

FIRST IMPRESSION OF A LOVING HEAVENLY FATHER

CURRICULUM FOR PRESCHOOLERS

1

Editor in Chief
Kristi Lemoine

Creative Director
Kendra Fleming

Copy Editor
Wendi Zebell

Curriculum Writers
Ashley Hiers
Autumn Ward
Melanie Williams

Illustrators &
Graphic Designers
Jodi Blackwell
Jeff Gribble
Julie Shefchunas

We want preschoolers to take a **first look** at who God is and understand...

God made me • God loves me

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Chief Creative Officer
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Chief Executive Officer
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Technical and Web Support
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John Estes
Howard Odom

Partner Support
Debbie Joiner
Leigha Montgomery

Jesus wants to be my friend for ever

5

open my eyes so that i can see the **wonderful truths**...Psalm 119:18

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Jesus wants to be my friend forever.

Key Question: Who is your friend?

Bottom Line: *Jesus is a good friend.*

Memory Verse: "A friend loves at all times."

Proverbs 17:17, NIV

Bible Story Focus: I'm happy to know Jesus.

Entry Celebration • Matthew 21:1-16

April 9, 2006

Here's an overview of what you'll be teaching 3s-5s this week.

Make It Fun

(Choose one or all of these activities)

- Be a Botanist
- Be a Fashionista
- Make a Face and a List

Make It True

- Introductory Sketch
- Bible Story
- Worship

Make It Stick

(Choose as many of these activities as you like)

- Re-enact the Story (Bible story review)
- Paperback Writer
- Face It
- Celebrate!
- Pillow Talk

Make It Real

- Small Group Time
- Prayer
- Dismiss: Small Talk cards

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Make it fun

INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITIES

10 MINUTES

Prepare to offer one or more of the following activities as your 3-, 4-, or 5-year-olds arrive. Let one or two teachers lead activities in different areas of the room while another teacher greets parents and kids at the door.

BE A BOTANIST

Whatcha Do: Lay the branches on the white paper. Guide kids to examine and feel the palm branches. Encourage them to describe the branches' color, shape, texture, weight, height, smell, etc. *Note: Be prepared to take the palm branches to large group with you.*

Whatcha Say: "Today our Bible story has something to do with these palm branches. I wonder what it could be? Do you know what it could be about? We'll find out in a few minutes."

WHAT CHA NEED

- Palm fronds from your local florist
- Magnifying glasses
- White art paper

BE A FASHIONISTA

Whatcha Do: Cut a slit in each child's piece of muslin as shown on "Make a Coat." Guide children to decorate their coats however they wish with the crayons or markers. *Note: Be prepared to take the coats to large group with you.*

Whatcha Say: "These coats are kind of like the coats people wore in Bible times. Today our Bible story has something to do with coats. I wonder what it could be? Do you know what it could be about? We'll find out in a few minutes."

WHAT CHA NEED

- A copy of "Make a Coat" (from the Activity Pages on the Web site)
- About 1½ yards of plain muslin for each child
- Scissors
- Crayons or markers

MAKE A FACE AND A LIST

Whatcha Do: Play a facial expressions game by asking kids to show you their happy, sad, angry, excited, afraid, or confused faces as you call out each one. Make it fun and suspenseful by varying how you call out the feelings. You can whisper them, say them slowly, or say them quickly.

Then ask kids to tell you what they say when they're excited or happy about something, like a good play at a soccer game. Write their answers on the tear sheet. Answers might include: "Yee haw!" "Wow!" "Cool!" "Yea!" "That's great!" Be sure to include the word "Hurray" on the list. Keep the list for use during Make It Stick.

Whatcha Say: "In today's Bible story, some people were feeling pretty excited about something. Let's go to large group to find out what it was."

WHAT CHA NEED

- A tear sheet
- Marker

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Make it true

LARGE GROUP

15 MINUTES

After children have participated in Make It Fun, gather them for a large group time that includes an introductory sketch, a Bible story, and interactive worship.

Choose an adult who relates well to preschoolers to tell the Introductory Sketch. If possible, use the same adult all year. To add variety, consider videotaping the sketch and playing the video during Make It True.

A Worship Leader and live instruments are recommended. Encourage children to be active during worship by providing suggested materials and/or incorporating appropriate hand motions as described in the teaching instructions that follow.

INTRODUCTORY SKETCH

HOST: "Hi, kids. Boy, have I been busy. I've been at my house doing all my spring cleaning. While I was cleaning out a closet, I came across an old fishing pole and this model airplane. They remind me of when my grandfather used to come and visit me when I was about your age. We would have the best time.

"I loved it when my grandfather would spend the night at my house. He was one of my most special friends. He would always sleep on the bottom bunk of my bed while I slept on the top bunk. It was like a

WHAT CHA NEED

- A fishing pole
- A model airplane

spend-the-night party. When my grandfather stayed with us, he would show me how to do things no one else could do. We would put model airplanes together (*hold up the airplane*), make our own kites, and go fishing (*hold up the fishing pole*). It was great having my grandfather around. (*Set the fishing pole and airplane aside.*)

"As soon as my mom would tell me that my grandfather was coming for a visit, I would start getting ready. I would help my mom put clean sheets on my bed, clean up my room, and of course get the fishing stuff ready. Sometimes I would draw special pictures for him and lay them on his bed for him to find.

"After I had gotten everything ready for my grandfather, the waiting began. I would sit in my bedroom and look out the window to see if he was coming down the road. Sometimes it seemed like forever. As soon as I would see his truck pull in the driveway, I would go running through the house yelling, 'He's here! He's here!' Thanks to me, the whole house knew when my grandfather arrived.

"My grandfather was always a good friend to me. Over the years I have had a lot of good friends, but there is one friend who has always been extra special. His name is Jesus, and He wants to be your friend, too. **Who is your friend?** 🌟 **Jesus is a good friend.** Can you say that with me? **Who is your friend?**"

KIDS and HOST: 🌟 "Jesus is a good friend."

HOST: "I like knowing that 🤝 **Jesus wants to be my friend forever.** No matter what, I will always have Jesus. Now let's listen up for our Bible story."

Jesus wants to be
my friend
forever

BIBLE STORY

Copy all the donkey illustrations and cut them out. Lay the two adult donkey heads on top of each other so the edges match and the donkey head can be seen on either side. Do the same with the colt's head. Staple the top and two sides of each set of the heads together, leaving the bottom open. Slide the adult donkey head onto a yardstick and use clear packing tape to secure the head to the stick. Slide the colt head onto a ruler and use clear packing tape to secure the head to the ruler.

STORYTELLER: "The Bible tells us about God. Our story today is about Jesus, God's Son. Did you know that Jesus is your friend? **Who is your friend?** ✨ **Jesus is a good friend.** Jesus is a friend to us, and He was a friend to the people in today's Bible story.

"I need your help to tell today's Bible story. I want you all to pretend to be the people who saw Jesus. When I tell you to, lay your coats or palm branches on the road where I'm standing. Listen closely so you know when to use your palm branches and coats. Right now I need you to stand along the sides of this pretend road. (*Help the children line the sides of the road outline.*) Great! Now, before we go any further, I want to show you the donkeys. They're going to help me tell the story, too. (*Stand at the end of the road outline and hold the two donkeys you've prepared.*)

"Okay, I think we're ready. One day, Jesus was going into the city of Jerusalem. Jesus told two of His disciples to go and get two donkeys—a mother and her colt. A colt is a young donkey. This will be the mama donkey (*hold up the donkey on the yardstick*), and this will be her colt (*hold up the donkey on the ruler*). The disciples did what Jesus said. They brought the donkey and her colt back to Jesus.

"Jesus' friends, the disciples, took their coats and spread them over the donkeys. (*Ask two children to lay their coats over the sticks of the two donkeys. Tilt the donkeys at an angle so the coats won't fall off.*) Jesus sat on the coats. The people in Jerusalem had heard that Jesus was coming and they were excited to see Him. They were so excited that they stood along the road and watched as He came into the city. As Jesus went

- A Bible marked at Matthew 21:1-16
- The palm branches used in "Be a Botanist" during Make It Fun
- The coats kids made in "Be a Fashionista" during Make It Fun
- A yardstick
- Ruler
- A copy of "Donkeys' Heads" (from the Activity Pages on the Web Site)
- Scissors
- Stapler
- Clear packing tape
- A road outline drawn on a piece of brown art paper and taped to the floor with masking tape

WHAT CHA NEED

along the road (*start walking down the road, holding the two donkeys to the side of you*), people laid their coats on the road. (*Ask the children to lay their coats on the road outline.*) They did this to show how much they loved Him. Other people cut branches from palm trees and laid them on the road. (*Ask the children to lay their palm branches on the road outline.*) They wanted to show how much they loved Jesus, too.

"As Jesus made His way down the road, people were walking in front of Him and behind Him shouting, 'Hooray! Hooray!' Say that with me."

KIDS and STORYTELLER: "Hooray! Hooray!"

STORYTELLER: "They were so happy to see Him. Even the children were shouting, 'Hooray! Hooray!' Say it with me again."

KIDS and STORYTELLER: "Hooray! Hooray!"

STORYTELLER: (*Lay the donkeys aside and ask the children to sit down.*)

"The people in our Bible story were so happy to see Jesus and to know Jesus. I'm happy that I know Jesus, too. 🌟 **Jesus is a good friend.**

Who is your friend? 🌟 **Jesus is a good friend.** Best of all, 🤝 **Jesus wants to be my friend forever.** Just like the people in the story, we can celebrate today because we have a good friend like Jesus. **Who is your friend?"**

KID and STORYTELLER: 🌟 "Jesus is a good friend."

STORYTELLER: "That's right. 🤝 **Jesus wants to be my friend forever.** There will never be a time when I don't have my good friend Jesus."

PRAYER

STORYTELLER: "Now let's close our eyes and pray. Dear God, I praise You. I say 'Hooray' to You today, God. You are awesome. Thank You for Your Son, Jesus. Thank You that Jesus is such a good friend. Amen."

"A friend loves at all times."

PROVERBS 17:17


WORSHIP

WORSHIP LEADER: (*Open the Bible to Proverbs 17:17.*) "The Bible says in Proverbs 17:17 that 'a friend loves at all times.' This Bible verse lets me know that Jesus loves me all the time because Jesus is my good friend. He loves me in the morning, at night, when I'm happy—like the people in today's Bible story—or sad. He even loves me when I do something wrong. Jesus loves me at all times. Because Jesus loves me at all times, I can love others. Let's say the Bible verse together. I'll do some motions to help you remember it."

KIDS and WORSHIP LEADER: "'A friend (*shake someone's hand*) loves (*hug yourself*) at all times' (*move hands up and around to the sides in a big circular motion and then point to your wrist where a watch goes*), Proverbs 17:17 (*open your hands as if reading from a book*)." (*Repeat once more.*)

WORSHIP LEADER: "Knowing that Jesus loves me at all times makes me want to sing!"

Lead children in singing "So Good to Me," track 2, from the CD *Shout to the Lord Kids!* Encourage children to dance, shout, leap, and spin as each is mentioned in the song.

WORSHIP LEADER: "You all sound so good. Are you happy to know Jesus? (*Pause for responses.*) I can't hear you. Are you happy to know Jesus? (*Pause.*) Okay, now I can hear you. We should be happy because  **Jesus wants to be my friend forever.** Can you say that with me? (*Let kids repeat the phrase with you.*) Let's sing and let God know that we're happy."

Lead children in singing "Happy & You Know It," track 7, from the CD *KidStuf Classics: Get Down.*

WORSHIP LEADER: "You did a great job letting God know that you're happy to know Jesus. Hearing your voices singing to Him makes Him happy, too. Let's listen to find out where (*say teacher's name*) wants us to go next."

- WHAT CHA NEED**
- A NIV Bible marked at Proverbs 17:17
 - A CD player
 - The CDs *KidStuf Classics: Get Down* and *Shout to the Lord Kids!*
 - Also, use this month's original worship song, which you can download from the Web site, during this segment or whenever you like this month.

Jesus wants to be my friend forever.

Key Question: Who is your friend?

Bottom Line: *Jesus is a good friend.*

Memory Verse: "A friend loves at all times."

Proverbs 17:17, NIV

Bible Story Focus: I'm happy to know Jesus.

Entry Celebration • Matthew 21:1-16

Make it stick

APPLICATION ACTIVITIES

35 MINUTES

These activities are designed to help preschoolers understand and remember today's Bible story and Bottom Line. Offer as many of the following activities as your time, facilities, resources, and leadership allow. You may want to lead one activity at a time. Or offer two activities at once and allow half of the kids to participate in each, then switch groups and repeat the activities.

Re-enact the Story

Whatcha Do: Lead kids to re-enact the Bible story as it was told earlier. Let them take turns being the disciples who led the donkeys to Jesus, placing coats and branches on the road outline, being Jesus and the two donkeys walking down the road outline, and being the people cheering for Jesus.

Whatcha Say: "The people were so happy to know Jesus that they cheered and yelled, 'Hurray! Here comes Jesus!' ★ **Jesus is a good friend.** He's a good friend to you and to me. I'm happy to know Jesus."

WHAT CHA NEED

- The palm branches used in Make It Fun and Make It True
- The coats used in Make It Fun and Make It True
- The donkeys made and used during Make It True
- The list made in "Make a Face and a List" during Make It Fun
- The road outline used in Make It True

Paperback Writer

Whatcha Do: Give each child a set of the "Bible Story Scenes" that have been cut apart. Lead each child to put the pictures in order. Fold two pieces of cardstock in half for each child and nest the pages inside each other. Staple or hole punch and tie the pieces of cardstock together to form a book. Guide kids to glue the "Bible Story Scenes" to the cardstock pages in the order of the story. Then encourage them to design a cover for their book. They may also add art elements to the story scenes. They may wish to color the children in scene 6, glue brown felt for someone's hair, or glue fabric scraps as people's clothes. Older children may want to write "Hurray" or other words from the list made during Make It Fun on the scene 6 page.

Whatcha Say: "I'm happy to know Jesus. The people who saw Jesus coming into town riding on the donkey were happy to know Him. The children who saw Jesus at the temple were happy to know Him, too. **Who is your friend?** (Pause for responses.) Yes, Jesus. **Jesus is a good friend** to everyone, kids as well as grown-ups."

WHAT CHA NEED

- A copy of "Bible Story Scenes" (from the Activity Pages on the Web site) cut apart for each child
- Two pieces of cardstock for each child
- A stapler or hole punch
- Yarn
- Glue
- Gray or brown felt
- Fabric scraps
- Green tissue paper
- Crayons or markers



Face It

Plan for no more than six children to participate in this activity at one time.

Whatcha Do: Place the "Faces" cutouts on the floor face up in a grid. Place the "Scenario Cards" in the sack or bucket. Invite the kids to take turns drawing cards. As a child draws a card, help her read the card aloud, and then guide her to point to a face cutout that expresses how she'd feel in the same situation. Talk about the memory verse.

Whatcha Say: "Who are some of your friends? (Pause for responses.) I'm so glad you have so many friends. Who else is your friend? (Pause.) Yes, Jesus is your friend. ★ **Jesus is a good friend**, the best friend we could ever have. Does anyone remember our Bible verse? (Invite a volunteer to open the Bible to the marked page.) 'A friend loves at all times,' Proverbs 17:17. A friend loves us when we're feeling happy, sad, or any other way. 'A friend loves at all times.'"

WHAT CHA NEED

- "Faces" cutouts from "Make a Face" during Make It Stick last week
- "Scenario Cards" (from the Activity Pages on the Web site) cut apart
- A colorful gift sack or decorated paint bucket
- A Bible marked at Proverbs 17:17

Jesus wants to be
my friend
forever

Celebrate!

Whatcha Do: Tape the numbered pieces of paper on the floor in a circle like the face of a clock. Invite each child to stand on a number. Play the music and call out a way for the kids to move clockwise around the circle in celebration. They could skip, jump, hop, twirl, or raise their hands in the air. Stop the music suddenly and lead kids to call out a cheer, perhaps using a phrase from the list you brainstormed in "Make a Face and a List" during Make It Fun. Continue in this fashion, calling out a different way to move when you restart the music.

Whatcha Say: "I'm so happy to know Jesus! It makes me feel like celebrating! ✨ **Jesus is a good friend!** 🤝 **Jesus wants to be my friend forever,** and He wants to be your friend forever, too! Can you say this with me? ✨ **Jesus is a good friend.**"

WHAT CHA NEED

- Twelve different colored pieces of paper numbered 1 to 12
- Masking tape
- CD player
- A CD of lively worship music

Pillow Talk

Whatcha Do: Lay out a pillow, blanket, or mat for each child. Play the music as you invite everyone to lie down on their backs. Lead everyone to flex and relax their muscles as suggested in the "Pillow Talk Script."

Whatcha Say: See the "Pillow Talk Script."

WHAT CHA NEED

- A copy of the "Pillow Talk Script" (from the Activity Pages on the Web site)
- CD player
- CD of relaxing instrumental music
- Pillows, blankets, or mats

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Entry Celebration • Matthew 21:1-16

Make it real

SMALL GROUP

5 MINUTES

Make It Real is designed to help preschoolers understand how the Bottom Line applies to them. They'll discuss real-life experiences and share prayer requests.

Divide kids into small groups of about five to eight children with each leader. Ideally, assign the same small group leader to the same group of preschoolers for the entire year.

small group time

SMALL GROUP LEADER

(SGL): "What an exciting and fun morning we've

had. Just like the people in today's Bible story, it makes me so happy to know Jesus. Raise your hand if you're happy to know Jesus today.

(Make sure you raise your hand, too.) It makes me happy to know that

 **Jesus wants to be my friend forever. Who is your friend?**

 **Jesus is a good friend.**

"Does anyone remember the picture for the journal this month?

(Pause.) It's an alarm clock. *(Show the picture in the journal.)* Who can

tell me why we have a picture of a clock in our journal? *(Pause for*

responses.) The clock helps us remember what our Bible verse says.

(Allow a child to open the Bible to the marked verse and read it aloud.)

Proverbs 17:17 says, 'A friend loves at all times.' No matter what time this clock says it is, I know that Jesus loves me because He is my

friend forever. **Who is your friend?**  **Jesus is a good friend."**


WHAT CHA NEED


- Use a bookmark or sticky note to mark Proverbs 17:17 in a NIV Bible.
- Highlight or underline the verse.
- Provide a journal and a fun-shaped pen for each small group.

prayer

SGL: "Let's make a list of some things that make us happy. (Write down in the prayer journal at least one thing for each child that makes them happy.) Now that we have our list, we're going to praise God together just like the people did in our Bible story. I'll read the list and then count to three. When I say three, I want all of us to say 'Hooray!' just like the people in our Bible story."

get ready to dismiss

Set any take-home creations where you or parents can get them easily. Greet parents at the door and give them a copy of Small Talk. Encourage parents to use Small Talk throughout the week as they continue helping their child understand that  **Jesus is a good friend.**

If a parent did not receive a magnet last week, explain that this month preschoolers are learning that  **Jesus is a good friend.** Point out this month's memory verse and symbol. Encourage parents to put the magnet on their refrigerator so they can see it often and reinforce their child's learning at home during the month.

WHAT CHA NEED

- Copy this week's Small Talk onto cardstock and cut the cards apart. Make copies of "April Magnet" (from the Activity Pages on the Web site) available for parents who did not receive one last week.