



Date: _____
Series: Jesus and the Lost
Winter Year 2, Lesson 40

Jesus and the Lost Son

Take Home Point: *I am important to God.

*Repeat this phrase throughout the lesson. Leaders say the phrase and the children repeat it.

Bible Event: Luke 15:11-27

We will help children know:

- A father was happy when his lost son returned home.
- We are God's children.
- We are important to God.




We will help children feel:

- Special because God is our father.
- Happy that Jesus loves us.

We will help children do:

- Participate in acting out the Bible Event.
- Eat a snack that you would take on a trip.
- Make a roadmap, a and lost son and a father stick puppet.
- Play a learning game called *Leaving or Coming Back?* and a movement game called *Going and Coming*.
- Take home a copy of *God Talk at Home* to reinforce learning today's Take Home Point: ***I am important to God.**

THIS LESSON'S ROADMAP

DESTINATION	PAGE #	DISCOVERIES ON YOUR JOURNEY	SUPPLIES NEEDED
Warm-Up (5-10 minutes)	3	Transition Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> toys of your choice
Large Group Opening (5-10 minutes) 	3	Sing (Optional)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> songs of your choice
	3	Puppet Presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Judy puppet
	4	Bible Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pink Pony children's picture Bible
Small Group Application (10 minutes—each activity) 	6	Activity 1: Acting Out Bible Event	<i>Activity 1: Bible Event</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> children's picture Bible
	9	Activity 2: Snack	<i>Activity 2: Snack</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> napkins cups of water trail mix (any combination of cereal, pretzels, crackers, raisins, chocolate chips, mini marshmallows, etc.)
	10	Activity 3: Craft	<i>Activity 3: Craft</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Copies of Appendix A Roadmaps or copies of maps Craft sticks, two per child Tape Sticker that says "I am important to God" or pen to write it Crayons or markers
	11	Activity 4: Learning Game	<i>Activity 4: Games</i> <i>Learning Game</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> none
	12	Movement Game	<i>Movement Game</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 bean bags Hula-hoop
Large Group Wrap-Up (5-10 minutes) 	13	Review Lesson and Take Home Point	
	13	Pray	
	13	Sing (Optional)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> songs of your choice

Warm-Up (Prior to class and first 10 minutes of the session.)

Young children this age need a time to get acquainted with the new surroundings as they enter the classroom. Provide a variety of calm activities and toys such as blocks, play centers and simple puzzles. These activities create an environment that helps young children let go of Mom and Dad. If necessary, Mom and Dad may play with them for a few minutes and then leave.

Large Group Opening (5-10 minutes)



Purpose: You may use singing as a large group activity and to gather attention. The opening puppet presentation is a quick overview introducing the Bible Event and Take Home Point. Early childhood humor is also used. Bubba often says something silly about elephants. Judy says something silly about pink ponies. Let the children enjoy the "joke" but use it to call attention to the Bible Event.

Singing: Use music of your choice.

Puppet Presentation

Supplies: children's picture Bible and pink pony.

Judy Loses Her Pink Pony

Presenter: Boys and girls, let's call out Judy.

Kids call out Judy, Judy, Judy. Judy comes out looking frantically around.

Presenter: Good morning, Judy. How are you?

Judy: Not very good.

Presenter: What's wrong?

Judy: I think my pink pony has run away.

Presenter: You do?

Judy: She must have. I put her right there and now she is gone. She must have run away.

Presenter: I did not know your pink pony could run away.

Judy: I didn't know either. I am going to find her.

Presenter: Boys and girls, shall we help her find the pink pony?
Have pink pony hidden in the room near presenter.

Presenter: Here it is Judy. It must have fallen off.

Judy: Oh, thank you, thank you, thank you. I'm so much better now.

Presenter: I'm glad. That reminds me just how God feels.

Judy: What do you mean? Did God lose a pink pony?

Presenter: No. Sometimes people are lost from God and do not know how important they are to him.

Judy: What happens?

Presenter: He wants to tell them that you are important and he loves you very much. Wherever you go, he wants to be with you.

Judy: Just like my pony.

Presenter: Yes, Jesus tells a story about a boy who ran away from home. It was like he was lost. Then he remembered how important he was to his father; he came home and his father was very happy. Would you like me to read it to you?

Judy: Yes.

Presenter: See what I am holding? This is the Bible. It is God's word. Everything in the Bible is true. Now I am going to read our lesson from the Bible. Let's put on our listening ears.

Read the Bible Event from a children's picture Bible.

Presenter: Let's practice the Take Home Point. I'll say it first and you repeat after me. *I am important to God. I am important to God.

Presenter: Judy, will you help us sing our song of the week?

Judy: Sure, I love to sing.

Song: to the tune of *Mary Had a Little Lamb*
Capitalized letters indicate emphasis on that syllable when the rhyme is sung.

I am IM-por-TANT to GOD.
YES I AM. YES I AM.
I am IM-por-TANT to GOD.
He LOVES me ALL the TIME.

Let's fold our hands and say a prayer. Repeat after me.

Dear God, Dear God,

You are with us. You are with us.

We love you. We love you.

We are important to you. We are important to you.

Thank you, thank you, thank you. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

In Jesus' name. In Jesus' name.

Amen. Amen.

Small Group Application (30-40 minutes)



Purpose: Young children learn best by repetition. Review the Bible Event and practice the Take Home Point as you rotate through the activities.

The shepherd to child ratio for three-year-olds should be one to six or fewer. Divide into groups of six with one shepherd or have a slightly larger group with two shepherds.

Groups rotate from activity to activity. Another option, especially for larger churches, is to provide a leader at each activity table with a shepherd leading a group of up to twelve. The ratio will be maintained at one to six.

Activity 1: Acting Out the Bible Event

Supplies:

- Children's picture Bible

Jesus and the Lost Son

Luke 15:11-27

Introduction

Hold up a children's picture Bible.

This is the Bible. It is God's word. Let's act out what it says in the Bible. When you see me do the actions, you do them, too.

Jesus preaches to sinners.

- One day Jesus was teaching a crowd of people. Most of the people were tax collectors. People did not like tax collectors. The tax collectors stole money from people. Pretend to take some money from someone near you.
- People did not think Jesus should talk to tax collectors. They said tax collectors are bad people who stole money. The people did not think Jesus should be friends with people who did wrong things. (Shake head "no.")
- But Jesus loves everyone. Jesus knew that the tax collectors needed to hear him. He told a story to help the people understand. The story Jesus told is called a parable. Help me act it out.

Son asks for his inheritance.

- In this story, a rich man had two sons. Let's count to two. One...two.
- Son number two, the youngest son, did not like being close to his father. He wanted to leave. He said, "Father give me all the money that's coming to me. I want to leave and never come back." Let's hold out our hand for some money.

- The father wanted his son to be happy and make his own decisions. The son was old enough to do what he wanted. His father knew it was not a good idea. (Shake head “no.”)

The son spends freely.

- The younger son packed up his things and traveled to another country. Let’s pretend to pack a suitcase.
- He spent his money quickly trying to buy everything. Let’s pretend to give someone money.
- He bought expensive clothes and jewelry. Let’s put on a pretend shirt.
- He ate fine foods and drank lots of wine. Let’s pretend to eat lots of food.
- He had parties all the time. Let’s put our hands over our heads and turn around in a circle.
- Soon, all his money was gone. He checked all of his pockets but they were empty. Show me your empty hands.
- Now he was poor.

The son is starving.

- The country where the son was living was having hard times. There was not enough food for everyone. Rub your hungry tummy.
- There was not enough water to drink. Pretend your glass of water is empty.
- There were not enough jobs for everyone. Soon the son was starving. He finally found a job feeding pigs. Let’s make a pig noise.
- He was so hungry that he wanted to eat the pig’s food! Yuck!

The son decides to go home.

- The son thought about his father’s house. He remembered that even the servants had enough food to eat at his father’s house. He decided to return home. Let’s walk back home. (Walk around the room and return.)
- He would tell his father he was sorry. He would tell his father that he was not good enough to be his son. He would tell his father that he would be a servant so he would have enough to eat. He started the long journey home.

Father welcomes lost son.

- When the son was getting close to his father’s house, his father saw him. His father could not believe his eyes. Let’s rub our eyes.

- He ran out to his son. Let's run in place.
- He hugged him. Let's hug ourselves.
- He kissed him. Let's make a kissing sound.
- He was so happy he danced. Let's put our hands above our heads and turn around in a circle.
- The son told his father that he was very sorry. Let's all say, "sorry."

The lost son's return is celebrated.

- The father was so happy to have his lost son home. Give me a big smile.
- He treated his son like a king. He gave him fine clothes to wear. He put a ring on his finger. He gave a big party for him. He told everyone that his son was lost, but now was found.

God celebrates when his lost children return.

- Sometimes when people do things that are bad, it's like walking away from our heavenly father. But our heavenly father always wants us to come back. He is so happy when we do. We will always be important to God. Jesus told this story to show that some of the tax collectors and people who do wrong things are like the younger son who ran away from his father. The father wanted him to come home. God always wants us to come back to him, even if we do something wrong. Repeat after me, "I am important to God."

Pray, Sing and Review the Take Home Point

Prayer:

Let's fold our hands and say a prayer. Repeat after me.

Dear God, Dear God,

You are with us. You are with us.

We love you. We love you.

We are important to you. We are important to you.

Thank you, thank you, thank you. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

In Jesus' name. In Jesus' name.

Amen. Amen.

Let's sing our song of the week.

Song: to the tune of *Mary Had a Little Lamb*

Capitalized letters indicate emphasis on that syllable when the rhyme is sung.

I am IM-por-TANT to GOD.
YES I AM. YES I AM.
I am IM-por-TANT to GOD.
He LOVES me ALL the TIME.

Take Home Point:

Let's practice the Take Home Point. I'll say it first and you repeat after me. *I am important to God. *I am important to God.*

Activity 2: Snack

Supplies:

- *Napkins*
- *Cups and water*
- *Trail mix (use any combination of small crackers, pretzels, raisins, chocolate chips, etc.)*

BE AWARE OF ANY FOOD ALLERGIES CHILDREN MAY HAVE BEFORE YOU GIVE THEM ANY FOOD TO EAT.

Today we are going to eat a snack that we would take with us when we are traveling. Before we eat our snack, let's fold our hands and say a prayer. Repeat after me.

Dear God, *Dear God,*
You are with us. *You are with us.*
We love you. *We love you.*
We are important to you. *We are important to you.*
Thank you, thank you, thank you. *Thank you, thank you, thank you.*
In Jesus' name. *In Jesus' name.*
Amen. *Amen.*

Today we have been learning about the son who left his father's house and traveled far away. Our snack today is food that we might take with us if we were traveling. Pass out cups of water and napkins. I will put some trail mix on your napkin and, while you eat, you can tell me about times when you traveled somewhere.

Let's practice the Take Home Point. I'll say it first and you repeat after me. *I am important to God. *I am important to God.*

Let's sing our song of the week.

Song: to the tune of *Mary Had a Little Lamb*

Capitalized letters indicate emphasis on that syllable when the rhyme is sung.

**I am IM-por-TANT to GOD.
YES I AM. YES I AM.
I am IM-por-TANT to GOD.
He LOVES me ALL the TIME.**

Activity 3: Craft

Children take pride in making something themselves. Resist trying to do too much for children so that they can say, "I did it myself."

Supplies:

- Road maps (or outdated atlas) cut into 8" x 11" pieces (one per child) or copies of a map
- Copy of Appendix A, on regular paper
- Stickers that say, "I am important to God" or pen to write on back of figure
- Craft sticks, two per child
- Tape
- Crayons or markers

Before class, cut out a father and son set, one per child. You do not need to cut right on the lines but can leave some white space around each set of figures.

Today we heard how the lost son left his father's home and went on a long trip. Do you think he followed a map? Maybe. We are going to give them a map to follow. First we will color the father and son. Then we will tape a stick on each so they will be puppets. Now you can put a sticker on back of one or write the Take Home Point on it. Now we will lead the lost son back to his father. Have children follow roads on map and have son leave and then come back to the father.

Let's practice the Take Home Point. I'll say it first and you repeat after me: *I am important to God. I am important to God.

Let's sing our song of the week.

Song: to the tune of *Mary Had a Little Lamb*

Capitalized letters indicate emphasis on that syllable when the rhyme is sung.

**I am IM-por-TANT to GOD.
YES I AM. YES I AM.
I am IM-por-TANT to GOD.
He LOVES me ALL the TIME.**

Let's pray now. Fold your hands and repeat after me:

Dear God, Dear God,
You are with us. You are with us.
We love you. We love you.
We are important to you. We are important to you.
Thank you, thank you, thank you. Thank you, thank you, thank you.
In Jesus' name. In Jesus' name.
Amen. Amen.

Activity 4: Games

Choose one or both games to play. Children with lots of wiggles should play the Movement Game first.

Learning Game

Supplies:

- none

Today we are going to play a game called *Leaving or Coming Back?*
After you answer the questions, you can do the actions.

1. If you put on your coat, are you leaving or coming back? Leaving. Let's pretend to put on our coats.
2. If you are putting the car in the garage, are you leaving or coming back? Coming back. Let's pretend to drive a car.
3. If you are kissing Grandma goodbye, are you leaving or coming back? Leaving. Let's pretend to kiss Grandma.
4. If you are taking off your skates at the park, are you leaving or coming back? Leaving. Let's pretend to roller skate.
5. If you are really hungry, are you leaving the restaurant or coming back? Coming back. Let's pretend to eat.
6. If your hair is long and shaggy, are you leaving the barbershop or coming back? Coming back. Let's shake our hair all over.
7. If you have a bunch of packages, are you leaving the mall or coming back? Leaving. Let's pretend we are carrying a lot of packages.
8. If you are all wet and wrapped in a towel, are you leaving your bath or coming back? Leaving. Let's dry ourselves off.
9. If you ate one sandwich and are still hungry, are you leaving the table or coming back? Coming back. Let's pretend to eat a sandwich.
10. If you have a new puppy in your hands, are you leaving the pet store or coming back? Leaving. Let's bark like a puppy.

Movement Game

Supplies:

- bean bag
- hula-hoop

We are going to play a game called *Going and Coming*. It will remind us of the younger son going away from home but then coming back to his father. Put a bean bag in the hula-hoop. When I call your name, I want you to go to the hula-hoop. We are pretending that it is the father's house. We are pretending that the bean bag is the younger son. You will stand in the "house" (hula-hoop), pick up the bean bag and toss it out of the house. Then you will go to the bean bag, pick it up and try to toss it back into the house. Remember that God is happy when we come home to our heavenly father. Play until all children have had a turn.

Let's practice the Take Home Point. I'll say it first and you repeat after me: *I am important to God. I am important to God.

Let's sing our song of the week.

Song: to the tune of *Mary Had a Little Lamb*

Capitalized letters indicate emphasis on that syllable when the rhyme is sung.

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YES I AM. YES I AM.
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Let's pray now. Fold your hands and repeat after me:

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You are with us. You are with us.
We love you. We love you.
We are important to you. We are important to you.
Thank you, thank you, thank you. Thank you, thank you, thank you.
In Jesus' name. In Jesus' name.
Amen. Amen.

Large Group Wrap-Up (5-10 minutes)



Lesson Review:

Presenter reviews the lesson with questions or by supplying key parts of the lesson with some words left out. Children are to supply the answers as the presenter shares the Bible Event.

**See if you know the words I'm thinking of when I tell the Bible Event.
If you know it, you may say it out loud without raising your hand.**

**In our parable today, Jesus told a story about a man who had two sons.
Did the younger son want money or cookies from his father? (Money.)
The son traveled far away. What did he do with the money? (Spent it.) The
son did not have enough to eat, so he was (hungry). He traveled back to
his father's house. Was his father happy to see him? (Yes.) Was the lost
son important to his father? (Yes) Are we important to God? (Yes.).**

Lesson Prayer:

Let's fold our hands and pray. Repeat after me.

**Dear God, Dear God,
You are with us. You are with us.
We love you. We love you.
We are important to you. We are important to you.
Thank you, thank you, thank you. Thank you, thank you, thank you.
In Jesus' name. In Jesus' name.
Amen. Amen.**

Lesson Song:

Let's sing our song of the week.

Song: to the tune of *Mary Had a Little Lamb*
Capitalized letters indicate emphasis on that syllable when the rhyme is sung.

**I am IM-por-TANT to GOD.
YES I AM. YES I AM.
I am IM-por-TANT to GOD.
He LOVES me ALL the TIME.**

Take Home Point:

Let's practice the Take Home Point. I'll say it first and you repeat after me: *I am important to God. I am important to God.

Lead the children in singing songs from a CD until parents begin arriving. Let parents know that they are welcome to join in. Dismiss by handing out God Talk at Home.

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