



Date: _____

Series: Jesus is Our Friend
Winter Year 1, Lesson 36

Jesus Blesses the Children

Bible Event: Matthew 19:13-15

Take Home Point: *JESUS IS OUR FRIEND – *Jesus loves me too.*

*Repeat this phrase throughout the lesson. The leader will say the first part of the phrase (*CAPS*). The children respond with the second part of the phrase (*italics*).

Jesus Point: Everyone, even the smallest child, is important to Jesus.

What kids will learn about God in this worship experience:

- Children will learn that God sent Jesus to be our special friend – especially a friend to children. When Jesus' disciples tried to keep the children away, thinking they weren't important enough for Jesus' time, Jesus corrected them and made it clear...Jesus loves children. Today children will hear that the message applies personally to them as well: ***JESUS IS OUR FRIEND – Jesus loves me too.**
- Children will respond to God's love as they pray to him, thanking him for loving them and sending Jesus. They will offer him their songs of worship, their offerings, and their actions of love as they actively learn God's Word.



Welcome Zone: (15-20 minutes)

Purpose: While kids arrive give them a simple learning readiness activity that requires minimal supervision. This might include a video, games, blocks, or puzzles.

Video Suggestion: *Lyle, the Kindly Viking*, Veggie Tales. Big Idea Productions. 2001

Activity Suggestion: Blocks, toys, puzzles, paper, and crayons.



Opening Worship: (10-15 minutes)

Children can bring forward the cross, candles, Bible, offering plate, and treasure box. The treasure box contains the props used to tell or dramatize the Bible event. Open with a simple prayer having the children repeat after you. Collect offering and talk about how God will use it.

Praise Songs:

Choose two or three songs and list them here.

Bible Event: A Visit from the Traveler

The traveler is a character costumed in traveling gear: backpack, walking stick, hiking hat and shoes. He explains that he has traveled all around the world discovering wonderful deeds that God has done. He tells of an adventure he just discovered in God's Word as he pulls the Bible out of his backpack. As he tells the Bible event, he pulls out objects from his backpack that illustrate the story.

Supplies in the Traveler's backpack:

- A Bible
- A green circle of construction paper glued to Craft Sticks
- A red circle of construction paper glued to Craft Sticks
- Play coins to simulate treasure

Jesus Blesses the Children

Boys and girls, in my travels this week I discovered a most wonderful thing. Here let me show it to you in the Bible. The Bible is God's Word and it is true. Here I discovered that Jesus has a special friendship with children. Even when other people said children aren't important enough for Jesus' time, Jesus made it clear that he wanted children to be his friends.

In my travels this week, I learned a new game. Maybe we can use that game to remember how Jesus feels about us. The name of the game

is called “Red Light, Green Light.” In my pack I have a red light (Show red construction paper circle on stick) and a green light. (Show green construction paper circle on stick.) This is the way the game works. All of you will get to the other side of the room and I will turn my back. I’ll hold up the green light over my head so you can see that green means it’s time to go. You can start walking towards me, but you may want to walk slowly because as soon as I yell, “Red light” and turn around showing you the red light, if I see anyone moving, they’ll have to go back to the very beginning of the line. Let’s practice and try it.

Now that you understand, let’s play the game.

After playing a few rounds, gather the children closely.

It was fun trying to get close to me, wasn’t it? Here in the Bible, it says when Jesus lived here on earth, many, many years ago; it was fun for children to get close to him, too. Remember Jesus was God’s own son and Jesus came to give his life for us to show us how much God loved us. He wanted to take away our sin and show each one of us God’s love. He would tell people about the treasures of heaven, (Hold up the simulated coins or treasure.) This was not just treasure like money. This was much more important. This was treasure you could put in your heart. It comes when you know and trust God as your heavenly father. It comes when you know how much Jesus loves you and is with you even you can’t see him. It comes when his spirit teaches you how to live in kind and loving ways.

Boys and girls, would you like to have treasures like this? Of course you would. And God wants you to. You can just believing in him. And the girls and boys who were listening to Jesus talk, scoot close to him, and climbed up on his lap. They wanted to play with him and talk to him. But before they could, some of Jesus grown-up helpers said, “No, children. You’re getting too close.” It was like the game we just played, “Red Light, Green Light.” Jesus’ helpers told the children to stand back, go further away from Jesus. Don’t come to close. (Hold up red light sign.) But Jesus corrected his disciples. He said, “Stop! Let the kids come to me. I want to give them all of my treasures.” (Hold up the green light sign.) So the kids came to Jesus and sat on his lap and laughed with him and played with him. He taught them about how God loves them and how he would be with them no matter what. So today you can remember, too, that *JESUS IS OUR FRIEND – Jesus loves me, too.****

Let's pray. Children repeat each phrase.

Dear God, *(repeat)*

Thank you for being here. *(repeat)*

Thank you for sending Jesus. *(repeat)*

He is our friend. *(repeat)*

Jesus loves me. *(repeat)*

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! *(repeat)*

Amen. *(repeat)*



Action Zones: (20-30 minutes)

Purpose: Children move at their leisure to the activities according to their interest. Adults are assigned to oversee each of the zones watching for safety, assisting any activity, and helping the children connect to the lesson of the day. All zones are introduced at the beginning of Zone Time. Some suggested zones are included below. It is usually best to have all children go to the Snack Zone first. Sing a blessing song or say a snack prayer together before dismissing to the zones.

During the Zone Time, children may arrive from mid-service dismissal if this is an option at your church. Be prepared to welcome the children and invite them to choose a zone.

Snack Zone: A regular marshmallow to represent Jesus and miniature marshmallows to represent children. The softness represents the touch of Jesus' blessing to the children. Place several small marshmallows on a large one. Show how the children can be close to him.

Drama Zone: Reenact the story with Jesus preaching and adults sitting and listening. Designate one or two adults to play the role of children and move closer to Jesus while others try and keep them away. Jesus will correct the disciples and invite the children to sit in the very front.

Felt Zone: Use felt board materials reenact the children coming to Jesus

Craft Zone: Provide blank paper, scissors, markers, crayons, heart-shaped stickers, etc. for kids to trace their hands. Have them decorate the hands and cut them out if they choose. Prepare labels that say, "Jesus touches me with his love" to be placed on the hands.

Play Zone: Parachute game, if parachute is available. While kids are waving the parachute up and down at a slow rhythm, call out characteristics such as wearing red, having black hair, boys, etc.). When called, the children should run under the parachute to the other side. Explain that God's love and Jesus' blessing comes down on all children. *Option:* Play "Red Light, Green Light."

Quiet Reading Zone: Read Bible storybooks of Jesus reminding the kids that reading the Bible is a way that Jesus can spend time with us.

Music Zone: *Jesus Loves Me, Alalalaleluia.*

Coloring Zone: Color page with markers or crayons.

Safety and Security: Safety and security procedures are important for each church to carefully define and implement according to their unique needs. The security, safety, illness and accident procedures described in this curriculum are provided for example purposes only and may not be appropriate, applicable or adequate for every situation. Each church is responsible for determining whether any security, safety, illness and accident procedures contained in the curriculum are appropriate, applicable or adequate for its unique situation. The activities described in this curriculum require adult supervision and may not be suitable for each child and each situation. Each church is responsible for ensuring that adequate adult supervision is provided for all activities and for determining whether an activity is appropriate for each child and each situation. Kids Kount Publishing disclaims all liability for the implementation of any procedures or the performance of any activities described in this curriculum.



Closing Worship: (20 minutes)

Purpose: As you empty the zones and clean up, begin the music so the children can start wandering over.

Worship Songs:

Choose one or two songs and list them here.

Bible Application with Puppet Presentation:

Purpose: The puppet demonstrates the need that will be met in today's lesson. The scripts are not written verbatim, but give a story line in which the group leader can interact with the puppet.

Judy comes on stage with some outlandish apparel or decoration on her. It could be an oversized bow for her hair, a football helmet, or alien antennae. The point is that she likes wearing it, because when she does, the pastor at church notices her and says something about it. She likes to feel special at church and likes it when people notice her. The presenter asks her if little kids get noticed more at church than adults. She turns the question back to the audience, "What do you think, kids?" Discuss how you feel noticed or special at church and some of the ways we don't feel noticed or special. The presenter asks this question, "If Jesus was here at church, do you think he would notice you?" Judy responds, "Of course." ... because of what she's wearing. The presenter asks the kids if that is what makes Jesus notice people... what they wear. They will reply, "NO! Reinforce the take home point: ***JESUS IS OUR FRIEND – Jesus loves me, too.** Jesus loves me for just who I am. The truth is that Jesus is here even when we can't see him. He is glad that we are here. What is most important is not just getting noticed, but rather, learning about him and giving him our thanks and praise. We can do that in our closing prayer today.

Prayer Time:

Purpose: Allow children to contribute their own prayers. This will teach them to turn to God in both good times and in times of trouble. End with the Lord's Prayer.

"Children Pray" Options: (select one from the options below)

_____ **Prayer Train Option:** Children line up and take turns stepping in front of the microphone and speak their brief prayers of thanksgiving.

_____ **Prayer Chair:** Children stand in a circle around one child sitting on a chair in the middle. All children in the circle will lay a hand on the child sitting in the chair as they say a prayer together.

_____ **Popcorn Prayer:** The leader moves through the crowd with a microphone and taps children on the head to stand and speak their prayer.

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:

May God, who is all around you,
pour his love upon you.

(Beginning at the bottom of the circle, slowly make large circle with your hands. Finish by bringing your hands down and wiggling your fingers to resemble rain.)

And Jesus, his life a sacrifice,
walk right there beside you.

(Slowly make a large sign of the cross. Then move your hands out to the sides.)

And may God's Holy Spirit,
the one who lives inside you,

(Cross hands over your heart.)

keep you strong,
comfort, lead and guide you!

(Move to a "strong man" position. Then cross your arms with your hands on corresponding upper arms to communicate comfort. Bring one hand forward with "lead" and the other with "guide" to complete the blessing.)

Song of Sending:

Choose one song and list it here.



Closing Zones:

Purpose: Children go to an activity zone such as, the coloring zone, quiet reading zone, and children's Christian music video zone, as they wait for their parents.

Supplies:

Welcome Zone:

- video: Veggie Tales: *Lyle the Kindly Viking*—order from: <http://www.veggiegear.com/lylkinvik1.html> or from: <http://www.cleanfilms.com/viewdvd.phtml?VEG03>
- blocks, toys, puzzles, paper, and crayons

Opening Worship:

- Traveler's backpack items
 - a Bible
 - green and blue construction paper
 - craft sticks
 - play coins

Action Zones:

Snack:

- regular sized marshmallows
- miniature marshmallows

Craft:

- blank paper
- scissors
- markers and crayons
- heart shaped stickers
- labels: "Jesus touches me with his love"

Play:

- parachute

Coloring:

- coloring page
- markers and crayons

Quiet Reading:

- basket of books

Music:

- *Jesus Loves Me* (<http://www.cyberhymnal.org/html/j/e/jesuslme.htm>), *Alalalaluia* or your choice of other children's tunes

Felt:

- materials to reenact story

Closing Worship:

- Judy, the puppet
- outlandish apparel

Closing Zones:

- colored pencils
- paper
- basket of books