

# JESUS WANTS TO BE MY FRIEND FOREVER

WEEK  
**THREE**  
APRIL 2019

SMALL GROUP  
**3-5**  
YEAR-OLDS



## first look™

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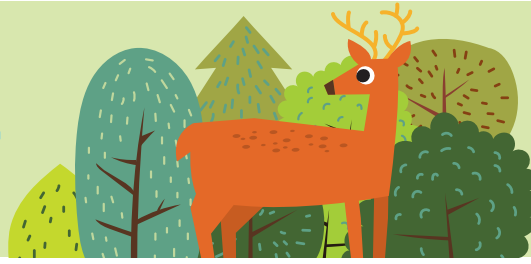
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PRELUDE

SOCIAL

WORSHIP

STORY

GROUPS

HOME



**BIBLE STORY**

God sent Jesus to be my friend forever.

**EASTER**

**MATTHEW 26:20-30;  
27:45-50; 28:1-7**

**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.  
Happy or Sad?  
Roll and Come Back  
The "Come Back" Tunnel

**10**  
MIN

**WORSHIP: Inviting people to respond to God**

Doesn't Matter  
Jesus Is Alive

**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.  
Heart Hop  
Happy or Sad Story Recall  
Sequence  
Friendship Dance  
Tomb Craft  
Journal and Prayer

**HOME: Prompting action beyond the experience**

Going Home  
Parent Cue



## BIBLE STORY

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## MOVE

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

### 1. HAPPY OR SAD?

**WHAT YOU NEED:** “Happy and Sad Faces” Activity Pages, white cardstock, and wall tape

#### WHAT YOU DO:

**BEFORE THE ACTIVITY:** Copy “Happy and Sad Faces” onto cardstock. Tape the pictures on the wall on opposite sides of the room at a preschooler’s eye level.

**DURING THE ACTIVITY:** Gather the children in the center of the room. Call out the scenarios below and instruct the children to walk to the happy face if they would feel happy or the sad face if they would feel sad in that situation. Between each situation, have the children return to you in the center of the room.

- It’s your birthday! Time for your party.
- You woke up with a sore throat. You don’t feel good.
- You dropped your painting on the floor while it was still wet and all the colors ran together.
- Your mom takes you to a brand new playground with a swing that goes really high!
- Your friend isn’t kind or willing to share.
- You open your lunch to find your very favorite snack!
- You fall on the playground and skin your knee.
- You get a package and a letter in the mail from your grandparents.
- It’s Sunday! Time for church where we learn about Jesus and see all our good friends.
- It rains all day long and you can’t go outside to ride your scooter.

#### WHAT YOU SAY:

**BEFORE THE ACTIVITY:** “Everyone come here and stand with me! Do you see the two faces I’ve taped on the wall? One is a happy face. Everyone show me your happy face! (Pause as children follow directions.) Great job! The other is a sad face. Show me your sad face. (Pause as children follow directions.) That’s it!”

**DURING THE ACTIVITY:** “Now I’m going to read about some different things that happen. I want you to think about how it would make you feel. If it would make you happy, I want you to walk to the happy face. If it would make you sad, walk to the sad face. Are you ready?” (Read each scenario above and then allow time for the children to walk to one of the faces.)

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

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STORY

GROUPS

HOME

15 MINUTES

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**EASTER**  
**MATTHEW 26:20-30;**  
**27:45-50; 28:1-7**



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## 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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**AFTER THE ACTIVITY:** "Some of these things—like celebrating a birthday or eating your favorite snack—can definitely make you happy. But some were sad too. In our Bible story today, we'll hear about a TRUE event that had some happy parts AND some sad parts. Let's be good listeners so we listen for the happy and sad parts."

**TRANSITION:** Move to Worship and Story by calling out different emotions for the children to show on their faces as you travel like happy, sad, scared, angry, surprised, frustrated, etc. Switch quickly between each emotion to keep interest high.



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GROUPS

HOME

15 MINUTES

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**27:45-50; 28:1-7**

## MEMORY VERSE

"A friend loves at all times."

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## PLAY

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

### 2. ROLL AND COME BACK

**WHAT YOU NEED:** Inflatable ball

**WHAT YOU DO:**

**BEFORE THE ACTIVITY:** Sit in a circle with the children.

**DURING THE ACTIVITY:** Roll the ball to one child and instruct him to roll it back to you. Continue the activity until each child has had the ball rolled to him and he has rolled it back.

**WHAT YOU SAY:**

**BEFORE THE ACTIVITY:** "Let's play a game with our friends!"

**DURING THE ACTIVITY:** (*Sit in a circle.*) "I am going to roll the ball to you and you can roll it back to me. (*Do activity.*) Great job!"

**AFTER THE ACTIVITY:** "The ball went away, but then it came back! Today we are going to hear about someone who went away but then came back. I am so excited to hear our Bible story today."

**TRANSITION:** Move to Worship and Story by telling the children that you are leaving to hear the Bible story and you will come back.



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15 MINUTES

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## IMAGINE

an activity that lets preschoolers pretend, imagine, and role play to enhance their learning

### 3. THE "COME BACK" TUNNEL

**WHAT YOU NEED:** A preschool tunnel

**WHAT YOU DO:**

**BEFORE THE ACTIVITY:** Set up the tunnel in an open area of the room.

**DURING THE ACTIVITY:** Line up the children in front of the tunnel. Let them take turns crawling in, and then encourage them to come back out. Repeat so that each child has a turn in the tunnel.

**WHAT YOU SAY:**

**DURING THE ACTIVITY:** "Everyone gather here with me. Let's line up in front of our tunnel. I want you to take turns. One at a time, a friend will climb through the tunnel. But once you get to the end, I want you to come back through the tunnel to all your friends. Are you ready? Let's go."

**AFTER THE ACTIVITY:** "Everyone came back! You are great crawlers. In our TRUE Bible story today, we'll hear about someone who went away but then came back. I can't wait for you to hear all about it!"

**TRANSITION:** Move to Worship and Story by walking several steps and then taking two steps back. Continue walking, stopping, and then going back a few steps, until you reach your Large Group 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**

God sent Jesus to be my friend forever.

**EASTER**  
**MATTHEW 26:20-30;**  
**27:45-50; 28:1-7**

**1. HEART HOP**

**WHAT YOU NEED:** "Heart" Activity Page, red cardstock, scissors, heart stickers (*one per child*), and floor tape

**WHAT YOU DO:**

**BEFORE THE ACTIVITY:** Copy "Heart" on cardstock and cut on dotted lines. You will need ten hearts per activity. Tape the hearts in a pathway on the floor about a foot apart.

**DURING THE ACTIVITY:** Invite the children to hop from heart to heart as they say the memory verse.

**AFTER THE ACTIVITY:** Give each child a heart sticker as they complete the path.

**WHAT YOU SAY:**

**BEFORE THE ACTIVITY:** "Let's get hopping!"

**DURING THE ACTIVITY:** "We are going to say our memory verse while we hop from heart to heart. Let's get started!" (*Do activity.*)

**AFTER THE ACTIVITY:** "Great job! Everyone gets a heart sticker. (*Give out stickers.*) Our memory verse tells us that a friend loves at ALL times. Jesus wants to be your friend forever. **Who is your friend? Jesus is my friend!**"

**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

SOCIAL

WORSHIP

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GROUPS

HOME

25 MINUTES

**TALK  
ABOUT GOD  
BIBLE STORY  
REVIEW**



**IMAGINE**

an activity that lets preschoolers pretend, imagine,  
and role play to enhance their learning

**BIBLE STORY**

God sent Jesus to  
be my friend forever.

**EASTER**  
**MATTHEW 26:20-30;**  
**27:45-50; 28:1-7**

**2. HAPPY OR SAD STORY RECALL**

**WHAT YOU NEED:** No supplies needed

**WHAT YOU DO:**

**DURING THE ACTIVITY:** Gather the children to sit in a circle on the floor in an open area of the room. Explain that you will review today's Bible story as they show happy or sad faces based on what happens.

**WHAT YOU SAY:**

**DURING THE ACTIVITY:** "Let's talk about what happened in our TRUE Bible story today. If I talk about a sad part, I want you to show me your sad face. If I talk about a happy part, let me see your happy face. Are you ready? Great!"

**MEMORY VERSE**

"A friend loves at all times."

**PROVERBS 17:17, NIRV**

"Today is Easter! We celebrate something very special today. (*Happy face.*) We come to church, we see our friends, and we say, 'Happy Easter!' Easter is a wonderful day to celebrate because the Easter story begins with God's love for everyone! (*Happy face.*) God loved us so much that He sent Jesus, His Son. Jesus is God's Son. That makes me so happy. (*Happy face.*) One day, Jesus told His friends that He would have to go away. (*Sad face.*) But He would come back! (*Happy face.*) One night, Jesus was in a garden praying when an angry group took Jesus away. They hurt Jesus and He died. (*Sad face.*)

**KEY QUESTION**

Who is your friend?

"All of his friends we so sad. They cried. (*Sad face.*) Some people put Jesus' body in a tomb and rolled a big stone in front of it. Three very sad days went by. One, two, three. (*Sad face.*) Then on the third day, something amazing happened! When Jesus' friends got to the tomb, the stone had been rolled away from the entrance and Jesus' body wasn't there! At first they were sad (*sad face*), but then Jesus came back, just like He said He would! (*Happy face.*) Everyone was so happy!"

**BOTTOM LINE**

Jesus is my friend.

**AFTER THE ACTIVITY:** "Jesus is ALIVE, and He wants to be your friend forever! (*Happy face.*) Tell me: **Who is your friend? Jesus is my friend.**"

**BASIC TRUTH**

Jesus wants to be  
my friend forever.



PRELUDE

SOCIAL

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GROUPS

HOME

25 MINUTES

**LIVE  
FOR GOD  
APPLICATION  
ACTIVITY**



**THINK**

an advanced activity specifically designed for older preschoolers

**BIBLE STORY**

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**MATTHEW 26:20-30;**  
**27:45-50; 28:1-7**

**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. SEQUENCE**

**WHAT YOU NEED:** "Sequence" Activity Pages, white cardstock, and wall tape

**WHAT YOU DO:**

**BEFORE THE ACTIVITY:** Copy the Activity Pages onto the cardstock. You will have five pictures. Spread the pictures on the floor in the activity area.

**DURING THE ACTIVITY:** Have the children sit in front of the pictures. Ask the children to work together to place pictures in order according of the story. The sequence is: Jesus, angry men, closed tomb, number three, and Jesus outside the tomb. Hang the pictures on a wall in the correct order.

**WHAT YOU SAY:**

**BEFORE THE ACTIVITY:** "We have heard an amazing story about how Jesus went away and CAME BACK!"

**DURING THE ACTIVITY:** "I have pictures from our Bible story. (*Point.*) Let's work together and see if we can put them in the correct order of the story. Which one do you think is first? (*Pause.*) The picture of Jesus is first! Jesus told His friends that He was leaving but that He would come back. (*Hang the picture on the wall.*) Great job! Which picture is next? (*Pause.*) The picture of the angry men. The angry men took Jesus away. (*Hang the picture on the wall.*) Do you know what happened next? (*Pause.*) Yes! Jesus was in the tomb. (*Hang the picture on the wall.*) How many days was Jesus in the tomb? (*Pause.*) YES! (*Hang up the picture of the number three.*) The last picture is of Jesus standing outside the tomb. Jesus CAME BACK!" (*Hang the picture on the wall.*)

**AFTER THE ACTIVITY:** "Great job, friends! Our Bible story tells us that Jesus came back and wants to be our friend FOREVER! **Who is your friend? Jesus is my friend!**"



first look™  
SMALL GROUP



WEEK

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APRIL 2019

3-5

YEAR-OLDS

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

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## MEMORY VERSE

"A friend loves at all times."

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## KEY QUESTION

Who is your friend?

## BOTTOM LINE

Jesus is my friend.

## BASIC TRUTH

Jesus wants to be my friend forever.

## 4. FRIENDSHIP DANCE

**WHAT YOU NEED:** Upbeat preschool music and a smart phone or music player

### WHAT YOU DO:

**DURING THE ACTIVITY:** Play the music and encourage the children to find a partner to dance with. When you say, "SWITCH," the children must find a new partner to dance with. Say, "SWITCH," every minute or so. Give children an opportunity to dance with three or four different friends.

### WHAT YOU SAY:

**DURING THE ACTIVITY:** "Friends, who likes to dance? (Pause.) You know what's better than dancing? Dancing with a friend! Choose a friend, and let's dance. But listen closely. When I say, 'SWITCH,' I want you to find a new friend to dance with. Ready? Does everyone have a friend to dance with? (Pause.) Let's dance!" (Do activity.)

**AFTER THE ACTIVITY:** "Whew! It is so fun to dance with our friends, isn't it? God sent Jesus to be your friend forever. **Who is your friend? Jesus is my friend!**"

**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**

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**EASTER**  
**MATTHEW 26:20-30;**  
**27:45-50; 28:1-7**

**5. TOMB CRAFT**

**WHAT YOU NEED:** "Tomb" and "Stone" Activity Pages, white paper, 16-oz. clear plastic cups (*one per child*), scissors, and clear tape

**WHAT YOU DO:**

**BEFORE THE ACTIVITY:** Copy the Activity Pages onto the white paper. Cut on the dotted lines on both Activity Pages. Each child will need one of each cutout.

**DURING THE ACTIVITY:** Help the children tape the tomb cutout inside one of the cups. Tape the cutout to the side of the cup so that when the cup is placed upside down the cutout is right side up. Be sure the bottom of the cutout is flush with the opening of the cup. Do the same thing with the "Stone" cutout with the second cup.

**AFTER THE ACTIVITY:** Turn both cups upside down. Place the stone cup on top of the tomb cup so that they are stacked. Invite the children to twist the top cup so that the stone covers Jesus in the tomb. Then ask the children to twist the top cup to move the stone to show that Jesus came back.

**WHAT YOU SAY:**

**BEFORE THE ACTIVITY:** "We are going to make a super cool craft today!"

**DURING THE ACTIVITY:** "We have a cutout of the tomb that Jesus was in and the stone that closed the tomb. We are going to use these cups to make the tomb open and close! Super cool!" (*Do activity.*)

**AFTER THE ACTIVITY:** "Great job! Twist the top cup to close the tomb with the stone. Now let's count to three. One, two, and three! Three days later the stone moved and (*twist cups to move the stone*) Jesus came back! Jesus is our friend! **Who is your friend? Jesus is my friend!**"

**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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PRELUDE

SOCIAL

WORSHIP

STORY

GROUPS

HOME

25 MINUTES

**PRAY  
TO GOD**  
PRAYER  
ACTIVITY



**REFLECT**

an activity that encourages personal application and prayer

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**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. Raise your hand if you can count to three. (*Pause for response.*) Count to three with me!"

**CHILDREN AND SGL:** "One! Two! Three!"

**SGL:** "Yay! We're going to count to three to get to our Small Group spot today. Follow me and do what I do.

(*Count to three as you take steps to your Small Group spot. Clap on three each time until you reach your Small Group spot.*)

"We made it! Let's sit down and talk about today's Bible story now. We have to count to three one more time. One, two, three, sit down with me!

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

**SGL:** "Something VERY special happened not on day one, not on day two, but on day THREE of our Bible story. Do you remember what happened on day three? (*Pause for response.*) Yes! Jesus came back on day three!

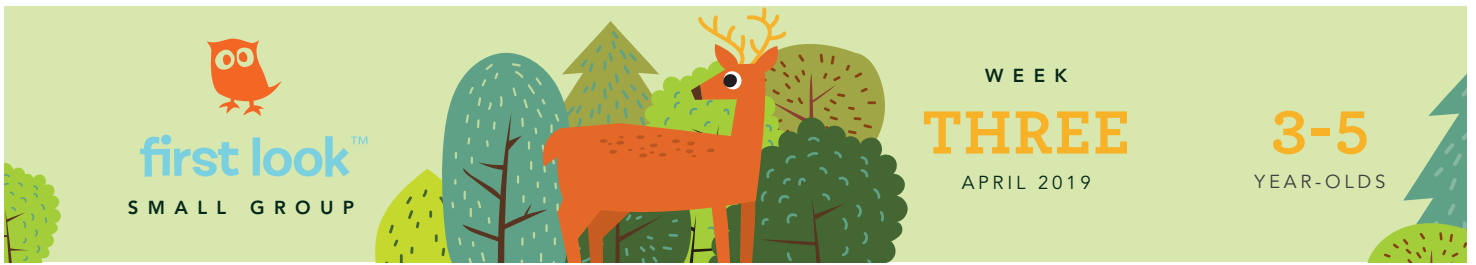
"Jesus told His friends that He had to go away, but He promised He would come back. Then some angry people took Him away. They hurt Jesus so bad that He died. BUT, on day three, what did Jesus do? (*Pause for response.*) YES! Jesus came back, just like He promised!

"Jesus is alive and He is your friend. **Who is your friend?**"

**CHILDREN AND SGL:** "**Jesus is my friend.**"

**SGL:** "And not only is Jesus your friend, but Jesus also wants to be your friend FOREVER! Who wants to be your friend forever?"

**CHILDREN AND SGL:** "**Jesus wants to be my friend forever!**"



PRELUDE

SOCIAL

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25 MINUTES

**PRAY  
TO GOD  
PRAYER  
ACTIVITY**



**REFLECT**

an activity that encourages personal application and prayer

**SGL:** "He sure does! And Jesus is the best friend we will ever have. Do you know why Jesus is the best friend we will ever have? Jesus loves us at all times, just like it says in the Bible verse we have been learning.

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

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

*(Close Bible and lay it down.)*

"Let's stand up and say this verse together with the motions. Ready?"

**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:** "I think you'll be ready to say that all by yourself next time! Make sure you practice at home. Now let's sit 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 our friends. Guess which friend's name goes at the top in super big letters? JESUS!

*(Write "JESUS" across the top of the page in your journal.)*

"Now, when we make our list of friends to pray for, we will remember that Jesus is our friend, too—the BEST friend!  
**Who is your friend?"**

**CHILDREN AND SGL:** "Jesus is my friend!"

**SGL:** "Okay, when I say your name, tell me one friend and I'll write their name in our prayer journal.

*(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.)*

"Now we have a list of our friends to pray for, including the best friend EVER: JESUS! Would anyone like to pray before I pray?"

PRELUDE

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25 MINUTES

**PRAY**  
**TO GOD**  
PRAYER  
ACTIVITY



**REFLECT**

an activity that encourages personal application and prayer

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

**PRAYER**

**SGL:** "Dear God, thank You for giving us so many great friends. Thank You for *(read the list the children made)*. We want to say a very, very, VERY special thank You for our good friend Jesus. Jesus is the best friend we will ever have. Thank You that He made a way for us to be with You forever and that Jesus came back just like He promised. I pray *(name each child in your small group)* will believe that Jesus is alive and He wants to be their friend forever. We love You, God. In Jesus' name, amen."