

JESUS WANTS TO BE MY FRIEND FOREVER.



Editor in Chief: Kathy Hill

Copy Editor: Dana Wilkerson

Curriculum Writer: Donna High, Emily Meredith

Illustrator: Jodi Blackwell

Graphic Designers: Sharon van Rossum, David Hill

FL Creative Team: Brittany Compton-Robertson, Kathy Hill, Autumn Ward, Ashley Hiers, Donna High, Mary Beth Brannan, Sharon van Rossum, McKenzie Causey

Chief Executive Officer: Reggie Joiner

Chief Operating Officer: Reggie Goodin

Executive Director: Brittany Compton-Robertson

Technical and Web Support: Hadley Brandt

Partner Support: Deb Springer

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BASIC TRUTH

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

KEY QUESTION

WHO IS THE BEST?

BOTTOM LINE

JESUS IS THE BEST!

MEMORY VERSE

**"God loved the world so much that
He gave His only Son."
John 3:16, GNT**

BIBLE STORY FOCUS

**God sent Jesus to be
my friend forever.**

Easter

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

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.

- **Three Corners**
- **Cover It Up**
- **Find the Friends**

MAKE IT TRUE (LARGE GROUP)

- **Worship**
- **Introductory Sketch**
- **Bible Story**

MAKE IT STICK

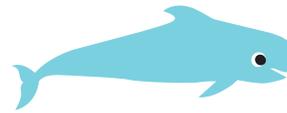
These activities are designed to help preschoolers understand and remember today's Bible story and Bottom Line. Offer as many of the following activities as your time, facilities, resources, and leadership allow. You may want to lead one activity at a time. Or, offer two activities at once and allow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

- **Roll Away**
- **Jesus Is Alive!**
- **1, 2, 3**
- **Stone Bowling**
- **Tomb Craft**

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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THREE CORNERS

"Three Corners" is an activity that uses listening and gross motor skills to reinforce this month's Bottom Line.

WHAT YOU NEED: "Oh So Happy Day" from the Whoooo Loves You CD, CD player, 3 pieces of white cardstock, black permanent marker, and painter's tape

WHAT YOU DO:

Before the Activity: Use the marker to draw the numbers one through three on cardstock—one number per page. Choose three corners in your room that the children can easily move to and tape one number in each corner with the painter's tape.

During the Activity: Point out the signs in each of the three corners and call out their numbers. Explain that the children will walk from corner to corner as you play "Oh So Happy Day." When the music stops, you will call out a number and all of the children should walk to that corner and say, "Jesus is number one!"

WHAT YOU SAY:

During the Activity: "Do you see the signs hanging here in the corners of the room? (*Point to the signs.*) Can you point to the number one? (*Pause.*) Yes! And where is number two? (*Pause.*) Exactly! And finally, where is number three? (*Pause.*) Wow, you guys really know your numbers! Today I'm going to play one of our favorite songs and I want you to walk from corner to corner. But when the music stops, I'm going to call out a number and I want you to walk quickly to that number. When everyone gets there, let's all say, 'Jesus is number one!'"

After the Activity: "Great job, everyone! You are very good listeners and counters! Today we're going to hear about something SUPER amazing that happened to Jesus after three days. How many days? (*Pause.*) THREE! That's right. Let's put on our listening ears to find out what happens in our Bible story today."



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GAME

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

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COVER IT UP

"Cover It Up" is an activity that teaches critical thinking, matching, size recognition, and fine motor skills while introducing a key concept of today's Bible story.

WHAT YOU NEED: Several empty and clean plastic containers with lids (such as Tupperware®, butter tubs, whipped cream containers, etc.)

WHAT YOU DO:

Before the Activity: Place the containers in a pile in the activity area. Place the lids in a separate pile nearby.

During the Activity: Challenge the children to find the matching lids for each container. Encourage them to place the matching lid on each container.

After the Activity: Introduce today's Bible story.

WHAT YOU SAY:

Before the Activity: "UH-OH! All of the lids are off of my containers! (Point.) Can you help me find the correct lid for each container?"

During the Activity: "Here are the containers (point) and here are the lids (point). Let's work together and see if we can match all of the lids with the containers. (Do activity.) Let's cover the opening of this container. (Point to a container, grab the matching lid, and put it on.) Let's cover the opening of this one now. (Point to another container and have children help you find the matching lid.) Great job!"

After the Activity: "That was fun putting the lids on to cover my containers! Today, we're going to hear about a big rock that covered the opening to a cave called a tomb. I wonder what was in the tomb. You will soon find out!"



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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FIND THE FRIENDS

"Find the Friends" is an activity that uses fine-motor skills and investigation to introduce today's Bible story.

WHAT YOU NEED: A plastic bin, paper shreds to fill the bin, and several Little People® figures

WHAT YOU DO:

Before the Activity: Place the Little People figures in the bottom of the plastic bin and mix them with the paper shreds to "hide" them.

During the Activity: Let the children take turns finding the Little People among the paper shreds—one figure per child. After each child takes a turn, place the figure back in the bin for the next child's turn.

WHAT YOU SAY:

During the Activity: "Today we're going to play 'Find the Friends'! Inside this bin are some Little People. I want you to take turns searching for a friend. When you find one, pull it out for everyone to see. We'll each take turns finding a friend."

After the Activity: "Great job finding the friends today! I'm so thankful for friends. Did you know that God sent Jesus to be your friend forever? (Pause.) It's true. We'll hear all about that in our Bible story today! I can't wait!"



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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ROLL AWAY

"Roll Away" is an activity that uses repetition and large motor skills to teach this month's memory verse.

WHAT YOU NEED: 2 large pieces of brown butcher paper, scissors, and wall tape

WHAT YOU DO:

Before the Activity: Cut a large cave-shaped tomb out of one of the pieces of butcher paper. Be sure to cut an opening to the tomb. Crumple the other piece of butcher paper into a large ball that can cover the opening. Tape the tomb to the bottom of a wall in the activity area. The bottom of the tomb should be close to the floor. Place the ball of paper on the floor in front of the opening of the tomb.

During the Activity: Say the memory verse with the children. Choose a child to come up and say the memory verse. Once the memory verse is said, encourage the child to roll away the paper ball from the tomb, showing the opening to the tomb. Move the paper ball back in front of the tomb and allow another child to have a turn. Be sure that every child gets a turn rolling the "stone."

WHAT YOU SAY:

Before the Activity: "There is a tomb on our wall just like in our story today! (Point.) And there is a stone too!" (Point.)

During the Activity: "Let's say our memory verse together. God loved the world so much that He gave His only Son, John 3:16. Great job! When I call your name, I want you to come up and say our memory verse. Then you can roll the stone away from the tomb just like what happened in our story today." (Do activity.)

After the Activity: "Way to go! You all did a great job saying your memory verse and rolling the stone away from the tomb. God sent us Jesus because He loves us SO much! **Jesus is the best! Who is the best? Jesus is the best!**"



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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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JESUS IS ALIVE!

"Jesus Is Alive" is an activity that uses fine motor skills and creativity to review today's Bible story.

WHAT YOU NEED: Gray paper cups (1 per child), craft sticks (1 per child), black permanent marker, "Jesus Cutout" Activity Page, white cardstock, crayons, tape, and scissors

WHAT YOU DO:

Before the Activity: Copy the "Jesus Cutout" onto white cardstock and cut out. You'll need one cutout per child. On the side of each cup, draw a circle (like the opening of the tomb) with another circle off to the side colored in (like the stone rolled to the side to open the tomb). Cut a slit in the bottom of the cup large enough for the craft stick to fit through. Make sure the slit is parallel to the tomb/stone you drew on the outside of the cup.

During the Activity: Pass out a "Jesus Cutout" to each child to color. When finished, help them tape their cutout to a craft stick. Show them how to put their craft sticks through the bottom of the cup so that the end of the stick sticks out the bottom like a handle. Then show them how they can pull Jesus down into the tomb and then push Him up to make Him rise out of the tomb."

WHAT YOU SAY:

During the Activity: "Let's say the chant we've been learning this month. Ready? 'J-E-S-U-S! We love Jesus because He's the best!' Great job! Jesus IS the best because God sent Jesus to be our friend forever. Today we're going to create something to help us remember that Jesus is alive. Even though He died and they put Him in the tomb, three days later, He came back! He's alive! God sent Jesus to be our friend forever." (Make craft.)

After the Activity: (Hold up one of the crafts, and pull the popsicle stick down so that the Jesus cut out is inside the cup.) "We heard in our Bible story today that some people hurt Jesus. He died and they placed Him in the tomb. His friends were so sad. But Jesus promised that he would come back. And three days later, what happened? (Pause for responses.) Yes! Jesus kept His promise and He DID come back. (Push the stick up so that the Jesus cutout sticks up from the top). Jesus came back. He's ALIVE! God sent Jesus to be my friend and YOUR friend forever! I love Jesus. He's the best. Push up your Jesus cutout in your cup and say it with me. **Who is the best? Jesus is the best.** That's right, friends!"



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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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1, 2, 3

"1, 2, 3" is an activity that teaches number recognition, listening skills, and following directions to review today's Bible story.

WHAT YOU NEED: "Numbers 1-3" and "Actions 1-3" Activity Pages, white paper, and wall tape

WHAT YOU DO:

Before the Activity: Copy all of the Activity Pages onto the white paper. Tape the numbers in order about one foot apart horizontally. Tape the action picture of a child marching under the number one. Tape the action picture of a child jumping under the number two. Finally, tape the action picture of a child touching his toes under the number three.

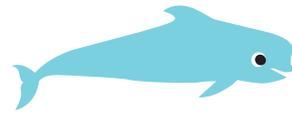
During the Activity: Introduce the numbers and pictures to the children. Call out a random number from one through three and encourage the children to do the corresponding action. Repeat each number several times.

WHAT YOU SAY:

Before the Activity: "Do you see numbers on our wall? (Pause.) I see a one (point), a two (point), and a three (point). Each number has an action under it. The one tells us to march. (Demonstrate.) The two tells us to jump. (Demonstrate.) And the three tells us to touch our toes." (Demonstrate.)

During the Activity: When I call out the number, I want you to do the action. Are you ready? (Pause.) Here we go! ONE! (Do action.) THREE. (Do action.) ONE. (Do action.) TWO." (Do action.) (Continue activity and repeat several times.)

After the Activity: "Fantastic job doing all three of the actions! Jesus' body was in the tomb for THREE days! Then something AMAZING happened. He was ALIVE and He came back! WOW. **Jesus is the best! Who is the best? Jesus is the best!**"



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MOVEMENT

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STONE BOWLING

"Stone Bowling" is an activity that uses gross motor movements to review today's Bible story.

WHAT YOU NEED: A small rubber ball, 3 plastic bowling pins (*or you can also use 3 half-empty 16-ounce water bottles; make sure the tops are tightly closed*), and floor tape

WHAT YOU DO:

Before the Activity: Set up the three bowling pins (*or water bottles*) in an open area of the room. Use the floor tape to mark a starting line about five feet from the bowling pins. Line up the children behind the tape.

During the Activity: Point out the bowling pins and have the children count them together. Remind them that Jesus came back after three days! Encourage the children to roll the ball on the floor and try to knock down the three pins, letting each child take a turn. Repeat as time and interest allow.

WHAT YOU SAY:

During the Activity: "Let's count the pins. Ready? (*Point while saying the numbers.*) One, two, three! What does the number three have to do with our story today? (*Pause.*) That's right, Jesus promised He would come back. And after THREE days, Jesus DID come back. Let's roll the ball and see if we can knock down all three pins. Everyone, come line up here on this line (*point*) and roll the ball like this." (*Demonstrate rolling the ball and knocking over the pins for the children.*)

After the Activity: "Way to go! You have some great bowling skills, my friends! That was fun trying to knock down the three pins. I'm so glad that Jesus is alive and that He came back after three days! That's amazing. **Jesus is the best! Who is the best? Jesus is the best!**"



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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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TOMB CRAFT

"Tomb Craft" is an activity that allows the children to create a visual of today's Bible story to take home.

WHAT YOU NEED: "Jesus Is Risen" Activity Page, white paper, scissors, clear tape, crayons, brads, stapler, and white paper plates

WHAT YOU DO:

Before the Activity: Copy the Activity Page onto the paper. Cut along the dotted lines. Provide one for each child. Cut out the center of half of the paper plates. Save the center circles of the plates.

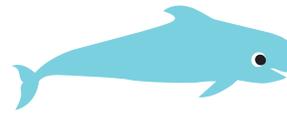
During the Activity: Hand out the outer circles of the paper plates and encourage children to color the back of them. Then ask them to color the Activity Page and the center circle of the plate. Next they will glue the Activity Page to the front of the second plate. Staple the first plate to the second, so that the picture shows through the hole. Use a brad to connect the cut out circle to the side of the hole so that it can cover a portion of the hole and then roll away.

WHAT YOU SAY:

Before the Activity: "Our Bible story today was AMAZING! Jesus is ALIVE!"

During the Activity: "This is a story that we want to share with EVERYONE! We are going to make a craft that you can use to tell everyone about our AMAZING Bible story. First, we are going to color the pieces of our craft. I cannot wait to see how it turns out!" (*Do activity.*)

After the Activity: "WOW! Your tombs look awesome! It really does remind me of our story today. Now you can use them to tell EVERYONE that Jesus is ALIVE and that **Jesus is the best! Who is the best? Jesus is the best!**"



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 John 3:16. Provide a journal and a fun-shaped pen for each small group. You will also need a red heart sticker for each child.

SMALL GROUP LEADER (SGL): "Today is a very, very special day. Do you know why today is a very, very special day? (Pause for response.) Yes! It's Easter! Easter is when we celebrate that Jesus is alive! Our good friend Jesus did what He said He would do and He came back! That's one of the things that make Jesus the best! **Who is the best?**"

CHILDREN AND SGL: "Jesus is the best!"

SGL: "You got it! God loves us so much that He gave us His best: JESUS! Turn to a friend and say, 'God loves you!' (Pause.) Now turn to another friend and say, 'God loves you!' (Pause.) But God doesn't just love us, does He? No way! God loves the whole, wide world! It says so in the Bible verse we're learning.

(Open Bible to memory verse card.)

"Our verse says (read verse from the Bible): God loved the world so much that He gave His only Son, John 3:16. Now let's say it with the motions. Just say what I say and do what I do."

CHILDREN AND SGL: "God (point up) loved (hug yourself) the world (raise your arms overhead to form a circle) so much (stretch your arms out as far as possible) that He gave (place your hands together with palms up in front of you as if you're offering something) His only (point up) Son (hold your arms as if you're cradling and rocking a baby), John 3:16." (Open your hands like a book.) (Repeat several times.)

SGL: "You sound so good! I am so proud of you! Now I want you to come sit with me. It's time to write in our prayer journal and talk to God.

(Open prayer journal and hold your fun pen.)



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"I think today is the perfect day to tell God thank You for loving us and giving us Jesus. I brought some red heart stickers to help us do that. *(Give each child a red heart sticker.)* I'll write down everyone's name. When I say your name I want you to put your red heart by your name and say, 'Thank You, God!'

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

"You are so sweet! Thank you for doing that. Let's close our eyes and talk to God. Would anyone like to pray before I pray?"

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

"Now I will pray."

PRAYER

SGL: "Dear God, I hope we never forget how much You love us. You love us so much that You gave us Your best: your only Son, Jesus. Jesus really is the best friend we could ever ask for. Thank You! Thank You! Thank You! We love You, God. In Jesus' name, amen."