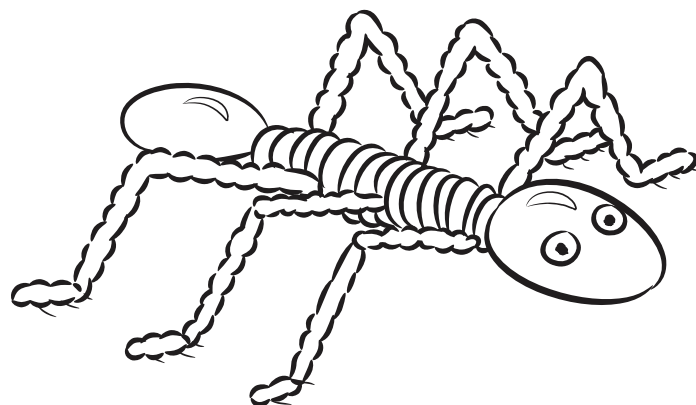


1. Give each child an ant body. Child uses pipe cleaners and wiggle eyes to make an ant. Child wraps pipe cleaners around the center of the body.
2. Child then winds three more pipe cleaners around body and spreads out pipe cleaner ends for legs.
3. Child adds wiggle eyes. If child is interested, he or she could make an ant family.

Talk About



- **Ants are one of God's amazing creations! Where do you see ants?** (Everywhere outside. In an ant farm.) **Where do ants live?** (Underground.)
- **In Dr. Luke's Bible account, we heard about the time Jesus taught His friends about how to pray to God. Jesus taught**



God's Word

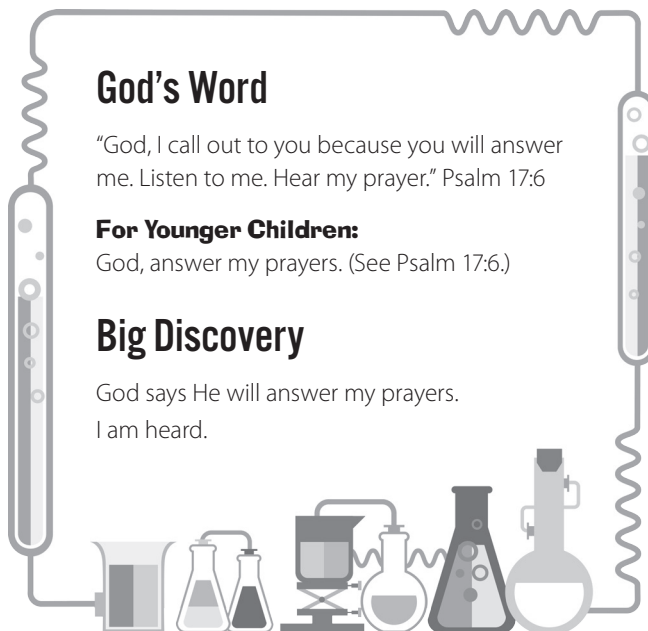
"God, I call out to you because you will answer me. Listen to me. Hear my prayer." Psalm 17:6

For Younger Children:

God, answer my prayers. (See Psalm 17:6.)

Big Discovery

God says He will answer my prayers.
I am heard.



them they could pray anywhere. Could we pray to God if we were under the ground, like the ants? (Yes. God hears us no matter where we are.)

- **Ants are also known for not giving up. When they have a big job, they just keep at it until it is done. Ants can remind us to pray and not give up!**
- **What are some things we can say to God?** (Thank You for Your love. Please help me. Please give me things I need today. Please help me to do what makes You happy.)
- **Our Bible says that God will answer our prayers. He loves us. And He hears us! He will answer our prayers in the very best way—and sometimes, His answers surprise us!**

Pray briefly, **Dear God, thank You for loving us and hearing us when we pray. We love You!**

For Older Children



Older children may glue their own spoon handles together and also be enlisted to glue spoon handles together for younger children.

Art Center

for older children Luke 11:1–13

Collect



Bible, Prayer Box Pattern (p. 154), white card stock, scissors, ribbon, markers, stickers, hole punch, small individually wrapped candies.

Prepare



Photocopy a Prayer Box Pattern onto white card stock for each child. Cut ribbon into 6-inch (15 cm) lengths. Set out materials.

Do



1. Give each child a Prayer Box Pattern. Child cuts out the triangle-shaped box.
2. Child writes or draws to complete prayer prompts that are found on inside.
3. Child then uses markers and stickers to decorate the outside of box.
4. Child punches holes in the top points of each triangle and then folds the box so that the triangles meet, with decorated sides facing out.
5. Child places several candies in box, inserts ribbon through the holes and ties to close. Children take boxes home. During the week, they open boxes and use prompts to pray while they enjoy a candy.



God's Word

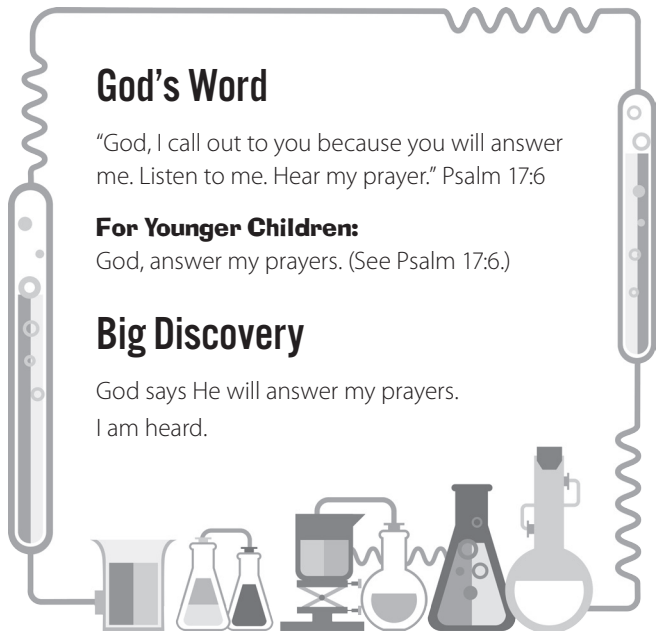
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For Younger Children:

God, answer my prayers. (See Psalm 17:6.)

Big Discovery

God says He will answer my prayers.
I am heard.



Talk About



- What would you tell a friend who asked you what prayer is? (Talking to God. Telling God what you need. Asking for help.)

God wants to hear from us. What are some things Jesus' prayer helps us know we can pray about? (Honoring and praising God. Thanking God. Asking God for what you need. Asking for help and protection.)
- The Bible tells us God hears and answers our prayers. How can we tell when a prayer is answered?** (God does something. God does the best thing for us. Sometimes it is not what we expect!) **God loves us. He answers our prayers in the way that is best for us!** Repeat Psalm 17:6 together.

Pray briefly, thanking God for His love and for hearing us pray.

For Younger Children



Precut and prefold the verse boxes. Be ready to help children thread and tie ribbons.

Worship Center

Luke 11:1-13

Collect



Bibles, CD-ROM and CD player, Lesson 8 Big Discovery Visual, song lyrics (pp. 255, 251), whiteboard and marker.

Prepare



Write out the words and reference for Psalm 17:6 on a large whiteboard.

Team Game

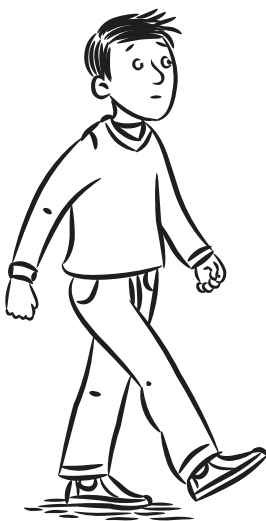


Students stand in a group. Choose two volunteers and tell them, **You have an important job. It will take a lot of concentration!** Volunteers must walk around the group of students, looking straight ahead and not smiling. As the volunteers begin walking, say, **The rest of you have a job, too. Your job is to make our volunteers laugh!** Others try to distract volunteers and make them laugh. Once volunteers laugh, choose other volunteers and play again.

Bible Verse Game



Read Psalm 17:6 aloud with children. Create a series of motions together for each phrase. Practice the motions, and then add them as you repeat the verse. Do it several more times!



God's Word

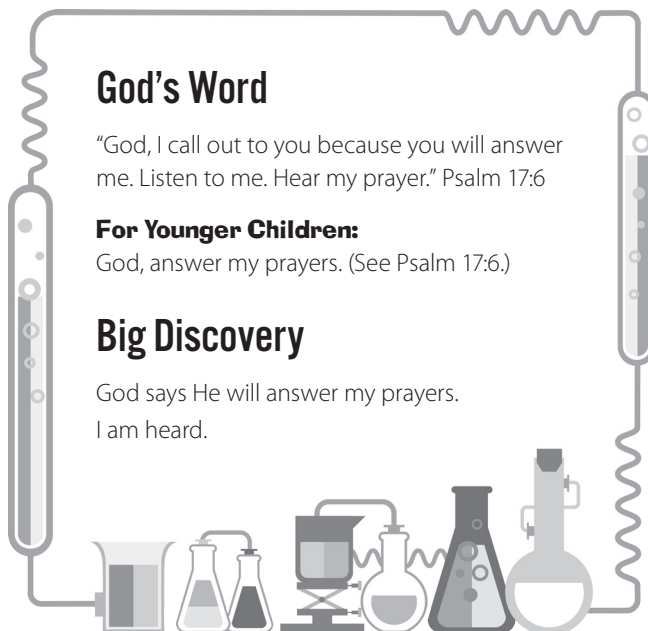
"God, I call out to you because you will answer me. Listen to me. Hear my prayer." Psalm 17:6

For Younger Children:

God, answer my prayers. (See Psalm 17:6.)

Big Discovery

God says He will answer my prayers.
I am heard.



Song



You, or another leader, lead children in singing "Pray!" adding motions and/or clapping if desired.

Prayer



Today we talked about how Jesus taught His friends to pray.

Show Big Discovery Visual. **What's our Big Discovery?** (Students shout, "God says He will answer my prayers! I am heard!") **This BIG**

discovery reminds us that no matter where we are or what we're doing, we can talk to God, our Father. He loves us and

wants to hear from us! Then lead children in prayer, thanking God for His love and for listening to and answering our prayers.

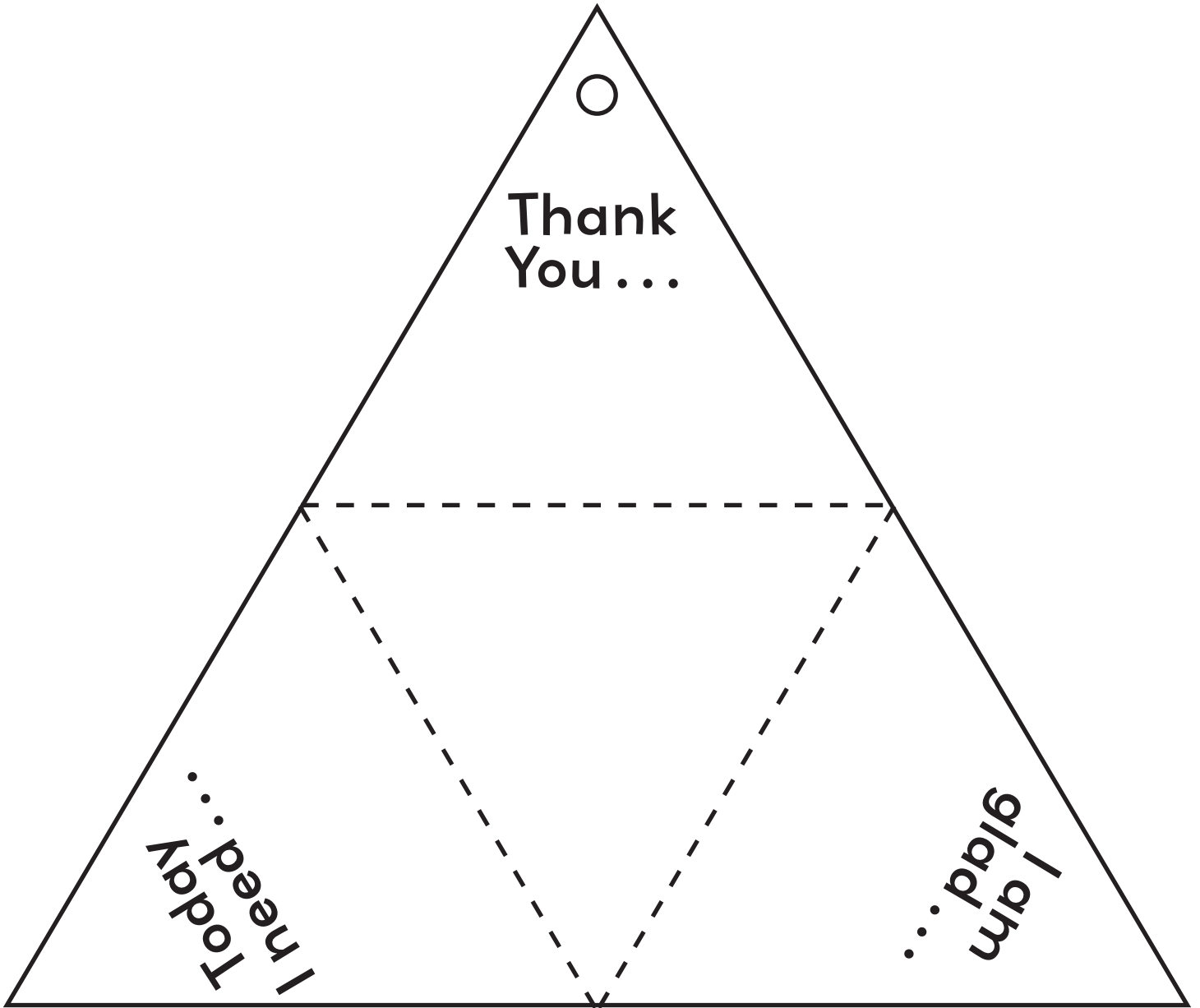
Song



You, or another leader, lead children in singing "J-E-S-U-S," adding motions and/or clapping if desired. **Jesus tells us to pray and not give up. This week, let's try praying every time we begin to worry. God, our Father, wants to hear from us!**



Prayer Box



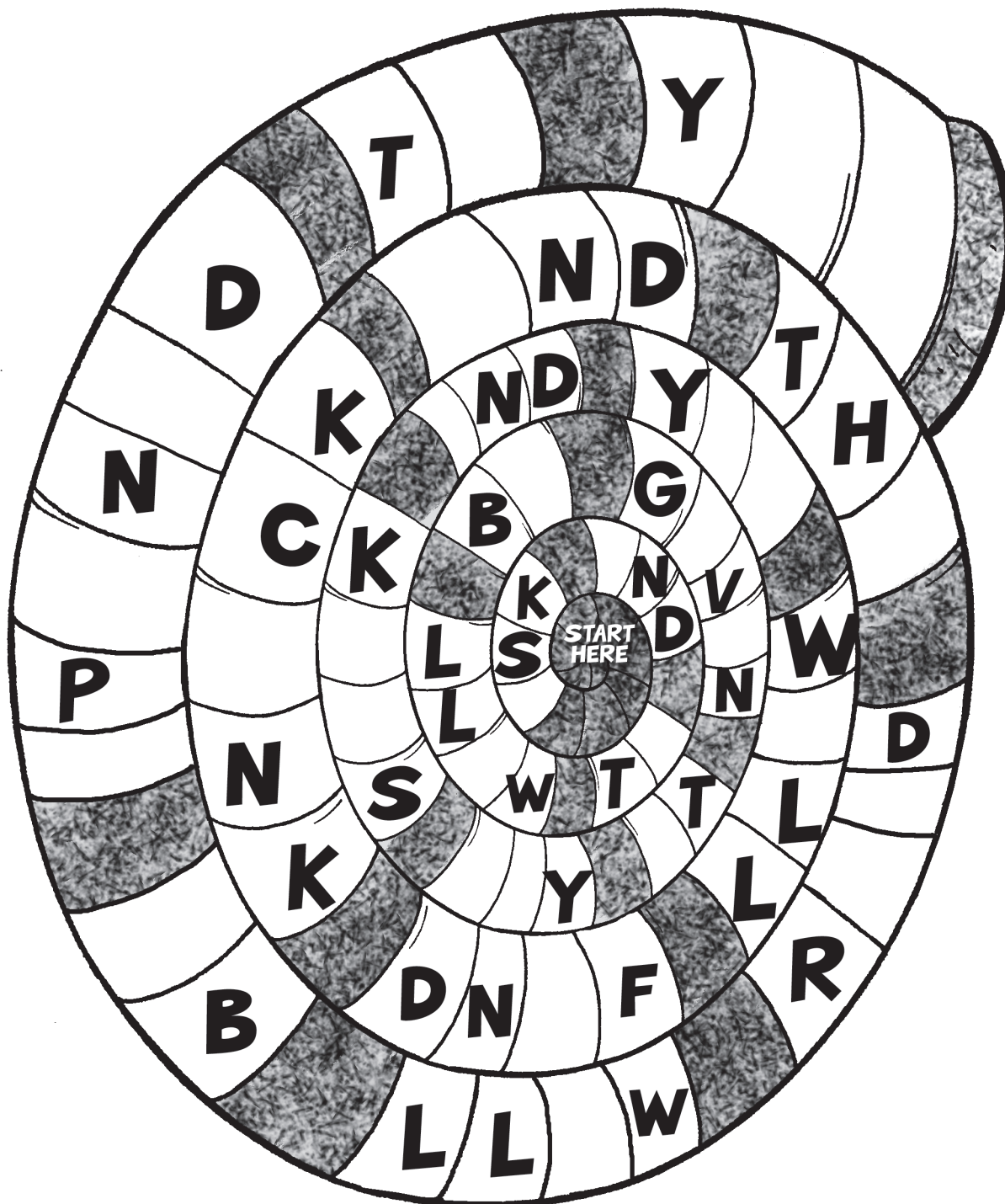
Jesus' friends learn to pray.

Luke 11:1-13



Spiral of Answers

Start at the center of the spiral and fill in the missing vowels.
(Hint: Read Luke 11:9 in your Bible for help.)



I Can Be Wise

Parable of the Rich Fool © Luke 12:13-34

God's Word

"If any of you need wisdom, ask God for it. He will give it to you. God gives freely to everyone. He doesn't find fault." James 1:5

For Younger Children:

Ask God for wisdom. He will help. (See James 1:5)

Big Discovery

God says He will give me wisdom when I ask and trust. I can be wise.



Teacher & Parent Connection

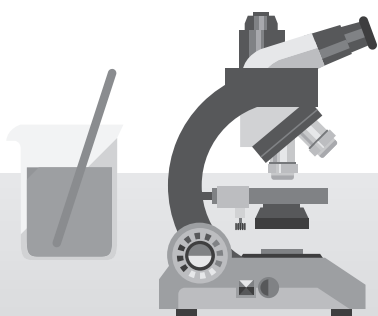
Justice. Fairness. Equality. We hear those words a lot, don't we? They sound so right, so good—even wise! But those words can also be a cloak for greed, self-interest and manipulation!

The young man who pushed through the crowd demanded that Jesus DO SOMETHING "for justice." It may have sounded like his interest was in equality, but he was consumed with his potential loss of income if his brother didn't share the inheritance! "Tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me!" he demanded.

But Jesus knew his (and our) humanness (or human-mess!) all too well. We're often like that young man, hollering for equality when we fear we'll get cheated, shouting for justice when we're afraid somebody is going to take what WE want! After Jesus had told His story about the foolish farmer, the young man probably kept quiet, realizing that Jesus had called him out on his greed.

But if all this justice can be fake, all this fairness be empty and even unwise, then how can we in the twenty-first century live in real wisdom? Jesus made it clear that we're wise to hold material goods and human "success" lightly. Then we're free to wisely enjoy the good gifts our Father God has for us. And beyond that, for every situation that might stump us, He has offered us HIS own wisdom, brought to us by His own Holy Spirit.

What a relief! We can relax our grip on our "stuff." (Only open hands can receive!) We can ask God for wisdom and then trust His Spirit to give us true wisdom in any situation. We can rely on Him to reveal HIS brilliant wisdom just when we need it! That's the way of God's wisdom. It's more than fair or just or equal—it's BEYOND even the world's best wisdom!



Planning Page

Choose which centers you will provide and the order in which children will participate in them (see pp. 14–18 for schedule tips and pp. 24–25 for guidelines in combining older and younger children). Also plan who will lead each center (for staffing tips, see pp. 19–21). Use the reproducible planning sheet (p. 240) to record your plans.

Bible Story Center

Bible Story

Parable of the Rich Fool • Luke 12:13–34

Younger Child Option

Big Discovery Box • Show props and draw simple sketches during the story.

Older Child Option

Big Discovery Box • Distribute plastic coins during story.

Art Center

Younger Child Option

Make an owl puppet and talk about God's wisdom.

Materials

Bible, brown and yellow paper, scissors, thin paper plates, crayons, stapler, adhesive wiggle eyes

Older Child Option

Create wisdom reminders and talk about God's wisdom.

Materials

Bible, 1/4 inch (3.1 cm) clear flat-backed marbles, heavy paper, colored pencils, scissors, glue, magnet sheets

Game Center

Younger Child Option

Play a bowling game and talk about being wise.

Materials

Bible, Game Cards (p. 168), masking tape, six water bottles, several foam balls

Older Child Option

Play a marble-passing game and talk about true wisdom.

Materials

Bible, paper towel tubes, scissors, marbles or round rocks

Coloring/Puzzle Center

Younger Child Option

Review the Bible story while completing coloring page.

Materials

Lesson 9 Coloring Page (p. 169) for each student, crayons

Older Child Option

Review the Bible story while completing puzzle page.

Materials

Lesson 9 Puzzle Page (p. 170) for each student, pencils

Worship Center

For All

Participate in large-group activities to review the Bible verse and worship God together.

Materials

Bibles, CD-ROM and CD player, Lesson 9 Big Discovery Visual, song lyrics (pp. 256, 252), whiteboard and marker, permanent marker, 30 paper or plastic cups



Bonus Investigation!

Use this investigation at any time during this session: as an additional activity center, to extend the session for a longer time or for added theme excitement.

Got your safety glasses? Lab coats? Here's a simple experiment to do with your kids!

Lift Me Up!

For each child, you need:

- Plastic funnel
- Ping-Pong ball



Here's what you say:

How is it that birds are able to fly? Most people think that the air pushes them up. But God made a very amazing thing in the air. It's completely OPPOSITE of that! It's called LIFT. It makes it possible for birds (and airplanes) to lift off the ground and fly. Let's see how it works!

Here's what you do:

- Hold the funnel upside down.
- Put the small end of the funnel in your mouth, bending over so that the funnel is upside down when you blow through it.
- Practice blowing steadily through the funnel. Lay your hand underneath, palm up, so that you can feel the air going straight down.
- When you've got a good airflow going, lay a Ping-Pong ball in the palm of your open hand, under the large end of the funnel.
- Continue blowing. Take your hand away. What happens?
- Keep on trying it, and talk about the reasons why it works!

Here's why it works:

The ball floats inside the funnel because the air passing by it is moving quickly. This puts less pressure above the ball than the air pressure under the ball. Since the air pressure is greater below the ball than the pressure is above it, the ball is held in the air! We call this upward push "lift." It's what makes a bird—or an airplane—fly!

Bible Story Center

for younger children Luke 12:13–34

Big Discovery Box



Before class, print out Lesson 9 Big Discovery Visual from the CD-ROM. Place in the Big Discovery Box with a Bible, stalks of grain, silk flowers, a sketchbook and a pen.

Introduction



Open Big Discovery Box as you speak. **What do you think is in our Big Discovery Box today?** Remove printout, stalks of grain, silk flowers, sketchbook and pen. **Why do you think we have grain? Flowers? Let's find out!** Remove Bible. **This is the Bible! It will tell us what happened with these things.** Show sketchbook and pen. **Listen and look. I'm going to draw some pictures of things in our story!**

Tell the Story



(Draw circles for a crowd of people.) Jesus was talking to His disciples. Many people crowded around them. They wanted to see Jesus!

But one young man pushed through the crowd to Jesus.

He said to Jesus, "Teacher, my father has died. And my brother won't give me my share of our father's MONEY!" (Add details to circles to make them into coins.)

Jesus cared about the young man. But Jesus knew this man cared TOO much about money!

Jesus turned to the people listening. He said to them, "Be careful! Don't be greedy. Your life matters MORE than how many things you have."

Jesus wanted people to know that money and things are not the MOST important things. To help people understand, Jesus told this story. (Draw vertical lines; add a series of small v's at ends of lines for grain.)

A farmer had fields that grew lots and lots of grain. That year, he had SO MUCH grain that his barns were FULL! (Show stalks of grain.) **What do you think the farmer did?**

The farmer decided, "I'll tear down my old barns. I will build even BIGGER barns!" (Draw upside-down u's for barns.)

The farmer was SO proud of himself! He thought, *I'm RICH! I've got SO MUCH, I won't need to work. I'll eat, drink and just have FUN. I have EVERYTHING I need!* (Draw smiling face.)

But the farmer FORGOT something IMPORTANT. He forgot that all the good things he had were things God had GIVEN him! He had forgotten ALL about God!

Besides that, God knew something the farmer didn't know. God said to him, "You are a FOOL. Tonight is the night you will die. Then who will get what you have?" (Draw sad face.)

The rich farmer had thought only about himself. He thought about HIS plans, HIS money, HIS future. He FORGOT that his THINGS did not give him what he needed. He really needed to know God!

When Jesus finished the story, maybe He pointed to birds in the sky. (Draw v's for flying birds.)

"Look! Ravens don't save grain in barns. But God feeds and takes care of them. God cares about you even MORE. So DON'T WORRY!"

Then maybe Jesus pointed at some flowers. (Show silk flowers.) He talked about how God made "clothes" for flowers. He dresses them with petals. Jesus said, "If God takes care of flowers, He will give YOU clothes. You are more important to God than the flowers!"

Finally, Jesus told the people the WISEST thing they could do: Jesus said, "Seek God's kingdom. Trust God, love and obey Him. Then God will take care of everything else."

God's loving care and gifts are better than ANYTHING money can buy! To be wise, we need to know God and love and obey Him!

God's Word & Me



Jesus said that worrying about money and things is NOT wise. Trusting God is WISE. Jesus said WISE people are thankful and glad for what God gives! Show Big Discovery Visual and read it aloud. **God says He will give us wisdom when we ask and trust. We can be wise. Trusting and obeying God is the first step to being wise!**

Pray, **Dear God, thank You for Your gifts! Please help us be thankful for what You give. Help us remember that trusting YOU is the wisest way to live. In Jesus' name, amen.**

Bible Story Center

for older children Luke 12:13–34



Big Discovery Box

Before class, print out Lesson 9 Big Discovery Visual from the CD-ROM. Place in the Big Discovery Box with a Bible and plastic coins.

You may invite a male team member to dress in Bible-times clothing and tell the story each time, introducing himself as Dr. Luke, the head researcher of the materials.

Show plastic coins and distribute one to a student holding up a hand whenever you mention the words “money,” “wealth” or “riches.”

Introduction



Open Big Discovery Box as you speak. **I wonder if there’s anything in this box that Dr. Luke might have left? Show Bible. Ah! Here’s our source document again—the Bible. Show Big Discovery Visual. God says He will give us wisdom when we ask and trust Him. Listen to find out what SOME people trusted. It wasn’t anything WISE!**

Show coins. **Can you guess what our story is about? I’m going to pass out one of these to one person each time the word “money,” “wealth” or “riches” is said. To be eligible to get a coin, show me you heard the word by raising your hand.**

Tell the Story



Jesus was speaking to His disciples one day—and thousands of OTHER people were there too, pushing and crowding. They were all trying to see Jesus! But one young man pushed his way through the crowd—he really wanted to talk to Jesus!

He blurted, “Teacher, my father died and left his money to my brother and me. BUT my brother hasn’t paid me my fair share. Tell him to split the money with me!”

Jesus looked at the man. He cared about the young man, but He knew more about this man than the man knew about himself!

Jesus knew that this man’s problem was bigger than getting half of his father’s money! Jesus knew that the man cared too much about how much money he had.

Jesus turned to the people listening. He said, “Be careful! Don’t be greedy. Your life matters MORE than the things you have.”

Jesus wanted EVERYONE there to know that money and possessions are not the most important things for people to care about in life! To help people understand, Jesus told this story:

There was a farmer whose fields produced a LOT of grain one year. He had many more baskets of grain than he usually had. In fact, he had SO MUCH grain that his barns were already FULL.

The farmer was so excited by his great crop of grain that he thought of nothing else. He lay in bed at night and dreamed about the WEALTH he’d get from selling this crop. He was certain he would have all the money he needed for the rest of his life.

“I think I will just take life easy,” said the farmer. “I’ll have all the MONEY I need. I’ll eat, drink and have FUN. With all that money, I won’t worry about anyone or anything! I have EVERYTHING I need. I’ve got PLENTY of wealth stored up to last me the rest of my life.”

But God knew the farmer’s life would end soon. God said to him, “You are a FOOL! Tonight you will die. Then who will get those riches you have stored away for yourself?”

The rich farmer’s problem was that he had spoken only about HIS wealth, HIS plans, HIS money, HIS future. God said the farmer was a FOOL because he thought that the thing he needed was plenty of money. The farmer FORGOT that all his crops and all his money were a gift from GOD. He didn’t thank God for the good crop. He forgot that his money could not give him what he needed most—to know God, to thank Him and to learn to trust Him!

When Jesus finished His story, He turned to His listening disciples. Perhaps He pointed to the birds in the sky.

“Look at the ravens,” He said. “They don’t save food in barns. But God takes care of them. And you’re worth MUCH more than birds. So DON’T WORRY about anything!”

Then maybe Jesus pointed to some beautiful flowers. He talked about how God gives the flowers beautiful “clothes.” Jesus went on to say, “If God takes care of flowers, He will certainly give you clothes, too. YOU are MORE important than these flowers!”

Then Jesus told the people, “Seek God’s kingdom FIRST”—thanking God, trusting God, loving and obeying Him.

“Then,” Jesus said, “God will give you all the things you need.”

Jesus’ friends learned that trusting stuff and money makes a person a fool! God’s love and His gifts are better than ANYTHING money can buy! A person who seeks God’s kingdom asks God about everything and depends on God for everything. Depending on God is always wise. Asking God what to do and trusting Him to answer is true wisdom!

God’s Word & Me

Jesus wanted the people listening to Him to know that trusting God is the WISEST way to live. Sometimes we think a new video game or tablet or bike can make us happy. But God wants us to seek His kingdom first, to love and obey Him—and then, He’ll give us things that are better than anything money can buy! His gifts are the things we truly need.

Read James 1:5 aloud from your Bible. **God says He is willing to give us wisdom when we ask Him. Of course, the VERY WISEST**

way to live starts with joining God’s family! (Invite children interested in knowing more about becoming members of God’s family to talk with you or another teacher after class. See “Leading a Child to Christ” on p. 12.)

- **Why do you think Jesus told the story of the foolish farmer?** (To help people understand that money and things aren’t very important. To show people that trusting God is the wisest way to live.)
- **What does God tell us to do to have His wisdom?** (Ask Him. Trust Him. Ask Him for everything. Seek His kingdom first.)
- Show Big Discovery Visual. **God tells us that He will give us wisdom when we ask and trust. We can be wise—if we will ask Him and then trust Him!**
- **What are some times a kid your age might need wisdom? Times an adult might need wisdom?**

Pray with children, thanking God for His promise to give wisdom when we ask Him and trust Him, as well as asking His help to remember that trusting Him for everything is the wisest way to live!



Game Center

for younger children Luke 12:13–34

Collect



Bible, Game Cards (p. 168), masking tape, six water bottles, several foam balls.

Prepare

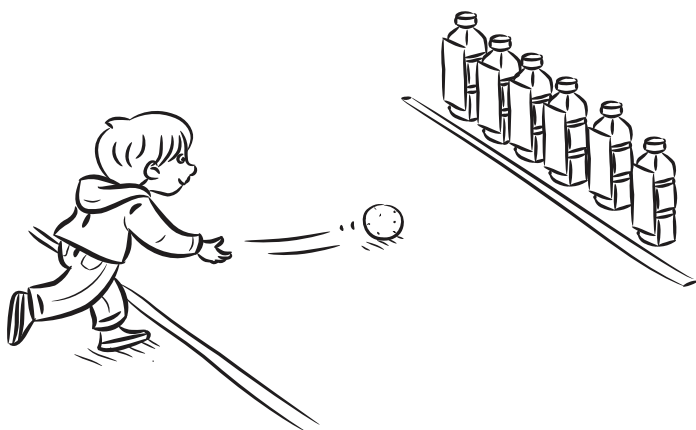


Lay two masking tape lines about 10 feet (3 meters) apart. Attach a game card to each water bottle. Line up bottles with cards along one line.

Do



1. Children form two groups and line up across from the bottles.
2. First child in each line rolls one or two balls toward bottles. If ball hits a bottle, child retrieves that bottle.
3. Play continues with each child rolling one or more balls, until all bottles are taken.
4. When all bottles are taken, children show pictures on bottles they are holding. Children tell what each picture is and how they think God can use what's pictured to help them be wise.



God's Word

"If any of you need wisdom, ask God for it. He will give it to you. God gives freely to everyone. He doesn't find fault." James 1:5

For Younger Children:

Ask God for wisdom. He will help. (See James 1:5.)

Big Discovery

God says He will give me wisdom when I ask and trust. I can be wise.



Talk About



- Was it easy or hard to knock over the bottles? What made it easier? (Students tell.) Sometimes we learn wise ways to do things just by doing them!
- In Dr. Luke's Bible account, Jesus told about a farmer who was not wise. What did the farmer think about? (Himself. His stuff.) What did he NOT think about? (God. Being thankful.)
- Jesus told people that God would take care of them. What else did Jesus say? (Love and trust God. Be part of His kingdom. Ask God for everything. Don't worry.)
- Our Bible says that we can ask God for wisdom. We can always trust Him to help us.

Pray briefly, Dear God, thank You for loving us. Thank You that we can ask You for wisdom. Please help us trust You. It's the WISEST way to live!

For Older Children



Older children stand back several feet from line to bowl.



Game Center

for older children Luke 12:13–34

Collect



Bible, paper towel tubes, scissors, marbles or round rocks.

Prepare



Cut paper towel tubes in half lengthwise to create two “troughs” each. You will need one trough for each player.

Do



1. Students form two equal teams. Each team stands in a line. Give each student a tube trough.
2. Give first person in each line a marble (harder) or a round rock (easier, since it moves more slowly).
3. Student puts the marble in the trough and then must pass it by rolling marble into the trough of the next player. (If you are short on troughs, students may also need to pass them to players down the line.)
4. First team to successfully pass the marble down the line and back to the first person wins. At the end of the round, ask questions from the Talk About section. Play several rounds and try using different rolling objects!

Talk About



- What was hard about rolling these marbles at first? (Had to figure out how fast it would go. Had to keep trough close



God’s Word

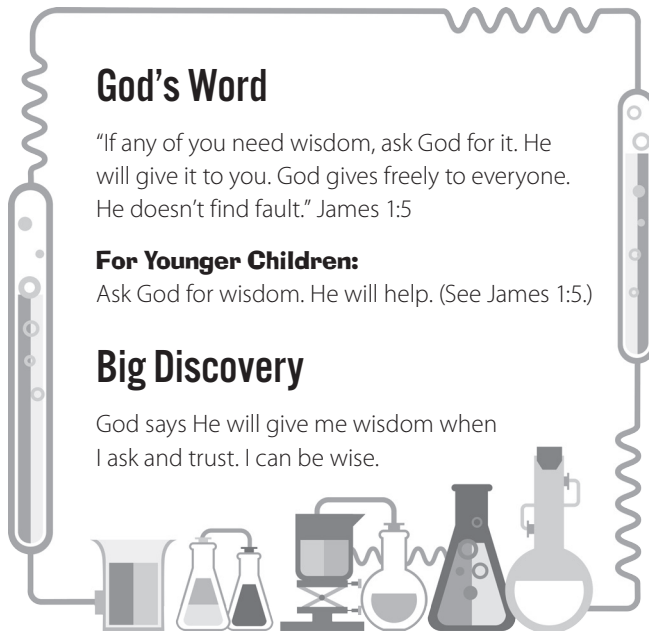
“If any of you need wisdom, ask God for it. He will give it to you. God gives freely to everyone. He doesn’t find fault.” James 1:5

For Younger Children:

Ask God for wisdom. He will help. (See James 1:5)

Big Discovery

God says He will give me wisdom when I ask and trust. I can be wise.



to other person’s trough.) **By doing it more than once, we gained a little practical wisdom!**

- Gravity is what makes this game work. What did you observe about the marble’s speed versus the rock’s? (The rounder and smoother item tends to roll faster.)
- Why do you think Jesus told the story of the foolish farmer? (To help people know that money and things aren’t truly WISE. To show that trusting God is the wisest way to live.)
- What does God tell us to do to have His wisdom? (Ask Him. Trust Him. Seek His kingdom first. Ask Him for everything.)
- Repeat James 1:5 together. **God tells us that He will give us wisdom when we ask and trust.** Tell about a time you needed wisdom and how God gave the wisdom you needed. **What are times a kid your age might need wisdom?**

Lead children in prayer, thanking God that He promises to give us wisdom when we ask Him and trust Him.

For Younger Children



If most players are younger, use large faceted plastic beads for rolling. Very young children may lay troughs end-to-end and then push the marble through the trough.

Art Center

for younger children Luke 12:13–34

Collect



Bible, brown and yellow paper, scissors, thin paper plates, crayons, stapler, adhesive wiggle eyes.

Prepare



For each child, cut a 3-inch (7.5 cm) triangle of brown paper for owl's head and a smaller triangle of yellow paper for beak.

Do

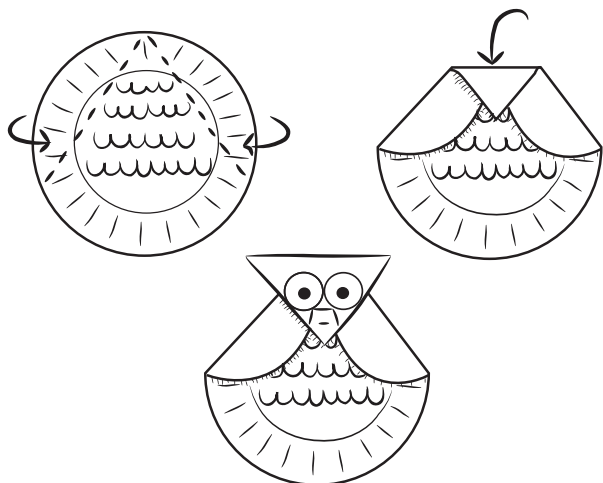


1. Give each child a paper plate, and demonstrate how to fold down both sides of plate to make a triangle with "wings." Child folds, then unfolds. Child colors owl body and wings as desired.
2. With adult help, child refolds wings and arranges brown and yellow triangles at the folded point above wings. Adult staples all parts together at top of beak.
3. Child adds wiggle eyes. If time allows, child may cut yellow feet for adult to staple to owl body.

Talk About



- **We are making owls today! For a long time, people have said that owls look wise. Owls can remind us of being wise. Who was NOT wise in our story today?** (Farmer who did not think about God. Man who thought only about himself.)



God's Word

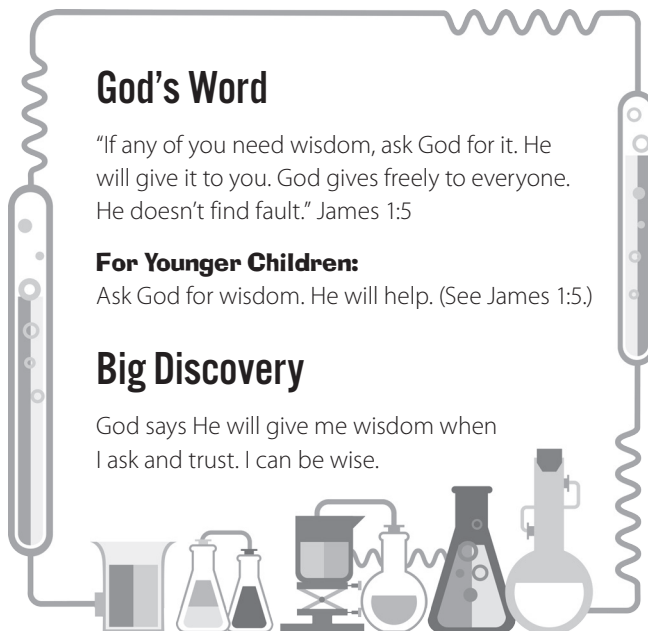
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For Younger Children:

Ask God for wisdom. He will help. (See James 1:5.)

Big Discovery

God says He will give me wisdom when I ask and trust. I can be wise.



- **In Dr. Luke's Bible account, what did Jesus say was a wise way to live?** (Trust God. Love Him. Ask God for everything. Do what God says to do. Don't worry.)
- **Our Bible says that God will give us wisdom when we ask Him. Then when we ask Him, we trust Him. We wait for Him to help us know what is wise!**

Pray briefly, **Dear God, thank You for loving us. Thank You that we can ask You for wisdom. In Jesus' name, amen.**

For Older Children



Encourage older children to make more elaborate owls by cutting brown paper for feathers, adding feet, etc.

Art Center

for older children Luke 12:13–34

Collect



Bible, 1/4 inch (3.1 cm) clear flat-backed marbles, heavy paper, colored pencils, scissors, glue, magnet sheets.

Prepare

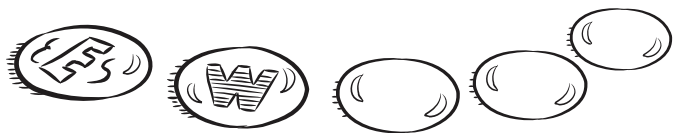
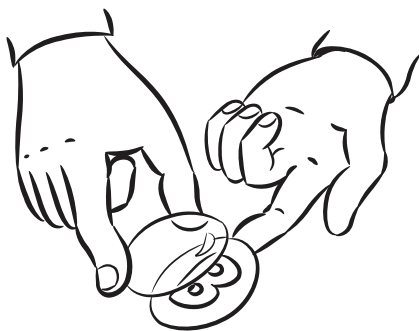


Make a sample of the project so that you know the process. Set out materials. Note: Because glue is applied to the surface of the decorated paper, use colored pencils; colored pencils don't bleed.

Do



1. Give each child six flat-backed marbles and paper. Child uses colored pencils to draw around each marble.
2. Child then writes "BE WISE," placing one letter in each of the circles drawn. Child decorates around the letters as desired.
3. Child cuts out a circle, puts glue over the lettered surface and then attaches circle to the flat side of marble, repeating until all are attached.
4. Child cuts six small pieces of magnet sheet and glues these onto each marble back. Set aside to dry.



God's Word

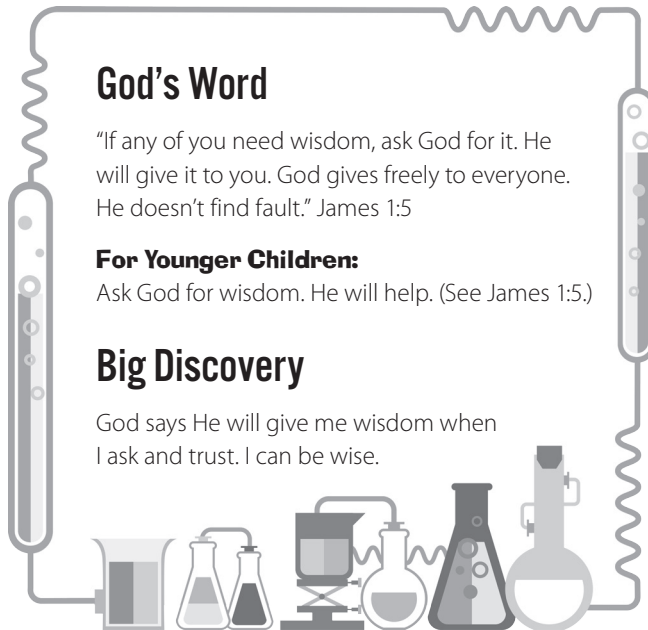
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For Younger Children:

Ask God for wisdom. He will help. (See James 1:5.)

Big Discovery

God says He will give me wisdom when I ask and trust. I can be wise.



Talk About



- Show sample magnets you made. **When your magnets are finished, the curved, or convex, surface of each marble will make the letters look bigger. Convex lenses are a wise way to magnify things! What are some ways Jesus said to be wise?** (Trust God. Don't worry. Don't think money is most important. Think of God first. Ask God for everything.)
- **What are times a kid your age might be in a tough situation? Might not know what to do? Might need wisdom?**
- **How do we get God's wisdom?** (Ask Him. Trust Him. Read His Word. Remember Bible verses. Do what God says when He says to do it.)
- Repeat James 1:5 together. **God tells us that He will give us wisdom when we ask and trust Him!**

Pray briefly, thanking God for His promise to give us wisdom when we ask Him and trust Him.

For Younger Children



Give younger children wide strips of heavy paper with the words written across them. Children decorate around the words and then attach magnet pieces to the back.

Worship Center

Luke 12:13-34

Collect



Bibles, CD-ROM and CD player, Lesson 9 Big Discovery Visual, song lyrics (pp. 256, 252), whiteboard and marker, permanent marker, 30 paper or plastic cups.

Prepare



Write out the words and reference for James 1:5 on a large whiteboard. Use permanent marker to write one word and the reference for the Bible verse on each of the cups. (Several cups will be left blank.) Divide cups evenly; set a stack on each of two tables.

Team Game



Let's see who can stack these cups the fastest! Group forms two teams and sends two volunteers from each team to a table. **In 30 seconds, let's see who can stack all of their cups. Cheer for your team!** Pairs work to stack cups. Declare a winner. Play again if time allows. **Good work! Working together is one kind of wisdom!**

Bible Verse Game



Read James 1:5 aloud with children. Students combine cups and at your signal, work together to quickly put cups in verse order. Read cups aloud together. Mix up and reorder cups several times so that everyone is part of the fun and repeats the verse!



God's Word

"If any of you need wisdom, ask God for it. He will give it to you. God gives freely to everyone. He doesn't find fault." James 1:5

For Younger Children:

Ask God for wisdom. He will help. (See James 1:5.)

Big Discovery

God says He will give me wisdom when I ask and trust. I can be wise.



Song



You, or another leader, lead children in singing "Trust in the Lord," adding motions and/or clapping if desired.

Prayer



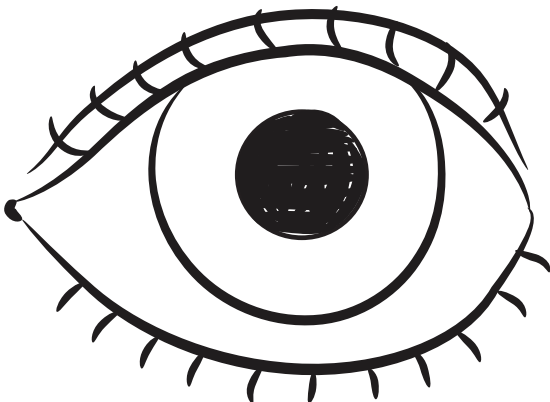
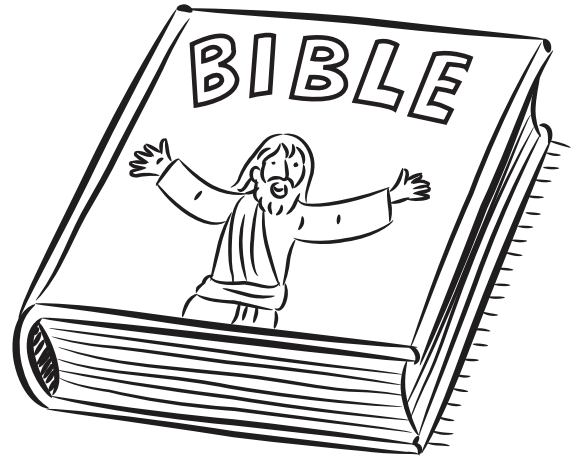
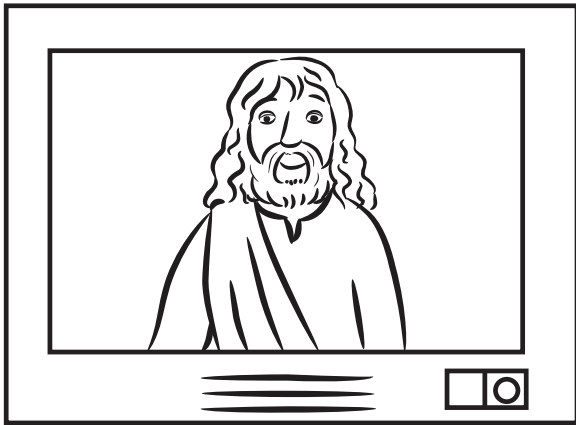
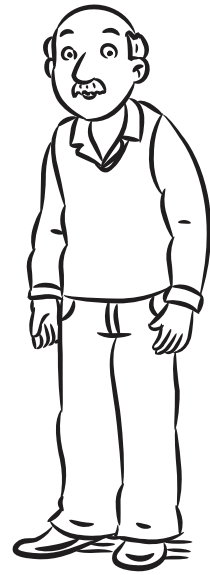
Today we talked about Jesus' story of the foolish farmer and about how God takes care of us so that we can live wisely!

Show Big Discovery Visual. **What's our Big Discovery?** (Students shout, "God says He will give me wisdom when I ask and trust! I can be wise!") **This BIG discovery reminds us that we can ALWAYS ask God for wisdom when we don't know what to do. We can trust Him to help!** Then lead children in prayer, thanking God for His promise to give us wisdom when we ask Him and trust Him.

Song

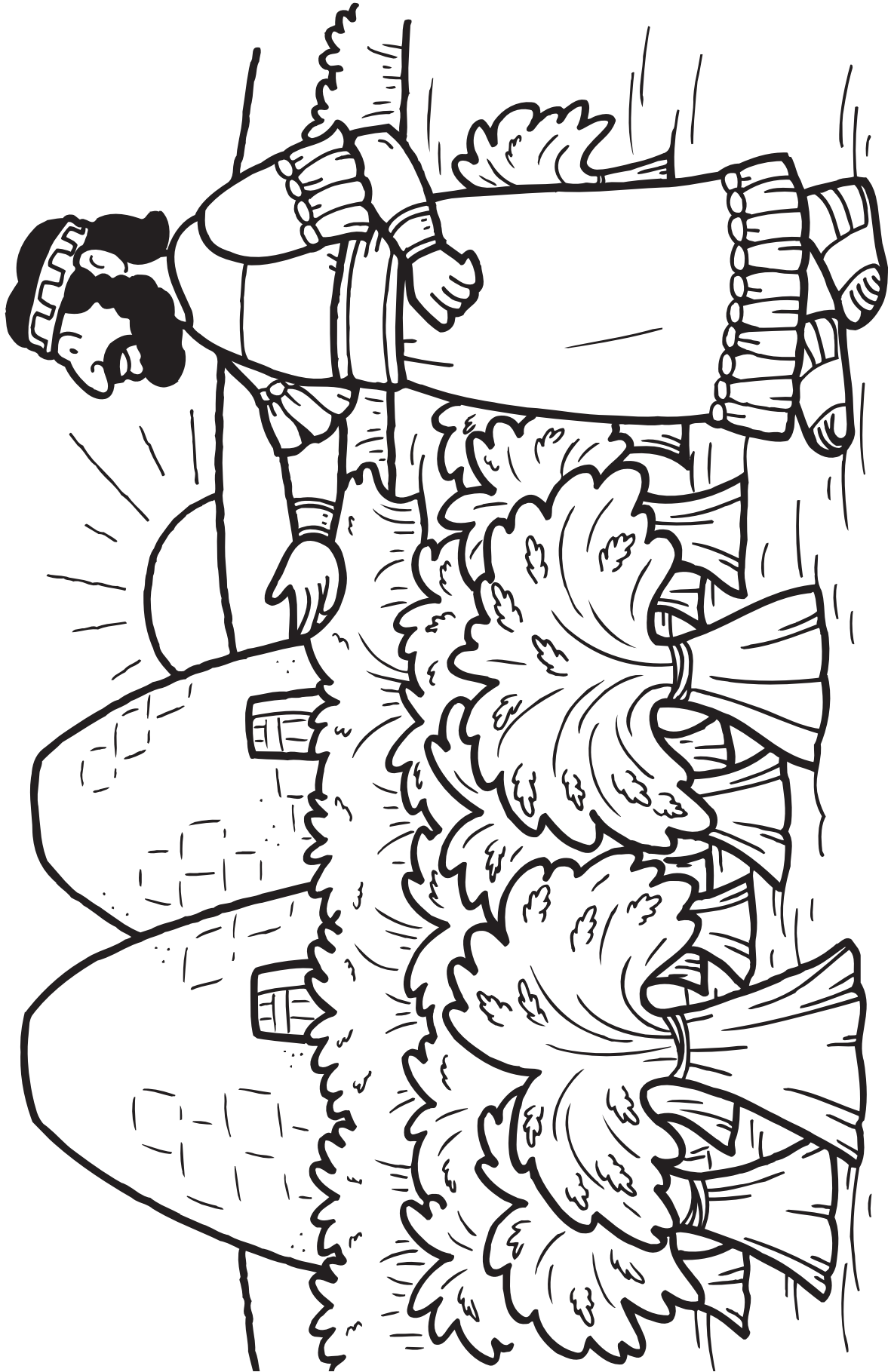


You, or another leader, lead children in singing "Lead a Life of Love," adding motions and/or clapping if desired. **Jesus said to ask God for everything we need. So this week when you don't know what to do, when you have a tough situation, be sure to stop and ask Him for HIS wise idea—then trust Him to help you!**



Jesus talks about a rich man.

Luke 12:13-21



From Fool to Wise!

First, use the clues below to change "fool" to "wise." Then, start at the dot to circle every other letter. Write the circled letters below to read what James has to say about being wise!

F	O	O	L

Someone who doesn't listen—

What sheep wear—

What trees become—

What isn't narrow—

Someone who listens and does God's commands!

What's a command you want to obey?

OIPF HAJNBY MODFW YKORUS NTELEFD
 MWJIASCPOVM, BAISTK OGLOFD UFXOIR BIRTY.
 HDE SWEIKLUL EGOIRVLE SILT ATHOP YEOSU.

“ _____ , _____ .
 _____ ” James 1:5

I Can Be Forgiven

Parable of the Lost Son © Luke 15:11-24

God's Word

"But God is faithful and fair. If we admit that we have sinned, he will forgive us our sins. He will forgive every wrong thing we have done." 1 John 1:9

For Younger Children:

God forgives us when we ask. (See 1 John 1:9)

Big Discovery

God says that when I mess up, He forgives me when I ask. I can be forgiven.



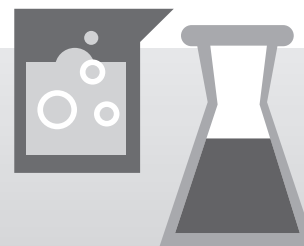
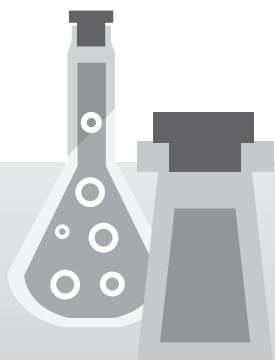
Teacher & Parent Connection

Only after many years of reading and hearing the stories of Jesus did it begin to dawn on me: Those Pharisees, those guys who hated Jesus and ultimately got Him killed—I was one of THEM! They judged everyone by their own (self-designated) perfect standard. They knew how things should be. They knew what was right, and they had God's ear more than anyone else because of their pure hearts and good deeds. Oh. That was ME, TOO!

For years, I didn't understand that spiritual pride and judgmental attitudes were SIN. I thought that people who did outward things that didn't meet with my approval, who drank or danced or (fill in the blank), THOSE people were the bad guys. THOSE people, however, were the very ones Jesus came to save! And unlike the Pharisees, THEY knew they needed saving! The Pharisees (and I!) didn't even have a good sense of their own (my) deep sinfulness. (And yes, God saw to it that I got a good understanding of the horrific depths of my sin!)

I'm not advocating that we all run out and join in outward actions we deem to be sinful. But we do need to ask ourselves two things: First, what ungodly attitudes do I hold onto? (Since we're such experts at holding them IN, we may think they "don't count," but they DO!) Second, what words do I say about others who don't "meet my standard"? Remember, Jesus said that out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks! (See Luke 6:45.) Do I despise and avoid THOSE PEOPLE, or do I see them as "God-sent," people to whom I can show His love and compassion?

The beauty of this parable is several layers deep—but today's clear and obvious lesson is that when we come to the end of our (good, smart, capable, successful) selves and recognize that we ARE in the pigpen, God is delighted to welcome us home with open arms (even when we stink)! He waits for us to confess. He loves for us to agree that our sin is real and that we need His forgiveness. It's the path to joy and freedom—even for recovering Pharisees!



Planning Page

Choose which centers you will provide and the order in which children will participate in them (see pp. 14–18 for schedule tips and pp. 24–25 for guidelines in combining older and younger children). Also plan who will lead each center (for staffing tips, see pp. 19–21). Use the reproducible planning sheet (p. 240) to record your plans.

Bible Story Center

Bible Story

Parable of the Lost Son • Luke 15:11–24

Younger Child Option

Big Discovery Box • Follow a masking-tape path as you tell the story.

Older Child Option

Big Discovery Box • Draw places from the story on butcher paper attached to tabletop.

Art Center

Younger Child Option

Explore bubble-wrap painting and talk about God's forgiveness.

Materials

Bible, newspaper, scissors, bubble wrap, tempera paint, shallow plastic containers, permanent marker, paper

Older Child Option

Use erasures as an art method and talk about God's forgiveness.

Materials

Bible, pencil sharpener, pencils (Number 2 pencils work best), new pencil-top erasers, paper

Game Center

Younger Child Option

Play a game fanning balloons with paper plates and talk about forgiveness.

Materials

Bible, masking tape, balloons, paper plates

Older Child Option

Play a game like Hopscotch and talk about forgiveness.

Materials

Bible, Question Cards (p. 182), masking tape

Coloring/Puzzle Center

Younger Child Option

Review the Bible story while completing coloring page.

Materials

Lesson 10 Coloring Page (p. 183) for each student, crayons

Older Child Option

Review the Bible story while completing puzzle page.

Materials

Lesson 10 Puzzle Page (p. 184) for each student, pencils

Worship Center

For All

Participate in large-group activities to review the Bible verse and worship God together.

Materials

Bibles, CD-ROM and CD player, Lesson 10 Big Discovery Visual, song lyrics (pp. 255, 248), whiteboard and marker, soccer ball

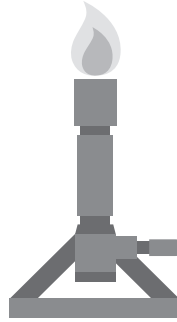


Bonus Theme Ideas

Bonus Theme Ideas can be used at any time during this session: as an additional activity center, to extend the session for a longer time or for added theme excitement.

Mystery Lab Assistants of the Day!

Give each child a large index card. Ask each child to number his or her card from one to four and answer each of these questions (be available to write answers for children who need help): What is your favorite food? What is your favorite game? How old are you? What letter does your first name start with? Collect cards. Choose one card and read questions and answers aloud, encouraging volunteers to guess the identity of the Mystery Lab Assistant. Repeat as time and interest allow. (And if kids enjoy it, repeat the guessing activity each of the remaining weeks of TruthLab Investigations!)



Family Fun Event

Plan a special event designed to build relationships among families and the church. Send home invitations (see p. 235) several weeks ahead of time. Ask families to bring their favorite outdoor sports equipment (soccer balls, footballs, jump ropes, etc.). Designate several parents as game leaders. Game leaders guide families in playing games and beginning new games as needed. (Optional: Plan an egg toss or water-balloon toss in which all families can participate at the same time.) After 30 or 40 minutes of game time, serve pizza or hotdogs, or let families make and eat one of the snacks suggested in the Bonus Theme Ideas.

Super Smiles!

Provide red apple slices, whipped cream cheese and miniature marshmallows. Kids spread cream cheese on one side of an apple slice, set marshmallows on top of the cream cheese, add cream cheese to another slice and then set that slice on top of marshmallows with cream cheese side down. Grin and eat!



Post a note alerting parents to the use of food. Also, check registration forms for possible food allergies.

Bible Story Center

for younger children Luke 15:11–24



Big Discovery Box

Before class, print out Lesson 10 Big Discovery Visual from the CD-ROM. Place in the Big Discovery Box with a Bible and a bag of coins. Use masking tape to make a long, curving path around the area.

Introduction



What do you think is in our Big Discovery Box today? Remove printout and bag of coins. **Why do you think we have a bag of coins? Let's find out!** Remove Bible. **This is the Bible! It is going to tell us what happened with those coins.** Point to path. **This story is about traveling. So we are going to walk along the path to tell our story!**

Tell the Story



Jesus told people this story to help them understand that even when we do wrong, God still loves us.

Once there was a father who had two sons. (All stand at one end of path.) The father and his sons lived on a big farm. The father loved his sons. He always took good care of them. They had everything they needed!

But one day the younger son said, "Father, you said you would give me money some day. But I want MY money NOW!" (Show bag of coins.) The father gave his son the money. The son decided to travel. He wanted to live far away from his family.

So the son packed his clothes and walked happily away to the big city! The father waved good-bye. He must have felt sad. (Children walk to other end of path while you remain. Wave.) Every day, while his son was gone, the father waited. He looked and looked down the road. (Shade eyes to look.) He wondered every day if his son would come home. He waited patiently.

In the big city, the son started to spend all that money. (Walk to where children are standing, remove coins from bag as you speak.) Now he made lots of new friends. He also had big parties!

He bought new clothes and other things he liked. But soon, he had spent and spent and SPENT until his money was all gone. (Shake empty bag.) His nice clothes got dirty. His fancy things got broken. And there was not much food in that city. So he was HUNGRY!

So the son got a JOB. (Walk partway down the path with children. Pretend to feed pigs.) It was an ICKY job, to him. His job was feeding some smelly pigs! And he was still SO hungry! He even thought about eating the PIGS' food!

But the son had time to THINK. He thought about his money. It was gone. He thought about his friends. They were gone. He began to think about home. He said to himself, "Even the men who work for my father have FOOD to eat! I know! I'll go HOME. I will ask my father if I can be his servant!" He thought this would be a good idea.

(Motion children to follow you as you walk toward the start of the path.) The son walked and walked toward home. But while he was still far down the road, his father was looking! (Look back at children.) He saw his son coming and RAN down the road to meet him! His father hugged him! (Motion children to come to you.)

The son started to talk about how bad he had been. But his father didn't need to hear his words. His father FORGAVE him! He HUGGED him! He called for new clothes for his son. He said, "Let's have a big party to celebrate!" The son was VERY glad that his father loved him and forgave him!

God's Word & Me



Jesus wanted people to know that God is like the father in our story. Show Big Discovery Visual and read it aloud. **God says when we mess up, He'll forgive us when we ask. Say this with me! "I can be forgiven!"**

Pray, **Dear God, we all mess up sometimes. Thank You for promising to forgive us when we ask You. In Jesus' name, amen.**

Bible Story Center

for older children Luke 15:11–24



Big Discovery Box

Before class, print out Lesson 10 Big Discovery Visual from the CD-ROM. Place in the Big Discovery Box with a Bible. Tape a large sheet of butcher paper to a tabletop. On the paper, draw a long, curving road.

You may invite a male team member to dress in Bible-times clothing and tell the story each time, introducing himself as Dr. Luke, the head researcher of the materials.

Describe items that need to be drawn along the road. Students draw as you tell the story.

"I want my share of the money right NOW, Dad," the younger son said. He wanted the money so that he could leave home and live far from his family. He wanted to travel and have fun.

The father didn't argue. He gave the younger son his part of the money. The younger son told his dad and brother good-bye and headed down the road to a big city. The father loved his son. He would miss him very much.

When the younger son arrived at the distant city, he felt rich! He had all this MONEY! And suddenly he had friends who wanted to party with him! He spent money on dinners and parties and anything else he could think of. **But what do you think happened?**

One day the younger son looked in his money bag. It had been so HEAVY when he had gotten to the city. But now, it was EMPTY! His friends were gone. He was all alone—and had no money to buy food or a place to live. He felt awful!

He found a job, but it was a job he NEVER would have chosen. He was feeding stinky, muddy pigs! And he was still so HUNGRY! He even started wishing he could eat the pigs' food—and pigs' food is pretty nasty! He was starving!

But even though the son didn't have food, he DID have time. He had time to think. He thought about home. He knew that even his father's servants had plenty to EAT! So the younger son decided, *I'm going to go back home and tell my father I don't deserve to be his son anymore. I'll ask him if I can work for him as a servant.* **How do you think he felt when he began walking home?**

All this time, the father had been waiting for his son. Day after day, the father had watched the road, hoping to see his son. FINALLY, one day he saw someone coming down the road—was it his son? YES! The father was SO EXCITED, he couldn't stand still!

The father RAN to meet his son! He hugged and kissed his son. The son started to tell the father that he didn't deserve to be his son, but the father wouldn't even LISTEN. It didn't matter. His son had come HOME! He was SO glad to have his son back home that he called for servants to bring new clothes and shoes for his son. He called for a ring to put on his son's finger. And he sent others to prepare a big PARTY to celebrate!

The son had really messed up. He had wasted all of the money his father had given him. But the son was so glad he had come

Introduction



Open Big Discovery Box as you speak. **I wonder if there's anything in this box that Dr. Luke might have left?** Show Bible. **Ah! Here's our source document again, also known as the Bible.** Show Big Discovery Visual. **God says that when we mess up, He forgives us when we ask. We can be forgiven. THAT's good news. Do you know anyone who messes up? I do—ME!**

Here's your job! Designate an area for farm, city and pigpen. Students draw these, adding details as you tell the story.

Tell the Story



When Jesus lived on Earth, the religious leaders didn't like Him much. They considered themselves the "good people." Some "good people" even said that Jesus should NOT be kind to people who were "sinners"! So Jesus told this story to help people understand how God loves and forgives both people who think they're GOOD and people who know they're BAD! The story went like this:

A rich farmer had two sons. He loved BOTH of his sons very much. The farmer planned to divide his money between his sons one day. But the younger son didn't want to WAIT!

home! Even though he had done wrong things, his father still loved him. His father forgave him!

Jesus told this story because He wanted people to know that God is like that father. God is patient and loving. Even when we do wrong, as the son did, God still loves us. He waits for us to ask Him to forgive us. He waits for us to turn around and change our minds—and come home to Him! He loves us and wants us to be close to Him! He will forgive us when we admit to Him that we have done wrong. When we confess our sins, God promises to forgive us. That’s a good reason to celebrate!

God’s Word & Me

Jesus told this story to teach people that God forgives people who turn around and confess their sins to Him. Even people who think they’re “good” people need to be forgiven! Jesus wants us to know that God, our Father, welcomes us with open arms. He doesn’t focus on what we have done wrong. Instead, He forgives us when we ask. He loves us and celebrates that we have come back!

Read 1 John 1:9 aloud from your Bible. **No matter how badly we mess up, no matter what we have done, God will forgive us when we ask. That’s because Jesus already took the punishment for our sin when He died on the cross. He made it possible for us to be forgiven and become part of God’s family!**

(Invite children interested in knowing more about becoming members of God’s family to talk with you or another teacher after class. See “Leading a Child to Christ” on p. 12.)

- **Why do you think the father ran to meet his son? Why didn’t he stand on the porch and wait to hear his son’s speech about wanting to be a servant and not being worthy?** (The father loved his son. He was SO glad to see his son!)
- **Why do you think some people think they don’t need to be forgiven?** (Don’t think they do anything wrong.) **The Bible tells us that everyone has sinned. What kinds of sin might people who think they DON’T sin be doing?** (Might be proud of their own goodness. May think they are better than “more sinful” people. Might not tell the truth to themselves about how sinful they are.)
- **Why do you think Jesus wanted “good” people to hear this story?** (Because we all are sinners. We all mess up. Some sins don’t show as much as others, but they’re still sin.)
- Show Big Discovery Visual. **God says that when we mess up, He forgives us when we ask. Each one of us messes up. Each one of us sins and does wrong. And each one of us can be forgiven!**
- **What are some words you’d use to describe how it feels to be forgiven?**

Pray with children, thanking God for His love and for His promise to forgive us when we admit we’ve done wrong and ask His forgiveness.



Game Center

for younger children Luke 15:11–24

Collect



Bible, masking tape, balloons, paper plates.

Prepare



Use masking tape to lay a start line. At opposite side of playing area, lay a square 10 feet (3 m) wide. Inflate a balloon for each team, and set it on a paper plate at start line.

Do

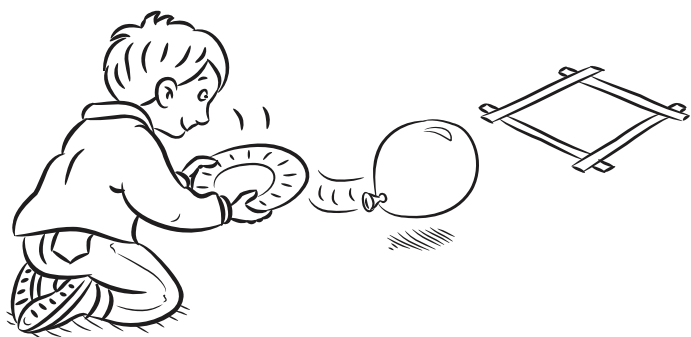


1. Form two or more teams. Each team lines up by balloon.
2. First child in line takes paper plate and fans or pushes balloon into masking-tape square, picks up balloon and runs back to tag the next child in line.
3. Play continues until one team finishes. Declare a winner, and ask winning team a question from the Talk About section. Play several rounds so that everyone has a chance to think about the questions.

Talk About



- What makes the balloon move, even if the plate doesn't touch it? (Moving air.) We can't see air. But we CAN see what it does! God's forgiveness is like that. We can't SEE it, but it makes us GLAD when we know we are forgiven!



God's Word

"But God is faithful and fair. If we admit that we have sinned, he will forgive us our sins. He will forgive every wrong thing we have done." 1 John 1:9

For Younger Children:

God forgives us when we ask. (See 1 John 1:9)

Big Discovery

God says that when I mess up, He forgives me when I ask. I can be forgiven.



- In Dr. Luke's Bible account, Jesus told a story about a son who messed up. What did he do? (Spent his father's money. Hurt his father's feelings.) What did he decide in the pigpen? (To go home and say he had been wrong.) How did his dad treat him? (Hugged him. Forgave his son. Had a party.)
- Our Bible says that God is like that father. When we mess up, we can ask God to forgive our sin. He will forgive us!

Pray briefly, Dear God, thank You for loving us. Thank You for promising to forgive us when we ask. Help us know what is wrong and to admit our wrong to You.

For Older Children



Older child's paper plate may not touch the balloon or else child must start over. (Set a grade designation for this so that every child is clear on what to do!)

Game Center

for older children Luke 15:11–24

Collect



Bible, Question Cards (p. 182), masking tape.

Prepare



Use masking tape to lay a large square at least 10 feet (3 m) wide on the floor. Divide it into nine squares. Lay question cards facedown along outside edges of large square.

Do

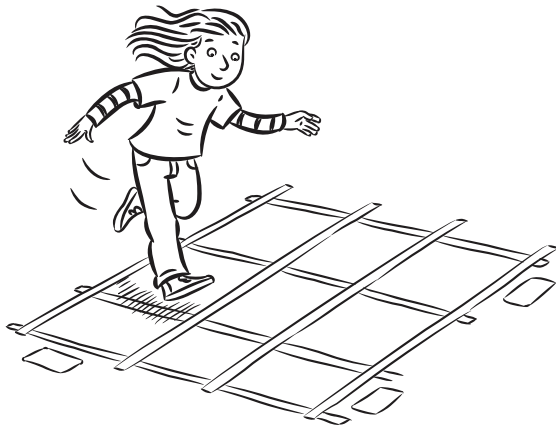


1. Students line up. **This game is like Hopscotch—but you may start in any square. You get five hops! You may hop in any order. The only thing you have to do is pick up one card on the outside while you are hopping.**
2. Students take turns to hop through the squares, picking up a card. (If more than nine children play, each one hops through and then chooses a student with a card. Partners consult each other to answer that question.)
3. At the end of the round, players answer the questions on the cards. Second time through, students may hop through and then answer a question from the Talk About section. Play as time and interest permit.

Talk About



- **Did you like or not like having a choice of where to hop? Is it easier or harder than regular Hopscotch?**



God's Word

"But God is faithful and fair. If we admit that we have sinned, he will forgive us our sins. He will forgive every wrong thing we have done." 1 John 1:9

For Younger Children:

God forgives us when we ask. (See 1 John 1:9)

Big Discovery

God says that when I mess up, He forgives me when I ask. I can be forgiven.



- **In the story Jesus told, the father looked down the road for his son every day. When he saw him, he ran to meet him! Why do you think he did that?** (The father loved his son. He was SO glad to see his son!) **What else did the father do?** (Hugged and kissed him. Had a party to welcome him home.)
- **Why do you think some people think they don't need to be forgiven?** (Don't think they do anything wrong.)
- **Why do you think Jesus wanted "good" people to hear this story?** (Because we all are sinners. We all mess up. Some sins don't show as much as others, but they're still sin. Not getting caught does not mean it is not sin.) **The Bible says that everyone has sinned—we all have messed up.** Repeat 1 John 1:9 together.

Lead children in prayer, thanking God for His forgiveness.

For Younger Children



Younger children may step in any five squares instead of hopping. Count aloud with those who might have trouble counting to five.

Art Center

for younger children Luke 15:11–24

Collect



Bible, newspaper, scissors, bubble wrap, tempera paint, shallow plastic containers, permanent marker, paper.

Prepare



Cover table with newspaper. Cut bubble wrap into shapes, letters, etc. Pour paint into shallow containers. Write the Younger Children's version of the Bible verse on each paper in permanent marker.

Do



1. Give each child a sheet of paper.
2. Child selects a bubble wrap piece, lays it bubble-side down in container and then lifts it out.
3. Child presses painted bubble wrap onto paper as desired.

Talk About



- ⦿ **What are some words to say we messed up?** (Did wrong. Hurt someone. Sinned.)
- ⦿ **When you drop something and it breaks, is that a sin?** (Not unless you did it on purpose to hurt someone. An accident or a mistake is not doing wrong, even if it makes someone angry.)



God's Word

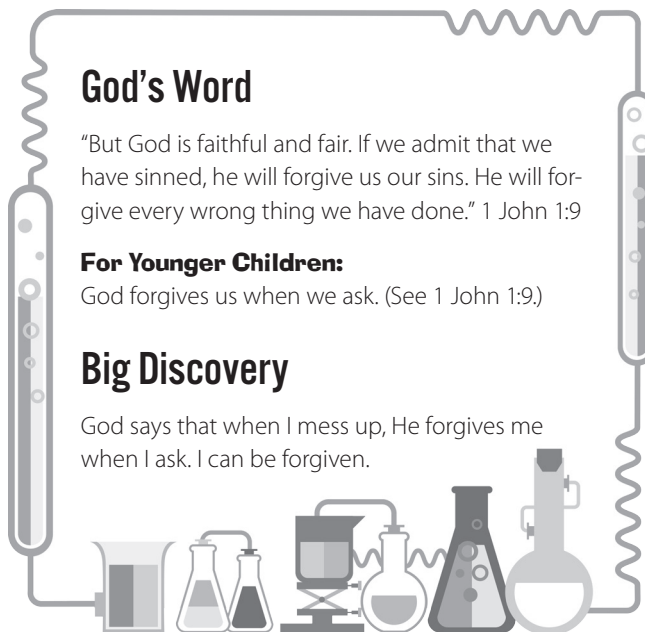
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For Younger Children:

God forgives us when we ask. (See 1 John 1:9)

Big Discovery

God says that when I mess up, He forgives me when I ask. I can be forgiven.



- ⦿ **In Dr. Luke's Bible account, Jesus told about a son who messed up. Some things the son did were wrong. Some things were just not smart. But who welcomed him back when he came home?** (His dad.)
- ⦿ **How did he know his dad forgave him?** (Dad hugged him. Threw a party for him.) **God is like that dad. When we do wrong, He wants us to ask to be forgiven. He loves us! Our Bible says that God forgives us when we ask.**

Pray briefly, **Dear God, thank You for loving us. Thank You that You will forgive us when we ask. Help us to know what is right and to do what is right. In Jesus' name, amen.**

For Older Children



Encourage older children to cut their own shapes or letters to create scenes or words.

Art Center

for older children Luke 15:11–24

Collect



Bible, pencil sharpener, pencils (Number 2 pencils work best), new pencil-top erasers, paper.

Prepare



Sharpen pencils and place new eraser tops on them.

Do



1. Give each child a sheet of paper and a pencil.
2. Child uses pencil to lightly color in the entire page.
3. Child then uses eraser to erase-write a message about forgiveness (“God forgives!” or “I can be forgiven!” etc.) and to erase-draw decorations around the message.

Talk About



- What are pencils made from? (A mixture of graphite and clay inside wood.) **Graphite is a soft rock. It leaves a dark mark. It is also used in batteries—in fact, people are looking for graphite deposits now, not for pencils, but for new kinds of batteries! What’s cool is that even when our whole paper is gray with graphite, we can erase the gray marks! The rubber in an eraser rolls that soft rock off the page!**



God’s Word

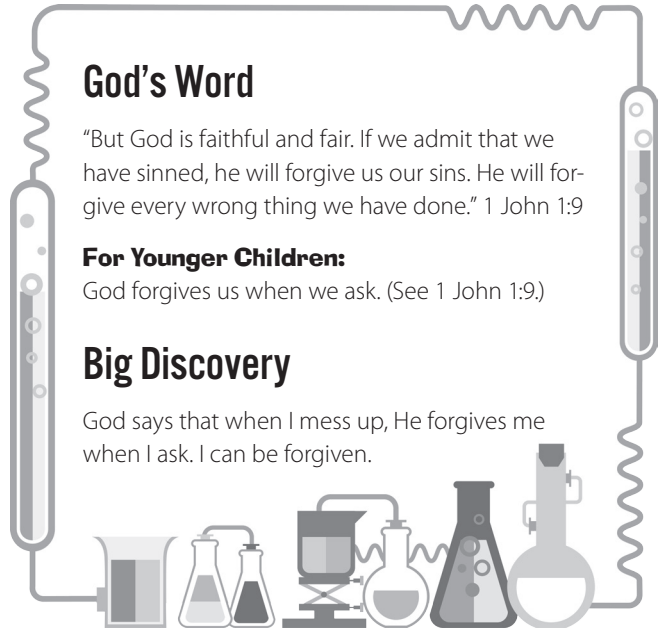
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For Younger Children:

God forgives us when we ask. (See 1 John 1:9)

Big Discovery

God says that when I mess up, He forgives me when I ask. I can be forgiven.



- Forgiveness is even better than having an eraser for our mistakes! Jesus told the story of the son who messed up. What did he do to mess up?** (Took dad’s money. Was selfish. Went away. Did wrong things. Spent all the money.)
- The Bible says that we ALL mess up. What does God say about forgiving us?** (He says He will forgive us when we admit our sin and ask forgiveness.) **Do we have to do better before we can ask forgiveness?** (No. God is like that father. He wants to welcome us back.) **God loves us!** Repeat 1 John 1:9 together.

Pray briefly, thanking God for His promise to forgive our sins when we admit we’ve messed up and done wrong.

For Younger Children



Station a helper near younger children to erase-write any words the child wants to add to his or her paper.

Worship Center

Luke 15:11–24

Collect



Bibles, CD-ROM and CD player, Lesson 10 Big Discovery Visual, song lyrics (pp. 255, 248), whiteboard and marker, soccer ball.

Prepare



Write out the words and reference for 1 John 1:9 on a large whiteboard.

Team Game

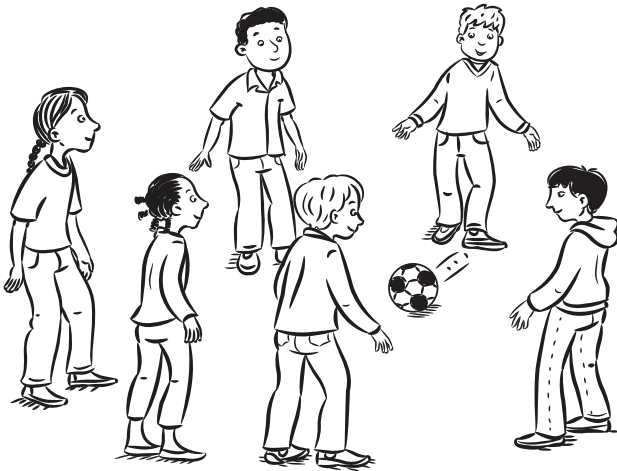


Let's stand in a circle. Our goal is to see if we can keep the ball moving without letting it out of the circle! Students kick ball gently to keep it moving inside the circle. When ball exits circle, retrieve ball and say, **Somebody messed up. But messing up by letting the ball out is not the same as doing wrong.** Toss ball back into circle so that students may play again. **When I mess up, I am always glad that God will forgive me and give me another chance!** Students play as time allows.

Bible Verse Game



Read 1 John 1:9 aloud with children. Then students repeat verse by saying aloud only words that begin with the same letter as their first names (Finley says only words beginning with "F," etc.). Assign unclaimed words to those whose middle or last names begin with that letter. Repeat verse all together several times at the end!



God's Word

"But God is faithful and fair. If we admit that we have sinned, he will forgive us our sins. He will forgive every wrong thing we have done." 1 John 1:9

For Younger Children:

God forgives us when we ask. (See 1 John 1:9)

Big Discovery

God says that when I mess up, He forgives me when I ask. I can be forgiven.



Song



You, or another leader, lead children in singing "Pray!" adding motions and/or clapping if desired. **When we ask God's forgiveness, He gives it! That gives us His peace!**

Prayer



Today we talked about Jesus' story of the son who messed up! Show Big Discovery Visual. **What's our Big Discovery?** (Students shout, "God says that when I mess up, He forgives me when I ask! I can be forgiven!") **This BIG discovery reminds us that when we do wrong, we don't have to stay in the pigpen and feel sad. We can ask God's forgiveness. We can run back into His arms, like the son in the story!** Then lead children in prayer, thanking God for His promise of forgiveness, and asking His help to do what is right.

Song



You, or another leader, lead children in singing "Following Jesus," adding motions and/or clapping if desired. **Part of following Jesus is admitting we have sinned. God forgives us when we ask. So if you mess up this week, don't wait—ask for God's forgiveness right away!**

You found a 50-dollar bill at school. You kept it. Now you feel as if God is mad. What can you do?

You lied to Dad. What can you say to God? What can you say to Dad?

Mom asked you to feed the dog. You said you did but you didn't. What's the right thing to do?

You told the teacher that your dog ate your homework. But you never did the work. What do you think God would say about that?

Does God forgive really bad sins? Why or why not?

Repeat the Bible verse. Can you add motions?

You have been making fun of a kid in your class. What do you think God would say about that?

You mom said you can't go to your friend's house. You ask your dad. You don't tell him what mom said. Dad said yes. What do you do now?

A kid at school has been hitting you every day, for no reason. What can you do? What can you say? What does God say about forgiving others?

Jesus tells about a forgiving father.

Luke 15:11-24



The Happy Wanderer!



Luke 15:11-24

Find the message on the merchant's scroll. Take the first letter from each picture on the scroll and write it on the son's parchment. Draw lines to divide the letters into words.



The son was a happy wanderer for a time. He spent his money foolishly. One day he spent exactly 205 shekels—no more, no less! The five things he bought were all different. Can you figure out what he got for his money?

I Can Grow

Jesus Meets Zacchaeus © Luke 19:1-10

God's Word

"I am sure that the One who began a good work in you will carry it on until it is completed."
Philippians 1:6

For Younger Children:

God will finish His good work in you.
(See Philippians 1:6.)

Big Discovery

God says He will finish the work He started in me. I can grow as God's child.



Teacher & Parent Connection

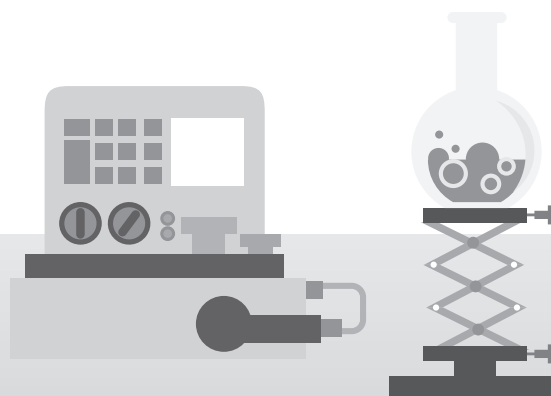
"DIY! Do It Yourself," the headlines read. Beautiful photos of completed projects shine. It's easy to forget that a long and gritty process creates a completed project!

By our human nature, we are ardent "DIY-ers." We love to do it ourselves! But when we apply DIY thinking to our spiritual lives, it can sometimes derail our growth. It's easy to attend events, read books, do worksheets . . . DIY-ing until we are fried and frustrated, throwing up our hands and saying, "It CAN'T be done!"

Feeling trapped in DIY spirituality? That's actually a good place for us to come to! Here's the good news: It's not all on you! The One who began a good work in you will keep at it. He finishes His projects. He is at work in every gritty process, growing you through every Bible verse you read, every prayer you pray in every baffling situation. He is far more interested in your spiritual growth than you are!

You see, God designed us so that spiritual growth is our core need! And He promises that as we learn to lean into Him, to rest our souls in Him, that HE, the One who began this project, is the One who will complete it! Our biggest "DIY" is to lay down our agendas and solutions and resist the temptation to think we know best. When we learn we can "LET HIM DO IT" and our DIY becomes "LHDI," He leads us and empowers us to act in response to His leading. Outwardly, that may look the same as DIY, but inwardly, it is the powerful process making that beautiful, completed project!

Our growth in Him then powers our goals, our projects, our business decisions. It fuels our parenting and volunteering! Growing spiritually results in an increasing flow of His love into us, and then out of us to invest into the good work He prepares for us! (See Ephesians 2:10.) In that gritty process, we grow joyful, loving, peaceful! We learn patience and kindness along the way, goodness and gentleness, faithfulness and self-control. So, spiritual DIY-ers, let your souls be at rest! Ultimately, God began it—He'll complete it!



Planning Page

Choose which centers you will provide and the order in which children will participate in them (see pp. 14–18 for schedule tips and pp. 24–25 for guidelines in combining older and younger children). Also plan who will lead each center (for staffing tips, see pp. 19–21). Use the reproducible planning sheet (p. 240) to record your plans.

Bible Story Center

Bible Story

Jesus Meets Zacchaeus • Luke 19:1–10

Younger Child Option

Big Discovery Box • Use toy people to show story action.

Older Child Option

Big Discovery Box • Use Conversation Cards (p. 196) during the story.

Game Center

Younger Child Option

Play a path-following game and talk about growing in God's family.

Materials

Bible, crepe paper

Older Child Option

Play a relay game and talk about growing in God's family.

Materials

Bible, masking tape, pair of tube socks

Art Center

Younger Child Option

Make a handprint mural and talk about growing in God's family.

Materials

Bible, masking tape, butcher paper or a white sheet, newspaper, tempera paints, shallow containers, paintbrushes, wipes

Older Child Option

Create reminders about growth in God's family.

Materials

Bible, newspaper, watercolor paper, crayons, black permanent fine-tip markers, watercolor paint, containers of water, paintbrushes

Coloring/Puzzle Center

Younger Child Option

Review the Bible story while completing coloring page.

Materials

Lesson 11 Coloring Page (p. 197) for each student, crayons

Older Child Option

Review the Bible story while completing puzzle page.

Materials

Lesson 11 Puzzle Page (p. 198) for each student, pencils

Worship Center

For All

Participate in large-group activities to review the Bible verse and worship God together.

Materials

Bibles, CD-ROM and CD player, Lesson 11 Big Discovery Visual, song lyrics (pp. 254, 252), whiteboard and marker

Bonus Theme Ideas

Bonus Theme Ideas can be used at any time during this session: as an additional activity center, to extend the session for a longer time or for added theme excitement.

Looking to Balance!

This easy experiment shows us how sight and balance work together. Appoint a timekeeper to use a watch or phone. **First, let's try to stand on one foot for a whole minute.** Timekeeper tells who stood the longest on one foot. **Now, everyone close your eyes. Then stand on one foot.**

Timekeeper tells who stood the longest on one foot.

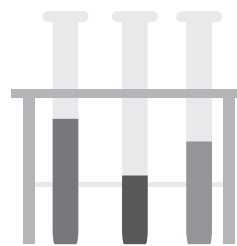
Take turns so that the timekeeper gets to try the experiment, too! **What happened to your ability to stand on one foot when you closed your eyes? This experiment shows us how much we need our sight to help us balance! When our eyes are closed, our brains don't have all the information they need to help our bodies balance.**



Colorful Test Tubes!

Dress up your lab space and create a set of eagerly awaited prizes for your lab assistants: Buy plastic test tubes with stoppers, and fill each one with a single color of M&Ms, Skittles or other brightly colored candies. Seal the top of each one.

Use them now for a great decoration and as a fun way to motivate kids to memorize Bible verses!



LEGO-Look Sandwiches

This easy snack recreates the look of the LEGO block! Ahead of time, color whipped cream cheese in LEGO colors. Cut rectangles from bread or use rectangular crackers. Provide circle-shaped cereal. Kids spread cream cheese, use cereal to add "LEGO bumps," admire and then eat!



Post a note alerting parents to the use of food. Also, check registration forms for possible food allergies.

Bible Story Center

for younger children Luke 19:1–10



Big Discovery Box

Before class, print out Lesson 11 Big Discovery Visual from the CD-ROM. Place in the Big Discovery Box with a Bible, a tree branch and toy people in various sizes.

Introduction



What do you think is in our Big Discovery Box today? Remove printout, tree branch and toy people. **Why do you think we have a tree branch? Let's find out!** Remove Bible. **This is the Bible! It is going to tell us what happened with someone who had to climb a tree.** Show toy people. **Listen to find out who it was!**

Tell the Story



Where Jesus lived, people from another country had come with strong armies. They were called Romans. And they were in charge! The people in Jesus' country didn't LIKE it. There were soldiers everywhere. And the people even had to pay money, called taxes, to the Romans. People did NOT like that! (Stand toy people together.)

But one man in this town LIKED for people to pay taxes. He was the tax collector! (Show the shortest toy person.) His name was Zacchaeus. He was rich. And he GOT rich by collecting tax money for the Romans. People had to pay Zacchaeus whatever he told them to pay. He kept extra money for himself. He bought a big house and nice clothes. And everyone in town KNEW that Zacchaeus had CHEATED them. He took more than he should have!

One day Jesus was coming to the town where Zacchaeus lived. Many people were waiting to see Jesus. *I want to see Jesus, too,* Zacchaeus thought. But Zacchaeus was NOT very tall. Even on tip-toe, he couldn't see OVER people. (Move shortest toy person behind other toy people.)

So Zacchaeus ran past the crowd. He looked up at a big tree—and up, up, up he went! (Make shortest toy person climb up the tree branch.) From up in the tree, Zacchaeus could see over EVERYONE! Now he could see Jesus coming!

Soon Jesus was right UNDER the tree where Zacchaeus was. Zacchaeus looked down—and Jesus stopped! (Place a toy person below the tree.) Jesus looked up into the tree. He called, "Zacchaeus!" The people around Jesus were SURPRISED!

They must have asked one another, "How did Jesus know this man's name? And WHY would Jesus want to talk to Zacchaeus? He's mean. He's a cheater!"

Then Jesus did something even MORE surprising. He said, "Zacchaeus, come down! I want to go to YOUR house today."

What do you think people said about Jesus' wanting to be with Zacchaeus?

Zacchaeus came RIGHT down from the tree! But the people did NOT think this was right! They grumbled, "Jesus is going to spend time with a SINNER!" **What do you think Zacchaeus thought?**

(Move two toy people away from others.) Now, already Jesus' love had CHANGED Zacchaeus on the inside! How do we know this? Because now, Zacchaeus wanted to make Jesus glad! Zacchaeus must have heard people grumbling about him. **How could Zacchaeus show he had changed?**

He said, "Jesus, right here and now, I am giving half of EVERYTHING I have to poor people. And to the people I cheated, I will give back four TIMES as much money as I took from them!"

WELL! THAT was real change! Now people knew that Zacchaeus was different! He wanted to make things right! He wanted to please Jesus! He was showing that he had already begun to grow in God's family. Zacchaeus knew that Jesus loved him. And now Zacchaeus loved Jesus—and he could keep on growing as a person in God's family!

God's Word & Me



Jesus' love made Zacchaeus change—and he began to grow in God's family right away! Show Big Discovery Visual and read it aloud. **God says He will help us grow, too. We can join God's family. And then, we can grow in His family!**

Pray, **Dear God, thank You that You will help us grow and change. Thank You that we can learn to do things that please You. In Jesus' name, amen.**

Bible Story Center

for older children Luke 19:1–10



Big Discovery Box

Before class, print out Lesson 11 Big Discovery Visual from the CD-ROM. Prepare Conversation Cards (p. 196). Place in the Big Discovery Box with a Bible.

You may invite a male team member to dress in Bible-times clothing and tell the story each time, introducing himself as Dr. Luke, the head researcher of the materials.

Give Conversation Cards to volunteers who will read them as directed throughout the story.

Introduction



Open Big Discovery Box as you speak. **I wonder what Dr. Luke might have left in here THIS week?** Show Bible. **Ah! Here's our source document again—the Bible.** Show Big Discovery Visual. **God says He will finish the good work He started in us. That means that when we join God's family, He'll help us grow. We don't have to do it on our own! Today, listen to find out how a man who cheated others was changed by Jesus. Let's find out how this man showed he was growing in God's family!**

Tell the Story



When Jesus lived on Earth, the country of Israel—and most of the rest of the world—was controlled by the Romans. The people of Israel were NOT happy about this! First of all, they didn't LIKE the Romans one bit. They didn't want their armies and soldiers bossing and bullying them. And second, people in Israel had to pay taxes to the Romans. Paying taxes to Rome took money away that they needed to buy food and clothes. And every time they paid taxes to Rome, it reminded them of how angry they were that the Romans were in charge at all!

But one man WAS happy about people paying money to Rome. He was the tax collector! His name was Zacchaeus. He was also RICH. He had a big house and nice clothes. But he did NOT have friends left among his people! You see, he'd gotten rich by taking MORE of their money than they really owed for taxes. He happily put that

extra money in his OWN pocket! Everyone could see the nice things he had bought—with THEIR money! Behind his back, people probably called Zacchaeus a cheater, a thief and a traitor to his country!

But then came the day when Jesus came to the town where Zacchaeus lived. People were crowding along the road, waiting to see Jesus. They had heard many good things about Jesus. The news of Jesus as a teacher of God's Word had spread throughout the country. They had also heard that Jesus cared about people and could heal anyone who was sick. People were excited to see this man they had heard so much about!

Zacchaeus had probably heard many wonderful things about Jesus. He wanted to see Jesus, too. But he couldn't. One thing he DID NOT have was height. He was very short. And nobody would let him through the crowd! But Zacchaeus REALLY wanted to see Jesus.

Up ahead, Zacchaeus saw a big tree that towered over everyone! So he ran past the crowd and climbed up that tree. (Student reads Conversation Card 1.)

Jesus was coming closer and closer! When Jesus was right under the tree where Zacchaeus was, Jesus stopped. He looked up! Then Zacchaeus got a BIG surprise! Jesus spoke to him. (Student reads Conversation Card 2.)

Now, the crowd around Jesus knew all about the bad things Zacchaeus had done. They'd likely all been cheated by him! And now Jesus wanted to visit HIM? **How do you think the people felt about that?** (Student reads Conversation Card 3.)

The crowd was surprised that Jesus would want to be with that greedy show-off, that cheating tax collector! They must have wondered, *Why would Jesus want to be friends with a man like that?* But Jesus did! And suddenly, Jesus' love had CHANGED Zacchaeus. Now he wanted to please Jesus and do what is right! (Students read Conversation Cards 4 and 5.) **Why do you think Zacchaeus wanted to give away money now, when he had been so selfish before?**

Jesus knew every bad thing Zacchaeus had ever done. But now, Zacchaeus believed in Jesus! And Jesus forgave Zacchaeus. Zacchaeus was changed on the inside. And he was already beginning to grow! He wanted to show EVERYONE that he was NOT the same cheating tax collector people had known before!

Zacchaeus wanted to make things right. He didn't want to steal from the people in town anymore. He wanted to GIVE, not take. THAT was a HUGE change—and it showed he was already growing!



Jesus wanted people to NOTICE how Zacchaeus had changed. So He turned to the people around Him and said, "Today, salvation has come to the house of Zacchaeus! He is just as much a part of God's family as anyone else—because the Son of Man (that's Jesus!) came to seek and to save what was lost."

Jesus knew that Zacchaeus was already growing. And the great thing is, now Zacchaeus could KEEP ON growing in God's family. He could give back what he'd stolen. He could make everything right! He could tell the truth and do what was kind. He could share his big house and his fine clothes. Now he would even be able to have friends again—because people would trust him!

THAT's what it looks like and sounds like when a person joins God's family and starts to GROW. God helps his family change and change, in GOOD WAYS. And God doesn't quit. He promises to complete the work He starts. He'll keep changing us until we are home with Him in heaven!

God's Word & Me



When a person joins God's family, that is not the end of anything. It is the BEGINNING of EVERYTHING! So, of course, the VERY best way to live starts with joining God's family! (Invite children interested in knowing more about becoming members of God's family to talk with you or another teacher after class. See "Leading a Child to Christ" on p. 12.)

Read Philippians 1:6 aloud from your Bible. **The really exciting part about joining God's family is that GOD loves us more than anyone else does. So He says that He will help us grow. We don't**

have to do this on our own and hope that He likes us. No, He loves us! And He will keep us growing and changing in ways that show we are part of His family—until we're all done. That is an awesome promise!

- **Why do you think Jesus wanted to spend time with Zacchaeus?** (He had the biggest house with room for more people to listen. He was the guy no one liked, so when Jesus liked him, it showed everyone that even the worst sinner can become part of God's family.)
- **Why were other people surprised?** (They thought Jesus should only hang around people who did right all the time. They thought that Jesus should not be around "bad people.")
- **What did Zacchaeus do after he met Jesus?** (Believed in Jesus. Was forgiven for his sin. Wanted to give his money to people. Wanted to pay back what he had stolen.)
- **Why do you think Jesus said that Zacchaeus was as much a part of God's family as anyone?** (To show everyone that we are all "bad people"! To show we all need to be forgiven and be part of God's family if we are ever going to grow and change.)

Show Big Discovery Visual. **God tells us that when we are part of His family, He will finish the good work He started in us! A person who is part of God's family can grow in ways that please God. Those ways we grow then show others what a follower of Jesus looks and sounds like!**

Pray with children, thanking God that He will finish the work He started in each of us. We can grow as God's children—and show others what it looks like to follow Jesus!



Game Center

for younger children Luke 19:1–10

Collect



Bible, crepe paper.

Prepare



Lay crepe paper lines across playing area, making lines cross. Lay at least four or five lines so that there are several paths to take from one side of the playing area to the other.

Do



1. Children line up at one side of playing area. Say, **The goal is to get from this side of the room to the other side, walking only on the crepe paper paths.**
2. First child in line walks across room on any path he or she chooses, turning to follow the path. After one child is halfway through, the second child may start.
3. Leader high-fives child when he or she gets to the other side.
4. Repeat game as time and interest allow, inviting a child to choose a different path by which to get across each time.



God's Word

"I am sure that the One who began a good work in you will carry it on until it is completed."

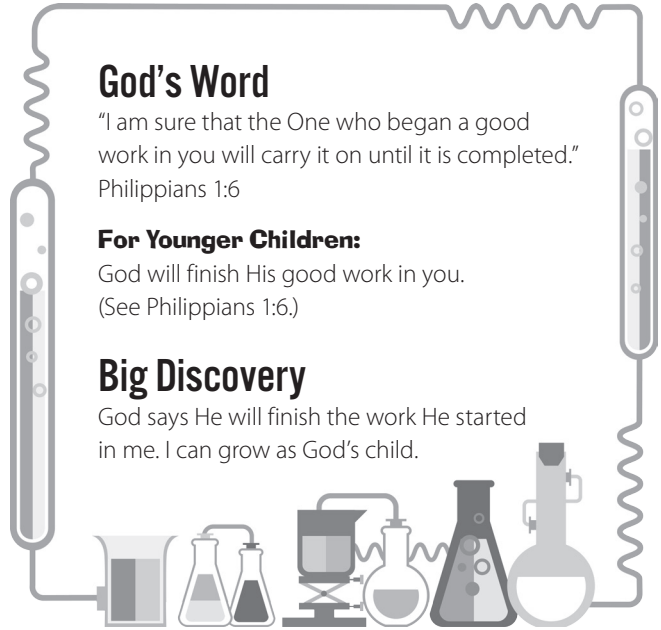
Philippians 1:6

For Younger Children:

God will finish His good work in you.
(See Philippians 1:6.)

Big Discovery

God says He will finish the work He started in me. I can grow as God's child.



Talk About



- **Liam, how did you know when you were finished?** (Got to the other side.) **That's right! We didn't all go on the same paths, did we? But we all got to the other side. We completed the challenge!**
- **In Dr. Luke's Bible account, we heard about the time Jesus met Zacchaeus. How could people tell that Zacchaeus was following God's path?** (Willing to share. Wanted to give back what he had stolen. Wanted to make things right.) **Zacchaeus showed he was already growing in God's family!**
- **Our Bible says that God will finish the work He starts in us. When we join His family, He helps us grow and keep on growing until we are finished.**

Pray briefly, **Dear God, thank You for loving us. Thank You for promising to help us grow and keep on growing!**

For Older Children



Challenge older children to walk only on the crepe paper, and then to walk on every part of the path on the way to the other side.

Game Center

for older children Luke 19:1–10

Collect



Bible, masking tape, pair of tube socks.

Prepare



Lay masking-tape start and finish lines about 20 feet (6 m) apart. Lay a tube sock where each team will start.

Do



1. Students form two equal teams and then form pairs within teams. Teams stand behind the start line.
2. To start this relay, first pair grabs either end of the tube sock. For every step to the finish line, one member of the pair steps over tube sock, and then other steps over. Pair then runs back to tag next pair.
3. Play continues until one team has finished. At the end of the round, ask questions from the Talk About section. Play several rounds.

Talk About



- Was this game easy or hard? (Students answer.) **Even when it wasn't easy, you didn't give up. You kept going until you completed the job!**
- God tells us that when we are part of His family, He'll keep going. **He'll do His good work in us until it is completed!**



God's Word

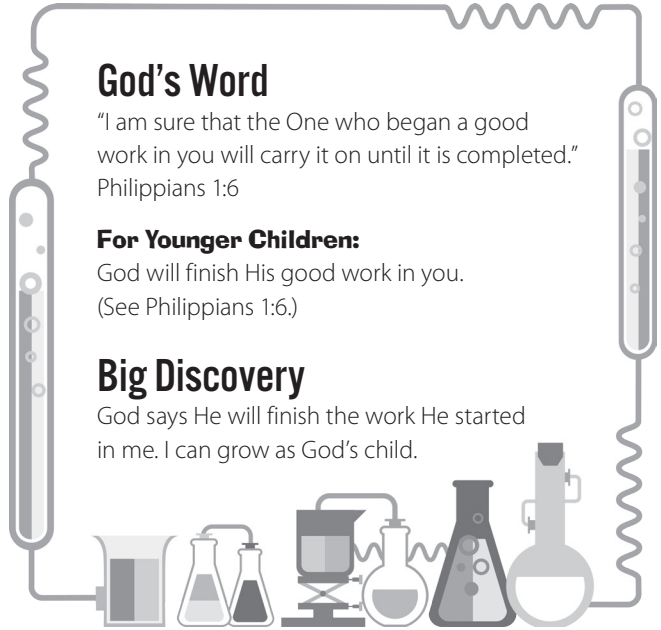
"I am sure that the One who began a good work in you will carry it on until it is completed."
Philippians 1:6

For Younger Children:

God will finish His good work in you.
(See Philippians 1:6.)

Big Discovery

God says He will finish the work He started in me. I can grow as God's child.



- How did Zacchaeus show he was growing after he met Jesus? (Wanted to give his money to people. Wanted to make things right. Wanted to please Jesus.)
- What are ways that a kid your age who is part of God's family might change? (Students answer.) **We grow more and more joyful! We are kinder and more loving. We are more patient when it's hard to be patient. And if we are part of God's family, God will keep us growing until we're with Him in heaven! As we grow, we show how a person in God's family acts and sounds!**

Pray with children, thanking God that He will finish the work He started in each member of His family, helping us to change and grow as we follow Jesus!

For Younger Children



If a large number of players are younger children, shorten the distance between the start and finish lines. Very young children may lay the sock on the ground and step over it for each step.

Art Center

for younger children Luke 19:1–10

Collect



Bible, masking tape, butcher paper or a white sheet, newspaper, tempera paints, shallow containers, paintbrushes, wipes.

Prepare



Post the paper or sheet at children's eye level. Cover the floor area below the mural with newspaper. Use brown paint to outline a tree trunk and branches. Pour brown, green, and other colors of paint into shallow containers.

Do



- 1. We're going to work together to make a big tree!** Children lay their hands flat into the containers, let paint drip off and then add one or more prints to the tree branches as leaves.
- Children also use handprints to fill in the tree trunk and sky.
- Children use fingers to add grass and flowers and use finger-prints to make insects, rocks or other features.
- If desired, add name of each child in permanent marker beside a leaf he or she has printed.

Talk About



- When have you climbed a tree? What do trees make? (Children tell.) **Trees make oxygen that we need to breathe. God made trees to help our air be good to breathe!**



God's Word

"I am sure that the One who began a good work in you will carry it on until it is completed."
Philippians 1:6

For Younger Children:

God will finish His good work in you.
(See Philippians 1:6.)

Big Discovery

God says He will finish the work He started in me. I can grow as God's child.



- In Dr. Luke's Bible account, we heard about the time Jesus met Zacchaeus. Why did Zacchaeus climb a big tree? (Wanted to see Jesus.) **Why couldn't he see Jesus?** (He was short. Couldn't see over people.)
- After Zacchaeus met Jesus, how could people tell that Zacchaeus was different now? (Was willing to share. Wanted to make things right.) **Zacchaeus was already growing in God's family. And God helped him keep on growing!**
- Our Bible says that God will finish the work He starts in us. When we join His family, He helps us grow. He keeps us growing until we are with Him in heaven!

Pray briefly, **Dear God, thank You for loving us. Thank You for promising to help us grow and keep on growing!**

For Older Children



Encourage older children to use their height, making handprints for the highest leaves, the sky, the sun, birds, etc.

Art Center

for older children Luke 19:1-10

Collect



Bible, newspaper, watercolor paper, crayons, black permanent fine-tip markers, watercolor paint, containers of water, paintbrushes.

Prepare



Cover tables with newspaper; set out materials.

Do

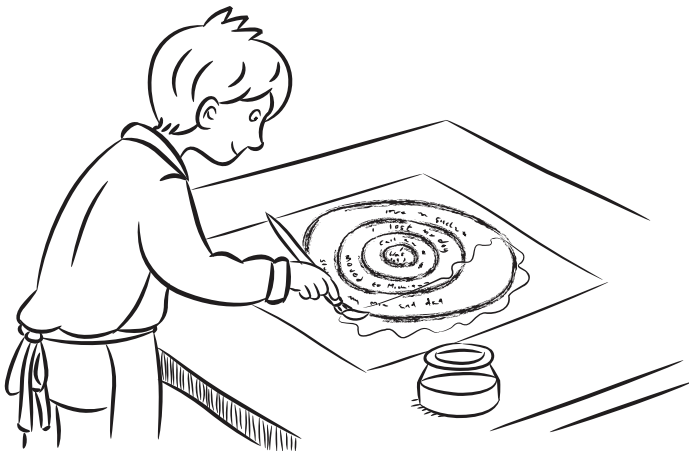


1. Give each child a sheet of paper. Student uses crayon to draw a small circle in the center and then draws concentric circles around it to look like tree rings.
2. In between crayon lines, student writes with permanent marker words that remind him or her of ways he or she has grown in God's family, ways to keep growing, names of people who help him or her grow, words of the Bible verse that tell about growing in Jesus, etc.
3. After writing is completed, student chooses several colors of watercolor and paints over project. Let paper dry flat.

Talk About



- **Our art today looks like tree rings. What do tree rings tell?** (How old a tree is. What years were easy or hard for the tree.)



God's Word

"I am sure that the One who began a good work in you will carry it on until it is completed."

Philippians 1:6

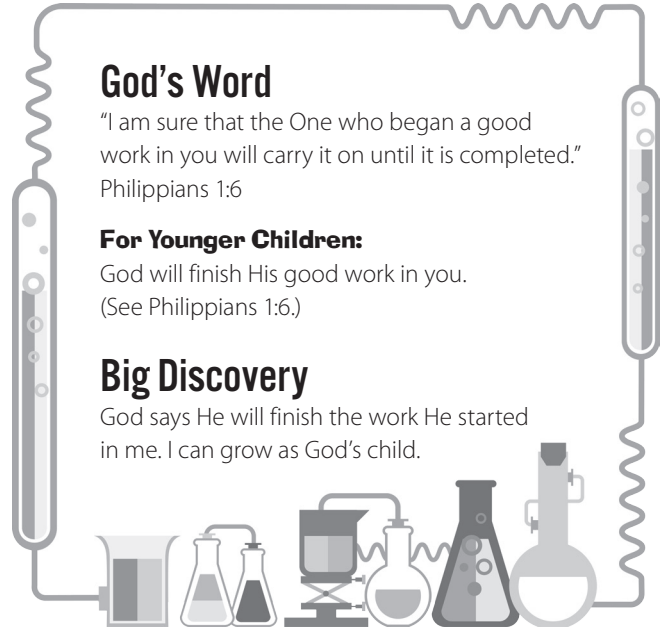
For Younger Children:

God will finish His good work in you.

(See Philippians 1:6.)

Big Discovery

God says He will finish the work He started in me. I can grow as God's child.



- **A tree's rings measure how the tree grew. How do we measure our physical growth?** (Height. Weight. Age.) **How do we measure our mental growth?** (Grade in school. Books read.)
- **How did Zacchaeus show he was growing after he met Jesus?** (Wanted to give his money to people. Wanted to make things right with people he had cheated.)
- **Zacchaeus was growing in God's family. But did that make him taller? What kind of growing was he doing? Spiritual growth! Spiritual growth doesn't make us taller! But it does change us. What are ways kids might show they are growing spiritually, in God's family?** (Able to be kind to people they didn't like before. Able to pray for people who are mean to them. Tell the truth more. More patient when things happen they don't like. Have more joy and peace.)

Pray, thanking God for His promise to help His kids grow and keep on growing!

For Younger Children



Adults write words for a younger child or simply write around the outside, "I can grow in God's family!"

Worship Center

Luke 19:1-10

Collect



Bibles, CD-ROM and CD player, Lesson 11 Big Discovery Visual, song lyrics (pp. 254, 252), whiteboard and marker.

Prepare



Write out the words and reference for Philippians 1:6 on a large whiteboard.

Team Game

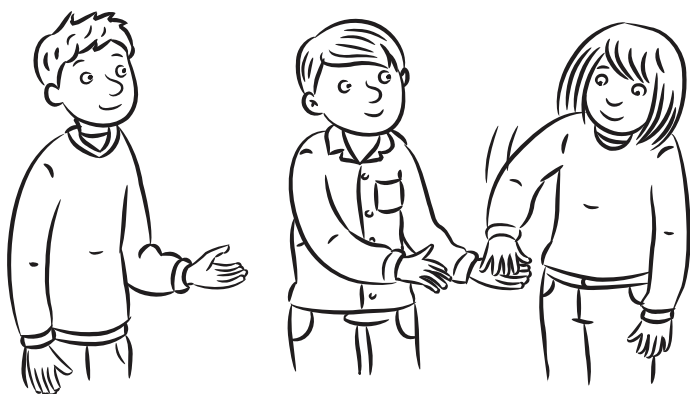


Everyone stand in a circle. Let's see if we can pass a hand clap all the way around the circle! Clap your hand onto first student's palm. Student claps his or her other hand and then passes the clap on to the next person by clapping that person's palm. Once students have gotten comfortable, challenge them to move the clap faster. **That was tricky to do at first. But we didn't stop. We kept on until we completed the challenge!**

Bible Verse Game



Read Philippians 1:6 aloud with children. Then read it again, clapping in a 1-2-3 rhythm and stomping as you say capitalized syllables: "I am SURE that the ONE who beGAN a good WORK in you WILL carry IT on unTIL it is COMpleted." Students imitate your actions and repeat the verse several times with stomps. Then students try repeating verse with different actions to emphasize capitalized syllables.



God's Word

"I am sure that the One who began a good work in you will carry it on until it is completed."
Philippians 1:6

For Younger Children:

God will finish His good work in you.
(See Philippians 1:6.)

Big Discovery

God says He will finish the work He started in me. I can grow as God's child.



Song



You, or another leader, lead children in singing "Love the Lord," adding motions and/or clapping if desired.

Prayer



Today we talked about what happened when Zacchaeus met Jesus. Show Big Discovery Visual. What's our Big Discovery? (Students shout, "God says He will finish the work He started in me! I can grow as God's child!") **This BIG discovery reminds us that when we're part of God's family, He will help us grow. He will help us keep on growing until we are home in heaven with Him!** Then lead children in prayer, thanking God for His promise to help us grow and that we can trust Him to do His good work in us!

Song



You, or another leader, lead children in singing "Lead a Life of Love," adding motions and/or clapping if desired. **God says He will help us grow. This week, be sure to ask Him to help you lead a life of love. That's how we show what a person who is growing in God's family looks like and sounds like!**

Conversation Card 1

**"NOW I can see! HA!
Those tall people can't
stop ME!"**

Conversation Card 2

**"Zacchaeus, come
down right now! I am
going to stay at your
house today!"**

Conversation Card 3

**"WOW. Doesn't Jesus
KNOW any better?

He's going to the house of
such a terrible SINNER.

Zacchaeus is the biggest liar
and cheater in this town!"**

Conversation Card 4

**"Look, Lord!
Listen up, everyone!

Right here and now,
I give HALF of everything
I own to the poor people."**

Conversation Card 5

**"And if I have
cheated ANYBODY
out of ANYTHING,

I will pay you back
FOUR TIMES what
you say I owe you!"**

**Zacchaeus climbs
a tree to see Jesus.**

Luke 19:1-10



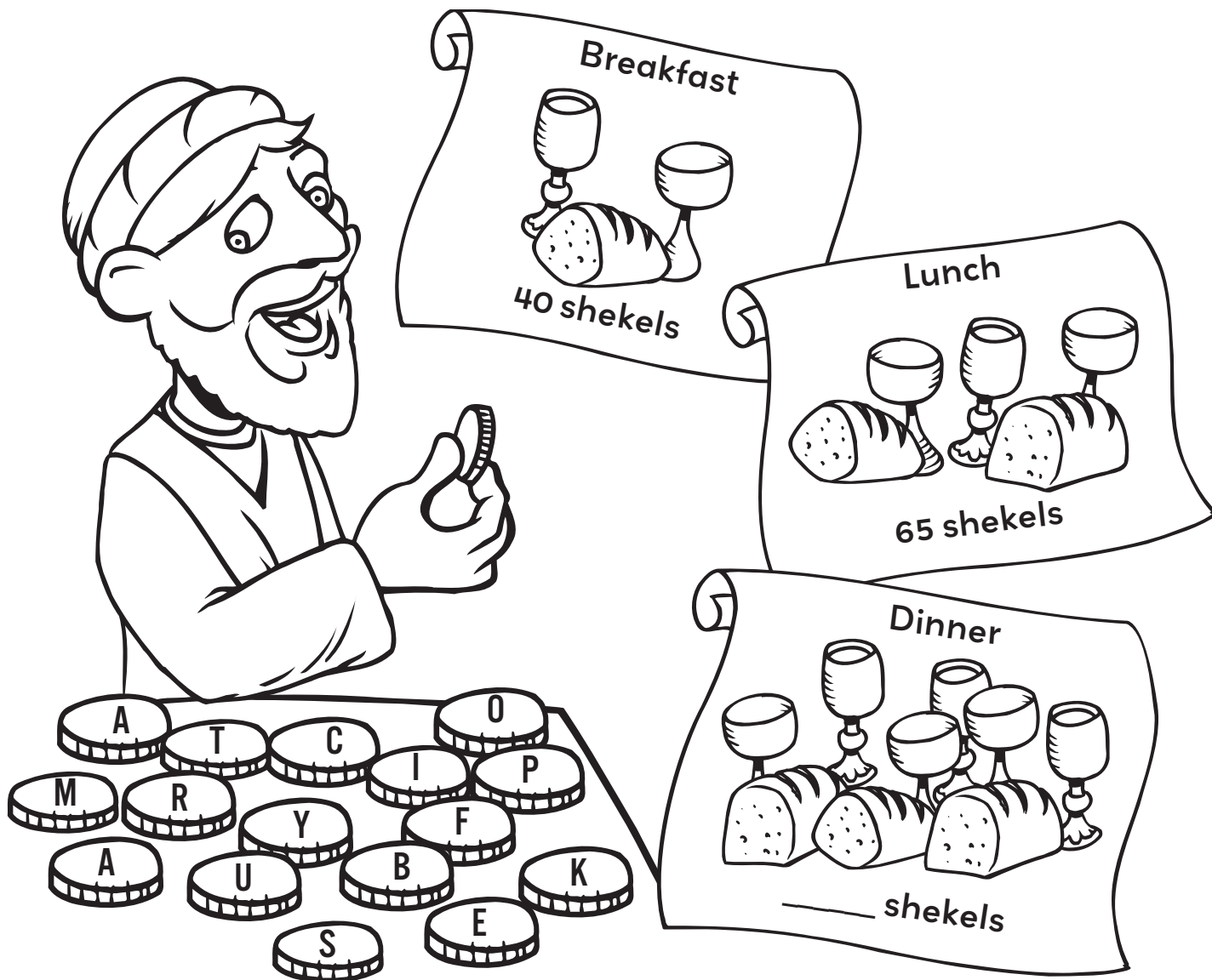
A Taxing Situation!



Luke 19:1-10

Unscramble the letters on Zacchaeus's coins to find a way Zach showed he was growing as God's child.

"I will _____
 _____ what I owe."



Zacchaeus bought 2 goblets of water and a loaf of bread for breakfast. He paid 40 shekels. At lunchtime he bought 3 goblets of water and 2 loaves of bread. Lunch cost him 65 shekels.

How much did a goblet of water cost? _____

How much did he pay for dinner? _____

I Can Join God's Family

Jesus Dies and Lives Again © Luke 22–24:12

God's Word

"Some people did accept him. They believed in his name. He gave them the right to become children of God." John 1:12

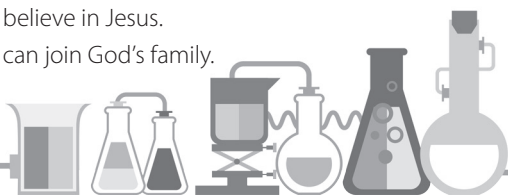
For Younger Children:

All who believe in Jesus become children of God. (See John 1:12.)

Big Discovery

God says He will make me part of His family when I believe in Jesus.

I can join God's family.



Teacher & Parent Connection

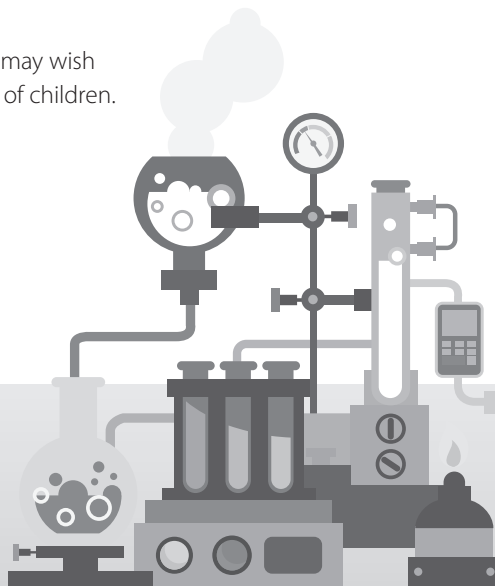
What would you rank as history's biggest discovery? Fire? The wheel? The Internet? Those are history-changing discoveries. But today's Big Discovery tops them all by a million light-years—it's the one that changes not only time but also eternity!

Jesus was, is and always will be the One Person in all of history who was able to do what no one else could do—live the perfect life we could not live, and then pay the penalty that had to be paid for sin. He took the punishment we could never have survived—and laid down His life, only to take it up again, as He had said He would, to prove that He is just who He says He is! John notes that Jesus came to destroy the work of the devil. (See 1 John 3:8.) And that work continues today as He invites you to help kids understand God's good news of forgiveness and joining His eternal family when they believe in Jesus!

Today, take some time to find out what the kids who come actually believe. Ask open-ended questions like, "What do

you think it takes to get to heaven?" or "What do you think happens to bad people when they die?" or "Why do people say only good people go to heaven?" You might be surprised to find out that many "church kids" can have a view of life that doesn't line up with the gospel. Take this opportunity not to criticize their ideas but to understand what they don't know. Then use that knowledge to help them understand God's great love for each of them and the simple truth of Scripture that for those who believe in Jesus, God grants the full right of being His child!

NOTE: This lesson is placed in order of Luke's account. But you may wish to teach this lesson first if it makes better sense for your group of children. Salvation opportunities are also given throughout this course.



Planning Page

Choose which centers you will provide and the order in which children will participate in them (see pp. 14–18 for schedule tips and pp. 24–25 for guidelines in combining older and younger children). Also plan who will lead each center (for staffing tips, see pp. 19–21). Use the reproducible planning sheet (p. 240) to record your plans.

Bible Story Center

Bible Story

Jesus Dies and Lives Again • Luke 22—24:12

Younger Child Option

Big Discovery Box • Use faces to show feelings.

Older Child Option

Big Discovery Box • Use props during story.

Game Center

Younger Child Option

Play a treasure-digging game and talk about God's love.

Materials

Bible, masking tape, inflatable pool, sand or packing peanuts, small toys or wrapped candies, sand pails and shovels

Older Child Option

Play a bowling game and talk about God's love and salvation.

Materials

Bible, tissue paper in at least four colors, eight clear plastic bottles, paper, pencils, small ball

Art Center

Younger Child Option

Create a cross from dough and talk about Jesus' resurrection.

Materials

Bible, air-dry clay, paper plates, marker, dough tools, decorative items (sequins, etc.), pencil

Older Child Option

Create a reminder of how salvation changes our view.

Materials

Bible, Dot Spinner (p. 210) and pencil for each child, white card stock, markers, scissors

Coloring/Puzzle Center

Younger Child Option

Review the Bible story while completing coloring page.

Materials

Lesson 12 Coloring Page (p. 211) for each student, crayons

Older Child Option

Review the Bible story while completing puzzle page.

Materials

Lesson 12 Puzzle Page (p. 212) for each student, pencils

Worship Center

For the Younger and Older Child

Participate in large-group activities to review the Bible verse and worship God together.

Materials

Bibles, CD-ROM and CD player, Lesson 12 Big Discovery Visual, song lyrics (pp. 249, 251), whiteboard and marker, rolls of toilet paper



Bonus Investigation!

Use this investigation at any time during this session: as an additional activity center, to extend the session for a longer time or for added theme excitement.

Suction Power!

Got your safety glasses? Lab coats? Let's go!

You need:

- matches
- tape
- a penny
- a quarter
- glass pie plate
- 1/2 cup (120 ml) water (add a little food coloring for dramatic effect)
- water glass

Prepare:

Ahead of time, bundle three matches together with a piece of tape. Then tape the penny to the bottom of the bundle so the bundle stands with tips upward.

Here's what you do:

- Don the glasses and coats!
- Lay the quarter to one side in the pie plate.
- Pour the water into the pie plate just to cover the quarter.

Here's what you say:

I've put enough (blue) water into the pie plate to cover my quarter. But now I want it back—without getting my fingers wet! How do you think we could get this water out of the plate? (Students give ideas.)

Well, here is one way to move the water out of the way. I am going to stand this bundle of three matches in the center of the pie plate.

Light the matches. Now, as I light the matches, I'll stand the glass upside down over the burning matches. What happens?

Here's why it works:

As the matches burn, they take the oxygen. The lack of oxygen inside the glass creates a vacuum. The vacuum pulls the water into the glass. When the water pulls up into the glass, we can slide the dry quarter out of the pie plate.

Aha! We did it! Shall we do it again?

Bible Story Center

for younger children Luke 22—24:12

Big Discovery Box



Before class, print out Lesson 12 Big Discovery Visual from the CD-ROM. Mark a Bible at Luke 24:2–3. Place both in the Big Discovery Box.

Introduction



What do you think is in our Big Discovery Box today? Remove Big Discovery Visual. **God says He will make me part of His family when I believe in Jesus!** Remove Bible. **From the Bible, we'll hear some SAD things that happened and some GLAD things that happened. We'll use our faces to show our feelings!** All use their faces to join you in showing emotions noted in story.

Tell the Story



It was a holiday called Passover. Jesus and His friends ate a special meal together. Jesus told Peter that before a rooster crowed in the morning, Peter would say three times that he didn't even KNOW Jesus. Peter said he would NEVER do that! (Look surprised. Shake head no.)

A little later, they walked out to a hill where Jesus often prayed. Jesus asked His friends to pray. (Clasp hands.) Then He walked away to pray alone. Jesus knew He would soon die. He would take the punishment for our sin. Jesus was glad to do this! But it would be HARD! So He needed to talk with God, His Father.

When Jesus came back to His disciples, they were asleep! (Make sleepy face.) Jesus woke them—and just then, a crowd of men came! They had swords and clubs! They grabbed Jesus. And all of Jesus' friends were afraid. (Make fearful face.) They RAN AWAY!

But Peter followed behind Jesus secretly. Jesus was taken to leaders who wanted to kill Him. The leaders tried to get people to LIE about Jesus! While this went on, Peter sat outside by a fire. And three times, people said they were SURE Peter was Jesus' friend. Three times Peter said, "NO! I don't know Jesus!" (Make angry face.)

The third time Peter said no, he heard a rooster. OH NO! Jesus looked right at Peter. Peter remembered Jesus' words. Peter felt very sad! (Look sad.)

The angry men took Jesus to Pilate, the Roman leader. Pilate asked Jesus questions. He listened to the leaders yell and holler. But no one could tell Pilate what Jesus had done WRONG!

But angry people outside started yelling. "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" they said. That meant they wanted Jesus to die on a cross.

Pilate gave in. He ordered his soldiers to kill Jesus. (Look sad.) Even though Jesus had not done anything wrong, the soldiers took Him to a hill. They nailed Jesus to a cross. Jesus could have stopped them. But He did it to take our punishment for sin. He loves us that much! (Smile.)

Finally, Jesus died. Jesus' friends were so sad! (Look sad.) They took His body to a new tomb, like a little room that was cut into the side of a hill. His friends wrapped Jesus' body with spices in cloth. And then, a big, heavy stone was rolled over the door. They left and sadly went home. (Look sad.)

But that's not the end! The third day after Jesus was buried, some other friends came to the tomb. When they got there, the big stone was rolled AWAY. **Listen to find out what they saw.** Read Luke 24:2–3 aloud. (Look worried.)

The tomb was EMPTY! Then they saw two men who looked like ANGELS! They asked, "Why are you looking for Jesus here? He isn't DEAD. This is where they put dead people! He is not here; He is ALIVE!" (Look surprised.)

Jesus' friends RAN back to tell Jesus' other friends! Some of them did not believe what they said. But Peter ran to the tomb to see! Jesus was not there. Peter was AMAZED! (Look amazed.)

Soon, he and all of Jesus' friends knew—Jesus was not in the tomb. Jesus is ALIVE! (Clap and cheer.)

God's Word & Me



Jesus died. He took the punishment for our sin. But He didn't stay dead! Show Big Discovery Visual and read it aloud. **God says we can believe in Jesus. When we believe in Jesus, we can join God's family, too!**

Pray, **Dear God, thank You for loving us. Thank You that we can join Your family. Thank You that Jesus is alive! In His name, amen.**

Bible Story Center

for older children Luke 22—24:12



Big Discovery Box

Before class, print out Lesson 12 Big Discovery Visual from the CD-ROM. Place in the Big Discovery Box with a Bible, a bag of coins, a nail and a strip of white cloth.

You may invite a male team member to dress in Bible-times clothing and tell the story each time, introducing himself as Dr. Luke, the head researcher of the materials.

Introduction



Open Big Discovery Box as you speak. **I wonder if Dr. Luke might have left anything in the box?** Show Bible. **Ah! Here's our source document—the Bible.** Show Big Discovery Visual. **God says He will make me part of His family when I believe in Jesus! As I tell this story, let's pass around some items that will help us remember it.** Show and pass props as directed in the story. Ask volunteers to read the Bible verses listed in boldface.

Tell the Story



Although Jesus' disciples didn't know it, the next few days would change their lives—and history—forever! Jesus and His disciples had finished eating their last Passover meal together. Jesus told Peter he'd be tested. **Read Luke 22:33–34 to hear Peter's words and Jesus' response.**

After the meal, they went to the Mount of Olives, a hill near Jerusalem. Jesus often went there to pray. Jesus asked His friends to pray as well. Then He walked a little way into the garden and knelt to pray. Jesus knew He was about to die to take the punishment for our sin. Even though Jesus was willing to do this, He also knew that dying would be VERY hard! He needed time to talk with God.

A little later, Jesus came back to His disciples. They were asleep! **Read Luke 22:47 to find out what happened next.**

Judas Iscariot was one of Jesus' disciples. The leaders had paid him to show them where Jesus was. (Show and pass bag of coins.)

Judas kissed Jesus—not out of love, but to show the men who they should arrest. They grabbed Jesus—and His friends ran, terrified! But Peter followed along, far behind.

Jesus was taken to the high priest's house. The religious leaders were waiting for Him. They were ready to complete their plan to KILL Jesus—but first, they needed a reason to say WHY He should die! So they paid people to tell lies about Jesus, but the people's stories didn't match.

Out in the courtyard, Peter waited. During the night, three people said they were SURE Peter was Jesus' friend. And three times Peter said, "NO! I don't KNOW Him!"

The third time Peter said this, a rooster crowed. Jesus looked right at Peter—and Peter remembered how he had said he would NEVER deny Jesus. But he DID! Peter went away, crying.

These leaders said Jesus had to die—but only the Roman ruler, Pilate, could order that someone be killed. So they had to convince Pilate that Jesus should die. Pilate questioned Jesus. He listened to the leaders' lies. But in all their lies and shouts, Pilate did NOT hear about any reason Jesus should be killed!

Outside, the crowd started shouting, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" over and over. It got louder and louder—it was beginning to sound as if there would be a riot over this innocent man! And Pilate didn't want a riot to start. So he ordered his soldiers to crucify Jesus—even though he KNEW Jesus was innocent!

The soldiers beat Jesus, made fun of Him and put a crown made of thorns on His head. They forced a man named Simon to carry Jesus' cross partway to a hill called Golgotha. There, they nailed Jesus' hands and feet to a wooden cross—and left Him there to die. (Show and pass nail.)

Jesus could have STOPPED all of this. But Jesus CHOSE to do this. He had said many times that this was going to happen, that this was God's good plan. Jesus did it to take the punishment for our sins—and for the sins of the world—because He loves us! For three hours, it was dark. Then Jesus died.

Jesus' friends didn't understand what had happened. Jesus was DEAD! Their hearts were broken! They took His body from the cross. A man named Joseph had a new tomb nearby, so he and some others took Jesus' body to this tomb. They wrapped Jesus' body in linen cloth and spices and left it there. It was almost the Sabbath, and they had to stay home on that day. (Show and pass strip of cloth.)



But that's not the end of the story! The third day after Jesus was buried, after the Sabbath was over, some women came to the tomb before dawn. They were coming to put more spices and perfumes on Jesus' dead body. **Read Luke 24:2–3 to find out what they saw.**

Then they saw two men in clothes as bright as LIGHTNING. They must have been ANGELS. They asked the women, "Why are you looking for someone who's alive in the place where they put the dead? He's not here; He is risen!"

WOW! The women were AMAZED! They RAN back to tell the others! At first, Peter and the other disciples did not believe them. But Peter ran back to the tomb. He could see for himself that Jesus was NOT there. And soon Jesus' friends all knew—Jesus is ALIVE!

God's Word & Me

Jesus did amazing things while He was on Earth. But the MOST amazing thing is that He chose to die on the cross. He took the punishment for our sins. When He rose from the dead, He proved that He is God's Son. He makes it possible for us to be forgiven of our sins and join God's family!

Read John 1:12 aloud from your Bible. **God says that those who believe in Jesus have a RIGHT—the right to be called His**

children. There is nothing better than joining God's family!

(Invite children interested in knowing more about becoming members of God's family to talk with you or another teacher after class. See "Leading a Child to Christ" on p. 12.)

- **Why do you think Jesus did not stop the people who hurt and killed Him?** (He loves us. He loved them. He was willing to take the punishment for sin.)
- **Why do you think Peter said he didn't know Jesus?** (Afraid. Scared for his own life.)
- **How do you think Peter and his other friends felt when they went to the tomb—and Jesus was not there?** (Confused. Surprised. Hopeful.)
- Show Big Discovery Visual. **God tells us that when we believe in Jesus, He will make us part of His family. What do we have to do? How do we show we believe in Jesus?**
- **What would you tell another kid is the best part about being in God's family?**
- **What might be some ways we could tell that a person is part of God's family?**

Pray with children, thanking God for Jesus' great love for us, for dying for us and for rising again. Ask His Spirit to help children understand and believe the good news of Jesus!



Game Center

for younger children Luke 22—24:12

Collect



Bible, masking tape, inflatable pool, sand or packing peanuts, small toys or wrapped candies, sand pails and shovels.

Prepare



Lay a masking-tape start line. Set inflatable pool 15 feet (4.5 m) from start line. Fill pool about two-thirds full with sand or packing peanuts. Bury small toys or wrapped candies in the sand. Set a sand pail and shovel at start line for each team.

Do



1. Children form teams of four. At your signal, a child from each team picks up pail and shovel, runs to wading pool, digs with shovel to find an item, puts it in the pail and then runs back to give pail to the next person on team.
2. Play continues until each team member has had a turn. When game is over, lay out the items each team collected.
3. To play again, children take turns to run and bury an item from the pail. For final round, each child claims the item found.



God's Word

"Some people did accept him. They believed in his name. He gave them the right to become children of God." John 1:12

For Younger Children:

All who believe in Jesus become children of God. (See John 1:12.)

Big Discovery

God says He will make me part of His family when I believe in Jesus.

I can join God's family.



Talk About



- **What did you have to do to find your prize? (Dig.) Was it easy or hard for you to do?** (Children tell.)
- **In Dr. Luke's Bible account, we heard about a VERY hard thing Jesus did. What did Jesus do because He loves you and me and everyone?** (Died on the cross. Came back to life. Took our punishment for sin.)
- **What does God say He will do when we believe in Jesus?** (Make us part of His family.)
- **Our Bible says that all who believe in Jesus become children of God.**

Pray briefly, **Dear God, thank You for loving us. Thank You that Jesus died so we can be forgiven and join Your family. In His name, amen.**

For Older Children



Older children who do not want to play may sit beside the pool to help younger children uncover or bury items.

Game Center

for older children Luke 22—24:12

Collect



Bible, tissue paper in at least four colors, eight clear plastic bottles, paper, pencils, small ball.

Prepare

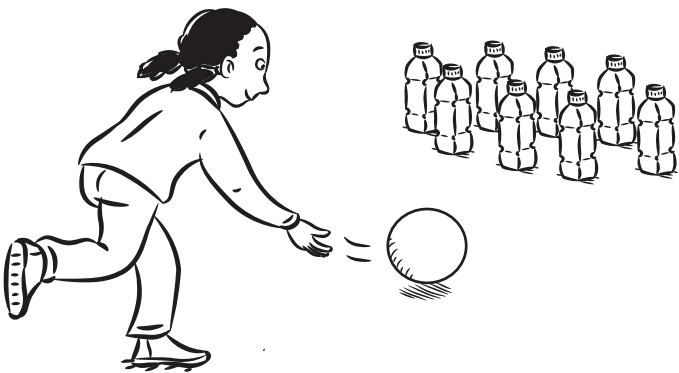


Stuff a sheet of tissue paper into each bottle, using each of the different colors twice.

Do



1. Children set up plastic bottles like bowling pins and form two teams. Give each team a sheet of paper and a pencil.
2. First player on one team stands about 10 feet (3 m) from bottles and rolls the ball toward them. First player on other team takes a turn. After a team knocks over its first bottle, 10 points are awarded for each bottle knocked over that contains a different color from the previous bottle knocked over.
3. Teams continue alternating turns and keeping score until all bottles are knocked down.
4. Teams total their points. Team with the higher number of points completes the sentence: "Becoming a member of God's family means that . . ." Other team repeats today's Bible verse.
5. Play other rounds, asking questions from the Talk About section.



God's Word

"Some people did accept him. They believed in his name. He gave them the right to become children of God." John 1:12

For Younger Children:

All who believe in Jesus become children of God. (See John 1:12.)

Big Discovery

God says He will make me part of His family when I believe in Jesus.

I can join God's family.



Talk About



- Was it easy or hard to knock down a pin? (Students tell.)
- In Dr. Luke's Bible account, we heard about a **VERY hard thing Jesus did. What was it?** (Died on the cross. Laid down His life for us. Took the punishment for sin. Came back to life.)
- Why do you think Jesus did not stop the people who hurt and killed Him?** (He loves us. He loved them. He was willing to take the punishment for sin.)
- The Bible tells us that people who believe in Jesus have a right. What is that right?** (To become children of God. To join God's family.) **God loves us. He wants us to be part of His big, forgiven family!** Repeat John 1:12 together.

Lead children in prayer, thanking God for His love and for Jesus' death and resurrection.

For Younger Children



Invite younger children to stand closer. Any younger child who knocks over a pin leads all in repeating the Younger Children's version of the Bible verse.

Art Center

for younger children Luke 22—24:12

Collect



Bible, air-dry clay, paper plates, marker, dough tools, decorative items (sequins, etc.), pencil.

Prepare



Put a fist-sized ball of dough on each paper plate, one for each child. Set out decorative materials.

Do



1. Adult writes child's name on his or her paper plate.
2. Child experiments with ways to make a cross shape (roll snakes and cross them, mold with fingers, etc.).
3. Child decorates the cross shape as desired.
4. Adult uses pencil to make a hole in top of cross for hanging. Set aside to dry.

Talk About



- **What does a cross shape remind us of?** (When Jesus died. When Jesus didn't stay dead. When Jesus came back to life.)
- **In Dr. Luke's Bible account, we heard about Peter. What did Peter say three times?** (I don't know Jesus.) **How did Peter feel after the rooster crowed and Peter remembered what Jesus had said?** (Sad. Ashamed.)



God's Word

"Some people did accept him. They believed in his name. He gave them the right to become children of God." John 1:12

For Younger Children:

All who believe in Jesus become children of God. (See John 1:12.)

Big Discovery

God says He will make me part of His family when I believe in Jesus.
I can join God's family.



- **Three days after Jesus died, His friends came to the tomb. How did they feel?** (Sad. Worried.)
- **What did they find out?** (Jesus wasn't here. He is alive.) **How did they feel when they found out that Jesus is alive?** (Glad. Happy.)
- **What does God say He will do when we believe in Jesus?** (Make us part of His family.) **Our Bible says that all who believe in Jesus become children of God.** Repeat Bible verse together several times.

Pray briefly, **Dear God, thank You for Jesus. Thank You that Jesus died and is alive again. Thank You that we can be forgiven and join Your family. In His name, amen.**

For Older Children



Older children use their dough to make and decorate several smaller crosses to use as backpack hangers, on necklaces, etc.

Art Center

for older children Luke 22—24:12

Collect



Bible, Dot Spinner (p. 210) and pencil for each child, white card stock, markers, scissors.

Prepare



Photocopy a Dot Spinner onto white card stock for each child.

Do



1. **When do dots become lines? How can you make a dot become a line? We're going to find out today!** Give each child a Dot Spinner. Child makes pea-sized circles of red, green and blue all over surface.
2. Child cuts out the spinner and then punches a pencil through the marked center hole.
3. Student spins the spinner like a top.
4. Talk about how the dots become rings of color when the spinner is moving.

Talk About



- **What happens when your spinner spins?** (Dots blur. Dots look like lines. Moving spinner looks different than when still.)



God's Word

"Some people did accept him. They believed in his name. He gave them the right to become children of God." John 1:12

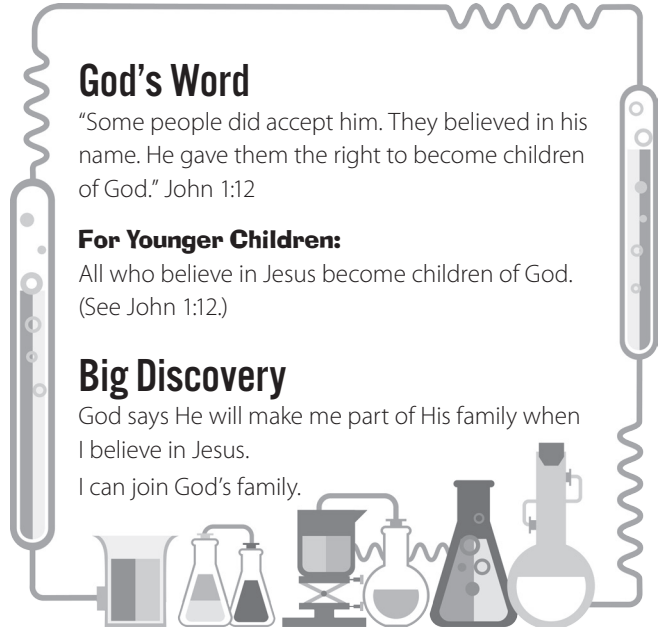
For Younger Children:

All who believe in Jesus become children of God. (See John 1:12.)

Big Discovery

God says He will make me part of His family when I believe in Jesus.

I can join God's family.



- **What are some things Jesus did?** (Died on the cross. Came back to life. Took the punishment for sin.) **Our spinners can remind us of Jesus' death and resurrection. Jesus' death and resurrection are the center of God's great plan of salvation, like the pencil is the center of a spinner. When God's plan of salvation was set in motion, everything looked different after that!**
- **The Bible tells us that people who believe in Jesus have a right. What is that right?** (To become children of God. To join God's family.) **When we believe in Jesus, that means we put Him at the center of our lives. And everything changes! God loves us and wants us to be part of His forgiven, forever family!** Repeat John 1:12 together.

Lead children in prayer, thanking God for salvation in Jesus.

For Younger Children



Adults help younger children cut out circles and punch pencils through. Older children show them how to spin the spinners.

Worship Center

Luke 22—24:12

Collect



Bibles, CD-ROM and CD player, Lesson 12 Big Discovery Visual, song lyrics (pp. 249, 251), whiteboard and marker, rolls of toilet paper.

Prepare



Write out the words and reference for John 1:12 on a large whiteboard.

Team Game

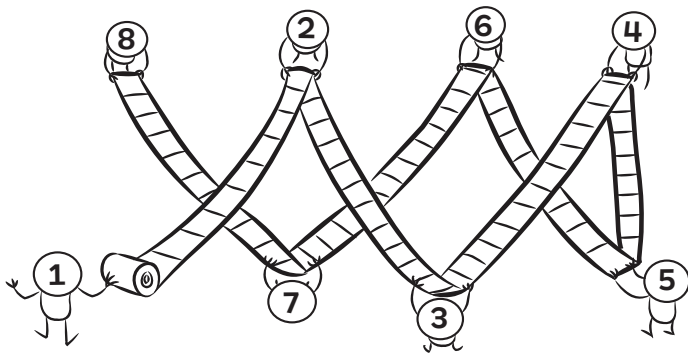


Students stand in two lines, facing each other. First student holds onto the end of a roll of toilet paper and tosses it to the person diagonal from him or her. Students continue to hold and toss roll in alternating fashion to the end of the line. Last student then tosses it to the last person skipped, continuing in alternating fashion up the line until everyone has caught and tossed the roll—and is holding a lot of toilet paper! Try again, challenging students to see if they can do it more quickly!

Bible Verse Game



Read John 1:12 aloud with children. Students repeat verse aloud with you once, and then erase every word containing an “a.” Say verse again. Then erase every word containing an “e.” Repeat with every vowel, saying verse each time.



God’s Word

“Some people did accept him. They believed in his name. He gave them the right to become children of God.” John 1:12

For Younger Children:

All who believe in Jesus become children of God. (See John 1:12.)

Big Discovery

God says He will make me part of His family when I believe in Jesus.

I can join God’s family.



Song



You, or another leader, lead children in singing “God’s Plan 4 U Is Jesus!” adding motions and/or clapping if desired.

Prayer



Today we talked about the biggest, best thing that ever happened in history! Show Big Discovery Visual. **What’s our Big Discovery? SHOUT it!** (Students shout, “God says He will make me part of His family when I believe in Jesus! I can join God’s family!”) **This is the BIGGEST of our BIG discoveries! When we’re part of God’s family, we can trust His promises for every part of our lives!** Then lead children in prayer, thanking God for sending Jesus so that we can join His family and grow in Him.

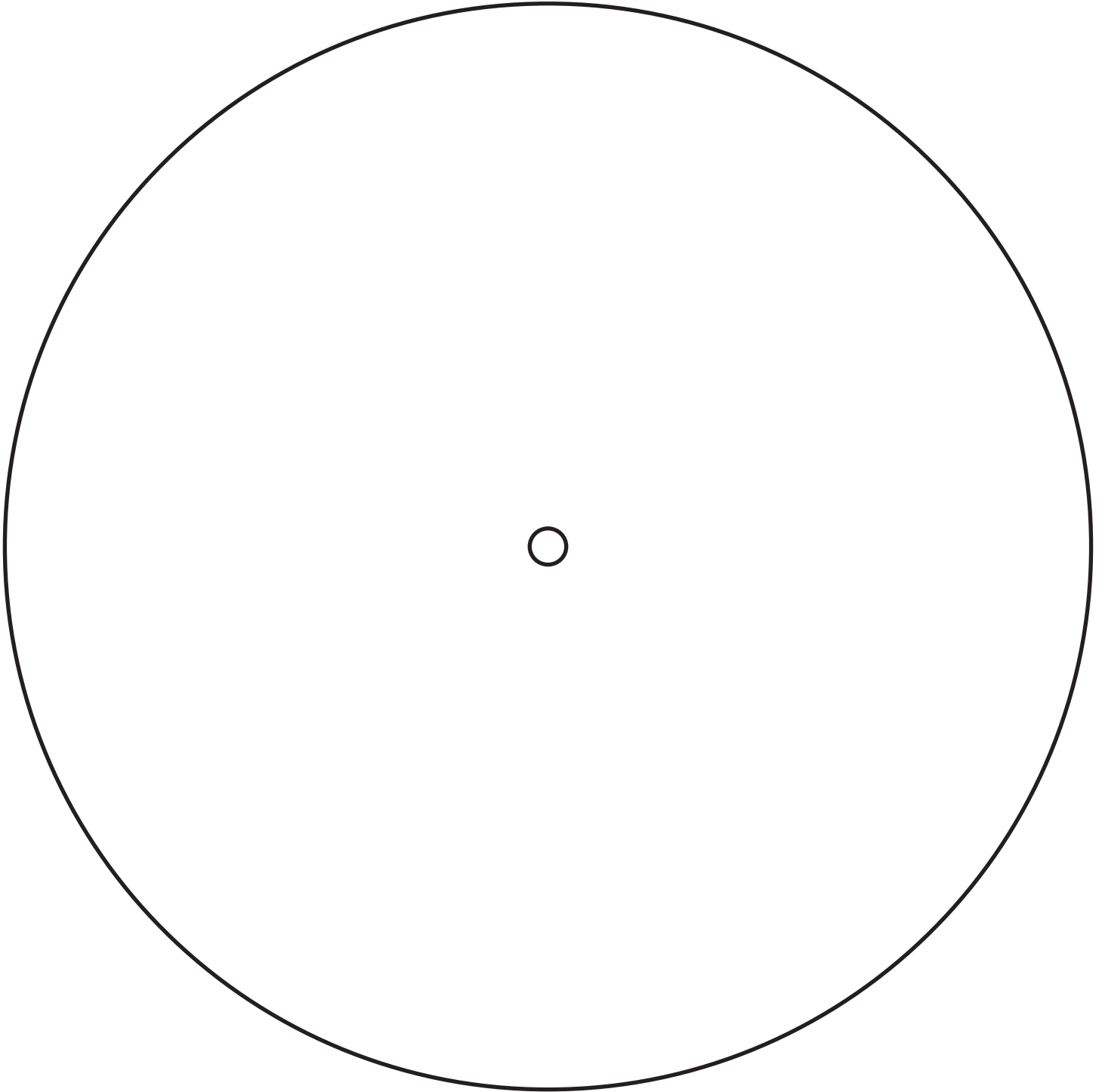
Song

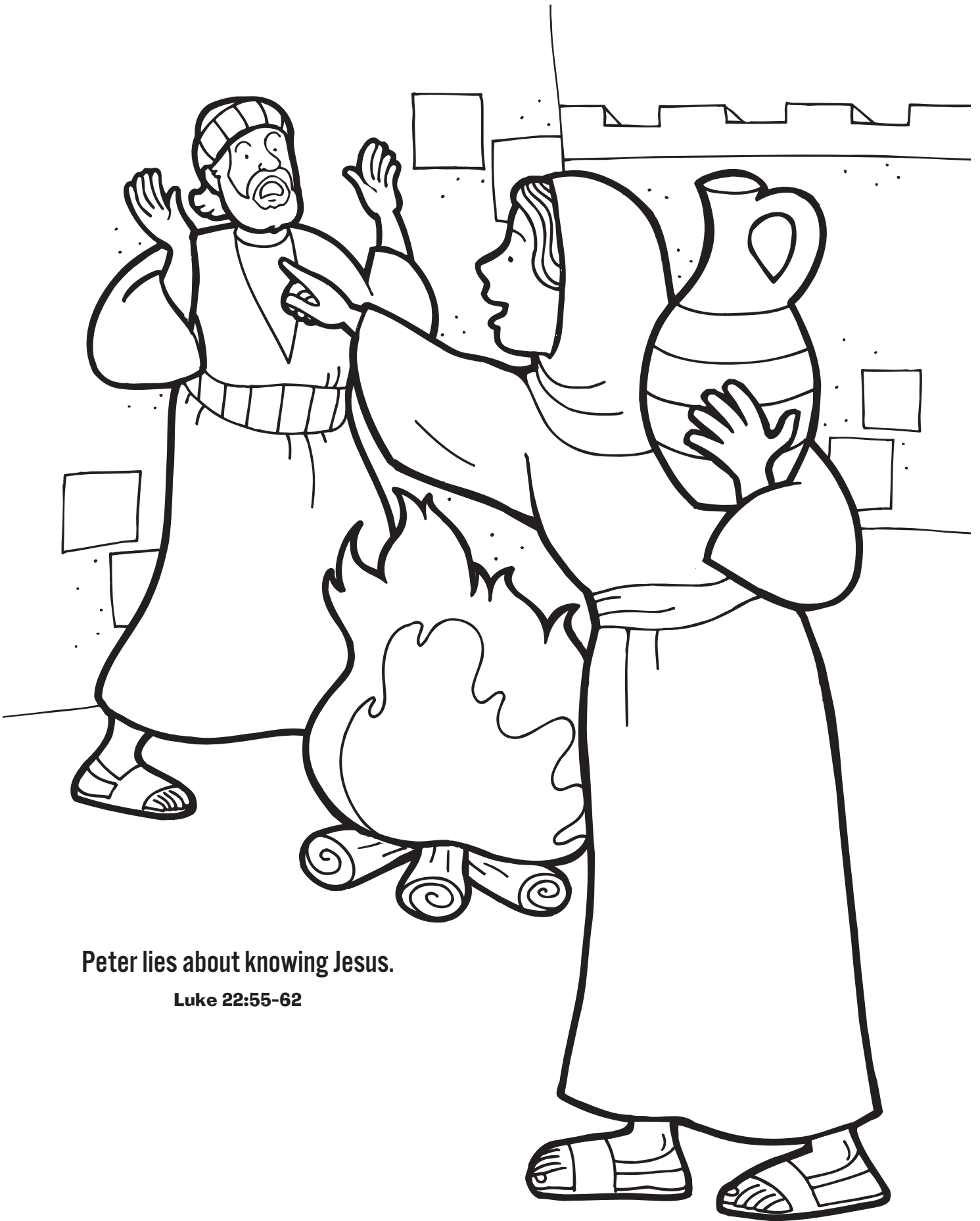


You, or another leader, lead children in singing “J-E-S-U-S,” adding motions and/or clapping if desired. **God wants each one of us in His family. If you haven’t joined His family, let’s talk more about that. If you have, then be sure to thank Him this week!**

Dot Spinner

Draw pea-sized dots of red, green and blue all over your spinner. Then cut it out, punch the pencil through the center—and spin it! What happens to the dots?





Peter lies about knowing Jesus.

Luke 22:55-62

You Have a Right!



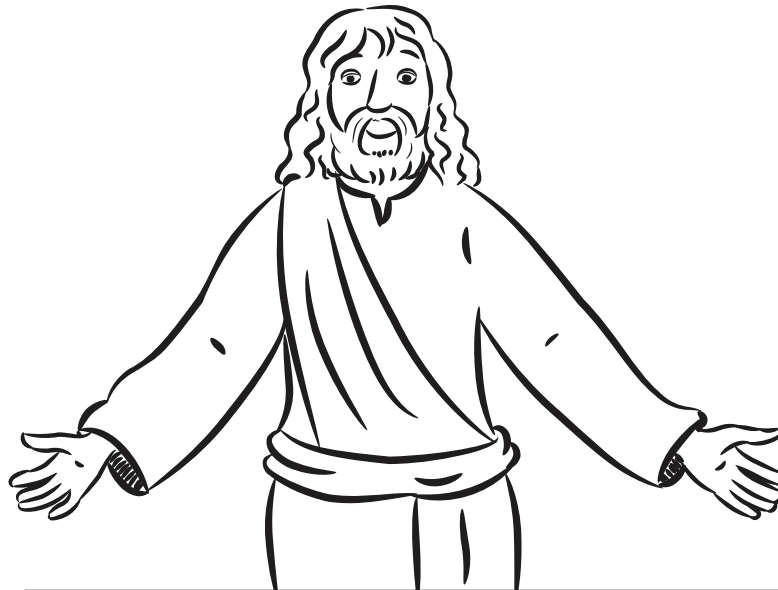
Start at the center star each time you need a letter. Some letters will be repeated.

The first clue is ↓-2. ↓-2 means you go in the direction of the arrow from the star 2 letters.

So the first letter you find is the letter O, which you write on blank 1. Now do the rest.

- 1 ↓-2
- 2 ↗-1
- 3 →-2
- 4 ↘-2
- 5 ↓-1
- 6 ↓-1
- 7 →-2
- 8 ↖-2
- 9 ↖-1
- 10 ←-1
- 11 →-2
- 12 ↗-2
- 13 →-1
- 14 →-2
- 15 ↙-1
- 16 →-2
- 17 ↑-2
- 18 ←-2
- 19 ↘-2
- 20 ↗-1
- 21 →-2
- 22 ↑-1

- 23 →-1
- 24 ↙-2
- 25 ↘-1
- 26 ↖-1
- 27 ←-1
- 28 →-2
- 29 ↓-1
- 30 ↓-2
- 31 ↗-1
- 32 →-2
- 33 ↓-1
- 34 ↘-1
- 35 →-1
- 36 ↗-2
- 37 ↑-2
- 38 ↑-1
- 39 →-2
- 40 ←-2
- 41 ↙-2
- 42 ↓-2
- 43 ↑-2



P	K	D	C	L
F	T	R	M	Y
N	B	★	I	E
C	V	C	H	J
G	S	O	U	A

“S _____ people did _____ him. They _____
 in his _____. He gave them the _____ to
 _____ of _____.”

John 1:12

I Can Tell Others

Jesus' Commission © Luke 24:45-53; Acts 1:1-11

God's Word

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you. Then you will be my witnesses. . . . from one end of the earth to the other." Acts 1:8

For Younger Children:

God helps me tell others about Jesus.
(See Acts 1:8.)

Big Discovery

God says He will help me share His love.
I can tell others about Jesus.



Teacher & Parent Connection

When was the last time you said to yourself, "I can't wait to tell so-and-so about this!" Some discoveries are so good, so exciting, that we just can't keep quiet! We call, we text, we post it on social media—we even tell people face-to-face! Dr. Luke must have felt that way. Having carefully researched accounts of Jesus' life and its eternal effects, he must have been eager to tell these amazing stories he'd collected—and (in the book of Acts) lived!

Still, when it comes to telling people our own amazing stories and the good news about Jesus, we may think it's somehow a "too big, not-doable" thing. I recently heard that one missions organization sent a question to each of its missionaries: "What must I do to be saved?" Answers to that question ran as long as 20 pages! That IS a big, not-doable answer! So let's take a simple look at the good news!

Consider Mark 1:15, Jesus' own words of good news, the gospel He preached everywhere: The time is fulfilled (it's now, a *kairos*, a moment of opportunity). The kingdom

of God is near (close enough for you to reach out and receive it). Repent (the Greek word means to turn around, to think differently). Believe this good news (that there is a Kingdom you can join right now, whose King makes anything possible—and Jesus is that King)! That's pretty simple! Most of us can remember those four things. Try making that your jumping off place next time you converse with someone about the good news of Jesus!

And for us, MORE good news is that Jesus never expected us to tell others on our own, from our own strength or smarts or resources! For us, official sons and daughters of the King, Jesus sent His Holy Spirit. He'll help us tell others, both by our actions and our words. He loves every person in our circles, every kid we teach, far more than we do! And as kids of the King who can do anything, He tells us to ask Him about everything! Then we go in the power of His Spirit to love, to pray, to act—and to tell the best news on Earth!



Planning Page

Choose which centers you will provide and the order in which children will participate in them (see pp. 14–18 for schedule tips and pp. 24–25 for guidelines in combining older and younger children). Also plan who will lead each center (for staffing tips, see pp. 19–21). Use the reproducible planning sheet (p. 240) to record your plans.

Bible Story Center

Bible Story

Jesus' Commission • Luke 24:45–53;
Acts 1:1–11

Younger Child Option

Big Discovery Box • Use fingers during story.

Older Child Option

Big Discovery Box • Draw sketches during the story.

Art Center

Younger Child Option

Create puppets to experience telling what we know about Jesus.

Materials

Bible, scissors, paper plates, stapler, lightweight craft supplies (foam stickers, fake fur, yarn, pom-poms, ribbons, etc.), glue sticks

Older Child Option

Create a picture frame to help each child share Jesus' love.

Materials

Bibles, poster board, ruler, scissors, ribbon, stapler, glue, markers, decorating materials (wrapping paper, fabric scraps, sequins, buttons, pom-poms, glitter, etc.)

Game Center

Younger Child Option

Play a relay game and talk about telling others about Jesus.

Materials

Bible, masking tape

Older Child Option

Play a tossing game and talk about telling others about Jesus.

Materials

Bible, CD-ROM and CD player, aluminum foil, one marble

Coloring/Puzzle Center

Younger Child Option

Review the Bible story while completing coloring page.

Materials

Lesson 13 Coloring Page (p. 225) for each student, crayons

Older Child Option

Review the Bible story while completing puzzle page.

Materials

Lesson 13 Puzzle Page (p. 226) for each student, pencils

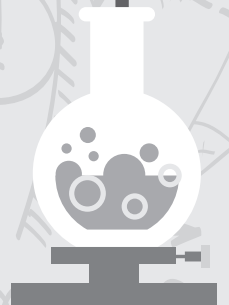
Worship Center

For All

Participate in large-group activities to review the Bible verse and worship God together.

Materials

Bibles, CD-ROM and CD player, Lesson 13 Big Discovery Visual, song lyrics (pp. 252, 248), whiteboard and marker, inflated balloon



Bonus Theme Ideas

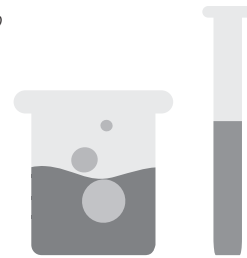
Bonus Theme Ideas can be used at any time during this session: as an additional activity center, to extend the session for a longer time or for added theme excitement.

Make-and-Drink Experiment!

Bring in pitchers, water and flavored drink mix—both a presweetened and an unsweetened version. (Hold back the cup of sugar required for the unsweetened.) Invite older kids to make the drinks with the materials you've provided—and then pour several cups of each kind for volunteers to do a taste test. Testers tell what's different about the two drinks! Then talk about how even though the drinks look the same, they are not the same. People who know Jesus may look the same as people who don't, but they are different! Now add the sugar to the unsweetened version, and talk about the way that being part of God's family changes us so that even if we may look like other people, we're different now—sweeter, different than we used to be. Then pour out a sweet drink for everyone!

TruthLab Awards!

Use a certificate (see p. 229) to create a *TruthLab Award* for each child who attended *TruthLab Investigations*. Also create thank-you awards for leaders and helpers. Present the awards to children and leaders as part of a large-group gathering to end your lab time together before children are dismissed. Show video or display pictures of children participating in the activities of *TruthLab Investigations*.



Earthquake Mix!

Provide small dishes of chocolate puffed cereal, granola, nuts and yogurt-covered raisins—anything rock-ish. Give each child a clear plastic cup and a spoon. Child layers each "strata" into cup as desired (be sure to admire it!), mixes it up (earthquake!) and then eats!



Post a note alerting parents to the use of food. Also, check registration forms for possible food allergies.

Bible Story Center

for younger children Luke 24:45–53; Acts 1:1–11

Big Discovery Box



Before class, print out Lesson 13 Big Discovery Visual from the CD-ROM. Place in the Big Discovery Box with a Bible.

Introduction



What is a job your mom does? Your dad? What do you think is a BIG job? Remove printout and Bible. **Here is our Bible—and our Big Discovery. It says God has a big job for us to do, too! Today we are going to find out what Jesus said about that big job. Listen for things to do with your fingers while I tell the story!**

Tell the Story



After Jesus was alive again, He visited His friends for 40 more days. That's more than a month! (Show 10, 20, 30, 40 with your hands.) The Bible tells us that He visited many people. He told them what was going to happen. Jesus wanted everyone to KNOW that He is alive—and that He loves us!

Jesus told His friends, "You are My friends. You saw the great things God has done. Now I am going to send you the gift my Father has promised you. So stay in Jerusalem. Soon God will give you power from heaven. You'll tell everyone the good news!"

Jesus walked and talked with His friends a lot during those 40 days. (Walk your fingers.) One day, it was time for Jesus to return to heaven. He and His friends walked together. His friends had a BIG question. They had wondered about it for a long time. They thought Jesus was going to be their King. They thought that now He would throw out the Romans—and they would all be in charge!

So they asked, "Lord, NOW is it time for us to chase out the Romans? Will we finally have our own kingdom again?"

Jesus answered them, "God has a plan. Your job is NOT to know His plans." (Wag pointer finger.)

But Jesus DID have a BIG job for them to do—it was a different job from what they had expected! (Point upward.)

Jesus said, "Soon you will receive power to tell everyone what you have seen and heard. (Point to eyes and ears.) The Holy Spirit will come to you! You'll tell people all over the WORLD about Me. You'll start here in Jerusalem. Then you'll keep on going, as far as anyone can go!" (Walk fingers as far as you can.)

Jesus' friends were probably surprised! THAT wasn't the job they expected Jesus to tell them about! But THIS was the job God had for them—not fighting Romans! And this surprising job was NOT something they had to do on their own. Jesus wanted His friends to know how much He loved them. He would send His Holy Spirit to help them! (Clap and cheer.)

After Jesus told His friends these important things, something surprising happened. Jesus began to rise up into the sky! (Slowly raise your hands and begin to look up.) His friends were AMAZED!

Jesus went up and up until He was in a cloud. His friends couldn't see Him anymore. (Shade eyes with hand.) They looked and looked. Their eyes searched the sky. But they could not see Jesus anymore. (Shade eyes to look around.)

Suddenly two men appeared who were dressed in bright white—they must have been ANGELS! They said, "Why are you standing here looking up in the sky? Jesus will come back some day. He will come back in the same way you saw Him go!" WOW!

Jesus' friends were very glad! Jesus did NOT leave them alone. He promised to send His Holy Spirit to help them. And Jesus would come back, just as He promised. Jesus' friends were glad—and we are glad, too! (Use fingers to draw a smile on your face.) Jesus has important work for us to do. And we don't have to do it alone. His Holy Spirit helps us! (Clap and cheer.)

God's Word & Me



Jesus told His friends some surprising things. He has a big job for all of us to do! Show Big Discovery Visual and read it aloud. **God says He will help me share His love. I can tell others about Jesus!**

Pray, **Dear God, thank You for Your love. We want to tell others the good news about Jesus. Thank You for giving us Your Holy Spirit to help us. In Jesus' name, amen.**

Bible Story Center

for older children Luke 24:45–53; Acts 1:1–11



Big Discovery Box

Before class, print out Lesson 13 Big Discovery Visual from the CD-ROM. Place in the Big Discovery Box with a Bible, a large sketch pad and a pen. Use Story Sketches (p. 224) for your reference as you draw.

You may invite a male team member to dress in Bible-times clothing and tell the story, introducing himself as Dr. Luke, the head researcher of the materials.

Distribute paper and pencils to students before telling the story (see below).

Introduction



Open Big Discovery Box as you speak. **I wonder what Dr. Luke might have left this very last time?** Show Bible. **Ah! He didn't forget our source document, the Bible.** Show Big Discovery Visual. **God says He'll help us share His love. That's good to know. It's a job we don't have to do alone!**

And to really get the picture, here is paper and pencil for each of you. Follow along with me as I draw some pictures to help us remember what Jesus said! Students copy your drawings as directed in the story.

Tell the Story



Hanging out with your best friends is a lot of fun! (Write, "40.") And that's what Jesus did. After He rose again, Jesus spent 40 days here on Earth. Dr. Luke tells us in both of his documents, the books of Luke and Acts, that Jesus took time to talk and eat and walk with His friends. All that time, Jesus helped them understand more about why He died and came back to life again. He told them about God's BIG plan for them—and everyone! (Write, "BIG PLAN.")

Jesus spent all that time hanging out with His friends because He knew they did NOT understand what was going on yet! Like all the other Jewish people, they expected Jesus to come and be the big, conquering KING. For some time now, the Romans had ruled

the land God had once given the Jews. They wanted to be FREED from the Romans' rule! But Jesus' friends were beginning to understand that Jesus HAD set them free from their sin—which was something far worse than even the mean Romans! Because Jesus died and rose again, they and all of us can be forgiven of our sins and become members of God's family.

One day, as Jesus and His friends were eating together, He told them something surprising. Jesus told His friends they would receive a gift. (Draw a gift box with bow.)

Jesus said to His friends, "Stay in Jerusalem. Wait there. Soon you will receive the gift My Father promised—the Holy Spirit."

Now that Jesus had said God was sending the Holy Spirit, Jesus' friends may have wondered if this Holy Spirit would be the One who would overthrow the Roman government! They didn't yet understand that God would send His Holy Spirit to help them live as God wanted them to live—and to give them power to do the REAL job Jesus was about to give them!

On another day, Jesus began to tell them more about what was going to happen. So they asked the question they'd all been wondering about. Remember, they were expecting Jesus to come as the conquering King who could throw out the Romans!

They asked, "Lord, NOW is it time to chase out the Romans? Will we finally have our own kingdom again?"

Jesus answered them, "That part is God's plan. Your job is NOT to know His plans." But Jesus DID have a job for them!

Jesus said, "Soon you will receive power to tell everyone what you have seen and heard. The Holy Spirit will come to you, and you'll tell people all over the WORLD. You'll start here in Jerusalem. Then you will keep on going—to Judea, then to Samaria—until you get to the ENDS of the EARTH, as far as anyone can go!" (Draw a globe.)

Jesus' friends were probably surprised! How was THAT going to overthrow the Romans? It was probably NOT at all what they had expected Jesus to say!

After Jesus had said this, something utterly stupendous happened! Jesus began to rise up from the ground—right up into the air! His friends stared in wonder. (Draw an O for a mouth, then draw a face around the O.)

While His friends watched, Jesus rose higher and higher—and then He finally disappeared into a cloud. (Draw clouds.)

Jesus' friends all stood there, dumbfounded, staring up into the sky. *Wait. What about the Romans? What about the new job? What just HAPPENED?*

Suddenly, two men appeared who were dressed in bright white. They must have been angels! (Write "2 ANGELS.")

"Men of Galilee," the men said. "Why are you standing here, staring up into the sky? Jesus has gone to heaven! But one day, He will return again in the same way you saw Him go!"

WOW! Jesus' friends had a LOT to think about! As they walked back into Jerusalem, they must have been stunned but also excited. There was SO MUCH to talk about—everything Jesus had said to them, all of the things they'd seen and how it all fit together. They must have been amazed and wondering WHAT could be next!

But Jesus' friends did just what He had asked them to do. They waited in Jerusalem until the day when God sent His Holy Spirit. When THAT happened, they had the power Jesus had promised them! (Draw a burst and write "POWER" across it.)

Jesus' friends began telling EVERYONE the good news about Him. They traveled farther and farther from Jerusalem, soon going from their country to OTHER countries! Everywhere they went, they told people all about Jesus—the things Jesus had taught them, the wonderful things they'd seen Jesus do, how Jesus died and came back to life and took the punishment for sin! And as they traveled and talked, people all over the world joined God's family!

And this job hasn't ENDED—it's still going on. Jesus gave this same important job to everyone in God's family! Dr. Luke's book, the book of Acts, doesn't have an ending. Maybe that's because the story goes on and on as God's family grows and grows! (Add dots to represent people all over the globe you drew.)

This "book of Acts" story has gone on and on—and it won't be over until we are all in heaven, amazed and glad to see all of the people God put into His family! Some of those people might be there because we told them the good news about Jesus! That makes this job the BEST JOB EVER!

God's Word & Me



Jesus' friends were surprised at the things He told them. They expected to go to war with a conquering King. But He gave them a completely DIFFERENT job. It's the job of conquering the whole world with God's LOVE! And we all get to do that job! When we are part of God's family and we ask God's help, His Spirit gives us what we need to show His love by what we do and to tell His love by the words we say!

Read Acts 1:8 aloud from your Bible. **In this verse, Jesus is talking with His friends. Other accounts in the book of Acts show us that this power is not something just anyone can have. It's only for people who have joined God's family!** (Invite children interested in knowing more about becoming members of God's family to talk with you or another teacher after class. See "Leading a Child to Christ" on p. 12.)

- **Who were Jesus' friends wanting to get free from? Why?** (The Romans. They didn't like being ruled by these mean foreigners.)
- **What gift did Jesus say God would send? (The Holy Spirit.) What would the Holy Spirit do?** (The Holy Spirit would give them power to show and tell the good news about Jesus.)
- Show Big Discovery Visual. **God tells us that He will help us share His love. He does this by giving us His Spirit. Who are some people who live near you who might still not know the good news about Jesus? People who live far away?** (Students give ideas.) **With God's help, we can tell other people the good news about God's love and Jesus' forgiveness!**
- **What's a way you can tell someone at school about Jesus? Someone on your soccer team? How can you tell about Jesus without saying anything?**

Pray with children, thanking God for Jesus and for the gift of His Holy Spirit, asking Him for power to tell others about Jesus by both our actions and our words!



Game Center

for younger children Luke 24:45–53; Acts 1:1–11

Collect



Bible, masking tape.

Prepare

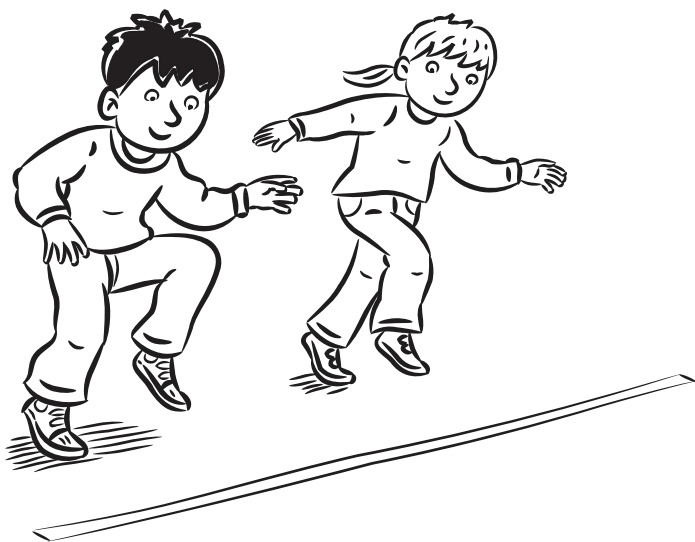


Use masking tape to lay start and finish lines about 20 feet (6 m) apart.

Do



1. Children form two teams and line up at starting line.
2. Call out a way to move (walk, tiptoe, slide, etc.). First child in each line moves to finish line in the way described.
3. First child to arrive at finish line shouts, "God helps me tell others about Jesus!" Second child to arrive tells a way to show God's love.
4. Continue until all children have had a turn either to repeat the Younger Children's version of the verse or to tell a way to show God's love.



God's Word

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you. Then you will be my witnesses. . . . from one end of the earth to the other." Acts 1:8

For Younger Children:

God helps me tell others about Jesus.
(See Acts 1:8.)

Big Discovery

God says He will help me share His love.
I can tell others about Jesus.



Talk About



- **What is a way we could tell someone about Jesus without talking?** Invite children to make up motions for "Jesus loves you," and incorporate that into the game.
- **In Dr. Luke's Bible account, we heard about the time Jesus' friends watched Jesus go back to heaven. Who did Jesus say God would send?** (The Holy Spirit.) **What are some things the Holy Spirit does?** (Helps us live in the best way. Helps us think about God. Helps us tell others about Jesus.)
- **Our Bible says that God will help us tell others about Jesus! I am glad for that.**

Pray briefly, **Dear God, thank You for loving us. Thank You for sending Your Holy Spirit to help us. We love You! In Jesus' name, amen.**

For Older Children



Older children who arrive first repeat their version of Bible verse. If there is a tie, students say the verse in alternate fashion, each taking a turn to say one word at a time.

Game Center

for older children Luke 24:45–53; Acts 1:1–11

Collect



Bible, CD-ROM and CD player, aluminum foil, one marble.

Prepare

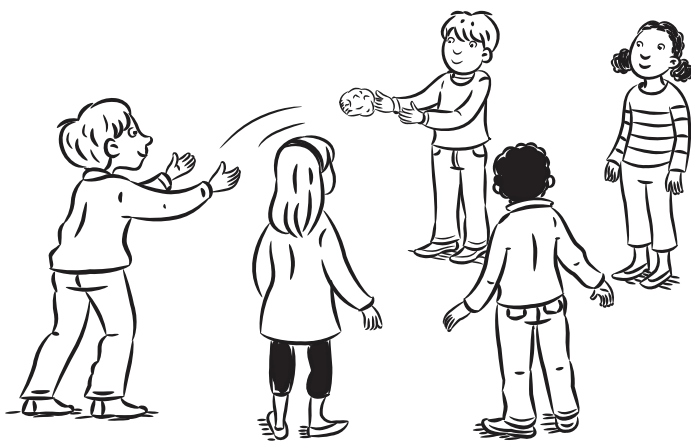


Make several small balls from pieces of foil. Hide a marble in the center of one foil ball.

Do



1. Class forms two groups. Groups line up facing each other about 3 feet (0.9 m) apart.
2. Lead children in a tossing game. Using the foil ball with the marble in it, children toss the ball back and forth across the lines. When the ball gets to the end of the line, last child in that line runs to the front of the line and continues to toss the ball to the child across from him or her. Play the song, “Love the Lord” (track 7) while children play game.
3. After the practice round, add the additional balls you prepared so that children toss three or four balls at the same time. After a few moments, stop the music.
4. Children unwrap the foil balls they are holding. Child holding the ball containing the marble answers one of the discussion questions from the Talk About section. Rewrap foil balls to play additional rounds as time allows.



God’s Word

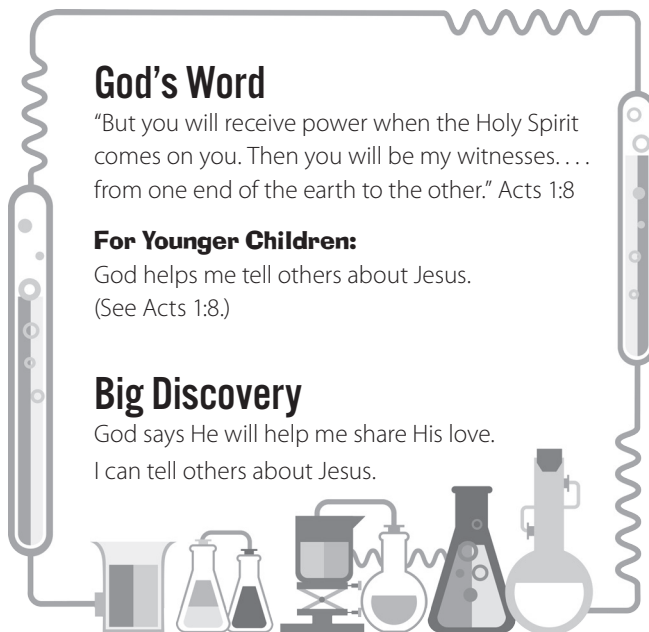
“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you. Then you will be my witnesses . . . from one end of the earth to the other.” Acts 1:8

For Younger Children:

God helps me tell others about Jesus.
(See Acts 1:8.)

Big Discovery

God says He will help me share His love.
I can tell others about Jesus.



Talk About



- Have you ever weighed something with your hands to see which item is heavier? How could you tell which ball contained a marble? Could your hands tell?
- Some people say that telling others about Jesus is a “heavy” responsibility. But we don’t have to do this alone! Who did Jesus promise to send to help us? (The Holy Spirit.)
- Let’s name some people we know who are not yet part of God’s family. (Students tell.)
- The Bible tells us that God’s Spirit will give us power to tell these people about Jesus. What is a way you could tell someone about Jesus? (Students give ideas.) We can use our actions and our words. God’s Spirit will help us with both! Repeat Acts 1:8 together.

Lead children in prayer, thanking God for His Spirit and His help to tell others the good news about Jesus.

For Younger Children



Make several more balls. Seat younger children in a circle to play a similar game, rolling foil balls across the circle.

Art Center

for younger children Luke 24:45–53; Acts 1:1–11

Collect



Bible, scissors, paper plates, stapler, lightweight craft supplies (foam stickers, fake fur, yarn, pom-poms, ribbon, etc.), glue sticks.

Prepare



Cut some paper plates in half to make at least one for each child.

Do



1. Child makes a slide-on hand puppet. With adult help, child staples facing edges of a half plate to a whole paper plate, creating a space for child's hand.
2. Child turns over full plate and decorates it to look like a face, using the craft materials provided.
3. When puppet is finished, children take turns to have their puppets tell something they know about Jesus or answer a question from the Talk About section.

Talk About



- Who helped you put your puppet together? (Children name helpers.)
- Jesus said that He would send us a Helper, too. Who was Jesus talking about? (The Holy Spirit.)

God's Word

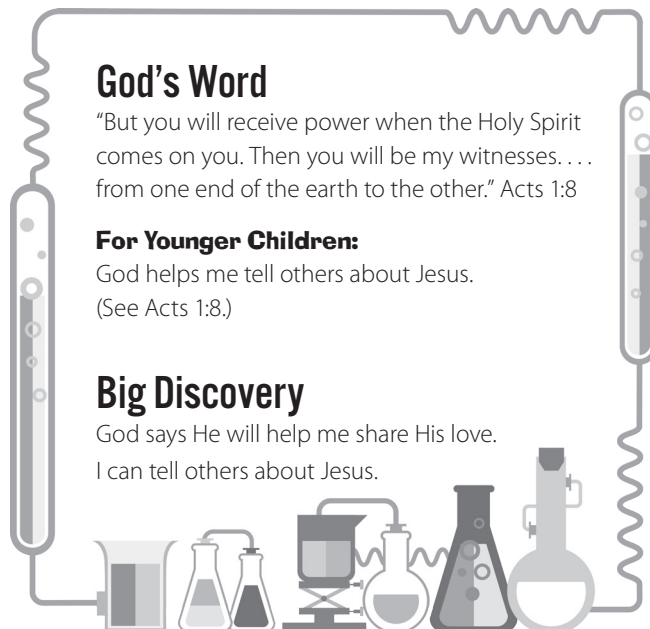
"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you. Then you will be my witnesses. . . . from one end of the earth to the other." Acts 1:8

For Younger Children:

God helps me tell others about Jesus.
(See Acts 1:8.)

Big Discovery

God says He will help me share His love.
I can tell others about Jesus.



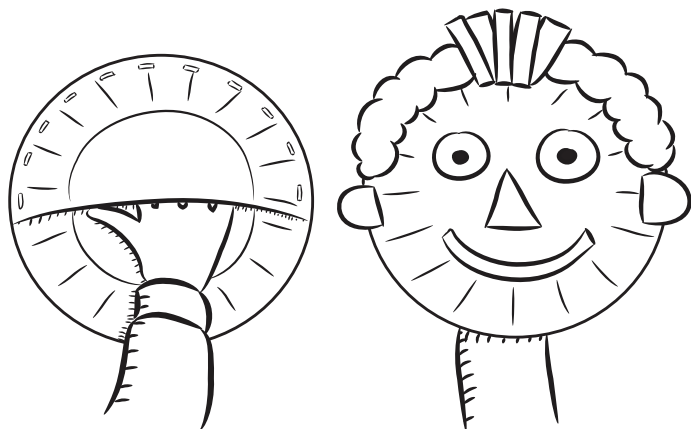
- In Dr. Luke's Bible account, we heard about the time Jesus went back to heaven. Jesus told His friends something important to do. What was it? (Tell others about Him. Tell what they had seen and heard.)
- Was this a job Jesus said to do on their own? (No. God would send the Holy Spirit to help them.) **God did that. And today, God sends His Holy Spirit to everyone who is part of His family! Our Bible says that God will help us share His love. I am glad!**

Pray briefly, **Dear God, thank You for loving us. Thank You for helping us by Your Holy Spirit. Thank You that we can tell others about Jesus!**

For Older Children



Encourage older children to make two puppets, and then use them to play out a conversational scene of one telling the other things he or she knows about Jesus.



Art Center

for older children Luke 24:45–53; Acts 1:1–11

Collect



Bibles, poster board, ruler, scissors, ribbon, stapler, glue, markers, decorating materials (wrapping paper, fabric scraps, sequins, buttons, pom-poms, glitter, etc.).

Prepare

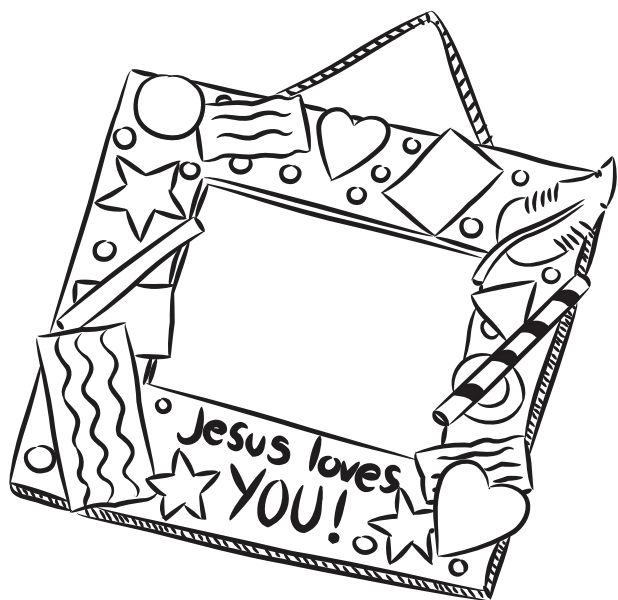


Cut two 6-inch (15 cm) squares from poster board for each child. Cut a 3-inch (7.5 cm) square opening from the center of half the squares to make frames. Cut one 12-inch (30.5 cm) length of ribbon for each child.

Do



1. Give each child one cut and one uncut poster-board square. Child staples the ends of ribbons onto the corners of uncut poster-board piece. With the staples and ribbon ends facing in, child glues uncut poster-board piece on top to form a frame, leaving a section unglued so that a picture can be inserted.
2. On the frame, children print "Jesus loves YOU!" Then, using the given materials, children decorate frames. Invite each child to give his or her frame to someone who might not yet be part of God's family.



God's Word

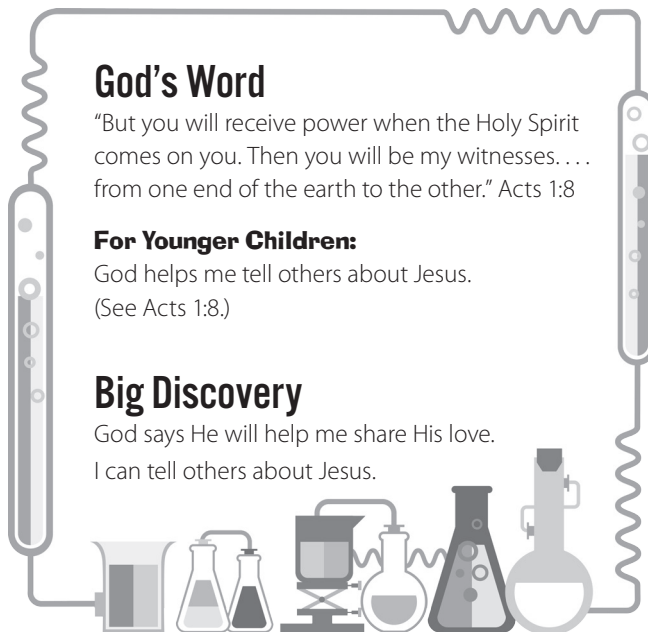
"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you. Then you will be my witnesses. . . . from one end of the earth to the other." Acts 1:8

For Younger Children:

God helps me tell others about Jesus.
(See Acts 1:8.)

Big Discovery

God says He will help me share His love.
I can tell others about Jesus.



Talk About



- **What did Jesus tell His friends to do?** (Tell what they had seen and heard.)
- **What are some things you know about Jesus?** (Students tell.) **What could you tell another kid about why it's important to be part of God's family?** (Students tell.)
- **We can tell what we've seen and heard, too! What is something you've seen or heard about that God has done? What answers to prayer have you seen or heard about?** (Students tell.) **God does great things all the time. Every story we tell about Him helps others understand more about Him. And He will help us!** Repeat Acts 1:8 together.

Pray briefly, thanking God for His great love and for promising to help us share His love by our actions and our words.

For Younger Children



Put frames together and write on them for younger children. Children decorate frames as desired.

Worship Center

Luke 24:45–53; Acts 1:1–11

Collect



Bibles, CD-ROM and CD player, Lesson 13 Big Discovery Visual, song lyrics (pp. 252, 248), whiteboard and marker, inflated balloon.

Prepare



Write out the words and reference for Acts 1:8 on a large whiteboard.

Team Game

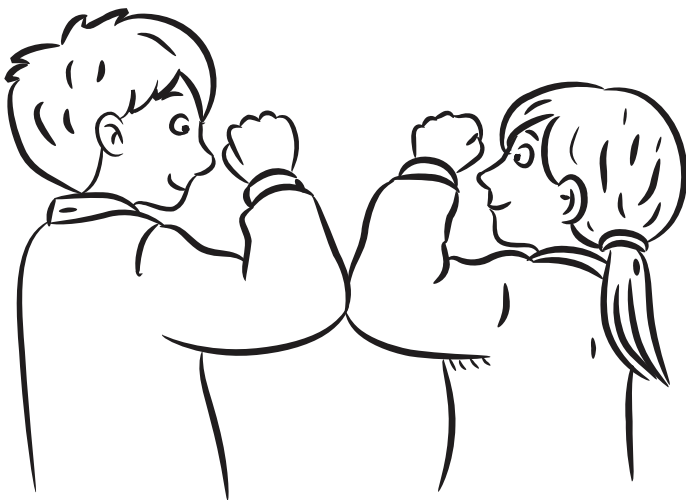


Everyone move around the area. When I call out a body part, freeze. Then touch the body part I called out to the same part of the person nearest you. So don't spread out too far! Kids move around until you call out a body part (fist, elbow, shoulder, head, foot). **Good work! Some of you really had to STRETCH to reach a partner. I'm glad it's not a stretch for us to tell other people about Jesus. God says His Spirit will help us do that!**

Bible Verse Game



Read Acts 1:8 aloud with children. Students stand in a circle. Toss a balloon into the circle. Students take turns to tap balloon to another person while saying the next word of the verse. Challenge them to pass the balloon to everyone in the circle as they repeat the verse. Repeat several times!



God's Word

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you. Then you will be my witnesses. . . . from one end of the earth to the other." Acts 1:8

For Younger Children:

God helps me tell others about Jesus.
(See Acts 1:8.)

Big Discovery

God says He will help me share His love.
I can tell others about Jesus.



Song



You, or another leader, lead children in singing "Lead a Life of Love," adding motions and/or clapping if desired.

Prayer



Today we talked about the surprising job Jesus gave to His friends—and to us! Show Big Discovery Visual. **What's our Big Discovery? Shout it out!** (Students shout, "God says He will help me share His love! I can tell others about Jesus!") **This BIG discovery reminds us that there is NOTHING God asks us to do that He won't help us do. He sent His Holy Spirit to help us live in ways that show His love and to help us say words that share His love!** Lead children in prayer, thanking God for His love and His Spirit, and asking His help to tell others the good news about Jesus.

Song



You, or another leader, lead children in singing "Following Jesus," adding motions and/or clapping if desired. **God says He will help us by His Spirit. We can follow Jesus and be a witness of what we have seen and heard every day. It's the BEST JOB EVER!**

Story Sketches

1.

BIG PLAN

5.



2.



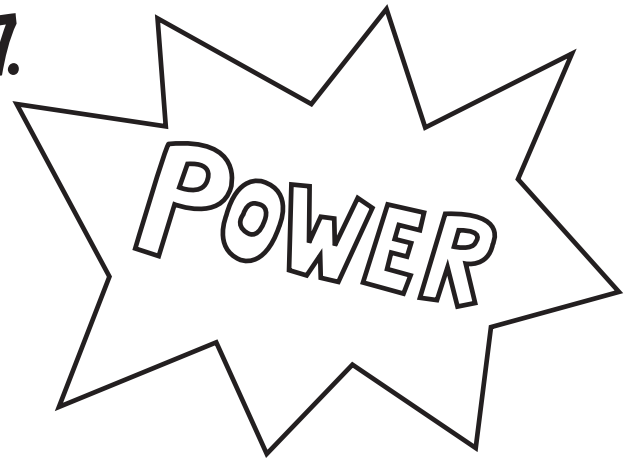
6.

2 ANGELS

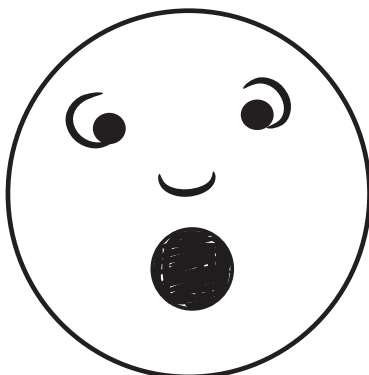
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7.



4.

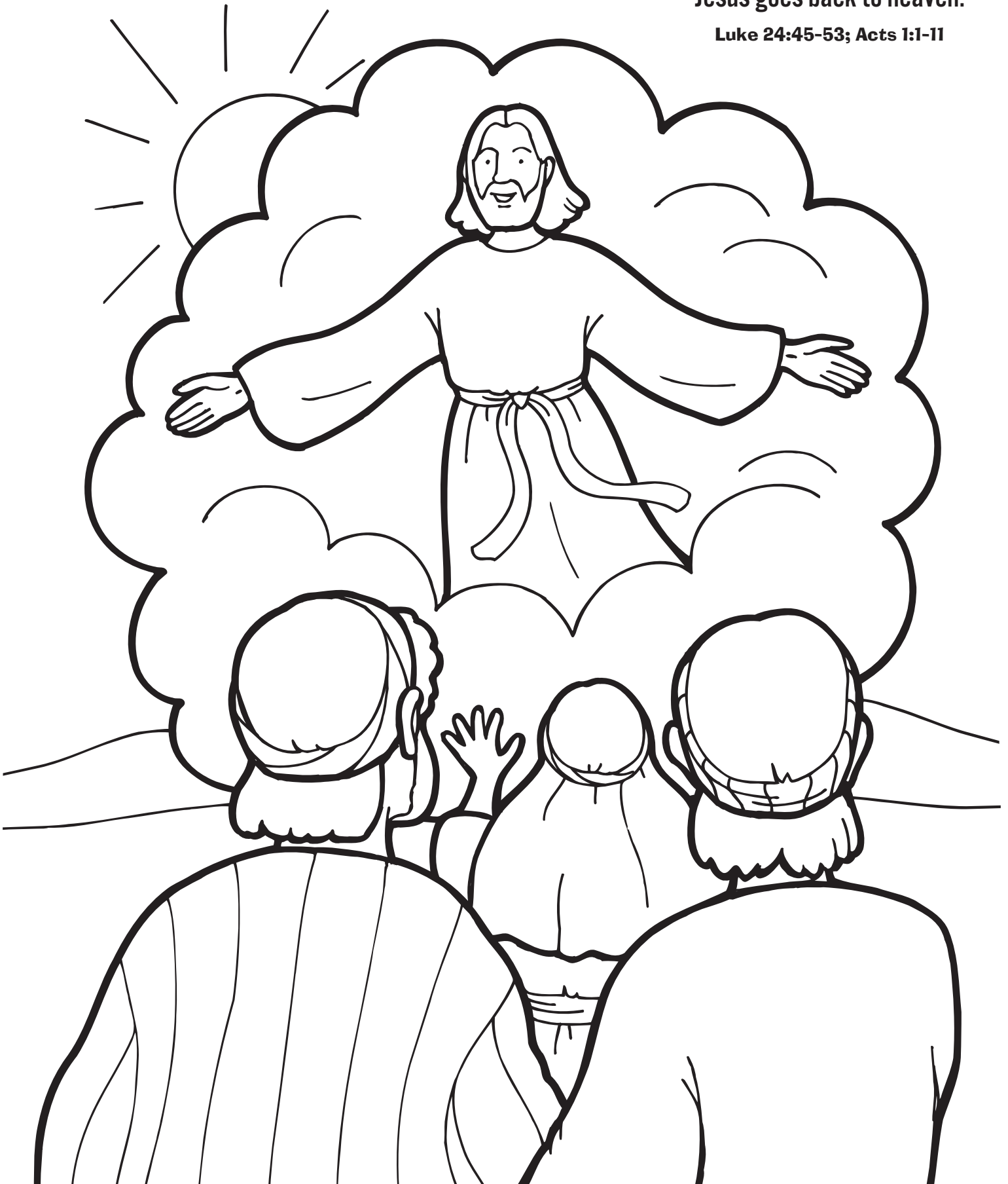


8.



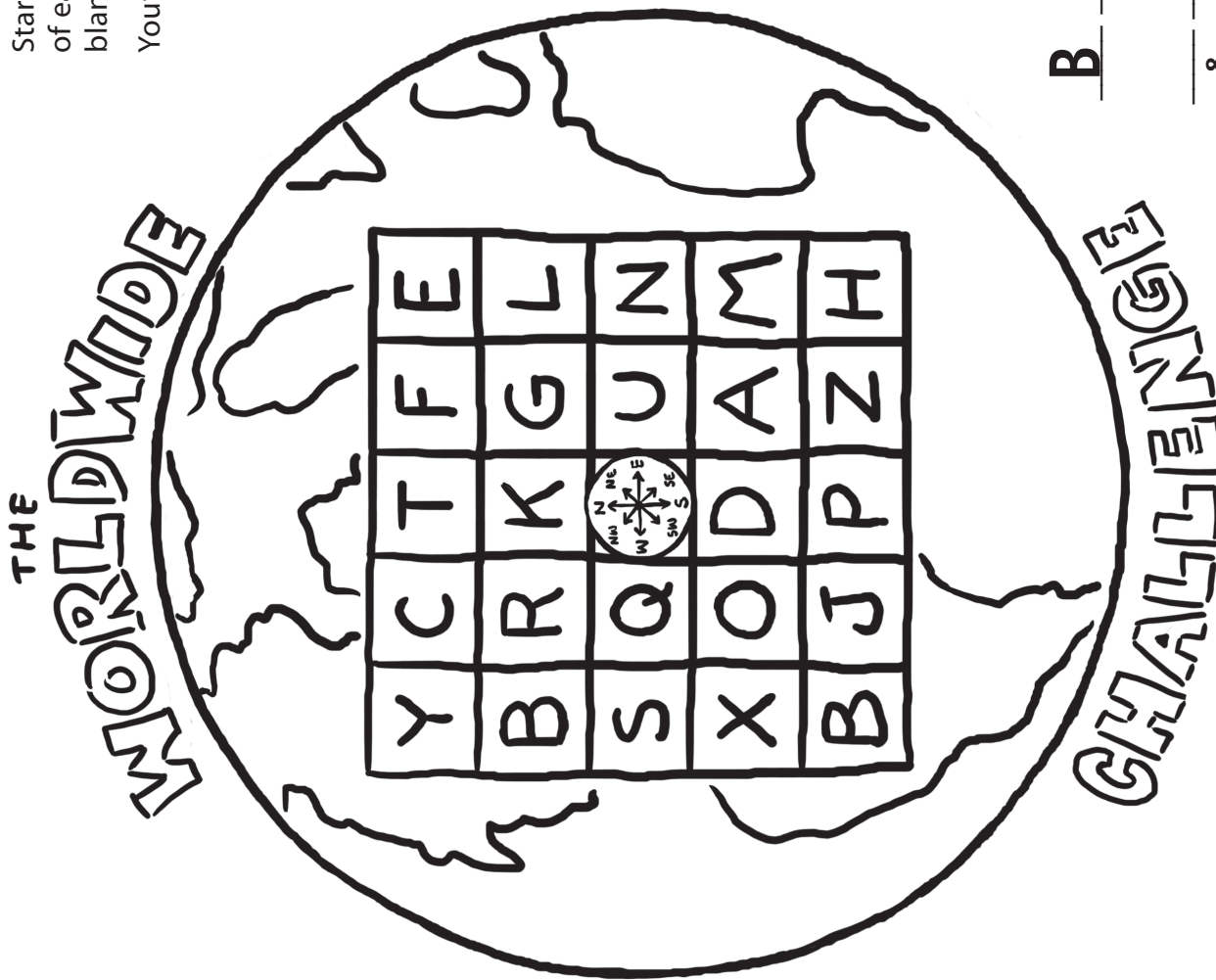
Jesus goes back to heaven.

Luke 24:45-53; Acts 1:1-11



Starting at the compass in the center, find the location of each letter and write the letters in the numbered blanks below. The first one is done for you.

You'll discover what it takes to change the world!



- 1. SW-2 13. NW-1
- 2. NE-2 14. NE-2
- 3. NW-1 15. N-2
- 4. NE-2 16. SE-2
- 5. SE-1 17. NE-2
- 6. S-1 18. NE-1
- 7. NW-2 19. SW-1
- 8. N-2 20. SW-1
- 9. SW-1 21. S-1
- 10. W-2 22. E-2
- 11. SE-2 23. NE-2
- 12. SE-1 24. W-2

B 2 3 4 5 6 7
 8 9 10 11 12 13 14
 W

On the other side, draw a picture of a way you can take the WORLDWIDE CHALLENGE this week! How will you share?



Resources

Look in this section to find helpful resources that you can customize for use in your church. You will find theme-related art, decorating patterns, a lesson-planning page, song lyrics, publicity flyers and more!

Certificates

Use these certificates to recognize and honor children, teachers and helpers.

THE OMNI AWARD

THIS AWARD IS GIVEN TO

FOR

_____ **Date** _____ **Researcher**

Leader of the Lab Award

_____ ,

we hope you had a great time visiting!

Date

Researcher

Please come back again!

The MegaBuddy Award

was a good friend !

Date

Researcher

SUPER GENIUS AWARD

**memorized all the Bible verses
at TruthLab!**

Date

Signed



Exceptional Expert Award

_____ has been recognized as an expert in

_____ Thanks for all your help!

DISCOVERY AWARD

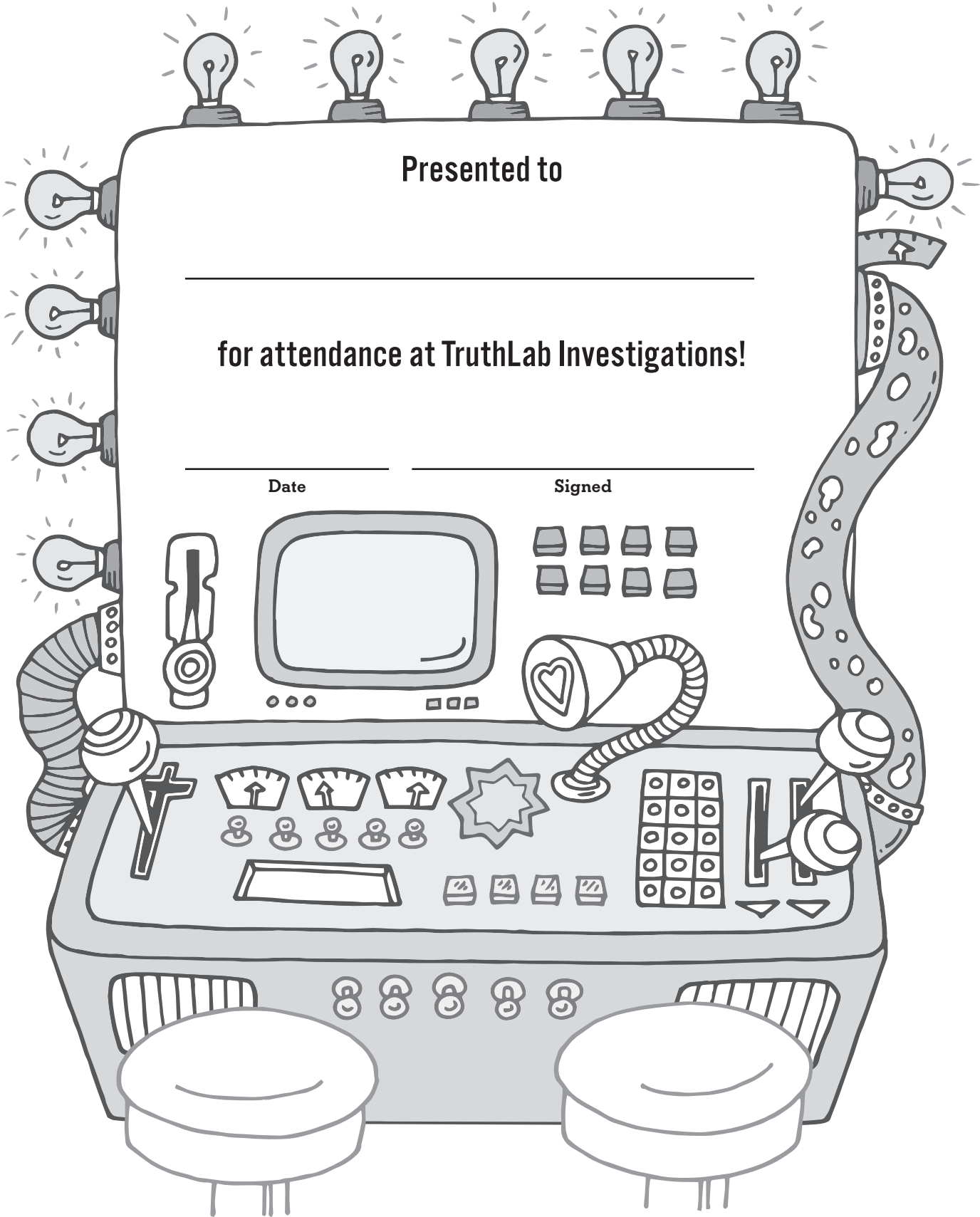
_____ discovered what God says about us at TruthLab Investigations!

_____ Date

_____ Signed



ATTENDANCE AWARD



Family Talk

Today's Date _____

What we read

One thing we are glad to know

One thing we would like to know

One thing we learn from these verses about how to live

One reason to thank God today

One thing to ask God for today



Parent Letter

Help parents become familiar with *TruthLab Investigations* and encourage their children's attendance by sending a letter to each family several weeks before the program begins. Use this sample letter as inspiration to create your own letter. On page 235 you'll find two invitations you can modify to invite parents to join in on the fun at *TruthLab Investigations*.

(Modifiable letter and invitations are on *TruthLab Investigations CD-ROM*.)



Dear Parents,

Plan now to have your child participate in the fun of *TruthLab Investigations*—a 13-week laboratory-themed adventure where each kid will discover “what God says about me”—and about all of us!

Each Sunday from 9:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M. in the Children's Ministry Building, your child is invited to a time of songs, games, Bible stories, creative art and more! Our Research Assistants are waiting to lead your child on the adventure of the summer.

TruthLab Investigations begins Sunday, June 29th! Sign up today by calling the church office at 555-5555 or by emailing jean@yourchurch.org.

READY FOR A FAMILY ADVENTURE?



You're invited to
Family Fun Movie Night at
TruthLab Investigations!

Date _____

Time _____

Place _____

You're invited to Family Day at

TruthLab Investigations!

**Join your kids on an
adventure of discovery!**

Please bring an outdoor game to
share (soccer ball, Frisbee, etc.).

Date _____

Time _____

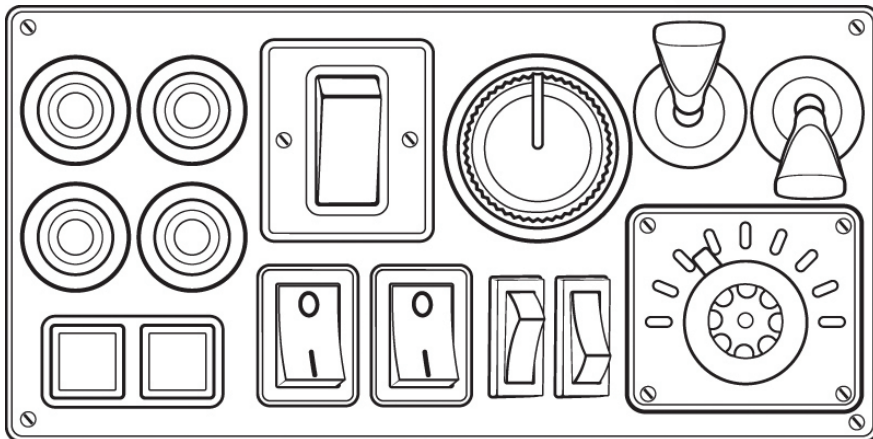
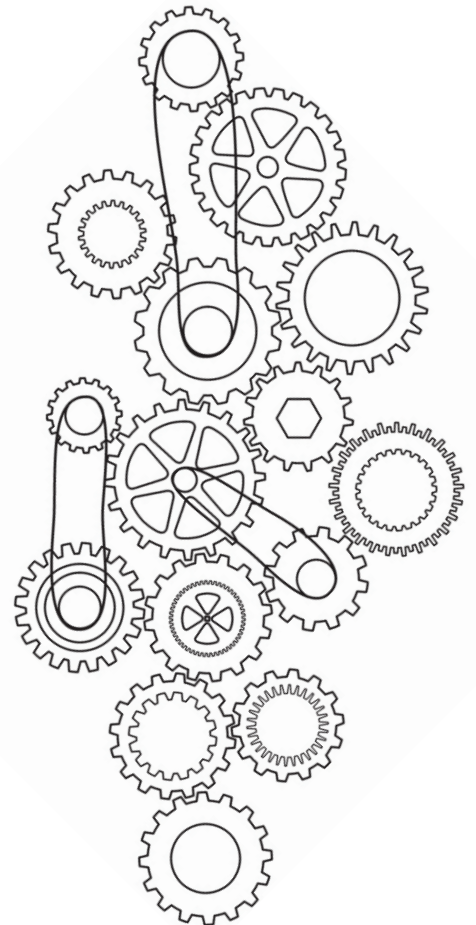
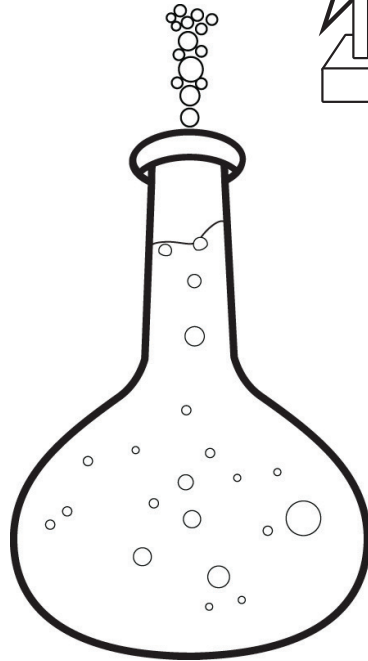
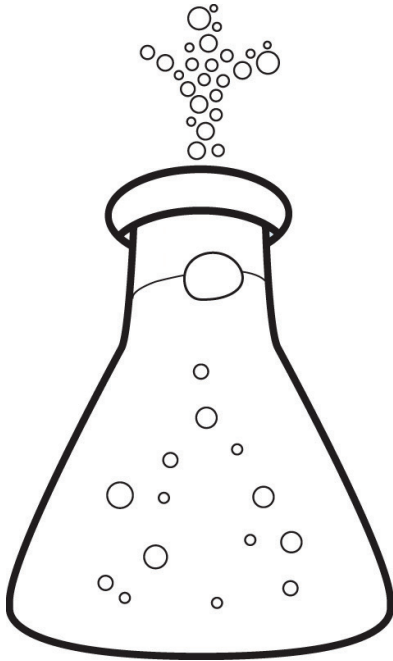
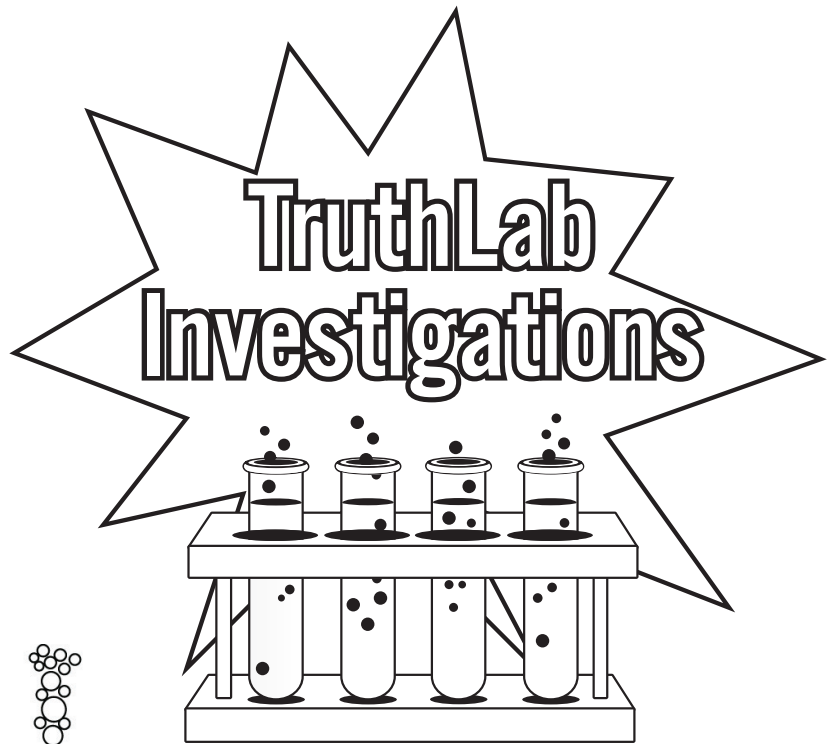
Place _____

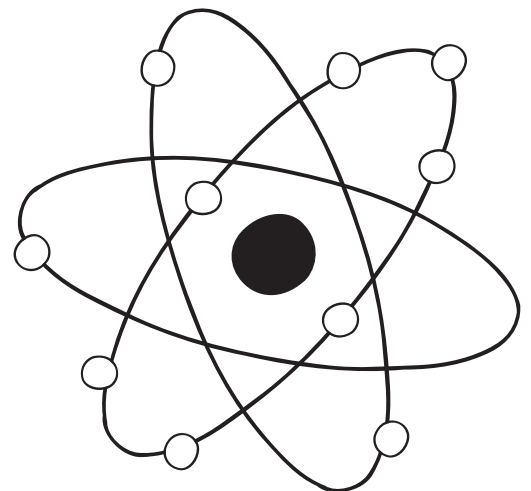
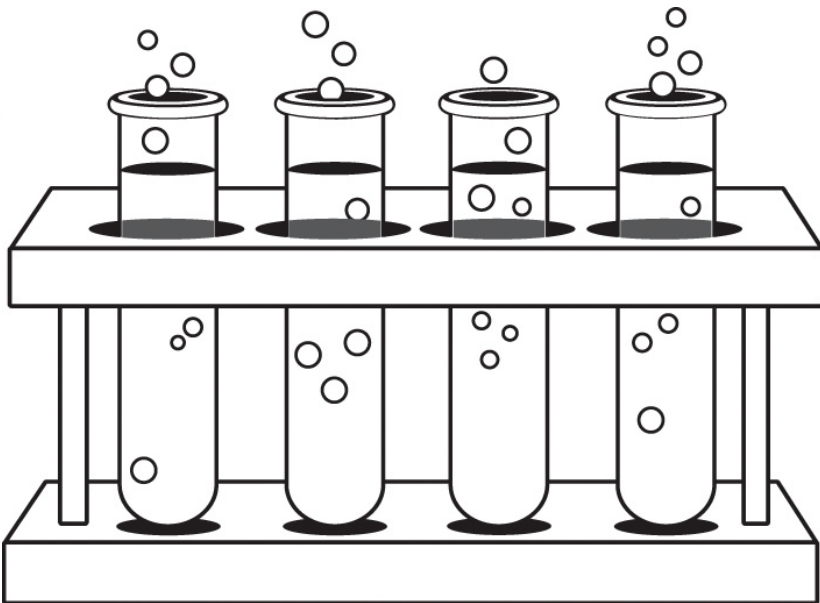
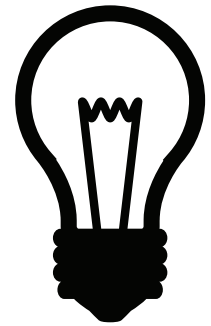
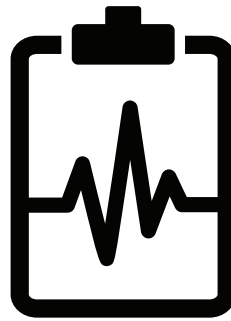
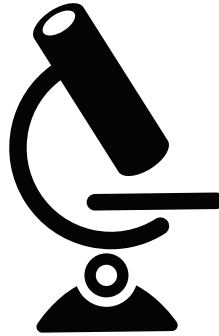
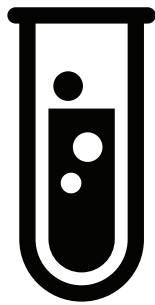
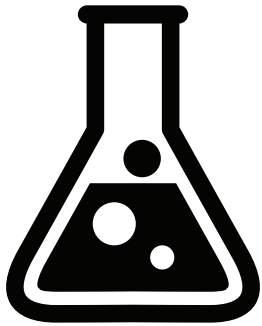
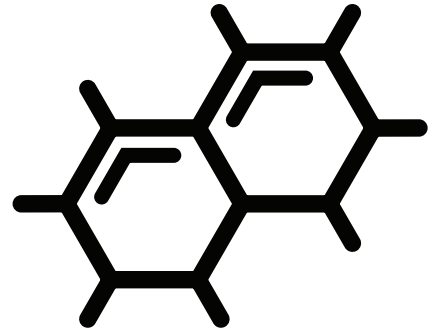
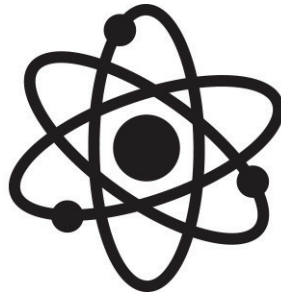
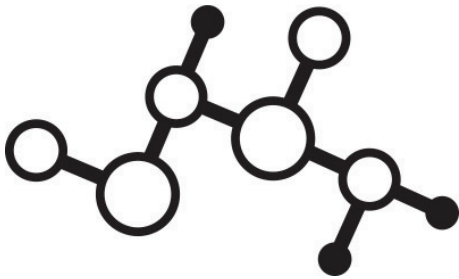
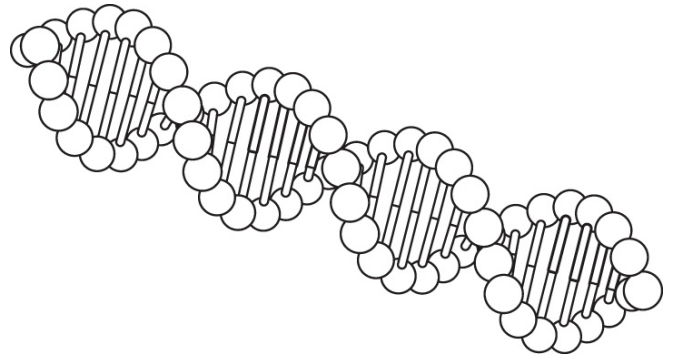
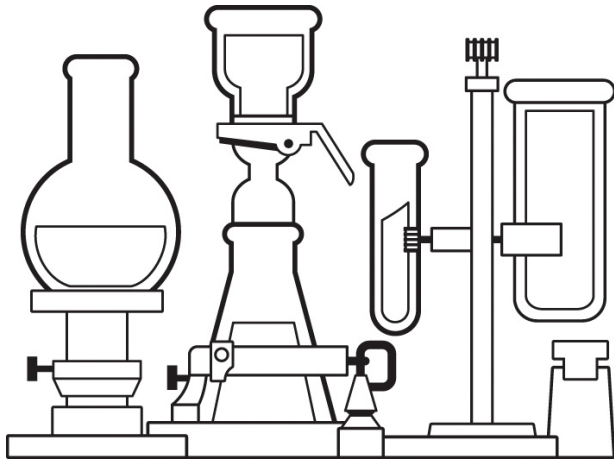


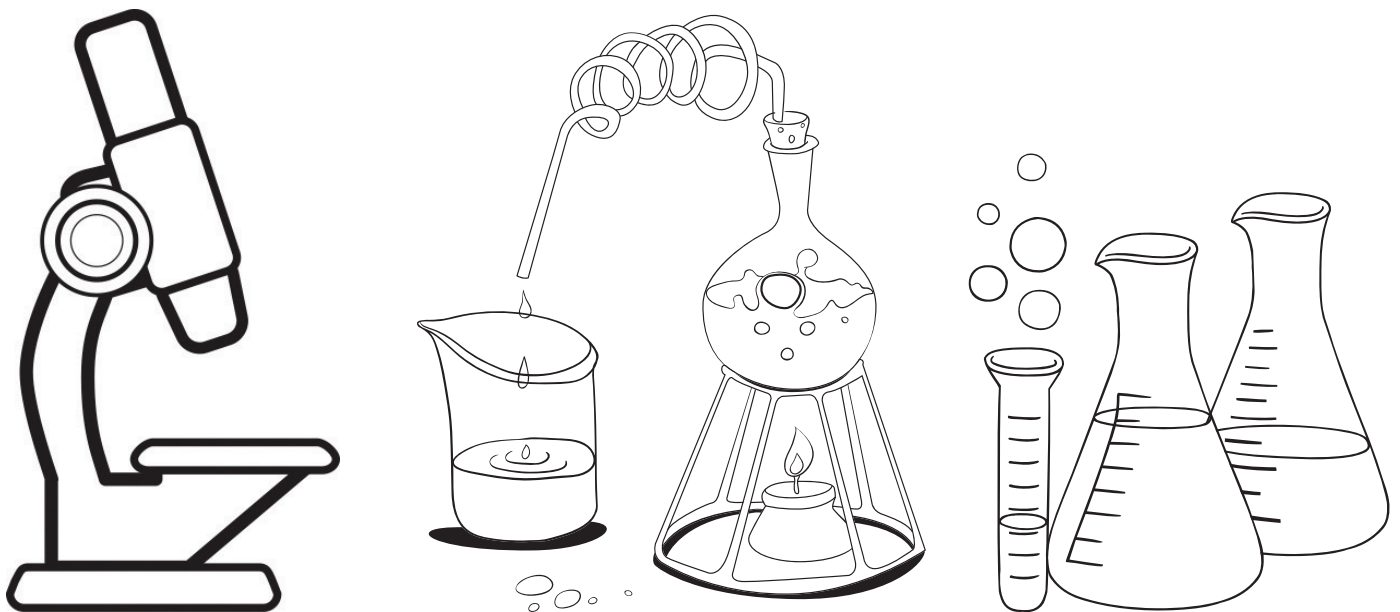
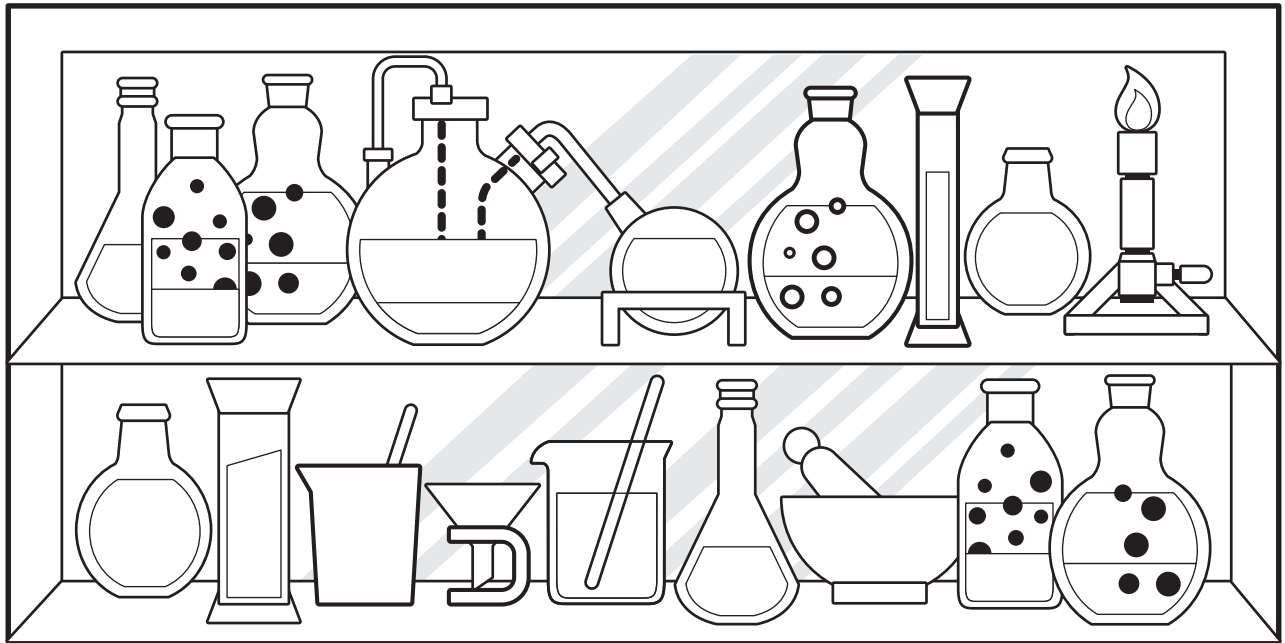
Patterns

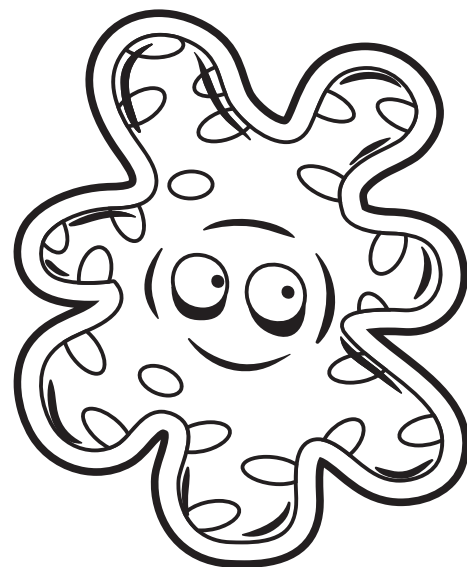
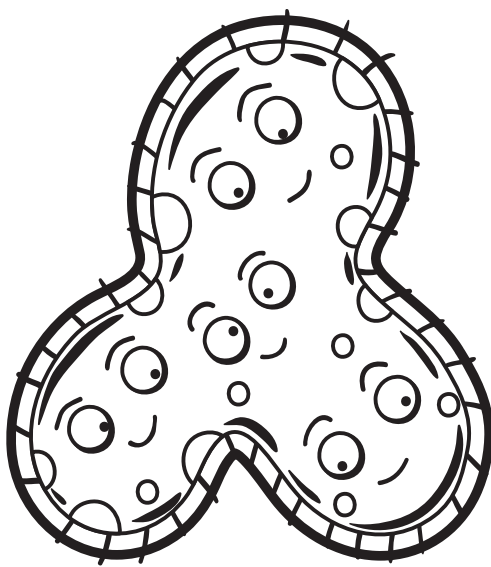
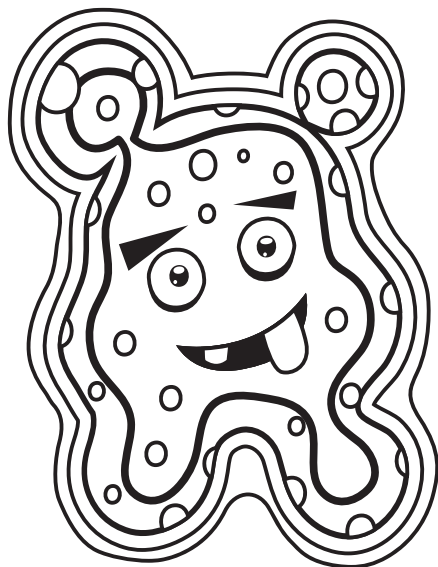
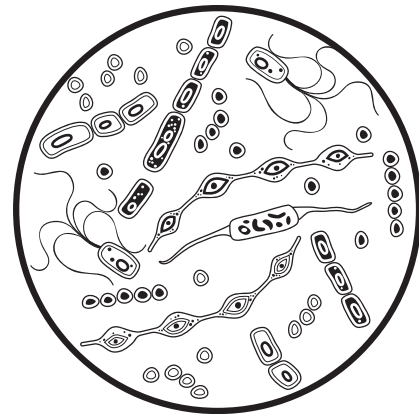
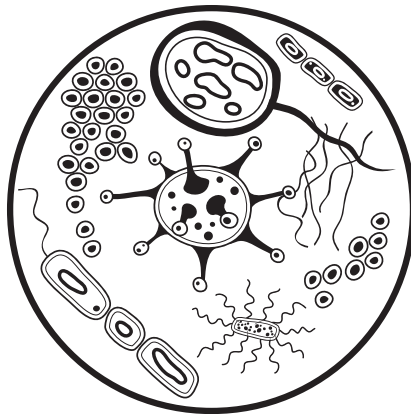
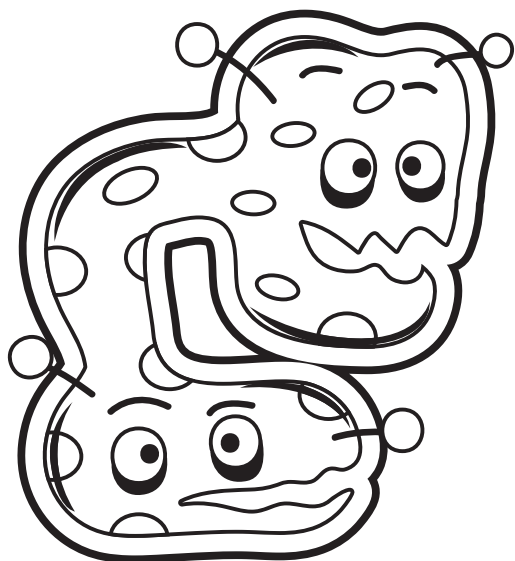
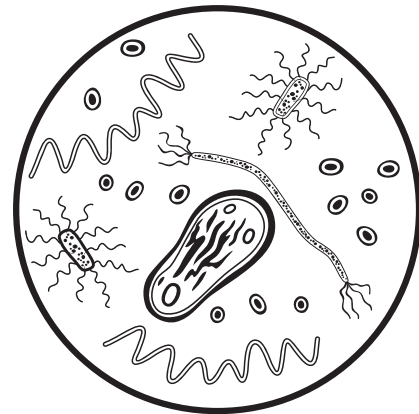
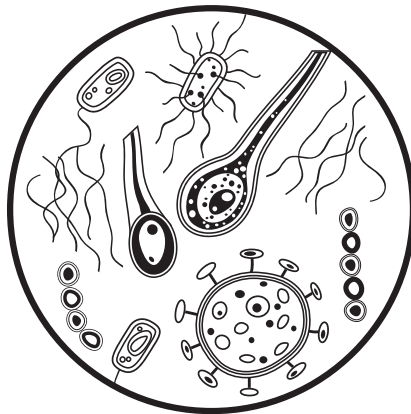
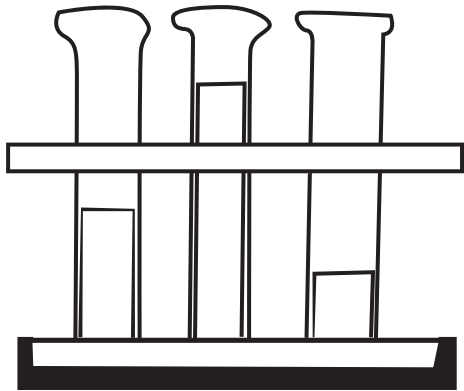
Use these patterns to enhance bulletin announcements, forms and flyers. Patterns can also be used to decorate bulletin boards, classrooms, hallways and church buildings. (Note: Name tags and *TruthLab Investigations* logo are available in color on CD-ROM.) Follow these three easy steps to enlarge patterns:

1. Make overhead transparencies of the patterns using a photocopier, and then project patterns onto butcher paper taped onto wall or onto portions of large appliance boxes. (Hint: To save time, you may also project patterns directly onto colored construction or butcher paper.)
2. Trace patterns with pencil.
3. Cut out patterns and then use markers or paint to color them.









Planning Page

TruthLab Investigations

Date(s) _____

Lesson # and Title _____

Teaching Team

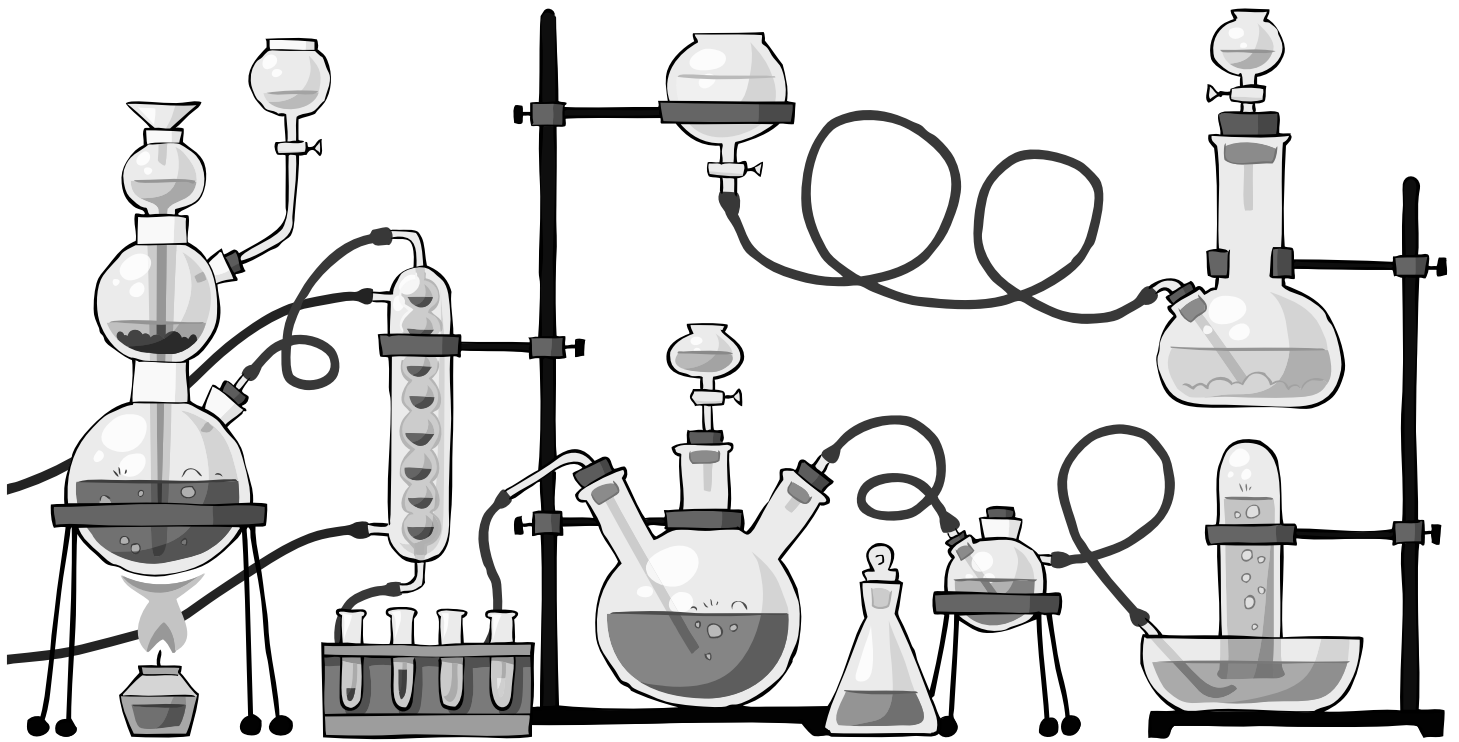
Time

Center

Materials

Teachers

Helpers



**Be a part of the Great Exploration—
join us at**

TruthLab Investigations!

Date _____

Time _____

Place _____

Sign up now!



**Are you ready for
AWESOME DISCOVERIES?
Prepare to be fascinated!
Come and experience**

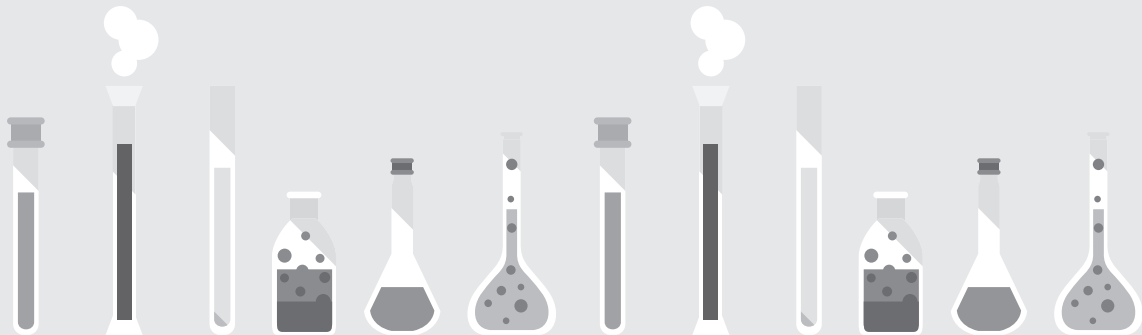
TruthLab Investigations!

Date _____

Time _____

Place _____

SIGN UP NOW!



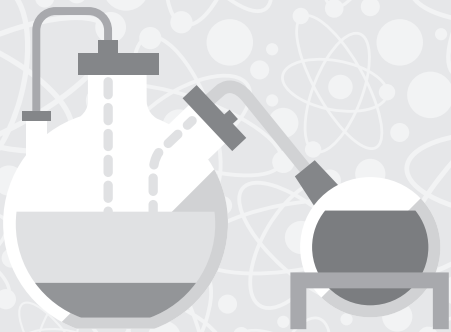
Discover the Truth!

Find out what God says about YOU
at **TruthLab Investigations!**

Date _____

Time _____

Place _____



**Sign up
now!**



TruthLab Investigations:

where the fun of **BIG DISCOVERIES** goes on and on!

Date _____

Time _____

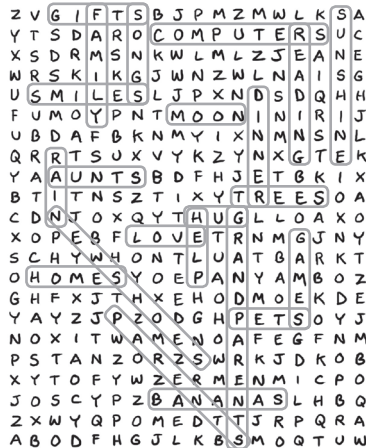
Place _____



Lesson 1 © Puzzle Page

Lots of Love!

This word search is full of ways God shows His love! Once you've found them all, you can rate them in the box below.



- Words to Find:
- SUNSHINE
 - AUNTS
 - SMILES
 - RAIN
 - GIFTS
 - FAMILY
 - SONGS
 - COMPUTERS
 - BANANAS
 - HUG
 - GRANDPARENTS
 - HELP
 - LOVE
 - NEW SHOES
 - HOMES
 - PARENTS
 - GAMES
 - TREES
 - PETS
 - DINNER
 - READING
 - MOON

RATINGS

Most thankful for:

- _____
- _____
- _____

Least thankful for:

- _____
- _____
- _____

Most likely to take for granted:

- _____
- _____
- _____

What's a way you could say "THANKS!" today?



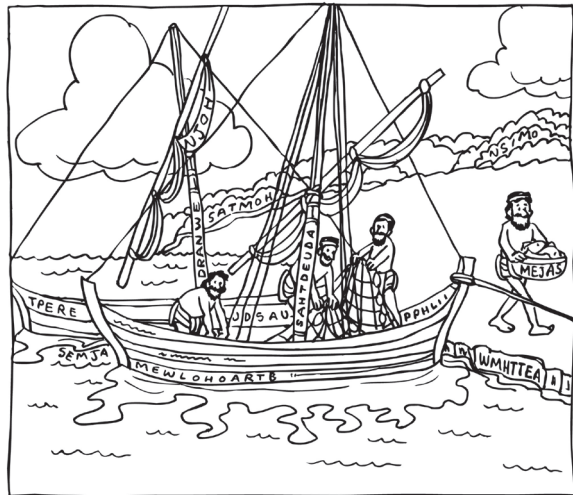
58

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Lesson 2 © Puzzle Page

Scrambled Sea Scene

Find and unscramble the names hidden in the picture. Write the names of the 12 disciples. Then color the scene!



Read Matthew 10:2-4 to check your answers!

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

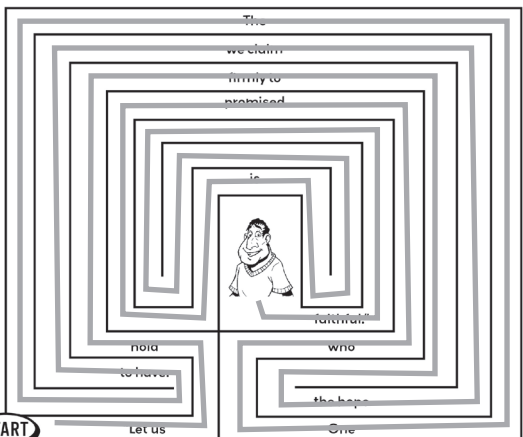
72

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Lesson 3 © Puzzle Page

Believing Without Seeing!

Start on the left to discover Hebrews 10:23 and get to the centurion in his house.



86

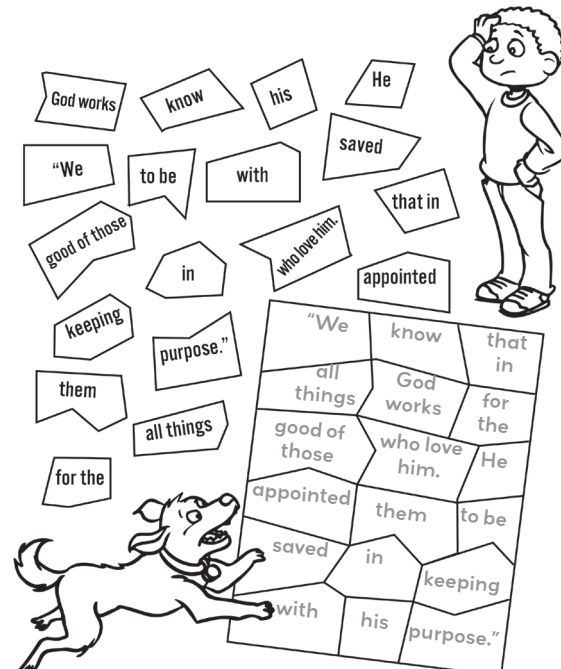
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Lesson 4 © Puzzle Page

It's a Dog's Life!

Romans 8:28

Uh-oh. The dog has torn up the Bible verse. Put the pieces together, and then memorize the verse!



100

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Lesson 5 © Puzzle Page

Stormy Weather!

The Challenge

Luke 8:22-25
Jesus is calming the storm. Break the code to tell the story!

Code: **BCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ**
Replace with: **ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ**

Panel 1: Scrambled text: "U I F THE STORM IS C B E R A D."
Panel 2: Scrambled text: "I F T H E S B T M F F O A S L E E P E P P T I F D O E S H E C A R E ?".
Panel 3: Scrambled text: "U I F THE STORM IS C B E R A D."
Panel 4: Scrambled text: "I P T H E S B T M F F O A S L E E P E P P T I F D O E S H E C A R E ?".
Panel 5: Scrambled text: "Q F B D F P E A C E C F T U J M M R E S T I I L".
Panel 6: Scrambled text: "F W F O E V E N U I F T U P S N T H E S T O R M P C F Z T I J N O B E Y S H I M".

The Super Challenge

Now that you've broken the code, put the story panels in the right order. Write the correct number of the panel in each bottom right corner.

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Lesson 6 © Puzzle Page

Going in Circles!

The Challenge

Luke 8:40-56
When Jairus's daughter got sick, Jairus asked Jesus for help. Start at the G and go around the circle clockwise, skipping every other letter as you go; go in the opposite direction when you get to the arrow. On the blank lines, write each letter you hit, until you use all the letters. You'll find today's Big Discovery!

GOD SAYS HE WILL HELP ME IN TIMES OF TROUBLE. I HAVE HOPE.

The Super Challenge

Circle all the things wrong in this picture.

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Lesson 7 © Puzzle Page

Treasure Map

Help the research assistants reach the treasure.

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Lesson 8 © Puzzle Page

Spiral of Answers

Start at the center of the spiral and fill in the missing vowels. (Hint: Read Luke 11:9 in your Bible for help.)

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Lesson 9 © Puzzle Page

From Fool to Wise!

First, use the clues below to change "fool" to "wise." Then, start at the dot to circle every other letter. Write the circled letters below to read what James has to say about being wise!

Someone who doesn't listen— **FOOL**

What sheep wear— **WOOL**

What trees become— **WOOD**

What isn't narrow— **WIDE**

Someone who listens and does God's commands! **WISE**

What's a command you want to obey?

O I P F H A J N B V M O D F W Y K O R S N T E L F O
 M W J A S C D P Q V M B A I S T K O G L O F D U F X O I R B I R Y .
 H D E S W E I K L U L E G O I R V L E S I L T A T H P Y E O S U .

" IF ANY OF YOU NEED WISDOM , ASK GOD FOR IT .
 HE WILL GIVE IT TO YOU ." James 1:5

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Lesson 10 © Puzzle Page

The Happy Wanderer!

Luke 15:11-24

The Challenge

Find the message on the merchant's scroll. Take the first letter from each picture on the scroll and write it on the son's parchment. Draw lines to divide the letters into words.

Items and prices: BELTS (35 shekels), SANDALS (15 shekels), SCROLLS (70 shekels), RINGS (50 shekels), BREAD (10 shekels), TURBAN (25 shekels), MEAT (60 shekels), ROBES (80 shekels).

Message on parchment: GOD WILL FORGIVE US WHEN WE ARE SORRY

The Super Challenge

The son was a happy wanderer for a time. He spent his money foolishly. One day he spent exactly 205 shekels—no more, no less! The five things he bought were all different. Can you figure out what he got for his money?

TURBAN ROBE SANDALS BELT RING

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Lesson 11 © Puzzle Page

A Taxing Situation!

Luke 19:1-10

The Challenge

Unscramble the letters on Zacchaeus's coins to find a way Zach showed he was growing as God's child.

"I will PAY BACK FOUR
TIMES what I owe."

Breakfast: 40 shekels

Lunch: 65 shekels

Dinner: shekels

Letters on coins: A, T, C, I, P, M, R, Y, F, A, U, B, K, S, E

The Super Challenge

Zacchaeus bought 2 goblets of water and a loaf of bread for breakfast. He paid 40 shekels. At lunchtime he bought 3 goblets of water and 2 loaves of bread. Lunch cost him 65 shekels.

How much did a goblet of water cost? 15 shekels
 How much did he pay for dinner? 120 shekels

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Lesson 12 © Puzzle Page

You Have a Right!

The Challenge

Start at the center star each time you need a letter. Some letters will be repeated.

The first clue is ↓-2. ↓-2 means you go in the direction of the arrow from the star 2 letters.

So the first letter you find is the letter O, which you write on blank 1. Now do the rest.

Grid of letters:

P	K	D	C	L
F	T	R	M	Y
N	B	★	I	E
C	V	C	H	J
G	S	O	U	A

Directions:

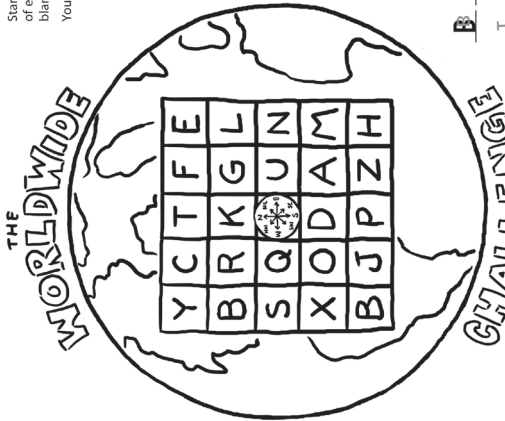
- 1 ↓-2
- 2 ↗-1
- 3 →-2
- 4 ↘-2
- 5 ↓-1
- 6 ↓-1
- 7 →-2
- 8 ↖-2
- 9 ↖-1
- 10 ←-1
- 11 →-2
- 12 ↗-2
- 13 →-1
- 14 →-2
- 15 ↖-1
- 16 →-2
- 17 ↑-2
- 18 ←-2
- 19 ↘-2
- 20 ↗-1
- 21 →-2
- 22 ↑-1
- 23 →-1
- 24 ↖-2
- 25 ↖-1
- 26 ↖-1
- 27 ←-1
- 28 →-2
- 29 ↓-1
- 30 ↓-2
- 31 ↗-1
- 32 →-2
- 33 ↓-1
- 34 ↖-1
- 35 →-1
- 36 ↗-2
- 37 ↑-2
- 38 ↑-1
- 39 →-2
- 40 ←-2
- 41 ↖-2
- 42 ↓-2
- 43 ↑-2

"SOME people did ACCEPT him. They BELIEVED
 in his NAME. He gave them the RIGHT to
 BECOME CHILDREN of GOD."

John 1:12

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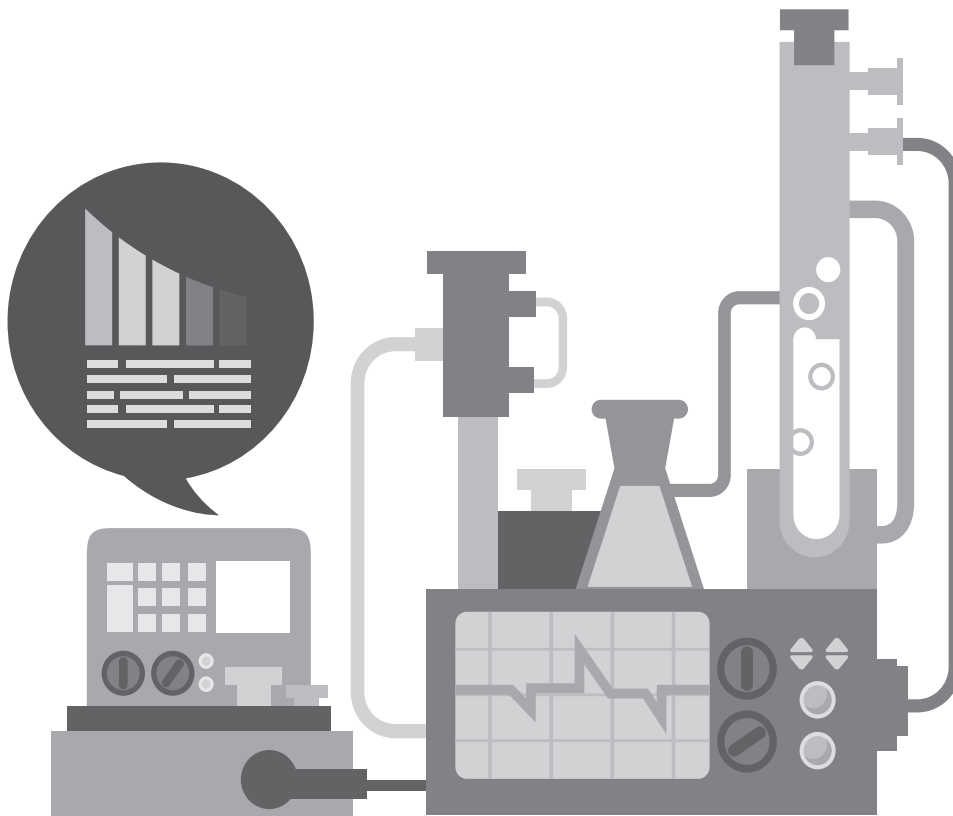
Starting at the compass in the center, find the location of each letter and write the letters in the numbered blanks below. The first one is done for you. You'll discover what it takes to change the world!



1. SW-2
2. NE-2
3. NW-1
4. NE-2
5. SE-1
6. S-1
7. NW-2
8. N-2
9. SW-1
10. W-2
11. SE-2
12. SE-1
13. NW-1
14. NE-2
15. N-2
16. SE-2
17. NE-2
18. NE-1
19. SW-1
20. SW-1
21. S-1
22. E-2
23. NE-2
24. W-2

B E R E A D Y
 2 3 4 5 6 7
 T O S H A R E
 8 9 10 11 12 13 14
 G O O D N E W S!
 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24

On the other side, draw a picture of a way you can take the WORLDWIDE CHALLENGE this week! How will you share?



Following Jesus

By Joey Walker

I have decided to follow Jesus,
To go where He may go;
Now undivided, I live to
worship;

My heart is His alone.

I will not cease to praise
His name;

My life's been changed by
His grace!

Chorus:

I'm following Jesus
(Hey! Hey! Hey!)

I'm following Jesus
(Hey! Hey! Hey!)

I'm following Him today.

I'm following Jesus
(Hey! Hey! Hey!)

I'm following Jesus
(Hey! Hey! Hey!)

I'm following Him today.

I have decided to be His
witness,
To take a stand for Him;
There's nothing better,
There's nothing greater
Than a life with Him.

I will not cease to praise
His name;
My life's been changed by
His grace!

Repeat Chorus.

The cross before me,
The world behind me,
I fix my eyes on Him;
My Creator, my living Savior,
Forgiver of my sin.

The cross before me,
The world behind me,
I fix my eyes on Him;
My Creator, my living Savior,
Forgiver of my sin.

Repeat Chorus.

I'm following Jesus
(Hey! Hey! Hey!)

I'm following Jesus
(Hey! Hey! Hey!)

I'm following Him today.

God's Plan 4 U Is Jesus!

By Jamie Owens Collins

God's plan!
God's plan!

Chorus:

God's plan 4 U is Jesus.
You're His special creation.
God's plan 4 U is Jesus.
He's the way to salvation.
Jesus is God's plan 4 U.

God's plan!
God's plan!

Verse:

Don't cha ever wonder?
Who made you and me?
Ask a million questions,
Bring your curiosity, and
you will see.

Pre-Chorus:

Come on, let's go; there's
fun in store,
A world of wonder to
explore.
We'll learn about God's
plan and more ...
It's true!

Repeat Chorus.

God's plan!
God's plan!

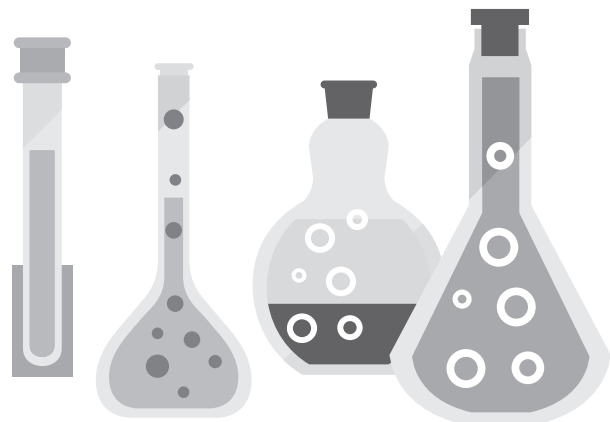
Bridge:

2 MAKE Us, BE WITH Us;
God's plan!
2 KNOW Him, 2 SAVE Us;
God's plan!
2 LOVE Us 4-Ever ...
It's true!

Repeat Chorus.

Tag:

Jesus is God's plan 4 U.



I Worship You, Lord

By Gary Pailer

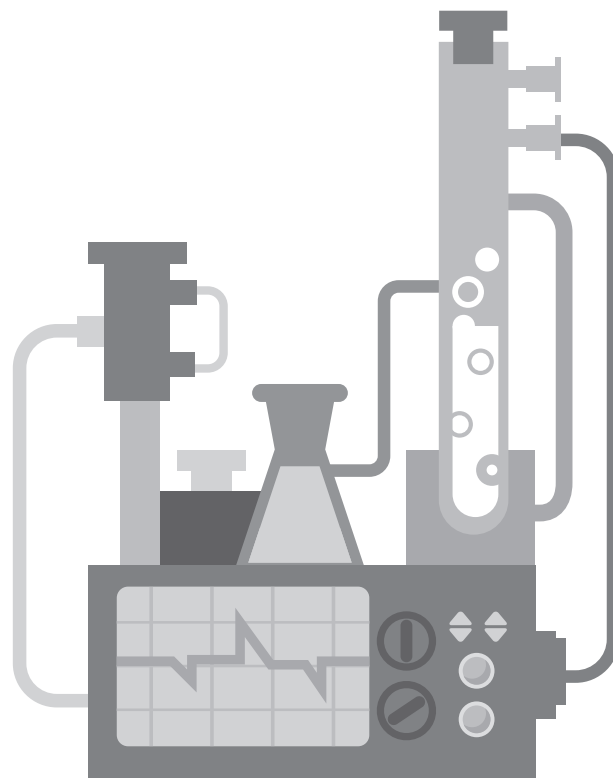
Chorus:

I worship You, Lord.
I worship You with all my heart,
With all that is within me.

Your promises last forever;
Your Word gives me strength.
Knowing You're with me,
I have courage:
You are my Lord, You are my Lord.

Tag:

You are my Lord.



J-E-S-U-S

By Gary Pailer

Chorus:

Meet up, meet up with Jesus,
Meet up with Him.

J-E-S-U-S (Meet up, meet
up with Jesus).

His l-o-v-e is the b-e-s-t.

J-E-S-U-S (Meet up, meet
up with Jesus).

God's only Son,
The chosen One,
Born in Bethlehem.
God showed His love
Through His Son.
Come, meet up with Him!

Repeat Chorus.

As a child, Jesus showed
Who His Father is!
Jesus shows
God's with us.
We can live through Him.

Repeat Chorus.

Tag:

Meet up, meet up with Jesus,
Meet up with Him!
Meet up with Him!



Lead a Life of Love

By Jamie Owens Collins

Verse:

Hey, God loves you.
And He loves those
 around you, too.
So, what should you do?
Lead a life of love.

Hey, God loves me,
And my friends and my
 family.
So, eternally
I'll lead a life of love.

Chorus:

Lead a life of love.
Lead a life of love.
Lead a life of love,
Just as Christ did.

Lead a life of love.
Lead a life of love.
Lead a life of love,
Just as Christ did.

Repeat Verse.

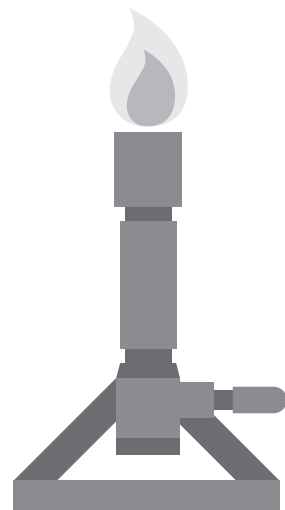
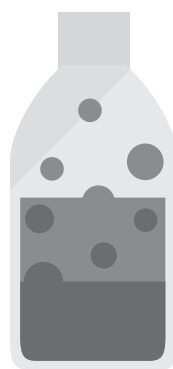
Repeat Chorus.

Bridge:

He loved us.
He loved us.
He gave Himself up
 for us.

He loved us.
He loved us.
He gave Himself up
 for us. So ...

Repeat Chorus.



Look Up to Jesus

By Eric Shouse and Joey Walker

Verse:

When I am afraid,
I will trust in You.
When I am afraid, I will
trust in You, yeah!
When I am afraid,
I will trust in You,
My Lord.

Chorus:

I look up to Jesus,
my help.
I know I can't do it myself.
So I look up to Jesus,
my help,
And I'll trust in You.

Repeat Verse and Chorus.

Bridge:

Jesus is the light
when it's dark.
He can heal the
broken heart.
He can make the
blind eyes see.
Yes, you know
He's trustworthy.

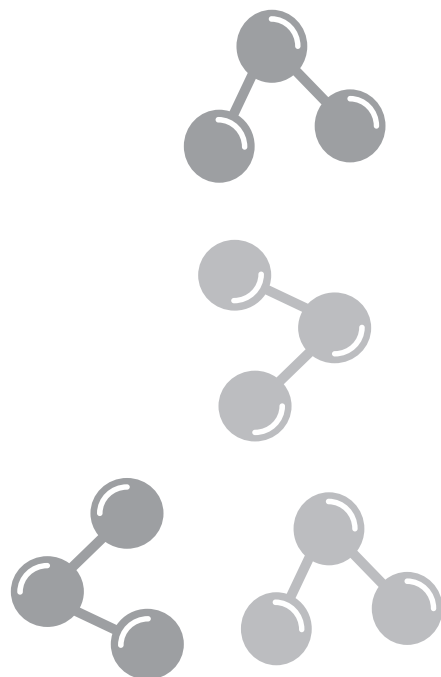
Repeat Bridge twice.

Chorus.

I look up to Jesus,
my help.
I know I can't do it myself.
So I look up to Jesus,
my help.
I look up to Jesus,
my help.
I know I can't do it myself.

Tag:

I'll trust in You.
I'll trust in You.



Love the Lord

Matthew 22:37-39 © By Mary Gross Davis and Janis Halverson

Chorus:

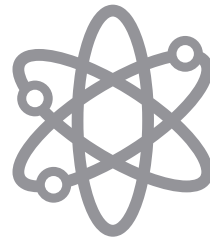
Love the Lord your God with all your heart;
Love the Lord your God with all your soul;
Love the Lord your God with all your mind;
Love your neighbor as yourself.

I will love the Lord (with all my heart!)
I will love the Lord (with all my soul!)
I will love the Lord (with all my mind!)
I'll share God's love
All the time!

Repeat Chorus.

I will love the Lord (with all my heart!)
I will love the Lord (with all my soul!)
I will love the Lord (with all my mind!)
I'll share God's love
All the time!

I will love the Lord (with all my heart!)
I will love the Lord (with all my soul!)
I will love the Lord (with all my mind!)
I'll share God's love
All the time!



Pray!

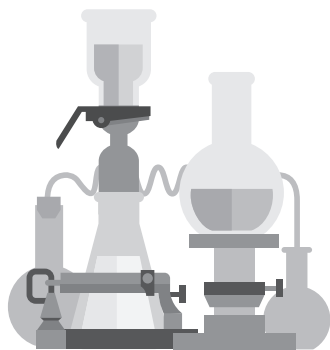
Philippians 4:6-7 © By Mary Gross Davis

Do not be anxious about anything,
But in everything,
By prayer and petition,
With thanksgiving,
Present your requests to God.
And the peace of God will guard your hearts,
And the peace of God will guard your minds;
The peace of God will guard
Your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Do not be anxious about anything, (Don't worry!)
But in everything, (All the time!)
By prayer and petition,
With thanksgiving,
Present your requests to God.

And the peace of God will guard your hearts,
And the peace of God will guard your minds;
The peace of God will guard
Your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

The peace of God will guard
Your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.



Trust in the Lord

Proverbs 3:5-6 © By Gary Pailer

Verse:

Trust in the Lord with all
your heart
And lean not on your own
understanding;
In all your ways
acknowledge Him,
And He will make your
paths straight.

Chorus:

Trust in the Lord.
(Trust in the Lord.)
He's like solid ground.
(Trust in the Lord.)
Trust in the Lord.
(Trust in the Lord.)
He will never (He will
never)
let (never let) you
down!

Repeat Verse.

Repeat Chorus.

Bridge:

I can follow Jesus,
Let Him be my guide;
I'll depend on Jesus;
That's how I can be wise.

Repeat Chorus.

