



# JESUS WANTS TO BE MY FRIEND FOREVER.



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### BASIC TRUTH

JESUS WANTS TO BE  
MY FRIEND FOREVER.

### KEY QUESTION

WHY IS JESUS SPECIAL?

### BOTTOM LINE

JESUS IS GOD'S SON.

### MEMORY VERSE

"I bring you good news of great  
joy." Luke 2:10, NLV

### BIBLE STORY FOCUS

The angels tell about Jesus.  
Shepherds • Luke 2:6-18



This symbol indicates an activity with potential allergens. Be sure to post allergy alert sign and inform parents at drop-off.

## 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.

- Who's in the Gift?
-  Sheep Round Up
- Find It!

## MAKE IT TRUE (LARGE GROUP)

- Worship
- Introductory Sketch
- 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.

- Greatest News!
- Roll the Christmas Dice
- Patterns
- Big Surprise
- My Special Gift

## MAKE IT REAL

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
- Prayer



## 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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## WHO'S IN THE GIFT?

"Who's in the Gift?" is an activity that uses gross motor and memory skills to introduce today's Bible story.

**WHAT YOU NEED:** A box large enough for a preschooler to fit in, Christmas gift wrap, tape, and scissors

### WHAT YOU DO:

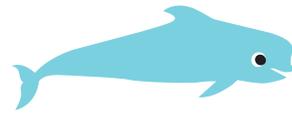
**Before the Activity:** Cut out the bottom of the box. Wrap the rest of the box in the Christmas paper using the tape and scissors.

**During the Activity:** Point out the box to the children. Let the children take turns being the "present" by hiding inside the box. As the children close their eyes, select one child to curl up on the floor like a ball as you place the gift box over them. The children will open their eyes and guess which friend is inside the present. Repeat with the rest of the children in the class as long as time and interest allow. (*Do not leave children unattended with the box. Some children may not want to participate, and that is okay.*)

### WHAT YOU SAY:

**During the Activity:** "All month long, we've been learning about the best gift ever. Who is the best gift ever? (*Pause.*) Yes! Jesus is the best gift ever. Do you see my big gift box? (*Point.*) We're going to take turns hiding in the box to figure out who might be inside. I want you to close your eyes and I will choose one of you by tapping you on the shoulder. If your shoulder is tapped, I want you to open your eyes, quietly get down, and curl up like a ball on the floor. I will then place this box over you. Then I'll ask all our friends to open their eyes and see if they can guess who is inside the present! Are you ready?" (*Do the activity.*)

**After the Activity:** "You are very good guessers! Did you have fun being the present? I'm so glad that God sent us the best gift ever when He sent us Jesus. In our Bible story today, we're going to learn about the first people besides Mary and Joseph to hear the news of Jesus' birth! I wonder who it was. I can't wait for us to find out!"



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## GAME

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

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## SHEEP ROUND UP

"Sheep Round Up" is an activity that uses fine motor skills and teamwork to complete a task.

**NOTE:** Be sure to list the items you will be using today on the "Allergy Alert Poster" and post it at the door to your room.

**WHAT YOU NEED:** "Allergy Alert Poster," white cardstock, masking tape, cotton balls, and large wrapped candy canes

### WHAT YOU DO:

**Before the Activity:** Copy the "Allergy Alert Poster" on white cardstock and hang it on the door. Using the masking tape, make a large circle on the floor of the activity area. Spread the cotton balls onto the floor outside the circle.

**During the Activity:** Give each child a wrapped candy cane. Instruct the children to use the hook part of the cane to move a cotton ball inside the circle. Continue until all balls are inside the circle. Repeat as long as time and interest allow.

**After the Activity:** Introduce the Bible story.

### WHAT YOU SAY:

**Before the Activity:** "Today our story is about shepherds. Shepherds take care of sheep and make sure they go where they need to go. Let's pretend that we are shepherds with our sheep!"

**During the Activity:** (Give each children a wrapped candy cane.) "I see sheep that are all out of their pen. (Point to the cotton balls and circle.) OH NO! We are the shepherds, so we need to help them find their way back to the pen! Hold your cane like this and move the sheep back into the pen. (Demonstrate by holding the candy cane by the staff and moving the cotton with the hook of the cane.) Are you ready? (Pause.) We have a lot of sheep to move!"

**After the Activity:** "Great job! All of the sheep are back in the pen! You are all excellent shepherds. In our story today, shepherds are taking care of their sheep and something AMAZING happens! Let's get ready to hear our true story from the Bible and find out what it was!"



### MAKE IT FUN

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



### 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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### FIND IT!

"Find It!" is an activity that uses discovery and identification skills to review this month's theme.

**WHAT YOU NEED:** "Sensory Tube Key" Activity Page, white cardstock, 16-oz. plastic water bottle (*emptied and cleaned with the label removed*), rice, hot glue gun, small funnel (*you can also roll up a piece of paper to serve as a funnel*), and the following small items: a penny, an M&M®, a marble, a large bean, a small jingle bell, and a tiny, plastic baby

#### WHAT YOU DO:

**Before the Activity:** Create a sensory tube. Place the six small items from the list above into the clean plastic bottle. Use the funnel or paper to pour the rice into the bottle to cover the items. Make sure to leave about an inch of space at the top of the bottle, so that the children can shake the rice around to see the objects. Screw the lid on tightly and run a bead of glue from the hot glue gun around the lid to secure. Give the glue time to dry and cool. If you have a large group, you may need to create more than one sensory tube. Copy the "Sensory Tube Key" Activity Page onto the white cardstock. You will need one or two copies per small group.

**NOTE:** Please do not use the hot glue gun within reach of the children. It would be best to prepare these bottles ahead of time.

**During the Activity:** Gather the children around a table or in a circle on the floor. Show the children the sensory bottle. Place the Activity Page in the center of the group. Let children pass the bottle around and shake it to find each of the items listed on the page, one at a time.

#### WHAT YOU SAY:

**During the Activity:** "Inside of my bottle, I have some fun items that we need to find! All of the items are pictured here on this page. Let's pass this special bottle around and take turns shaking it and finding the items on this page. Are you ready? Let's go!"

**After the Activity:** "You found all these special items. Let's count them. (*Point to each of the items on the page as you count*). One, two, three, four, five, six! You found all of them. Great job, everyone! Our counting today reminds me of another countdown—the countdown to Christmas and the best gift ever! I can't wait to hear more about this special gift in Large Group today. Let's go!"



### 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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### BIBLE STORY FOCUS

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## GREATEST NEWS!

"Greatest News!" is an activity that uses repetition and a prop to teach the memory verse.

**WHAT YOU NEED:** "Verse Label" from the Activity Pages on the Website, Avery® labels #5160 or equivalent, cotton candy cones, and Christmas stickers

**NOTE:** If you do not have access to cotton candy cones, you may consider using any color of cardstock and rolling it into a cone shape. Secure the cone with clear tape.

#### WHAT YOU DO:

**Before the Activity:** Copy the "Verse Labels" Activity page onto the labels so each child will have one.

**During the Activity:** Give each child a cone and let them decorate it with the Christmas stickers. Help each child place the label onto the cone. Encourage the children to speak into the cone and say the verse.

**After the Activity:** Say the Bottom Line together.

#### WHAT YOU SAY:

**Before the Activity:** "We are going to make a megaphone today that will allow us to say our memory verse super-duper loud!"

**During the Activity:** (Give each child a cone.) "First, we need to decorate our megaphone. Use the stickers to make your megaphone beautiful! (Allow the children to work and add the label.) Great job! Now, hold the megaphone to your mouth (demonstrate) and let's say our memory verse together. Are you ready? (Pause.) Here we go! I bring you good news of great joy, Luke 2:10. Awesome! Let's say it again!" (Repeat several times.)

**After the Activity:** "Jesus' birth is GREAT NEWS! God sent Jesus because He loves us so much! Let's say our verse into our megaphone one more time. Let's be super loud! I bring you good news of great joy, Luke 2:10. Great job, everyone. **Why is Jesus special? Jesus is God's Son!**"



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### 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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## ROLL THE CHRISTMAS DICE

"Roll the Christmas Dice" is an activity that uses memory and ordering skills to review today's Bible Story.

**WHAT YOU NEED:** "Christmas Cube" Activity Page, white cardstock, scissors, square tissue box, and clear tape

#### WHAT YOU DO:

**Before the Activity:** Copy the "Christmas Cube" Activity Page onto white cardstock. Cut out the squares. Tape one square to each side of the square tissue box to create a die.

**During the Activity:** Gather the children around a table or sit in a circle on the floor. Roll the cube in the center of the group. When it lands, look at the picture shown and talk about that part of the story. Let the children take turns rolling the cube to review this month's Bible stories as long as time and interest allow.

#### WHAT YOU SAY:

**During the Activity:** "Today, I thought it would be fun to review what we have learned in Large Group this month by using this special cube. On it, you'll see pictures from all the stories this month. Let's take turns rolling the cube and talking about our Bible stories as we look at the picture. Are you ready? (You can ask the following questions to help the children if they need it.) Who do you see in this picture? What happened to him/ her in our Bible story today? What did this person (or animal) do when they heard the best news ever?"

**After the Activity:** "Great job, everyone! You were really listening in Large Group this month. I can only imagine how excited those shepherds were to hear about the best gift ever and to actually SEE Jesus on the night He was born. What a special gift. **Why is Jesus special? Jesus is God's Son.**"



### MAKE IT STICK

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### JUST FOR FIVES

An activity that calls on older preschoolers' more developed cognitive and fine motor skills while reviewing the Bible story, bottom line or memory verse.

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## PATTERNS

"Patterns" is an activity that teaches color sorting and pattern recognition.

**WHAT YOU NEED:** 25-30 jumbo red craft sticks, 25-30 jumbo green craft sticks, and 2 small boxes

#### WHAT YOU DO:

**Before the Activity:** Place the red craft sticks into one box and the green craft sticks in the other box. Place both boxes in the center of the activity area.

**During the Activity:** Encourage the children to take sticks from both boxes and use them to make patterns. Challenge them to mimic the following patterns:

Red, green, red, green  
Green, green, green, red  
Red, red, green, green  
Green, red, green, red

**After the Activity:** Challenge the children to make their own patterns.

#### WHAT YOU SAY:

**Before the Activity:** "We have red and green craft sticks to play with again today! (*Point.*) These sticks are fun to play with because the colors red and green remind me of Christmas. And we are COUNTING DOWN TO CHRISTMAS!"

**During the Activity:** "Let's use the red and green sticks to make patterns today. First, let's make a square. (*Pause.*) Great job! Now, let's try to make a triangle. (*Pause.*) Perfect! You are so good at this! How about now we try to make a rectangle! (*Pause.*) WOW! Awesome job! Now I have a hard one. Are you ready? Let's try to make a HOUSE! (*Pause.*) You did it! Way to go!"

**After the Activity:** "Great job! I love counting down to Christmas. Christmas is very special because it is Jesus' birthday! **Why is Jesus special? Jesus is God's Son!**"



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### MOVEMENT

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

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## BIG SURPRISE

"Big Surprise" is an activity that uses gross motor movements and music to review this week's Bible story.

**WHAT YOU NEED:** "Big Surprise" (from the *One Big Gulp CD*) and a music player

#### WHAT YOU DO:

**During the Activity:** Gather the children in an open area of the room. Play the "Big Surprise" song and encourage the children to sing and dance along!

#### WHAT YOU SAY:

**During the Activity:** "Those shepherds were in for a BIG surprise while working out in the field the night Jesus was born! I'll bet they NEVER expected a group of angels to appear with such awesome news. Let's dance and sing about this big surprise. God sent a special baby, Jesus! Are you ready? Let's dance!" (*Play the song.*)

**After the Activity:** "That was super fun! I LOVE to dance and sing with you, friends. The news the angel gave to those shepherds was the biggest, best surprise EVER! Jesus was here! He was born as a baby! He's the best gift ever! **Why is Jesus special? Jesus is God's Son.**"



**MAKE IT STICK**

Activities designed to reinforce the Bible story and bottom line.



**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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**MY SPECIAL GIFT**

"My Special Gift" is an activity that uses the children's creativity to reinforce the concept of today's Bible story.

**WHAT YOU NEED:** 1 white shirt gift box per child, tempera paint (*at least 4 colors*), paint brushes, paint cups for each color of paint, water cups, water, gift bows, wet wipes, and paint shirts for the children

**WHAT YOU DO:**

**Before the Activity:** Pour each color of paint into a cup. Fill the water cups halfway with water. Place the paint shirts on the children before they start to paint.

**During the Activity:** Open the boxes and set the top of the boxes aside. Allow the children to paint inside the bottom of the box. Allow the children to paint anything that they would like with any color. After the paintings are finished, set them aside to dry.

**After the Activity:** Help the children place a bow on the outside of the box lid/top. After the bottom piece of the boxes have dried, place the box lid/top back on.

**WHAT YOU SAY:**

**Before the Activity:** "In our story today, God gave us the greatest gift! Do you remember what it was? (*Pause.*) Yes, Jesus! I think we should give a gift to someone too. So today we are going to make a very special gift for our families!"

**During the Activity:** (*Give each child the bottom of a box and set out the paint supplies.*) "Use the paint to paint a picture on the bottom of your box. (*Point.*) You may paint anything that you would like! (*Allow the children to paint.*) Beautiful paintings! These paintings are going to make a very special gift. After the paint is dry we can put the top on and give it to someone as a gift. I think your artwork is a very special gift! Now we just need to put a bow on top! (*Give each child a bow to place on top of their box.*) Perfect!"

**After the Activity:** "Your gifts are very special, but God gave us the GREATEST gift of all! He gave us Jesus! **Why is Jesus special? Jesus is God's Son!**"



### MAKE IT REAL

A time for preschoolers to meet with a consistent small group leader, apply the lesson to their lives and pray together.

## lead small.

Investing in a few to encourage their authentic faith.

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## SMALL GROUP TIME

**WHAT YOU NEED:** Paperclip "Memory Verse Card" (from the Week One Activity Pages on the Website) in your Bible at Luke 2:10. Provide a journal and a fun-shaped pen for each small group.

**SMALL GROUP LEADER (SGL):** "Today's Bible story was SO exciting! Think about what it was like on the night the angels told the shepherds about Jesus being born. There they were, just taking care of their sheep, and then WOW! They looked up and the sky was filled with bright angels telling them the good news that Jesus, God's Son, had been born!"

"This is one of my favorite parts of the Christmas story. God didn't send the angels to important kings and queens with their big houses and fancy clothes first. No! God sent the angels to the shepherds, who worked outside with animals in their dirty clothes. I love how God thinks every person is special no matter what. And He wants every person to know how special Jesus is. **Why is Jesus special?**"

**CHILDREN AND SGL: "Jesus is God's Son!"**

**SGL:** "You got it! Jesus is special because **Jesus is God's Son!**"

(Open Bible to memory verse card.)

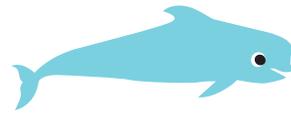
**SGL:** "That is the good news that brings great joy like the angels talked about in our Bible verse. Let's stand up and say our verse together with the motions."

(Lay Bible down.)

**CHILDREN AND SGL:** "I bring you (start with hands up and bring them in to chest like catching a football) good news (right arm up with jazz hand) of great joy! (left arm up with jazz hand), Luke 2:10. (Open your hands like a book.)

(Repeat the verse with the motions several times together.)

**SGL:** "You can sit down now. We're going to write in our prayer journal and talk to God. Today I want you to think of one person you can tell the good news that



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**Jesus is God's Son** to this week. I want us to do like the shepherds did and tell people the good news so they can have great joy like us!"

*(Open prayer journal and hold your fun pen.)*

**SGL:** "I have my pen ready! When I say your name, tell me one person you can tell the good news to."

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

**SGL:** "Would anyone like to pray for their person before I pray?"

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

**SGL:** "Now I will pray."

## PRAYER

**SGL:** "Dear God, thank You for another day here at church with my friends. Thank You that we are getting to hear the true story of Christmas. We want everyone to know that Jesus is Your Son so they can have great joy too. Please help [child's name] to tell [person's name] the good news about Jesus. *(Repeat for each child.)* We love You, God. In Jesus' name, amen."