

JESUS WANTS TO BE MY FRIEND FOREVER

WEEK

ONE

MARCH 2018

SMALL GROUP

3-5

YEAR-OLDS



first look™

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PRELUDE

SOCIAL

WORSHIP

STORY

GROUPS

HOME



BIBLE STORY

John told people that
Jesus is special.

JOHN THE BAPTIST
MATTHEW 3:3-4, 11, 13-15

MEMORY VERSE

“Come and follow me,
Jesus said.”

MATTHEW 4:19, NIRV

KEY QUESTION

Who can you follow?

BOTTOM LINE

I can follow Jesus.

BASIC TRUTH

Jesus wants to be my
friend forever.

PRELUDE: Setting the tone for the experience

For Leaders Only
Monthly Overview
Create the Environment

15
MIN

SOCIAL: Providing time for fun interaction

Offer one or more of these activities as preschoolers arrive.
Follow Me Fishin'
Tell and Match
Bug Hunt

10
MIN

WORSHIP: Inviting people to respond to God

Friend Forever
Always

10
MIN

STORY: Communicating God's truth in engaging ways

Introductory Sketch
Bible Story
Prayer

25
MIN

GROUPS: Creating a safe place to connect

Offer as many of these activities as your time, facilities, resources, and leadership allow.
Memory Verse with Motions
Jesus Is a Star!
Name Match
Star Walk
Megaphone
Journal and Prayer

HOME: Prompting action beyond the experience

Going Home
Parent Cue



PRELUDE

SOCIAL

WORSHIP

STORY

GROUPS

HOME

15 MINUTES

BIBLE STORY

John told people that Jesus is special.

JOHN THE BAPTIST
MATTHEW 3:3-4, 11, 13-15



MOVE

an activity that uses a preschooler's natural desire to move to help them learn

MEMORY VERSE

"Come and follow me,"
Jesus said."

MATTHEW 4:19, NIRV

KEY QUESTION

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BOTTOM LINE

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BASIC TRUTH

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1. FOLLOW ME FISHIN'

WHAT YOU NEED: A preschool fishing pole or pool noodle

(NOTE: You can buy or borrow a preschool fishing pole or hold onto a pool noodle and call it a "fishing pole." You could even attach some yarn or string from one end to serve as the fishing line.)

WHAT YOU DO:

DURING THE ACTIVITY: Gather the children in an open area of the room. Ask the children if they've ever been fishing or if they understand what fishing is. Hold up your fishing pole and talk for a minute about what a fishing pole does. Then explain to the children that they will be your fish today. Invite them to follow you around the room. Then let the children take turns holding the pole as the fisherman while the rest of the class follow along. Repeat until all the children have had a turn as the fisherman.

WHAT YOU SAY:

DURING THE ACTIVITY: "Raise your hand if you've ever been fishing. Wow! You can put your hands down. A fisherman takes one of these things (*hold up*), called a fishing pole, and he casts or throws the line out into the water and then waits for a fish to bite. He then carefully reels in the line to catch a fish. Today I thought it would be fun to play 'Follow Me Fishin'.' I'll be the fisherman and you all will be my fish. Come follow me around the room. But pay close attention because you just might become the fisherman soon!"

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: "That was fun! Great following, friends . . . I mean fishies! We'll talk more about why following is super important in our Bible story today. I can't wait!"

TRANSITION: Move to Worship and Story by continuing the game with a fisherman and fish followers.

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

WORSHIP

STORY

GROUPS

HOME

15 MINUTES

BIBLE STORY

John told people that
Jesus is special.

JOHN THE BAPTIST
MATTHEW 3:3-4, 11, 13-15



PLAY

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

MEMORY VERSE

“Come and follow me,
Jesus said.”

MATTHEW 4:19, NIRV

KEY QUESTION

Who can you follow?

BOTTOM LINE

I can follow Jesus.

BASIC TRUTH

Jesus wants to be my
friend forever.

2. TELL AND MATCH

WHAT YOU NEED: “Tell and Match” Activity Page, white cardstock, and scissors

WHAT YOU DO:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: Copy the “Tell and Match” Activity Page onto cardstock and cut along the dotted lines to make individual cards. You will need two cards of each picture.

DURING THE ACTIVITY: Separate the cards into two stacks. Each stack will contain one of each picture. Place one stack face down on the table or floor and place the cards from the second stack face up in a single layer on the table or floor. Encourage the children to turn up the top card from the stack and match it to one of the cards on the table.

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: Continue the activity by matching the three remaining cards in the stack to the three remaining cards on the table.

WHAT YOU SAY:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: “Today we are going to talk about ways to tell people good news.”

DURING THE ACTIVITY: “I see four pictures on the table. The pictures are of a cell phone, a postcard, a megaphone, and a microphone. We can use all of these things to tell everyone good news. (*Point to the cards in the stack.*) Choose the top card from this stack. Let’s see if we can match the cards in the stack to the cards on the table.”

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: “Great job! We matched all of the cards. Today we are going to hear a TRUE story about someone who told everyone some really GREAT news! I cannot wait to find out what it was!”

TRANSITION: Move to Worship and Story by shouting this month’s Bottom Line: **“I can follow Jesus!”** through a pretend megaphone.

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

WORSHIP

STORY

GROUPS

HOME

15 MINUTES

BIBLE STORY

John told people that Jesus is special.

JOHN THE BAPTIST
MATTHEW 3:3-4, 11, 13-15

MEMORY VERSE

“Come and follow me,
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MATTHEW 4:19, NIRV

KEY QUESTION

Who can you follow?

BOTTOM LINE

I can follow Jesus.

BASIC TRUTH

Jesus wants to be my friend forever.



EXPLORE

an activity that channels a preschooler's innate curiosity into a discussion of the week's crucial concepts

3. BUG HUNT

WHAT YOU NEED: A large plastic bin, yellow shredded paper (enough to fill the bin), and plastic bugs (at least 1 per child)

WHAT YOU DO:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: Place the bugs in the bin and cover them with the yellow shredded paper to create a sensory bin.

DURING THE ACTIVITY: Let the children reach into the bin and find a bug. Allow each child to take a turn so that everyone finds at least one bug. If time allows, place the bugs back into the bin and let the children search again.

WHAT YOU SAY:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: “Today we’re going on a bug hunt! Our bugs are stuck here in this honey (*point*) and we need to find them! In this bin, you’ll find some bugs. Each of you will have the chance to reach in and find one. But remember, only grab ONE bug, so that all of our friends can have a turn!”

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: “Great job, everyone. You found all the bugs! In our Bible story today, we’ll hear about someone who actually ate bugs and honey. Can you believe it? I think we’d better head to Large Group to find out all about this. Let’s go!”

TRANSITION: Move to Worship and Story by pretending to search for and then “eat” bugs.

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

WORSHIP

STORY

GROUPS

HOME

25 MINUTES

**HEAR
FROM GOD**
MEMORY VERSE
REVIEW



MOVE

an activity that uses a preschooler's natural desire to move to help them learn

BIBLE STORY

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Jesus is special.

JOHN THE BAPTIST
MATTHEW 3:3-4, 11, 13-15

MEMORY VERSE

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MATTHEW 4:19, NIRV

KEY QUESTION

Who can you follow?

BOTTOM LINE

I can follow Jesus.

BASIC TRUTH

Jesus wants to be my
friend forever.

1. MEMORY VERSE WITH MOTIONS

WHAT YOU NEED: No supplies needed

WHAT YOU DO:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: Say the memory verse and do the following motions in front of the **CHILDREN:**

"Come (*motion toward yourself with hand*)
and follow me" (*march*),
Jesus said (*hands to mouth like yelling*),
Matthew 4:19. (*Open your hands like a book.*)

DURING THE ACTIVITY: Say the verse again with the motions and invite the children to do it with you. Repeat several times.

WHAT YOU SAY:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: "I am going to say our new memory verse today. Everyone watch me! "Come (*motion toward yourself with hand*) and follow me" (*march*), Jesus said (*hands to mouth like yelling*), Matthew 4:19." (*Open your hands like a book.*)

DURING THE ACTIVITY: "Now let's do it all together! Are you ready?" (*Say the verse with the motions several times.*)

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: "Great job! Our memory verse tells us that Jesus wants us to follow Him. **Who can you follow? I can follow Jesus!**"

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

WORSHIP

STORY

GROUPS

HOME

25 MINUTES

TALK
ABOUT GOD
BIBLE STORY
REVIEW



CREATE

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

BIBLE STORY

John told people that
Jesus is special.

JOHN THE BAPTIST
MATTHEW 3:3-4, 11, 13-15

2. JESUS IS A STAR!

WHAT YOU NEED: "Star" Activity Page, white cardstock, star stamps (with stamp pads) OR star stickers

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: Copy the "Star" Activity Page onto white cardstock. Provide one per child. Place the stamps/stamp pads or star stickers on the tables where children can reach them.

MEMORY VERSE

"Come and follow me,"
Jesus said."

MATTHEW 4:19, NIRV

DURING THE ACTIVITY: Talk about how John wanted everyone to know that Jesus was special. Encourage the children to decorate their stars with the stamps/stickers.

WHAT YOU SAY:

DURING THE ACTIVITY: "John wanted everyone to know that Jesus was special. Jesus was a star! In fact, that's what it says right here: 'Jesus is special.' Jesus IS special and that's why **I can follow Jesus**. He's a star! Let's use our stamps/stickers to decorate our stars today."

KEY QUESTION

Who can you follow?

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: "Everyone hold up your stars so I can see them. WOW! Great job, friends. I'm so glad that John came to tell people that Jesus is special, because He is! **Who can you follow? I can follow Jesus**. That's right!"

BOTTOM LINE

I can follow Jesus.

BASIC TRUTH

Jesus wants to be my
friend forever.

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

WORSHIP

STORY

GROUPS

HOME

25 MINUTES

**LIVE
FOR GOD
APPLICATION
ACTIVITY**



THINK

an advanced activity specifically designed for older preschoolers

BIBLE STORY

John told people that
Jesus is special.

**JOHN THE BAPTIST
MATTHEW 3:3-4, 11, 13-15**

MEMORY VERSE

“Come and follow me,
Jesus said.”

MATTHEW 4:19, NIRV

KEY QUESTION

Who can you follow?

BOTTOM LINE

I can follow Jesus.

BASIC TRUTH

Jesus wants to be my
friend forever.

3. NAME MATCH

WHAT YOU NEED: Index cards (2 per child), a marker, and wall tape

WHAT YOU DO:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: When the children arrive, write each child's name on two different index cards with the marker. Try to make the name on each card look as identical as possible.

DURING THE ACTIVITY: Tape one card for each preschooler onto the walls at preschool level. Give the children the other card with their name on it. Have the children stand in a single file line behind you. Lead the children around the room as you say, “Follow me.” Have the children stop in front of the walls where the names are. Ask the children to look at the cards in their hands and try to match them to the cards on the wall. When they find their match, ask the children to take their name off of the wall.

WHAT YOU SAY:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: “Everyone line up and follow me! (Give each child an index card with their name on it.) This card has your name on it.”

DURING THE ACTIVITY: “Are you ready? (Pause.) Here we go! (Start leading them around the room and to the wall.) I see names on the wall. (Point.) Can you look on your card and see if you can find the match on the wall?” (Finish activity.)

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: “Great job! You found the match to your name. John the Baptist told everyone that the GREATEST was coming: JESUS! He told everyone that they should be baptized to get everyone ready for Jesus to come. He wanted everyone to follow Jesus. And each of you can too! **Who can you follow? I can follow Jesus!**”

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

WORSHIP

STORY

GROUPS

HOME

25 MINUTES

**LIVE
FOR GOD
APPLICATION
ACTIVITY**



MOVE

an activity that uses a preschooler's natural desire to move to help them learn

BIBLE STORY

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MEMORY VERSE

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KEY QUESTION

Who can you follow?

BOTTOM LINE

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BASIC TRUTH

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4. STAR WALK

WHAT YOU NEED: "Star Outline" Activity Page, several different colors of cardstock, floor tape, a music player, and this month's song, "Friend Forever"

WHAT YOU DO:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: Copy the "Star Outline" pages onto the different colors of cardstock. Lay the star pages on the floor in your classroom in a path and secure to the floor with the floor tape.

DURING THE ACTIVITY: Gather the children to line up at the beginning of your "star walk." Choose one child to be the leader each round. Explain that you will play music as the children follow the leader along the path. When the music STOPS, the children must freeze and then say, "Jesus is special! I can follow Jesus!" Try to allow time for every child to lead, if possible.

WHAT YOU SAY:

DURING THE ACTIVITY: "We're going to follow (*select a child to lead*) along our star path. Let's all line up here at the start of our path. (*Pause as children follow directions.*) When I start the music, I want you to carefully follow the leader and step from star to star. When the music stops, you must FREEZE and say, 'Jesus is special! **I can follow Jesus.**' Are you ready? (*Pause.*) Let's start walking."

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: "That was super fun. I loved taking a star walk with you! And you did an awesome job leading too. You know, Jesus is special! And because He's so special, we can all follow Him. **Who can you follow? I can follow Jesus.**"

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

WORSHIP

STORY

GROUPS

HOME

25 MINUTES

**LIVE
FOR GOD
APPLICATION
ACTIVITY**



CREATE

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

BIBLE STORY

John told people that
Jesus is special.

**JOHN THE BAPTIST
MATTHEW 3:3-4, 11, 13-15**

5. MEGAPHONE

WHAT YOU NEED: "Megaphone Label" Activity Page, Avery® #5160 labels or equivalent, 12 oz. paper cups, scissors, and fish stickers

(OPTION: If you do not wish to use cups for this activity, consider folding construction paper into a megaphone shape and securing with clear tape.)

WHAT YOU DO:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: Copy the Activity Page onto the labels. Use the scissors to cut the bottom out of the cups. Each child will need one cup.

DURING THE ACTIVITY: Give each child a cup or the paper megaphone. Encourage the children to decorate their megaphones with the stickers. Help the children place the label onto their megaphone.

WHAT YOU SAY:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: "Let's make a super cool craft that will help us tell others about Jesus!"

DURING THE ACTIVITY: *(Hold megaphone to your mouth and speak.)* "We can use this megaphone to tell everyone that Jesus is the GREATEST! *(Give the children the megaphones.)* Now everyone can use the fish stickers to decorate your megaphones." *(Do activity.)*

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: "Nice work! Your megaphones look awesome! Now you can be like John the Baptist and tell everyone to follow Jesus! **Who can you follow? I can follow Jesus!**"

MEMORY VERSE

"Come and follow me,"
Jesus said."

MATTHEW 4:19, NIRV

KEY QUESTION

Who can you follow?

BOTTOM LINE

I can follow Jesus.

BASIC TRUTH

Jesus wants to be my
friend forever.

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

WORSHIP

STORY

GROUPS

HOME

25 MINUTES

**PRAY
TO GOD
PRAYER
ACTIVITY**



REFLECT

an activity that encourages personal application and prayer

BIBLE STORY

John told people that Jesus is special.

**JOHN THE BAPTIST
MATTHEW 3:3-4, 11, 13-15**

MEMORY VERSE

“Come and follow me,
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MATTHEW 4:19, NIRV

KEY QUESTION

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BOTTOM LINE

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6. JOURNAL AND PRAYER

WHAT YOU NEED: “Memory Verse Card” paper clipped in your Bible at Matthew 4:19, journal, and fun-shaped pen

SMALL GROUP LEADER (SGL): “It’s Small Group time! Come and follow me!”

(Make a sweeping motion with your hand for the children to follow you and lead them to your Small Group spot.)

“We made it! Jesus told people, ‘Come and follow me,’ in the Bible. It’s also our new Bible verse this month!

(Open Bible to verse.)

“It says right here: “Come and follow me,” Jesus said, Matthew 4:19.

(Close Bible and lay it down.)

“Let’s say that together with the motions. Just say what I say and do what I do.”

CHILDREN AND SGL:

“Come *(motion toward yourself with hand)* and follow me” *(march)*, Jesus said *(hands to mouth like yelling)*, Matthew 4:19.” *(Open your hands like a book.)*
(Repeat the verse with motions a few times.)

SGL: “Good job! Now let’s sit down so we can talk about today’s Bible story. One, two, three, sit down with me!

“Our Bible story was about a man named John the Baptist. His job was to tell everyone to get ready because Jesus, God’s Son, was coming. John the Baptist didn’t want anyone to miss Jesus. When Jesus finally walked up to John the Baptist, John told everyone, ‘Jesus is here! Don’t follow me. Follow Jesus!’

“John the Baptist knew how special Jesus is and that everyone should follow Him—even you and me. That’s right! We should follow Jesus too! That’s why when I ask, ‘**Who can you follow?**,’ I want you to say, ‘**I can follow Jesus!**’

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

WORSHIP

STORY

GROUPS

HOME

25 MINUTES

PRAY
TO GOD
PRAYER
ACTIVITY



REFLECT

an activity that encourages personal application and prayer

Let's practice. **Who can you follow?"**

CHILDREN AND SGL: "I can follow Jesus!"

SGL: "Again! Who can you follow?"

CHILDREN AND SGL: "I can follow Jesus!"

SGL: "Following Jesus means doing what He does, like loving people the way He loves people or helping people the way He helps people. Hey, that gives me an idea for our journal time! Let's sit down and get started.

(Hold journal and fun-shaped pen.)

"My idea is that when I say your name, you tell me one way you can follow Jesus. It can be saying kind words like Jesus, sharing like Jesus, loving like Jesus, or even helping like Jesus. So, when I say your name, tell me one way you can follow Jesus.

(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.)

"Thank you for helping make this list! So many good things happen when we follow Jesus. Let's use our list when we pray. We can ask God to help us follow Jesus so we can do the things Jesus does. Would anyone like to pray before I pray?"

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

PRAYER

SGL: "Dear God, thank You for sending Jesus to be our friend forever. Thank You that He wants us to follow Him so He can show us the best way to live. Please help *(name each child)* to follow You so we can *(read the things they listed)*. We love You, God! In Jesus' name, amen."