



Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Series: Lookin' for a Leader  
Summer Year 3, Lesson 3

# Enjoy Spending Time with God

**Primary Scripture:** Psalm 23; 1 John 1:8-9; Psalm 34:8a

**Key Verse:** Psalm 34:8a, "Taste and see that the LORD is good."

## **How does this address a need in our kids' lives?**

Today's culture bombards our children with destructive spiritual messages. These are messages of self-indulgence, vengeance, and violence. It is the common mindset of the world that if we simply get more things, we can be happier. These harmful messages permeate television, movies, and advertising. To combat these influences, children need messages of spiritual input from God. They need to be able to spend time with him, instead of being pulled down. They need to be able to enjoy him, instead of seeking enjoyment only in the things of the world. Today's message focuses on enjoying time with God.

## **How does Jesus fill this need?**

**Jesus for us:** Jesus has made us rich through giving his life for us. In faith, we can receive his forgiveness and companionship.

**Jesus in us:** Jesus, through his Holy Spirit, is a companion with whom we get to know and enjoy spending time.

**Jesus through us:** The Christians' joy is contagious. Jesus shines through the joy we have in him.

## Stamp of Excellence:

*Remind the kids what excellent worship looks like. We are in God's presence to honor him. Put on your best manners. This might include wearing your name tag, participating eagerly at all times, listening when the leader is talking, raising your hand to speak, not distracting others, playing the learning game with cooperation, singing enthusiastically, and praying reverently. Offer rewards or positive reinforcement to those who worship with excellence.*



## Worship

### Invocation:

*Let kids bring forward the worship symbols, such as the cross, candles, Bible, and offering plate. Invite God's presence and call by name Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.*

### Attention Grabber:

*Capture the children's attention and help them focus on the worship theme for the day.*

*Supplies:*

- *three or four objects or toys that are used by friends together (for example rollerskates, a basketball, and a phone)*
- *shepherd's staff*

Show kids a few objects or toys that friends enjoy together such as roller skates, a basketball, and a phone. Hold them up one at a time as you say:

**Kids, what do you enjoy doing with friends? Do you enjoy roller-skating? How about basketball? How about talking on the phone?**

As children identify with these activities, interview some of them to describe why it is they like doing those things.

Next, pick up a shepherd's staff and read from Psalm 23. (Use a modern translation such as *God's Word to the Nations* or *The Message*.) Describe how the shepherd, David, loved to spend time with the Lord in prayer and worship. David wrote about how the Lord is our shepherd.

Read the entire Psalm or sections of it. Talk about what the Lord wants to do together with us—lie down and rest with us in green pastures, play beside the peaceful waters, walk with us along paths of doing right. We even get to have a banquet with him, and he pours his blessing over us as if he were pouring oil over us. Since the image of oil being poured over our heads is probably not a pleasant thought for us in our culture, explain

how hot it often is in Palestine and pouring olive oil (a very clean oil) over their heads was cooling and refreshing after being out in the desert sun all day.

Offer a word of prayer. Invite the Lord's presence so that we might know him and enjoy him better.

## **Songs of Worship:**

*Choose two or three songs. Briefly introduce songs so kids can better understand what they are singing and be drawn into a more focused worship. Keep the attention on God!*

Your choice of music.

## **The Power of the Cross:**

*Jesus has given his life for us that we might have forgiveness and power to live for him.*

Briefly refer to how easy it is to be mean to friends and how it hurts them.

**When we sin against God, it is just like being mean to a friend. The wrongs we do to other people can be just like wrongs to God. He is the one who told us to be kind and loving. Let's take time and confess our sins.**

Read 1 John 1:8, 9 for the confession and absolution verse:

***"If we say, 'We aren't sinful' we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us. God is faithful and reliable. If we confess our sins, he forgives them and cleanses us from everything we've done wrong."***

**Let's admit to God right now that our hearts need to change and that we sometimes are less than kind and loving even to those we love the most, our family and friends. Let's ask God to change our hearts to be more like his.**

Lead kids in a prayer of confession. Remind kids of the words in 1 John 1:9. We have confessed our sins to God, and he has forgotten them!

## **Song of Response:**

*Choose a song to help the children turn to Jesus. Or, you may want help them celebrate what God has done by singing a song of praise.*

# Offering:

*Teach the importance of giving and talk about the mission activities they are supporting.*

*Supplies:*

- *one of the toys from the Attention Grabber*

Using the toy, point to the fact that true friends share their belongings with each other.  
Say:

**God has shared all that he has with us. He is the one who has given us our houses, our money, our food, and our health. We can share with God when we give him our offerings. Friends share with each other.**

Inform kids what the current mission project is and update them as to progress toward your goal.



# The Word

## Learning Game:

*Some churches dismiss children from the adult service at this time to join Kids Church. The learning game provides a fun kinesthetic activity to help kids connect with each other. The learning point will help reinforce the theme of the day.*

*Supplies:*

- flat bed sheet for each group
- dozens of eggs
- paper towels and wet wipes for clean up

This game needs to be played outside. Divide the children into groups of six or more. Each group will be given a flat bed sheet.

Have everyone in this group take hold of the sheet on the outer edge. Place an egg in the middle of the sheet. By working together, the children can toss the egg into the air and catch it again. See which group can toss its egg the highest. Have a generous supply of eggs in reserve for the accidents that are bound to happen.

The next level of the game challenges a group to throw an egg to another group. The other group catches the egg with its sheet. This gets especially hilarious when all the groups are asked to throw eggs at the same time. Paper towels and wet wipes need to be available for any accidents that happen. Then bring groups together and say:

**This game was fun because we had fun doing it together. God has a plan in which he wants us to have fun with him. As his church, we should love and enjoy each other. Just like the entire group worked together in this game and enjoyed it, so the whole church enjoys working together.**

**You are the church of today. You can work together. You are not just going to toss an egg up and down. You are going to toss to others something that is unbreakable—God’s wonderful message of love. You are to throw that message high and far to the world.**

The teaching point might be punctuated by having the groups end the game launching their eggs far they can, letting them splat on the ground.

## Bible Reading:

*Help children pay attention by giving them a word or concept to listen for as you read. Consider letting a child read who could do so with excellence.*

During today's learning events, the kids will experience the importance of simply enjoying spending time with God. The key verse is **Psalm 34:8, "Taste and see that the LORD is good."** An interactive taste testing activity will set up the lesson. The taste test is followed by an experience using one's imagination to visualize a conversation with Jesus.

## Application:

### Application 1: "Tasting Contest"

*Supplies:*

- *nine paper plates numbered one through nine*
- *nine blindfolds*
- *nine different food items. They can include items like graham crackers, broccoli, a ball of macaronis, a mild onion slice, apple slice, etc.*
- *plate with something that is absolutely yucky, such as a rotten banana peel or some other spoiled food.*
- *mini candy bars*

In advance, prepare a sampling of nine different food items each on different paper plates. Have fun with the selection of the food items that can easily be found around one's home. Number the paper plates from one through nine, and do not reveal the plates to the audience until the actual taste testing begins.

Explain the food-tasting contest and invite three children forward and blindfold them. **Be sure none of the contestants have any food allergies.** Then place the paper plates in front of the contestants and in view of the audience. Say to the volunteers:

**Choose any number, one through nine.**

When the child picks a number, place the food item from that plate in the contestant's mouth. The contestant is then challenged to identify the food item.

After all contestants have tasted and identified their food, produce one final plate. On this plate have something that is absolutely yucky. It could be a rotten banana peel or some other spoiled food. The blindfolded volunteers will likely know something is up from the reaction of the kids who aren't blindfolded. Then say:

## **Which contestant will try the food item on this last plate?**

Of course, you will not feed this item to the children, but the audience will be appalled at the notion of eating it. When your bluff is over, give each contestant a mini candy bar. They can remove their blindfolds and return to the audience.

**Just as we take in physical food that feeds our bodies, we also take in spiritual food that feeds our souls. Our soul is the invisible part of us that we cannot see. It is the deepest part of us where we have our personalities, our desires, and our spiritual thoughts. God wants to feed our soul through spending time with him. But the devil will also try to feed our soul with other things.**

Ask for examples from the audience of things that God would not approve of that might fill our minds and desires. Examples could include bad television shows or certain music that might encourage things that God is not pleased with.

**If we watch bad shows or if we sing songs that are ungodly, even to ourselves, we might start believing those messages. It then feeds our souls with garbage.**

**There are other influences such as friends who would encourage us to disobey God or to behave in an unloving fashion. What are other examples of a bad spiritual diet?**

Again, ask the audience for examples of things we fill our minds with that might contribute to a bad spiritual diet. All of this sets up the teaching point.

**The Bible says in Psalm 34:8, “Taste and see that the LORD is good.” He not only tastes good but he is good for us. We need to let him into our souls by spending time with him in prayer and by understanding his word. Let’s spend time with him now.**

### **Application 2: “A Walk With Jesus”**

*Supplies:*

- *enough hard candies for each kid*

Ask the children to find a quiet and comfortable place in the room where they can lay down, close their eyes, and listen carefully without distraction. If the room is not conducive for this, it might be effective to take the children outside. Follow the script below.

*NOTE: It is extremely important to get the children in a place of undistracted quiet. It can be helpful to dim the lights in the room and have the children close their eyes. During this activity, every child is given a piece of candy to slowly let melt in their mouths. Don’t rush through the reading. And make sure that kids stay in their own “space” and don’t distract others.*

**Boys and girls, you can unwrap your candy now and slowly eat it. Try not to chew it up all at one time but enjoy it for a long time. Lie back, close your eyes, and just taste your candy. Let's take a few seconds and enjoy our candy... It tastes sweet and it is nice not to think of anything else. It is nice to relax and enjoy this time of tasting.**

After a few seconds, say the following.

**I want you to keep your eyes closed and picture in your mind a beautiful park with a hill in the middle. There are trees all around. There is a bright blue sky. You can hear the sounds of birds and the sounds of friends playing.**

**Over the top of the hill comes a man walking towards you. As he gets closer, you realize it is Jesus. He is dressed in a wonderful white robe. His sparkling brown eyes are looking at you, and he is smiling. He walks towards you and waves for you to come close to him.**

**Now Jesus is kneeling down and he takes both of your hands. He looks at you eye to eye. You hear him say your name. Pause briefly. Then he says, "It is wonderful to see you. I have been thinking about you all day. I would like to talk to you. Can we take a walk together?"**

**As you both turn to walk, you feel his hand on your shoulder. It feels wonderful!**

**Jesus says, "You did some wonderful and happy things this last week. Tell me about them." Now tell him in your mind about some of the things you did this week. Pause. Thank Jesus for giving you those blessings.**

**Jesus says, "You're welcome. I have so many wonderful blessings to give you. Let me tell you about some of my secrets.**

**"Look at the bird over there. See him hopping along the ground? He is having fun looking for food and then flying anywhere he wants. He doesn't have any worries. I have made that bird and I care for that bird. Did you know that you are a million times more important to me than that bird? That bird is just an animal, but you are a person. You can know me and talk to me. I can talk to you. Maybe there are some things that you have been worried about. Will you tell me about them now?"**

**Tell Jesus about anything you are worried about. Pause. Jesus stops walking with you. He asks that you both sit down together. The grass**

feels cool and soft. Jesus picks up a dandelion and blows it. The little parachutes float in the air. Jesus says, "I know about each one of these seeds that blow off this dandelion. I even make them float through the air. I know about each one of your worries too."

At this, Jesus takes another dandelion and blows the parachute seeds into the air. He looks at you and says, "I want to blow away any worries that you have. I want you to trust that I can help you. Just like when I blow on this dandelion and it blows these seeds away, I would like to do the same thing for you."

Then Jesus, in fun, blows a breath across the top of your hair. He says, "I will send the Holy Spirit to you and he will live in you. He will teach you about me and about how much I love you."

Just then Jesus takes your hand. When he does you notice a scar where his hand was nailed to the cross. He explains, "You know why that scar is there? Because I love you so much, I took the punishment for every wrong thing you have ever done or will do. It is over and done with now. You are forgiven and you are my child. Now my Holy Spirit will work in you so you can become more and more like me."

Jesus then asks you, "What can you do this week to show other people how much I love them?" Think about it and then answer him. Pause.

Jesus listens to you and smiles. He comments, "It's so wonderful when you show my love to others. My Holy Spirit will be with you to help you."

Now you stand together and continue to walk. You are both quiet for a while. Then Jesus says, "Can we take time every day to talk? I want to spend time with you. When you read the Bible, I will talk to you. I will show you my plans. You can talk to me anytime."

With that, Jesus bends down and gives you a hug. "I'll race you back to the top of the hill!"

You are running along with Jesus, side by side. Both of you are laughing. You pull out in front of Jesus a little bit. You get to the top of the hill and turn around. You don't see Jesus.

You are not worried. You hear his voice calling your name. He says, "Remember I love you. I will be with you all day and every day. See you later."



# Witness

## Witness and Tell:

*Give children opportunities to share how God is working in their lives. It is best to use a microphone to ask children interview questions around the theme for the day.*

Have kids tell about a special quiet time they had with Jesus or let them share how they felt about the quiet time they just spent with Jesus.

## Prayer:

*Let the kids pray out loud. If you are using a microphone, invite children to form a prayer line and speak their thanksgivings or requests. If you have portable microphones, you can roam the audience. Kids can also go to prayer stations set up for specific types of prayer.*

**Options:** (select one from the options below)

\_\_\_\_\_ **Prayer Line Option:** Kids line up and take turns stepping in front of the microphone to speak their prayers briefly.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Prayer Chair:** Adults or children with special prayer needs are invited to sit in the chairs. Kids gather around them, lay hands on their shoulders or knees and take turns praying.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Popcorn Prayer:** The leader moves through the crowd with a microphone and turns it toward kids who are raising their hands to pray. The kids speak their prayers into the microphone.

**Lord's Prayer:** Lead the children through the Lord's Prayer, phrase by phrase, or let them pray the entire prayer along with you.

## Blessing:

*Speak a blessing prayer over the children. Personalize this to your setting. Use a special scripture verse or blessing around the theme of the day.*

## Song of Sending:

*Choose one song. Briefly introduce song so kids can better understand what they are singing and be drawn into a more focused worship. Keep the attention on God.*

# Supplies:

## *Attention Grabber:*

- three or four objects or toys that are used by friends together (for example rollerskates, a basketball, and a phone)
- shepherd's staff

## *Offering:*

- one of the toys from the Attention Grabber

## *Learning Game:*

- flat bed sheet for each group
- dozens of eggs
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## *Application:*

### *Application 1: "Tasting Contest"*

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- enough hard candies for each kid

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