

JESUS WANTS TO BE MY FRIEND FOREVER

WEEK

TWO

APRIL 2019

SMALL GROUP

3-5

YEAR-OLDS



first look™

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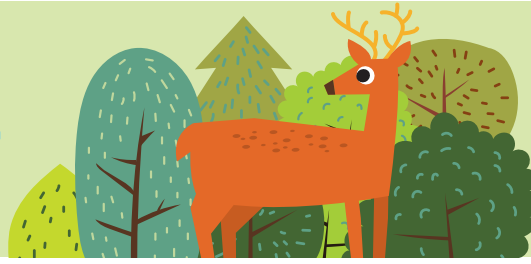
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PRELUDE

SOCIAL

WORSHIP

STORY

GROUPS

HOME



BIBLE STORY

We can praise Jesus.

PALM SUNDAY
MATTHEW 21:1-16

MEMORY VERSE

"A friend loves at all times."

PROVERBS 17:17, NIRV

KEY QUESTION

Who is your friend?

BOTTOM LINE

Jesus is my friend.

BASIC TRUTH

Jesus wants to be my friend forever.

PRELUDE: Setting the tone for the experience

For Leaders Only
Monthly Overview
Create the Environment

15
MIN

SOCIAL: Providing time for fun interaction

Offer one or more of these activities as preschoolers arrive.
Leaf Pile
Donkey, Donkey, Where's Your Tail?
Music

10
MIN

WORSHIP: Inviting people to respond to God

Doesn't Matter
Everybody Praise Him

10
MIN

STORY: Communicating God's truth in engaging ways

Introductory Sketch
Bible Story
Prayer

25
MIN

GROUPS: Creating a safe place to connect

Offer as many of these activities as your time, facilities, resources, and leadership allow.
Memory Verse Walk
Coats and Leaves
Coat and Leaf Matching
Praise
Clothespin Donkeys
Journal and Prayer

HOME: Prompting action beyond the experience

Going Home
Parent Cue



PRELUDE

SOCIAL

WORSHIP

STORY

GROUPS

HOME

15 MINUTES

BIBLE STORY

We can praise Jesus.

PALM SUNDAY
MATTHEW 21:1-16



MOVE

an activity that uses a preschooler's natural desire to move to help them learn

MEMORY VERSE

"A friend loves at all times."

PROVERBS 17:17, NIRV

KEY QUESTION

Who is your friend?

BOTTOM LINE

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1. LEAF PILE

WHAT YOU NEED: Large piece of green butcher paper and a broom

WHAT YOU DO:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: Tear the paper into pieces that are around six-inches tall to look like leaves. Make sure you have enough leaves to make a small pile for the children to jump in. Place the pile of leaves in the middle of the activity area. Be sure to remove any hard furniture or toys that are close to pile.

DURING THE ACTIVITY: Have the children form a line and stand about five feet from the pile of leaves. Allow the children to walk fast and jump into the pile of leaves. Allow only one child at a time to jump into the leaves. Be sure each child has a turn to jump into the leaves.

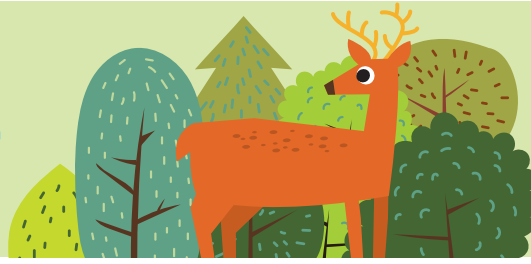
WHAT YOU SAY:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: "WOW! We have a pile of leaves in our room. Let's jump in them!"

DURING THE ACTIVITY: "Let's make a line, and we can jump into the leaves one at a time." (*Do activity.*)

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: "That was so much fun! We are going to talk about leaves in our Bible story today. People used their leaves to PRAISE Jesus. I cannot wait to hear our TRUE story from the Bible!"

TRANSITION: Move to Worship and Story by jumping as you move to the story area.



PRELUDE

SOCIAL

WORSHIP

STORY

GROUPS

HOME

15 MINUTES

BIBLE STORY

We can praise Jesus.

PALM SUNDAY
MATTHEW 21:1-16



PLAY

an activity that encourages preschoolers to follow guidelines while having fun and learning new concepts

MEMORY VERSE

"A friend loves at all times."

PROVERBS 17:17, NIRV

KEY QUESTION

Who is your friend?

BOTTOM LINE

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BASIC TRUTH

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2. DONKEY, DONKEY, WHERE'S YOUR TAIL?

WHAT YOU NEED: "Donkey" and "Tails" Activity Pages, white cardstock, butcher paper, a blindfold, wall tape, and scissors

WHAT YOU DO:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: Copy "Tails" Activity Page onto cardstock and cut on dotted lines (*one tail per child*). Enlarge the "Donkey" Activity Page onto butcher paper (*one per activity*). Tape the "Donkey" page to the wall at the children's eye level. Place a small circle of tape on the back of each tail.

DURING THE ACTIVITY: Gather the children in front of the "Donkey" page. Let the children take turns being blindfolded and attempting to pin their tail on the donkey.

WHAT YOU SAY:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: "When you look at our donkey picture, what's missing? (*Pause for responses.*) Yes! His tail. I actually have a few that we can add, but in order to add a tail, you need to wear a blindfold!"

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: "Great job, friends. This was a super fun game. I want you to pay attention to our true Bible story today. I think you just might hear something about a donkey!"

TRANSITION: Move to Worship and Story by walking and braying like a donkey.



PRELUDE

SOCIAL

WORSHIP

STORY

GROUPS

HOME

15 MINUTES

BIBLE STORY

We can praise Jesus.

PALM SUNDAY
MATTHEW 21:1-16



EXPLORE

an activity that channels a preschooler's innate curiosity into a discussion of the week's crucial concepts

MEMORY VERSE

"A friend loves at all times."

PROVERBS 17:17, NIRV

KEY QUESTION

Who is your friend?

BOTTOM LINE

Jesus is my friend.

BASIC TRUTH

Jesus wants to be my friend forever.

3. MUSIC

WHAT YOU NEED: Several preschool musical instruments

WHAT YOU DO:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: Place the instruments in the middle of the activity area.

DURING THE ACTIVITY: Invite the children to choose and play an instrument.

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: Encourage the children to switch instruments with each other and continue to play with them.

WHAT YOU SAY:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: "Let's make some music!"

DURING THE ACTIVITY: "Choose an instrument (*point*) and play it to make music. I cannot wait to hear the beautiful music! (*Allow children to play the instruments.*) Great job! Now switch your instruments with your friends so that everyone can try a new one." (*Finish activity.*)

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: "We can use these instruments to PRAISE Jesus by making music. In our Bible story today, we are going to hear about another way to praise Jesus!"

TRANSITION: Move to Worship and Story by pretending to play musical instruments as you move to the story area.

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

WORSHIP

STORY

GROUPS

HOME

25 MINUTES

**HEAR
FROM GOD**
MEMORY VERSE
REVIEW



MOVE

an activity that uses a preschooler's natural desire to move to help them learn

BIBLE STORY

We can praise Jesus.

PALM SUNDAY
MATTHEW 21:1-16

MEMORY VERSE

"A friend loves at all times."

PROVERBS 17:17, NIRV

KEY QUESTION

Who is your friend?

BOTTOM LINE

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BASIC TRUTH

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1. MEMORY VERSE WALK

WHAT YOU NEED: "Emojis" Activity Pages, white or yellow cardstock, and floor tape

WHAT YOU DO:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: Copy "Emojis" on cardstock. Make at least five copies of each page. Lay the pages out on the floor in a large circle, and tape them to the floor.

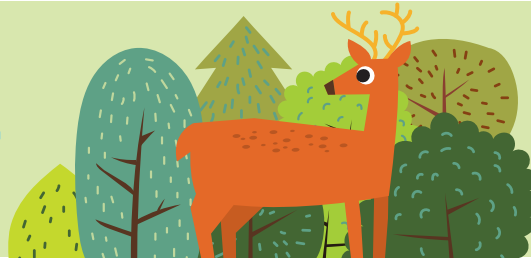
DURING THE ACTIVITY: Lead the children to walk around the circle while stepping on each emoji face as they repeat the words of this month's memory verse. When you finish the verse, instruct the children to stop right where they are. Point to one of the faces, name that emotion, and remind the children that Jesus is our friend even when we're happy, sad, scared, or mad.

WHAT YOU SAY:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: "Do you see the faces on these pages? I see a sad face, a happy face, a scared face, and a mad face. These are all emotions or the way we can feel at different times. This month, we're learning that: A friend loves at all times (*Proverbs 17:17 NIRV*). In fact, that's what our memory verse says! Let's say the words of our verse as we walk along this path. When we stop, I'll call out one of these emotions and ask a very important question. Are you ready? Let's take a walk and say our verse together."

DURING THE ACTIVITY: "A friend loves at all times, *Proverbs 17:17*. Let's see, you're standing on a scared face. Jesus is our friend. He loves you when you're scared. Everyone make a scared face!" (*Repeat. Call out a different emotion each round.*)

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: "Tell me: **Who is your friend? Jesus is my friend.** Yes, He is! And our verse reminds us that a friend loves at ALL times. Jesus loves you when you're sad, when you're happy, when you're scared, and even when you're mad. Jesus is awesome, and He loves you very much."



PRELUDE

SOCIAL

WORSHIP

STORY

GROUPS

HOME

25 MINUTES

TALK
ABOUT GOD
BIBLE STORY
REVIEW



CREATE

an activity that allows preschoolers to review the Bible story, bottom line, or memory verse by creating a craft to take home

BIBLE STORY

We can praise Jesus.

PALM SUNDAY
MATTHEW 21:1-16

MEMORY VERSE

"A friend loves at all times."

PROVERBS 17:17, NIRV

KEY QUESTION

Who is your friend?

BOTTOM LINE

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BASIC TRUTH

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2. COATS AND LEAVES

WHAT YOU NEED: "Coats and Leaves" Activity Page, white cardstock, two-inch fabric squares in assorted colors (*four per child*), liquid glue, and green tissue squares (*six per child*)

WHAT YOU DO:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: Copy the Activity Page onto the white cardstock (*one per child*).

DURING THE ACTIVITY: Give each child an Activity Page and four different colored fabric squares. Help the children glue the fabric below the picture of Jesus and the donkey as coats from the story.

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: Give each child six green tissue squares and ask them to crinkle them up and glue them next to Jesus as palm leaves.

WHAT YOU SAY:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: "We are going to make a picture of our Bible story today."

DURING THE ACTIVITY: (*Give each child an Activity Page.*) "Jesus is on our page. He is riding the donkey just like in our story. The picture is missing the coats and leaves from our story. Let's be sure to add them!" (*Do activity.*)

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: "WOW! Your pictures are amazing. They tell our Bible story. People were so glad to see Jesus that they laid their coats on the ground for Him and the donkey to walk on. They praised Jesus by waving palm leaves. We can praise Jesus in many ways, too! We can sing, dance, and pray to Jesus to praise Him. Jesus is our friend. **Who is your friend? Jesus is my friend!**"



PRELUDE

SOCIAL

WORSHIP

STORY

GROUPS

HOME

25 MINUTES

**LIVE
FOR GOD
APPLICATION
ACTIVITY**



THINK

an advanced activity specifically designed for older preschoolers

BIBLE STORY

We can praise Jesus.

**PALM SUNDAY
MATTHEW 21:1-16**

MEMORY VERSE

"A friend loves at all times."

PROVERBS 17:17, NIRV

KEY QUESTION

Who is your friend?

BOTTOM LINE

Jesus is my friend.

BASIC TRUTH

Jesus wants to be
my friend forever.

3. COAT AND LEAF MATCHING

WHAT YOU NEED: "Coats and Leaves Matching Page," "Coats," and "Leaves" Activity Pages, white cardstock, and scissors

WHAT YOU DO:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: Copy the "Coat and Leaves Matching Pages" onto cardstock and cut in half lengthwise. You'll need one half sheet per child. Copy the "Coats" and "Leaves" pages onto cardstock and cut out along the dotted lines. You'll need at least three leaves and three coats per child.

DURING THE ACTIVITY: Give each child a "Coats and Leaves Matching" half page and at least three leaf and three coat cutouts. Point out how the coats and leaves make a pattern. Encourage the children to lay out their coat and leaf cutouts next to the page to create a matching pattern. For instance, if the pattern on their page is "coat, leaf, leaf, coat," the child will place his cutouts in the same order. Let the children trade pages with a friend to match more patterns.

WHAT YOU SAY:

DURING THE ACTIVITY: "Do you see the pattern on your page of coats and leaves? They make a pattern. Let's see if we can match that pattern with our coat and leaf cutouts. So if your pattern is leaf, leaf, coat, coat, I want you to place your leaf and coat cutouts in the same order right next to it on the table. Then we can switch with a friend to match another pattern."

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: "Great job, friends! You matched all your leaves and coats. The people waved branches and said, 'Hosanna!' because they were so excited that JESUS was coming to their town. We can praise Jesus just like they did. Why? Because **Jesus is my friend.**"

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

WORSHIP

STORY

GROUPS

HOME

25 MINUTES

**LIVE
FOR GOD
APPLICATION
ACTIVITY**



MOVE

an activity that uses a preschooler's natural desire to move to help them learn

BIBLE STORY

We can praise Jesus.

**PALM SUNDAY
MATTHEW 21:1-16**

MEMORY VERSE

"A friend loves at all times."

PROVERBS 17:17, NIRV

KEY QUESTION

Who is your friend?

BOTTOM LINE

Jesus is my friend.

BASIC TRUTH

Jesus wants to be my friend forever.

4. PRAISE

WHAT YOU NEED: "Donkey" Activity Page, white cardstock, scissors, tape, empty wrapping paper tube, and green crepe paper

WHAT YOU DO:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: Copy the Activity Page onto the cardstock and cut on the dotted lines. Tape the donkey face onto one end of the wrapping paper tube. Cut the green crepe paper into one-foot strips.

DURING THE ACTIVITY: Guide the children to stand in two lines about seven feet apart facing each other in order to create a pathway. Give each child a section of the green streamer. Select one child to go first, and give him the tube with the donkey head. Allow the child to place the tube between his legs and ride it like a horse down the path between the lines of children. While the child is riding the donkey, encourage the other children to wave their streamers. Allow each child to have a turn to ride the donkey down the path.

WHAT YOU SAY:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: "We heard a wonderful Bible story today!"

DURING THE ACTIVITY: "Let's act out the amazing story that we have heard. First, we need to make a path for Jesus to ride His donkey on. (*Make two lines and choose one child to go first.*) Remember to wave your palm leaves (*hold up a streamer*) if you are standing in the lines. Hosanna, Hosanna, Yay Jesus!" (*Do activity.*)

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: "Great job! It is so wonderful to praise Jesus. We can praise Jesus EVERY DAY. He is our friend. **Who is your friend? Jesus is my friend!**"



PRELUDE

SOCIAL

WORSHIP

STORY

GROUPS

HOME

25 MINUTES

**LIVE
FOR GOD
APPLICATION
ACTIVITY**



CREATE

an activity that allows preschoolers to review the Bible story, bottom line, or memory verse by creating a craft to take home

BIBLE STORY

We can praise Jesus.

**PALM SUNDAY
MATTHEW 21:1-16**

MEMORY VERSE

"A friend loves at all times."

PROVERBS 17:17, NIRV

KEY QUESTION

Who is your friend?

BOTTOM LINE

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BASIC TRUTH

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5. CLOTHESPIN DONKEYS

WHAT YOU NEED: "Donkey Body" Activity Page, white cardstock, scissors, clothespins (*two per child*), "Bottom Line Labels" Activity Page, Avery® #5160 labels or equivalent, and brown crayons

WHAT YOU DO:

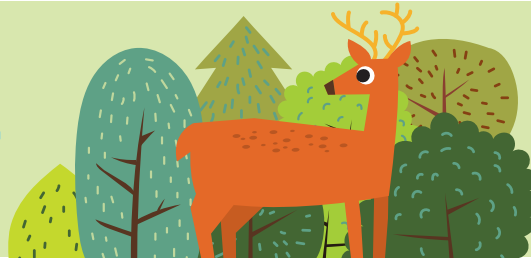
BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: Copy the "Donkey Body" Activity Page onto white cardstock and cut out (*one per child*). Set the clothespins in the center of the tables. Copy the "Bottom Line Labels" onto the label paper (*one label per child*).

DURING THE ACTIVITY: Encourage the children to color their donkey body cutout. Give each child a label to add to her donkey. Pass out two clothespins to each child and show them how to attach the pincher side to the bottom to form the donkey's legs and stand him up on the table.

WHAT YOU SAY:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: "Jesus road into town on a what? (*Pause for responses.*) Yes! A donkey! Let's make our own donkeys to remind us of our TRUE Bible story today."

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: "Your donkeys look so great! Just like the people on the road that day who waved their palm branches, we can praise Jesus. Jesus is our good friend, and He deserves all our praise. **Who is your friend? Jesus is my friend!**"



PRELUDE

SOCIAL

WORSHIP

STORY

GROUPS

HOME

25 MINUTES

**PRAY
TO GOD**
PRAYER
ACTIVITY



REFLECT

an activity that encourages personal application and prayer

BIBLE STORY

We can praise Jesus.

PALM SUNDAY
MATTHEW 21:1-16

MEMORY VERSE

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PROVERBS 17:17, NIRV

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my friend forever.

6. JOURNAL AND PRAYER

WHAT YOU NEED: Paperclip "Memory Verse Card" in your Bible at Proverbs 17:17. Provide a journal and a fun-shaped pen for each small group.

SMALL GROUP LEADER (SGL): "It's Small Group time. Today we are going to praise Jesus all the way to our Small Group spot. We can wave our hands in the air while we say, 'Hosanna! Hosanna! Yay, Jesus!'"

(Lead the children to your Small Group spot while saying, "Hosanna! Hosanna! Yay, Jesus!")

"That was fun! Let's sit down and talk about today's Bible story now. One, two, three, sit down with me!"

(Open the Bible and lay it open in front of the children.)

"Today we learned that we can praise Jesus like the people in our Bible story did. We can tell Jesus how much we love Him anytime we want. We love Jesus because He is our good friend. **Who is your friend?**"

CHILDREN AND SGL: "Jesus is my friend."

"The Bible verse we are learning this month tells us how a friend is supposed to love.

(Turn the pages of your Bible to the Memory Verse Card.)

"It says: A friend loves at all times, Proverbs 17:17.

(Close Bible and lay it down.)

"Wow! A good friend loves at all times. Jesus is a good friend because Jesus loves us at all times.

"Let's stand up and say this verse together with the motions. It will help us be a good friend like Jesus is a good friend. Ready?"

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

WORSHIP

STORY

GROUPS

HOME

25 MINUTES

**PRAY
TO GOD**
PRAYER
ACTIVITY



REFLECT

an activity that encourages personal application and prayer

CHILDREN AND SGL: "A friend (*hook your pointer fingers together*) loves (*hug yourself*) at all times (*stretch your arms out to each side with your palms facing up as you turn in a circle*), Proverbs 17:17." (*Open your hands like a book.*) (*Repeat the verse with motions a few times.*)

SGL: "You sound awesome! Good job! (*Thumbs up.*) Let's sit back down so we can write in our journal and pray.

(*Hold journal and fun-shaped pen.*)

"Today we are going to make a list of reasons we want to praise our good friend Jesus. **Who is your friend?**"

CHILDREN AND SGL: "Jesus is my friend!"

SGL: "And that is definitely a reason to praise Jesus! Jesus is such a good friend. Let's write that down first.

(*Write that Jesus is a good friend in your prayer journal.*)

"Now, when I say your name, tell me another reason we can praise Jesus.

(*Say each child's name and write down what they say. Remember to print the names so the children can recognize their names and the letters.*)

"This is such a sweet list. We have so many reasons to praise Jesus. Let's use our list to praise Jesus right now when we pray. Would anyone like to pray before I pray?"

(*Give each child who wants to pray the opportunity to do so.*)

PRAYER

SGL: "Dear God, we want to praise Jesus for being such a good, good friend. There are so many things to love about Jesus. We praise Him because (*read the list the children made*). Thank You for sending Jesus to be our friend forever. You're the best, God! We love You. In Jesus' name, amen."