



JESUS WANTS TO BE MY FRIEND FOREVER.



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BASIC TRUTH

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

KEY QUESTION

HOW CAN YOU LOVE LIKE JESUS?

BOTTOM LINE

I CAN LOVE EVERYONE.

MEMORY VERSE

"Love one another."
John 13:34, NIV

BIBLE STORY FOCUS

I can love no matter what.
Prodigal Son
• Luke 15:11-24

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.

- Trough Toss
- Tool Match
- Building with Tools

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.

- Hug It Out
- Walk the Story
- Oink, Oink
- Heart House



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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TROUGH TOSS

"Trough Toss" is an activity that uses gross motor skills and concentration to introduce an element of today's Bible story.

WHAT YOU NEED: Long rectangular tub or basket, and beanbags

WHAT YOU DO:

Before the Activity: Place the tub or basket on one side of the activity area.

During the Activity: Have the children stand five feet away from the tub. Challenge the children to toss the beanbags into the tub. Make sure each child has a turn tossing the beanbag.

WHAT YOU SAY:

Before the Activity: "Let's see who can toss the beanbag into the tub!" (*Demonstrate.*)

During the Activity: "Now it is your turn! Let's take turns tossing the beanbags into the tub." (*Do activity.*)

After the Activity: "Great job! This tub reminds me of a trough. A trough is something that pigs eat out of. And you know what? There are pigs in our Bible story today! I cannot wait for you to hear it!"



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GAME

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

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TOOL MATCH

"Tool Match" is an activity that teaches matching and problem solving skills while reinforcing this month's theme.

WHAT YOU NEED: Play tools, colored index cards, and a marker

WHAT YOU DO:

Before the Activity: Place each tool on top of an index card. Use the marker to trace each tool onto the cards.

During the Activity: Place the cards face up in the activity area. Lay the tools nearby. Challenge the children to pick up one of the tools and try to match it to the appropriate index card. Continue the activity until all of the tools are matched to their corresponding index cards.

WHAT YOU SAY:

Before the Activity: "We are going to play a matching game!"

During the Activity: (*Point to the index cards.*) "There are pictures of tools on the cards. And then we have real tools right here! (*Point.*) Pick up each tool and try to match it to the card that has the same tool drawn on it. Are you ready?" (*Do activity.*)

After the Activity: "Great job! Tools remind me of our theme for this month: BUILD IT! We need tools to build things. Sometimes building things is really hard. Today in our story we are going to hear about someone who did something hard. Let's get ready to hear our Bible story and find out what it was!"



MAKE IT FUN

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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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BUILDING WITH TOOLS

"Building with Tools" is an activity that teaches the children teamwork skills while reinforcing this month's theme.

WHAT YOU NEED: Play tools and blocks

WHAT YOU DO:

Before the Activity: Place the blocks and the tools in the activity area.

During the Activity: Encourage the children to work together to build with the blocks and tools.

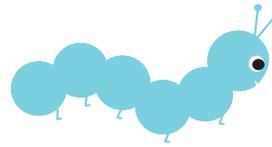
After the Activity: Introduce the Bible story.

WHAT YOU SAY:

Before the Activity: "Let's build together!"

During the Activity: "Use the tools and the blocks to build something amazing! Be sure to work together with your friends. Jesus wants us to help each other!" (Do activity.)

After the Activity: "Great job! I love how you all worked together to build with the blocks and the tools. Jesus wants us to love and help each other. In our story today, we are going to hear about someone who loved everyone, even when it was hard! It's a fantastic story!"



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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HUG IT OUT

"Hug It Out" is an activity that uses repetition to teach this month's memory verse.

WHAT YOU NEED: No supplies needed

WHAT YOU DO:

Before the Activity: Have the children to stand in front of you. Say the memory verse with the children.

During the Activity: Say the memory verse again and then ask the children to give a friend a hug.

After the Activity: Repeat several times and encourage the children to hug a different friend each time. Make sure every child gets a hug.

WHAT YOU SAY:

Before the Activity: "Do you remember our memory verse for this month? *(Pause.)* Awesome! Let's say it together! Love one another, John 13:34. Great job!"

During the Activity: "Now let's say our verse again and this time after we say it, choose a friend to hug. Are you ready? *(Pause.)* Love one another, John 13:34. Now hug a friend. *(Do activity.)* Great job! Now let's say our verse again and you can choose a different friend to hug this time!" *(Finish activity.)*

After the Activity: "Jesus wants us to love everyone! That is what our memory verse tells us! **How can you love like Jesus? I can love 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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WALK THE STORY

"Walk the Story" is an activity that allows the children to act out today's Bible story while it is being retold.

WHAT YOU NEED: Small dollhouse or Little People® house, blocks or toy fencing, and play pig figures

WHAT YOU DO:

Before the Activity: Place the dollhouse on one side of the activity area and set the blocks or fencing up in a circle across the area from the dollhouse. Place the pigs inside the circle.

During the Activity: Have the children stand behind you. Lead the children as you walk from the house to the pigpen and then back to the house again.

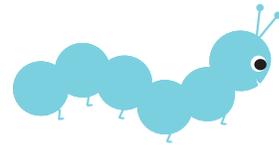
After the Activity: As you are walking, retell the Bible story.

WHAT YOU SAY:

Before the Activity: "In our story today, we talked about a boy who left his house and went far away."

During the Activity: "Now everyone line up behind me. (*Start walking from the house to the pigpen.*) The boy asked his father for a lot of money because he wanted to leave. His father was sad, but he gave him the money. The boy traveled far, far away and he spent his money on silly things. He did not save any for food or a house! He needed money before long and so then he had to work with pigs! (*Point to pigpen.*) YUCK! (*Start walking back to house.*) Now he wanted to go home! He thought his father would be angry with him, but he wanted to try to go home anyway. When he got home (*point to house*) his father was very happy to see him! He was not mad at all! He loved his son no matter what!"

After the Activity: "Sometimes we have to love each other even when it is hard. Just because someone makes a bad choice does not mean we should not love them. Jesus loves us even though we make bad choices sometimes. Tell me: **How can you love like Jesus? I can love everyone!**"



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OINK, OINK

"Oink, Oink" is an activity that allows the children to role-play and move like an animal that is featured in today's Bible story.

WHAT YOU NEED: No supplies needed

WHAT YOU DO:

Before the Activity: Have the children stand in front of you.

During the Activity: Ask the children to imitate pigs. Challenge them to pretend to roll in the mud and make pig sounds.

After the Activity: Reinforce the Bottom Line.

WHAT YOU SAY:

Before the Activity: "In our story today, we talked about a boy who left his father and spent all of his money. He had to work with pigs to make money. Let's pretend to be pigs."

During the Activity: (*Demonstrate.*) "Everyone get down (*on all fours*) and say what a pig says. Do you know what pigs say? (*Pause.*) Yes! Pigs say 'oink, oink.' Make a pig sound again! (*Do activity.*) Now let's pretend to roll in the mud, just like pigs do!" (*Finish activity.*)

After the Activity: "You were marvelous pigs! The boy had to work with pigs because he made bad choices. And then he did not think his father would let him come home, but when he did go home, his father was very glad to see him. He loved him even though he had made bad choices! And Jesus wants us to do the same. Jesus wants us to love everyone no matter what. **How can you love like Jesus? I can love everyone!**"



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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HEART HOUSE

"Heart House" is an activity that allows the children to create a visual of the Bottom Line for them to take home.

WHAT YOU NEED: "House" Activity Page, white cardstock, and red heart stickers or heart stamps.

WHAT YOU DO:

Before the Activity: Copy the Activity Page onto the cardstock.

During the Activity: Give each child an Activity Page and five or six heart stickers or a heart stamp. Encourage the children to place the stickers or stamps all over the house.

After the Activity: Relate the project to the story and Bottom Line.

WHAT YOU SAY:

Before the Activity: "The boy came back to his father's house after he had left. His father showed him love when he came home!"

During the Activity: (Give each child an Activity Page.) "There is a house on the page. (Point.) We are going to put hearts on the house to show that the son's father loved him no matter what!" (Do activity.)

After the Activity: "Great job! Your crafts show us the way Jesus wants us to love each other, just like how the father loved his son when he came back home! We should love everyone no matter what. **How can you love like Jesus? I can love everyone!**"