

JESUS WANTS TO BE MY FRIEND FOREVER

WEEK

THREE

MARCH 2018

SMALL GROUP

3-5

YEAR-OLDS



first look™

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PRELUDE

SOCIAL

WORSHIP

STORY

GROUPS

HOME



BIBLE STORY

Anyone can follow Jesus.

MATTHEW (TAX COLLECTOR)
MATTHEW 9:9-10

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.
Pipe Cleaner Fishing
Paper Chain
Show Me the Ollie Money

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.
Follow
Anyone Can Follow Jesus Mural
People
Follow, Follow, Follow, Me!
Anyone Can Follow Jesus
Journal and Prayer

HOME: Prompting action beyond the experience

Going Home
Parent Cue

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

WORSHIP

STORY

GROUPS

HOME

15 MINUTES

BIBLE STORY

Anyone can follow Jesus.

MATTHEW (TAX COLLECTOR)
MATTHEW 9:9-10



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

Who can you follow?

BOTTOM LINE

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1. PIPE CLEANER FISHING

WHAT YOU NEED: 5 red pipe cleaners, 5 yellow pipe cleaners, and 5 jars or bowls

Visit First Look's March 2018 Pinterest Board to see the inspiration for this activity: <https://www.pinterest.com/firstlookcurr/march-2018-gone-fishin/>

WHAT YOU DO:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: Bend the yellow pipe cleaners to create a fish. Bend them so that they resemble a figure eight by making the bottom circle (or tail of the fish) much smaller than the top. Bend the bottom circle (the tail) a bit so that the fish will stand up. Place one fish inside each jar or bowl. Take the red pipe cleaners and bend them to form a "j" or hook.

DURING THE ACTIVITY: Tell the children that today you are going to do some fishing! Point out the fish inside each jar. Let the children take turns lowering a red pipe cleaner into the jar to hook a yellow fish. Once five children have had a turn at fishing, replace the fish in the jars and repeat with the next five children. Continue repeating until every child has had a turn.

WHAT YOU SAY:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: "I thought it would be fun to do some pipe cleaner fishing."

DURING THE ACTIVITY: "I want you to take this red hook like this, place it in the jar, and then try to hook or catch the yellow fish like this. (Demonstrate and then put the fish back in the jar.) Let's see how many fish we can catch today!"

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: "Great job, friends! When we fish this way, anyone can catch a fish! We'll hear more about what anyone can do in our Bible story today too. Let's go!"

TRANSITION: Move to Worship and Story by pretending to fish. Mimic casting out a line, waiting patiently, feeling the line pull, reeling it in, and then declaring how "BIG" your fish is with your hands out wide in front of you.

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

WORSHIP

STORY

GROUPS

HOME

15 MINUTES

BIBLE STORY

Anyone can follow Jesus.

MATTHEW (TAX COLLECTOR)
MATTHEW 9:9-10



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. PAPER CHAIN

WHAT YOU NEED: 5 different colors of construction paper (1 piece of each color), scissors, and glue sticks

WHAT YOU DO:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: Cut all of the paper into five-by-one-inch strips.

DURING THE ACTIVITY: Lay the strips of paper on a table or the floor in the activity area. Help the children work together to make a paper chain. Make the chain by looping the strips around each other until they are entwined circles. Secure the ends with the glue sticks. Challenge the children to make the chain as long as they can.

WHAT YOU SAY:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: “Let’s work together. We need EVERYONE to help.”

DURING THE ACTIVITY: “We are going to make a paper chain. You make the chain by looping the strips of paper together like this (*demonstrate*) and then gluing the ends. Let’s all work together and make a super-duper long chain!” (*Do activity.*)

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: “WOW! What a long chain! I love it when we work together with everyone. Today we are going to talk about something that ANYONE and EVERYONE can do! I am so excited for our Bible story today!”

TRANSITION: Move to Worship and Story by playing “Follow the Leader.” Have the leader say, “Follow me!”

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15 MINUTES

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IMAGINE

an activity that lets preschoolers pretend, imagine,
and role play to enhance their learning

3. SHOW ME THE OLLIE MONEY

WHAT YOU NEED: “Ollie Dollars” Activity Page, white cardstock, scissors, several wallets and purses, and items pulled randomly from the classroom for children to pretend to buy (*like toys, plush animals, pots and pans, plastic food from the play kitchen, etc.*)

WHAT YOU DO:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: Copy “Ollie Dollars” on cardstock (*at least 10 copies per classroom*) and cut apart. Place several “Ollie Dollars” in each purse and wallet. Lay out the items you’ve collected to “sell.”

DURING THE ACTIVITY: Let the children choose a wallet or purse and point out the “Ollie Dollars” inside them. Explain that they will pretend to purchase the items in front of you. Let the children take turns approaching you to select an item they would like to buy. Tell them how much that item costs. Do not price any item over three dollars. Encourage children to “pay” you the money they owe for the item chosen. Continue until every child has had an opportunity to “buy” something. Repeat as time and interest allow.

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: Encourage the children to return the items they’ve bought along with the wallets and purses you’ve used. If the children would like to keep some of their “Ollie Dollars,” ask them to say the memory verse or Bottom Line with you and then let them keep some of the dollars to take home.

WHAT YOU SAY:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: “I want everyone to grab a wallet or a purse. If we don’t have enough for everyone, don’t worry. Everyone will get a turn. Take a look inside your purse/wallet. What do you see? (*Pause.*) Yes! Ollie Dollars! So fun. Let’s use our Ollie Dollars to play store. I have a few items here that we’ll pretend to buy. (*Point to items.*) I’ll call your name to come up. You can pick an item, I’ll tell you what it costs, and then you can pay me with your Ollie Dollars. Ready? Let’s go!”

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: “That was so fun! Great counting, friends. Let’s return our wallets and our items right over here. Would anyone like to keep an Ollie Dollar or two? Can anyone say this month’s memory verse or Bottom Line? (*Prompt with the first word if a child needs help.*)”

PRELUDE

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GROUPS

HOME

15 MINUTES

BIBLE STORY

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MATTHEW 9:9-10



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MEMORY VERSE

“Come and follow me,
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BOTTOM LINE

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BASIC TRUTH

Jesus wants to be my
friend forever.

“We just pretended to buy things with money, didn’t we? Today we’re going to talk about a man in our story who took money from others and because of that, people didn’t like him very much. Let’s go find out what happened!”

TRANSITION: Move to Worship and Story by pretending to pull money out of an imaginary wallet, count it up, and then pay the cashier by saying something like: “You’re at the store with your mom and see a delicious lollipop. The lollipop costs one dollar. Let’s open our wallets and pull out one dollar. Great job! Now let’s pay the store clerk. And now we can enjoy our yummy lollipop!” Repeat with other items.



PRELUDE

SOCIAL

WORSHIP

STORY

GROUPS

HOME

25 MINUTES

**HEAR
FROM GOD**
MEMORY VERSE
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

Anyone can follow Jesus.

MATTHEW (TAX COLLECTOR)
MATTHEW 9:9-10

1. FOLLOW

WHAT YOU NEED: "Follow" Activity Page, light blue cardstock, and small fish stickers

WHAT YOU DO:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: Copy the "Follow" Activity Page onto the cardstock.

DURING THE ACTIVITY: Give each child an Activity Page and some fish stickers. Point out the word FOLLOW and mention that it is not finished. Encourage the children to finish the word by placing fish stickers over the dotted lines.

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: Say the memory verse with the children.

WHAT YOU SAY:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: "Our memory verse tells us that Jesus wants everyone to follow Him."

DURING THE ACTIVITY: "I have a page with our memory verse on it. Uh-oh! The word FOLLOW is not finished. It is a very important word in our memory verse. We have to finish it! We can place these fish stickers (*hold up*) on the dotted lines to finish the word." (*Demonstrate and do activity.*)

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: "Perfect! Now the memory verse is complete. Let's say it together. "Come and follow me," Jesus said, Matthew 4:19. Awesome! Anyone can 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

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

Anyone can follow Jesus.

MATTHEW (TAX COLLECTOR)
MATTHEW 9:9-10

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. ANYONE CAN FOLLOW JESUS MURAL

WHAT YOU NEED: 3-foot long piece of butcher paper, 2-3 large stamp pads, a wide black marker, wall tape, and baby wipes or access to a sink

WHAT YOU DO:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: On the butcher paper, write the words “Anyone can follow Jesus” in large block letters across the top of the page. Using the wall tape, secure the butcher paper to the wall at a preschooler’s eye level. Place the stamp pads nearby.

DURING THE ACTIVITY: Point out the butcher paper and read the words aloud to the children. Then encourage the children to press their hands onto the stamp pad and stamp their handprint onto the butcher paper. Write each child’s name next to his/her handprint as they finish. Use the baby wipes (or a sink with soap and water) to clean hands afterwards.

WHAT YOU SAY:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: “Friends, do you know what this says right here? (Point.) It says, ‘Anyone can follow Jesus.’ We learned about that in our Bible story today. Anyone—even someone who was a tax collector like Matthew—can follow Jesus. Every single one of us can follow Jesus! And to show that, I thought we could all put our handprints here on the paper to make a mural. I want you to take turns pressing your hand down on the stamp pad and then stamping your hand onto the paper. Let’s take turns, friends!”

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: “Look at all of our friends! Here’s (point to different handprints, calling out the names for each one). We can ALL follow Jesus. Anyone can follow Jesus! **Who can you follow? I can follow Jesus.** This mural will remind us that Jesus wants to be our friend forever and that anyone can follow Him. Beautiful job, everyone!”

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

WORSHIP

STORY

GROUPS

HOME

25 MINUTES

**LIVE
FOR GOD
APPLICATION
ACTIVITY**



THINK

an advanced activity specifically designed for older preschoolers

BIBLE STORY

Anyone can follow Jesus.

**MATTHEW (TAX COLLECTOR)
MATTHEW 9:9-10**

3. PEOPLE

WHAT YOU NEED: Medium-sized tub, water, towel, Styrofoam tray, small net, and several Little People® figures

(NOTE: When working with water in the classroom, be sure that there is adult supervision at all times. Never leave the children alone with the water. After the activity, be sure to discard the tub of water immediately.)

MEMORY VERSE

“Come and follow me,
Jesus said.”

MATTHEW 4:19, NIRV

WHAT YOU DO:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: Fill the tub half full of water.

DURING THE ACTIVITY: Place the tray in the tub. Encourage the children to place the Little People figures onto the tray one by one. Challenge the children to try to make the people stay on the tray and not fall in the water. If the people do fall in, use the net to fish them out of the water. Be sure every child has a turn to place the people onto the tray.

KEY QUESTION

Who can you follow?

WHAT YOU SAY:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: “We are going to do a fun activity. We are going to put people onto a boat in the water. We have to be really careful so they do not get wet!”

BOTTOM LINE

I can follow Jesus.

DURING THE ACTIVITY: “Everyone can place a person onto the boat. (*Demonstrate.*) It is okay if they fall in. We can get them out with our net. (*Hold up.*) Anyone can follow Jesus. All of these people (*point to Little People*) can follow Jesus, just like we can! Even the ones who fall in the water! ANYONE can follow Jesus!”

BASIC TRUTH

Jesus wants to be my friend forever.

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: “Way to go! You got all of the people onto the boat. It is so cool that the boat floated in the tub. There are a lot of people, and ANYONE can follow Jesus. We can follow Jesus 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

Anyone can follow Jesus.

**MATTHEW (TAX COLLECTOR)
MATTHEW 9:9-10**

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.

4. FOLLOW, FOLLOW, FOLLOW ME!

WHAT YOU NEED: No supplies needed

WHAT YOU DO:

DURING THE ACTIVITY: Gather the children to sit in a circle in an open area of the room. Explain that you will play the game "Duck, Duck, Goose" but with different words. Instead of saying, "Duck, duck, duck," etc., the leader will say, "Follow, follow, follow ME!" When someone says, "ME!" the child who was tapped must get up and follow the leader around the circle. The child who was the leader will sit down in the open spot and the child who was tapped is the new leader. Repeat until everyone has a chance to be the leader.

WHAT YOU SAY:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: "Everyone come over here with me!"

DURING THE ACTIVITY: "Let's all join hands to form a circle. (Pause as children grab hands.) Great! Now that we're in a circle, drop hands and sit down right where you are. Good job!"

"Today, we're going to play the game 'Duck, Duck, Goose' but with different words. Let me show you what I mean. The person that is the leader will walk around the circle, tapping friend's heads. Instead of saying, 'Duck,' I want you to say, 'Follow, follow, follow' (tap heads as you say these words), and then say, 'ME!' If you're tapped on the 'me,' I want you to get up and follow the leader all the way around the circle until the leader sits down. Then it will be your turn to be the leader and pick a new friend. Are you ready? (Pause.) Let's go!" (Let the last child you tapped be the first leader.)

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: "Whew! That was super fun. In this game, we followed each other. But who can we always follow? Yes! **I can follow Jesus.** That's right! ANYONE can follow Jesus. Remember this week that Jesus wants to be your friend forever and that **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

Anyone can follow Jesus.

**MATTHEW (TAX COLLECTOR)
MATTHEW 9:9-10**

5. ANYONE CAN FOLLOW JESUS

WHAT YOU NEED: "Anyone" Activity Page, yellow cardstock, small gingerbread men or people cutouts, glue sticks, and markers

(OPTION: If you do not have access to gingerbread men or people cutouts, consider making your own using the "People" Activity Page. You will need to copy the Activity Page onto yellow cardstock and cut on the dotted lines.)

MEMORY VERSE

"Come and follow me,"
Jesus said."

MATTHEW 4:19, NIRV

WHAT YOU DO:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: Copy the "Anyone" Activity Page onto the yellow cardstock.

DURING THE ACTIVITY: Give each child an Activity Page and three people cutouts. Help the children glue the cutouts in a single file line on the left side of the page in front of Jesus.

KEY QUESTION

Who can you follow?

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: Encourage the children to use the marker to make faces on the people cutouts.

WHAT YOU SAY:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: "Anyone can follow Jesus!"

BOTTOM LINE

I can follow Jesus.

DURING THE ACTIVITY: "Here is a page with Jesus on it (*Hold up.*) We need to add the people who can follow Him. (*Do activity.*) Great job! Now use the markers to make faces on all of the people." (*Finish activity.*)

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: "Fantastic! Now there are people following Jesus. Anyone can follow Jesus—ANYONE! We can follow Jesus too. **Who can you follow? 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

Anyone can follow Jesus.

**MATTHEW (TAX COLLECTOR)
MATTHEW 9:9-10**

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

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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! I need my small group to 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.)

“Here we are in our spot, just our group. Let’s sit down in our spot with our special group and talk about the Bible story. One, two, three, sit down with me!”

“Now, can anyone follow me to our spot, or is this a special time for just our small group? *(Pause for response.)* Yes, this is a time for just our small group. You are the only ones who follow me to our spot. Our friends over there are sitting with their leader in their spot. *(Point to another small group.)* And those friends over there are sitting with their leader in their spot. *(Point to another small group.)*

“Let’s think about our Bible story. Was it just a small group that could follow Jesus or could ANYONE follow Jesus? *(Pause for response.)* Yes! ANYONE could follow Jesus! Boys, girls, mommies, daddies, old people, young people, fishermen, and even tax collectors like Matthew.

“Matthew was a tax collector, which means he took money from people to help the city. The problem was Matthew would take more money than he was supposed to and keep it for himself. That was wrong, and it made people not like Matthew. That’s why people were surprised when Jesus looked at Matthew and said, ‘Come and follow me.’ They were wondering why Jesus would want Matthew the tax collector to follow Him. Matthew had done wrong things.

“Well, the good news is ANYONE can follow Jesus, even people who have done wrong things. Following Jesus will help them learn to do what is right, just like it did with Matthew.

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

WORSHIP

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GROUPS

HOME

25 MINUTES

PRAY
TO GOD
PRAYER
ACTIVITY



REFLECT

an activity that encourages personal application and prayer

"Jesus says ANYONE can follow Him. ANYONE can be His friend forever. That means you and I can follow Jesus too!
Who can you follow?"

CHILDREN AND SGL: "I can follow Jesus!"

SGL: "One more time! **Who can follow Jesus?"**

CHILDREN AND SGL: "I can follow Jesus!"

SGL: "Yes! ANYONE can follow Jesus! (Give each child a high-five.) The Bible verse we are learning will help us tell people that ANYONE can follow Jesus because it says,"

(Open Bible to verse.)

"Come and follow me," Jesus said, Matthew 4:19.

(Close Bible and lay it down.)

"That's easy to remember! Say it with me and we can do the motions too. 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! Okay, it's time to write in our journal and pray. Let's sit down and get started.

(Hold journal and fun-shaped pen.)

"The special thing I want us to remember is that ANYONE can follow Jesus, even people who have done something wrong. Following Jesus helps us learn to do what is right. I want us to make a list of things that are wrong, like saying mean words or complaining or taking something that doesn't belong to us, like Matthew did. When we pray we can ask God to help us follow Jesus even when we do something wrong. So, when I say your name, tell me one thing that is wrong and I'll write it down.

(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.)

"This is a great list! I'm ready to pray. Would anyone like to pray before I pray?"

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TO GOD
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REFLECT

an activity that encourages personal application and prayer

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

PRAYER

SGL: "Dear God, thank You for loving us no matter what. Thank you for sending Jesus to be our friend forever—even when we do something wrong like *(read the list the children made)*. It is such awesome news to know that ANYONE can follow Jesus and be His friend. I pray that we will all follow Jesus so we can be with You forever and learn to do what is right. You are so good to us, God. We love You, God! In Jesus' name, amen."