



JESUS WANTS TO BE MY FRIEND FOREVER



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BASIC TRUTH

**JESUS WANTS TO BE MY FRIEND
FOREVER.**

KEY QUESTION

WHO DOES JESUS LOVE?

BOTTOM LINE

JESUS LOVES EVERYONE.

MEMORY VERSE

**"Love each other as I have loved
you." John 15:12, NIV**

BIBLE STORY FOCUS

**Jesus loves us when we do
something wrong.
Zacchaeus • Luke 19:1-10**

MAKE IT FUN

Prepare to offer one or more of the following activities as your preschoolers arrive. Let one or two teachers lead small groups of children in activities throughout the room while another teacher greets parents and kids at the door.

- Hidden Heart
- Coin Toss
- Making Hearts

MAKE IT TRUE (LARGE GROUP)

- Worship
- Bible Story

MAKE IT STICK

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 the kids to participate in each, then switch groups and repeat the activities.

- Love Each Other
- Zacchaeus
- In Love
- Jesus Loves Everyone



MAKE IT FUN

Activities designed to draw children into the classroom and introduce vocabulary and concepts needed for the Bible story.



MOVEMENT

An activity that uses a preschooler's natural desire to move to help them learn and grow.

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HIDDEN HEART

"Hidden Heart" is an activity that introduces this week's Bible story while children use cognitive and gross motor skills.

WHAT YOU NEED: Heart pillow

WHAT YOU DO:

Before the Activity: Hide the heart pillow in the room.

During the Activity: Play "Hide and Seek" with the heart pillow. Have kids look for the hidden heart. Give clues as needed. Repeat as many times as desired.

After the Activity: Sit down together and pass the heart around as you introduce the Bible story.

WHAT YOU SAY:

Before the Activity: "Hello, friends! We have a fun game to play today! I have hidden a heart in the room and I want you to find it!"

During the Activity: "We'll need to look high and low to find the heart! Let's get started! (Pause.) Great job finding the heart! Let's play again. (Have another leader hide the heart while you distract the kids.) Where could it be? (Pause.) Is it high or low? (Pause.) (Repeat as many times as desired.) Great job! Come sit with me on the floor."

After the Activity: "That was so much fun! We had to look low and look high up on our tiptoes to look for the hidden heart! In our Bible story today we are going to hear about a short little man who didn't have a happy heart who had to climb up in a tree to see someone who loved him. I wonder who it was."



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GAME

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

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COIN TOSS

"Coin Toss" is an activity that introduces this week's Bible story while encouraging kids to use their hand-eye coordination, counting, and gross and fine motor skills.

WHAT YOU NEED: Beach/sand buckets, painter's tape, and large play coins

WHAT YOU DO:

Before the Activity: Place buckets in an open area on the floor spaced apart. Place a piece of tape on the floor about three feet in front of the buckets.

During the Activity: Give kids a couple of coins and have them toss them into the buckets. Pick up the coins that didn't make it into the buckets and toss them again. Repeat as many times as desired.

After the Activity: Count the coins in the buckets and introduce the Bible story.

WHAT YOU SAY:

Before the Activity: "Come stand with me at this line. (Pause.) Look at all those buckets! We are going to toss these coins and try to get them into the buckets."

During the Activity: "Ready, set, toss! (Pause.) Great job! Have all the coins been tossed? (Pause.) Okay, let's go get all the coins that aren't in the buckets and bring them back to the line. (Pause.) Okay, ready to toss again? (Pause.) Ready, set, toss! (Repeat as many times as desired.) That was fun! Come sit with me around the buckets."

After the Activity: "Let's count how many coins we got into the buckets. (Count out loud.) Wow! You guys got (number of coins) in the buckets! Great tossing! Today in our Bible story we are going to hear about a man whose job was to collect coins from all the people."



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INVESTIGATION/ROLE PLAY

An activity that channels either a preschooler's innate curiosity or desire to play dress up into a discussion of concepts crucial to the lesson.

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MAKING HEARTS

"Making Hearts" is an activity that introduces this week's Bible story while encouraging kids to use their fine motor skills to make hearts out of Play-Doh®.

WHAT YOU NEED: Different sizes of heart-shaped cookie cutters, and Play-Doh®.

WHAT YOU DO:

Before the Activity: Divide Play-Doh® into smaller balls.

During the Activity: Help kids flatten out the dough and show them how to make cutouts with the cookie cutters. Have fun making lots of different hearts.

After the Activity: Introduce the Bible story.

WHAT YOU SAY:

Before the Activity: "Hey friends, come sit with me. I have Play-Doh® for us to play with today!"

During the Activity: "Everybody gets a little ball of Play-Doh®. Squish it flat and then use a cookie cutter to make a heart cutout. (*Demonstrate.*) You try. (*Pause.*) Great job! Let's make some more. (*Pause.*) Can you make a heart like this? (*Roll up the scraps like a snake and then bend it to make a heart outline.*) Give it a try. (*Pause.*) Super duper! Look at all the hearts we have on the table!"

After the Activity: "Today we are going to hear a Bible story about love. That's why we've been making hearts, because hearts make me think of love."



MAKE IT STICK

Activities designed to reinforce the Bible story and bottom line.



MEMORY VERSE REVIEW

An activity that encourages preschoolers to learn the monthly memory verse.

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LOVE EACH OTHER

"Love Each Other" is an activity that helps kids recite this month's Memory Verse while hopping from heart to heart.

WHAT YOU NEED: Hearts from "Heartscotch" in Week 1, and painter's tape

WHAT YOU DO:

Before the Activity: Arrange hearts in a straight line, spaced out just a bit. Tape to secure to the floor.

During the Activity: Say this month's Memory Verse as you go from heart to heart. Repeat as many times as desired.

After the Activity: Say the Bottom Line together.

WHAT YOU SAY:

Before the Activity: "Come stand with me at this heart. (Pause.) We are going to hop from heart to heart as we say our Memory Verse today!"

During the Activity: "Every time we step on a heart, we'll say a word in our verse. (Say a word as you hop on each heart.) 'Love each other as I have loved you,' John 15:12. Let's do it again. (Repeat as many times as desired.) Super job! Sit down on the floor right where you are."

After the Activity: "Today we heard a story from the Bible about a man named Zacchaeus and how Jesus loved him and wanted to be his friend even when he had been bad. Jesus loves everyone all the time. **Who does Jesus love? Jesus loves everyone!**"



MAKE IT STICK

Activities designed to reinforce the Bible story and bottom line.



BIBLE STORY REVIEW

An activity that reviews the entire Bible story in a fun and interactive way allowing preschoolers that repetition they crave.

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ZACCHAEUS

"Zacchaeus" is an activity that retells the Bible story while the children add hearts to their papers.

WHAT YOU NEED: "Zacchaeus" from the Activity Pages found on the Website, copy paper, heart stickers, and a marker

WHAT YOU DO:

Before the Activity: Copy "Zacchaeus" on copy paper, one per child.

During the Activity: Retell the Bible story as kids point out Zacchaeus and Jesus and add heart stickers to their papers. Write their names on the back of their papers.

After the Activity: Say the Bottom Line.

WHAT YOU SAY:

Before the Activity: "In our Bible story today we heard a story about a man named Zacchaeus. Say that with me: Zacchaeus. Great!"

During the Activity: "Zacchaeus wasn't liked by many people. He had a job as a tax collector. That meant that he went around and collected money from everyone. The people had to give Zacchaeus part of what they earned to pay their taxes. Nobody liked this. But the worst part is Zacchaeus was taking more money than he was supposed to and keeping the extra money for himself. He would send some of it to the guys in charge like he was supposed to for taxes and then KEEP the rest for himself. Zacchaeus was STEALING! And people were really mad at him.

"One day, Jesus came to town. Everyone really wanted to see him. Even Zacchaeus the thief wanted to see him. But Zacchaeus was short and he couldn't see Jesus over the crowd. So he climbed up in a tree to get a better view. Look at your paper. Do you see Zacchaeus up in the tree? (Pause.) There he is! Zacchaeus could see Jesus much better from up there. And you will NEVER guess what happened! When Jesus walked by the tree that Zacchaeus was in, He looked up in the tree and He said, 'Zacchaeus, you come down. For I'm coming to visit you at your house today.' Show me Jesus on your paper. (Pause.) That's right! There's Jesus. The people in



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the crowd couldn't believe it! Jesus was talking to a thief. Why would Jesus want to spend any time with someone like that? *(Pause.)* Didn't He know what Zacchaeus had done? *(Pause.)*

"Zacchaeus came down from that tree and Jesus went to his house that day. Because Jesus loves us even when we do something wrong. Put a heart sticker on your paper. *(Pause.)* Jesus loves you when you get a time out. Put a heart sticker on your paper. *(Pause.)* Jesus loves you when you pitch a fit. Put a heart sticker on your paper. *(Pause.)* Jesus loves you when you don't share your toys. Put a heart sticker on your paper. *(pause)* and when you don't obey your mommy or daddy. Put a heart sticker on your paper. *(Pause.)* Jesus told Zacchaeus that He loved him too and that Zacchaeus needed to make things right and apologize. Put a heart sticker on your paper. *(Pause.)* He needed to give back the money he'd stolen. Zacchaeus did! Put a heart sticker on your paper. *(Pause.)* He gave them back even MORE than he'd stolen." *(Write children's names on their papers.)*

After the Activity: "Wow! Your paper is full of LOVE! That's what happens when you know Jesus loves you. Jesus loves you when you follow all the rules AND when you mess up. Jesus loves everyone. **Who does Jesus love? Jesus loves everyone.**"



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IN LOVE

"In Love" is an activity that encourages kids to use their gross motor and balance skills.

WHAT YOU NEED: Painter's tape

WHAT YOU DO:

Before the Activity: Make a large heart outline on the floor with the painters tape. (Note: If possible, keep the heart outline for Make It Stick in Weeks 3 and 4.)

During the Activity: Stand on the heart. Ask the Key Question. Shout the Bottom Line and jump inside the heart. Repeat as many times as desired.

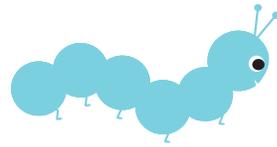
After the Activity: Sit down on the heart and say the Bottom Line together.

WHAT YOU SAY:

Before the Activity: "Hey friends, look at this great big heart! Come over and find a spot here on the heart."

During the Activity: "I'm going to ask you: **Who does Jesus love?** When you answer, I want you to jump in the heart and shout **Jesus loves everyone!** Ready? (Pause.) **Who does Jesus love?** (Jump.) **Jesus loves everyone!** Great job! This time when I ask you who Jesus loves, I want you to jump back on the heart. Ready? (Pause.) **Who does Jesus love?** (Jump.) **Jesus loves everyone!** Super duper! (Repeat as many times as desired.) Great! Now find a seat on the heart."

After the Activity: "Jesus loves everyone, and He wants to be your friend and my friend forever. **Who does Jesus love? Jesus loves everyone.**"



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CRAFT

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

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JESUS LOVES EVERYONE

"Jesus Loves Everyone" is an activity that reintroduces the Bible story and Bottom Line while children use their fine motor skills to fill the heart with tissue paper squares.

WHAT YOU NEED: "Jesus Loves" from the Activity Pages found on the Website, cardstock, multiple colors of tissue paper, glue sticks, and a marker

WHAT YOU DO:

Before the Activity: Copy "Jesus Loves" on cardstock, one per child. Cut one- or two-inch squares of tissue paper.

During the Activity: Talk about the Bible story as kids glue tissue to their hearts. Write names on papers.

After the Activity: Say the Bottom Line together and put papers aside to dry.

WHAT YOU SAY:

Before the Activity: "The Bible story about Zacchaeus is another great lesson of how Jesus loves everyone, all the time!"

During the Activity: "Look on your paper. What do you see? (Pause.) A heart! It's an empty one! See these pretty pieces of paper? (Pause.) You are going to use these to fill in your heart. So first we need to rub the glue stick over the heart and then you can start putting the papers on. (Pause.) Jesus loves me. Jesus loves you.

Jesus loves everyone. Jesus loves us all the time—when we're good and when we're bad. Zacchaeus was not nice and took money that didn't belong to him but Jesus still loved him. And because Jesus loved him, Zacchaeus knew he had done the wrong thing and gave back the money he took. **Jesus loves everyone.** Look at your pretty hearts! (Write names on papers and take up.)"

After the Activity: "I'm so glad that Jesus wants to My Friend and Your Friend Forever. Jesus loves me, and you, and you. (Point to all the kids.) **Who does Jesus love? Jesus loves everyone.** Say it again. **Jesus loves everyone.**"