

LESSON 4:

THE SON: GOD'S GIFT TO US



Learning Objectives

- Children will understand that Jesus is God's Son sent to earth as payment for our sins.
- Children will recognise that Jesus was fully human and a living example for us to follow.

Items Needed

- Torn paper from Lesson 2

Welcome & Introduction (5 minutes)

Warmly welcome the children. Lead the group in prayer (or ask a volunteer to do so), thanking God for the opportunity to meet and learn together once again. Explain that today they will be learning about a very, very special gift God sent for each one of us, his Son Jesus. Share that even though we know God's rules, none of us are perfect and we break God's commandments. We sin, and sin separates us from God who is holy and without sin. Share that God loved us and continues to love all of us, even when we sin. In fact, God had a plan to bring us back to him all along. And that plan included his Son, Jesus.

Lesson Review (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the Review Activities section in the back of the teacher's guide. If time allows, review other previous stories as well.

Object Lesson (5 minutes)

Show the large piece of paper that was ripped into 2 pieces during lesson 2. Ask the group if they can think of any way to fix or repair the ripped paper. Ask a few volunteers to share their ideas aloud. Next, explain that there's no way to repair the rip without the use of something else such as glue or tape. Share that sin does this to our relationship with God. Sin has torn our relationship with him. But God still loves us and he had a plan to help bring us back to him. God sent his only Son, Jesus, to earth to help repair our relationship with him.

Scripture Story to Share (10 minutes)

(If the children have their books, have them turn to pages 6 through 9 and look at the pictures.)

Jesus is Born

Jesus is God's Son. He was born in a stable. A stable is a home for animals, not the birth of kings!

God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a village in Galilee, to a virgin named Mary. She was engaged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of King David. Gabriel appeared to her and said, "Greetings, favoured woman! The Lord is with you!"

Confused and disturbed, Mary tried to think what the angel could mean. "Don't be afraid, Mary," the angel told her, "for you have found favour with God!"

You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be very great and will be called the Son of the Most High... his Kingdom will never end!"

She gave birth to her first child, a son. They named him Jesus. She wrapped him snugly in strips of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no lodging available for them. That night there were shepherds staying in the fields nearby, guarding their flocks of sheep. Suddenly, an angel of the Lord appeared among them, and the radiance of the Lord's glory surrounded them. They were terrified, but the angel reassured them. "Don't be afraid!" he said. "I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people. The Saviour—yes, the Messiah, the Lord—has been born today in Bethlehem, the city of David! And you will recognise him by this sign: You will find a baby wrapped snugly in strips of cloth, lying in a manger." Suddenly, the angel was joined by a vast host of others—the armies of heaven—praising God and saying,

"Glory to God in highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased." When the angels had returned to heaven, the shepherds said to each other, "Let's go to Bethlehem! Let's see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about." They hurried to the village and found Mary and Joseph. And there was the baby, lying in the manger. After seeing him, the shepherds told everyone what had happened and what the angel had said to them about this child.

Luke 1:26a, 27-28, 29-32a, 33b; 2:7-17a

What Do YOU Think? (5-10 minutes)

- What is happening in the pictures in your book?
- Who told Mary about God's plan for her?
- How did Mary respond to the news the angel gave her?
- God sent his only Son to repair his relationship with all of us, including you. What must this say about how he feels about you?

Lesson Activity (5-10 minutes)

Select a volunteer from the group. To begin, ask the volunteer to turn so that their back is facing you. Next, explain that it will be your job to catch them when they fall backward. The volunteer in front of you is to slowly fall backward into your arms, trusting you completely. As time permits, invite several children to try this activity with you.

Ask the group if the activity was difficult. Allow a few children to share their thoughts. Invite them to think about and discuss which role was harder: trusting or catching? Share that this game required them to place complete trust in their teammate. Point out that when the angel visited Mary, she chose to place complete trust in God.

You Should Know... (5 minutes)

Jesus coming to earth was God's plan to repair our relationship with him. Jesus is God's Son. He is fully God. Jesus was human, too, just like you and me, so he knows and understands how we feel.

Think About It! (5 minutes)

God cared about you so much that he created a plan to bring you back to him. How can you show your love to God?

LESSON 5:

GOOD NEWS: NEW LIFE THROUGH JESUS



Learning Objectives

- Children will understand that Jesus was God's Son.
- Children will understand that Jesus obeyed his earthly parents and his heavenly father, God.
- Children will recognise that God loved and was pleased with Jesus.

Items Needed

- A picture of a home

Welcome & Introduction (5 minutes)

Welcome the children by sharing what a special gift it is to see them each time you meet for a lesson. Lead the group in prayer (or ask a volunteer to do so), thanking God for the opportunity to meet and learn together once again. Share that today we will learn even more about God's gift to us, his Son Jesus, and how much God loved him.

Scripture Story to Share (10 minutes)

(If the children have their books, have them turn to page 10 and look at the picture.)

Jesus as a Boy

Jesus grew up healthy and strong. He was filled with wisdom, and God's favour was on him. Every year Jesus' parents went to Jerusalem for the Passover festival. When Jesus was twelve years old, they attended the festival as usual. After the celebration was over, they started home to Nazareth, but Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents didn't miss him at first, because they assumed he was among the other travellers. But when he didn't show up that evening, they started looking for him among their relatives and friends. When they couldn't find him, they went back to Jerusalem to search for him there.

Lesson Review (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the Review Activities section in the back of the teacher's guide. If time allows, review other previous stories as well.

Object Lesson (5 minutes)

Hold up the picture of a home that represents the types of homes in which children in your group would live. Explain that a home is a very important place no matter where it is or what it looks like. It's where our family and loved ones live. Point out that Jesus was born on earth in a town called Bethlehem. Ask them to describe Jesus' "home" the night he was born. Ask if anyone can tell you where his real home is (Heaven). Point out that even while Jesus was here on earth, he never forgot this that his true home was in heaven with Father God.

Three days later they finally discovered him in the Temple, sitting among the religious teachers, listening to them and asking questions. All who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers.

His parents didn't know what to think. "Son," his mother said to him, "why have you done this to us? Your father and I have been frantic, searching for you everywhere." "But why did you need to search?" he asked. "Didn't you know that I must be in my Father's house?" But they didn't understand what he meant.

Then he returned to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. And his mother stored all these things in her heart. Jesus grew in wisdom and in stature and in favour with God and all the people. *Luke 2:40-52*

Jesus is Baptised

We clean dirt off our bodies with water. Baptism is a public way to show the cleansing of sin from our hearts when we ask Jesus to forgive our sins.

John the Baptist came to the Judean wilderness and began preaching.

Jesus went from Galilee to the Jordan River to be baptised by John. But John tried to talk him out of it. "I am the one who needs to be baptised by you," he said, "so why are you coming to me?" But Jesus said, "It should be done, for we must carry out all that God requires." So John agreed to baptise him. After his baptism, as Jesus came up out of the water, the heavens were opened and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and settling on him. And a voice from heaven said, "This is my dearly loved Son, who brings me great joy."

Matthew 3:1, 13-17

(Explain what the word and act of baptism means: Baptism is a symbolic act. It represents the washing away of our sins.)

What Do YOU Think? (5-10 minutes)

- What is happening in the picture in your book?
- Why were Joseph and Mary worried?
- What did God say when Jesus was baptised?
- Jesus pleased God by obeying him. How can WE please God?

Lesson Activity (5-10 minutes)

Divide the group into pairs. To begin, ask one student in each pair to close his or her eyes and allow themselves to be led around the room safely by their teammate. After a few minutes, have the children switch roles.

Ask the group if being lead with their eyes closed was difficult or easy. Allow a few children to share their thoughts aloud. Next, ask the children to consider how difficult and unsuccessful it would have been to try to navigate the room without the help of their guide. Point out that even as a young boy, Jesus loved and chose to obey his earthly parents, Mary and Joseph, and his heavenly father, God. Share that just as each child trusted their guide during the game, Jesus trusted and looked to God for help and wisdom.

You Should Know... (5 minutes)

God loves Jesus very much, and he loves you, too. God sent his Son to earth as part of his plan to help bring you back to him.

Think About It! (5 minutes)

What did Jesus do that pleased God?
What can we do to please God?

LESSON 6:

RESISTING TEMPTATION: MAKING GOOD CHOICES



Learning Objectives

- Children will understand that even Jesus was tempted and resisted sin.
- Children will identify specific ways they can personally resist sin in their daily lives.

Lesson Review (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the Review Activities section in the back of the teacher's guide. If time allows, review other previous stories as well.

Items Needed

- A small ball (safe for throwing)
- A large piece of cardboard or paper

Welcome & Introduction (5 minutes)

Greet the children with a smile. Lead the group in prayer (or ask a volunteer to do so), thanking God for the opportunity to meet and learn together once again. Remind them that in previous lessons, they learned about what sin is. Explain that today they will learn about the temptation to sin, and how Jesus was also tempted while here on earth.

Scripture Story to Share (10 minutes)

(If the children have their books, have them turn to page 11 and look at the picture.)

Jesus is Tempted

Temptation happens when we want to say or do something we know is wrong. Is it easy or hard to say no to temptation?

Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted there by the devil. For forty days and forty nights he fasted and became very hungry. During that time the devil came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become loaves of bread."

Object Lesson (5 minutes)

Select a volunteer to come up and help you. Ask the volunteer to place their hands in their pockets or behind their back and keep them there. Next, hold up the ball for the group to see. Then pretend to throw the ball at the child. (The child will probably try to catch the ball or instinctively flinch in response.) Point out that this is a very uncomfortable and potentially dangerous situation to be in. The child can't catch or protect himself from the ball, but what if you let them try to catch the ball or—even better—gave the volunteer something to use as a shield! Next, hand the large sheet of cardboard or paper to the child and ask them to hold it up. Then, throw the ball a few times against the cardboard. (If time allows, invite a few children to try both roles as well.) Point out that temptation can show up when we least expect it and catch us off-guard much like the ball in this activity. Share that we can know that Jesus understands how we feel because he was tempted too. But Jesus was prepared to fight temptation.

But Jesus told him, “No! The Scriptures say, ‘People do not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.’”

Then the devil took him to the holy city, Jerusalem, to the highest point of the Temple, and said, “If you are the Son of God, jump off! For the Scriptures say, ‘He will order his angels to protect you. And they will hold you up with their hands so you won’t even hurt your foot on a stone.’” Jesus responded, “The Scriptures also say, ‘You must not test the Lord your God.’”

Next the devil took him to the peak of a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. “I will give it all to you,” he said, “if you will kneel down and worship me.” “Get out of here, Satan,” Jesus told him.

“For the Scriptures say, ‘You must worship the Lord your God and serve only him.’”

Then the devil went away, and angels came and took care of Jesus.

Matthew 4:1-11

What Do YOU Think? (5-10 minutes)

- What is happening in the picture in your book?
- Who tempted Jesus?
- What did Jesus specifically do to resist him/temptation?
- What are some temptations to do the wrong things do you sometimes experience?
- What are some ways you can fight the temptation to do wrong (sin)?

Lesson Activity (5-10 minutes)

Emphasise that Jesus was tempted just like every other person is, but he stayed strong against it. Jesus lived a life without sin. Jesus chose to always obey God. He was always prepared with a response to the temptation Satan threw at him.

Ask the children to stand and form a large circle. Explain that this game is about being prepared to respond quickly, just like Jesus was prepared to fight temptation in the story. Share that you will begin the game by asking a question aloud. Explain that whoever is holding the ball must answer quickly and then toss the ball to another child in the circle. But point out that each child must call out their answer quickly because no one may hold the ball for more than 5 seconds or they are “out” and must sit down. The game continues (asking new questions as necessary) until only one child is left standing. (Some sample questions for the game include: What is your favourite sport? Who is wearing the colour blue today? What is your favourite fruit?)

You Should Know... (5 minutes)

Everyone struggles with temptation; even Jesus was tempted.

Think About It! (5 minutes)

What can you do to fight temptation like Jesus did?

LESSON 7:

DISCIPLES: FOLLOWING JESUS



Learning Objectives

- Children will identify the people who chose to follow and learn from Jesus as “disciples.”
- Children will identify ways they can personally be disciples of Jesus in their own lives.

Lesson Review (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the Review Activities section in the back of the teacher’s guide. If time allows, review other previous stories as well.

Items Needed

- A picture of a local sports team

Welcome & Introduction (5 minutes)

Express how happy you are to see the children again. Lead the group in prayer (or ask a volunteer to do so), thanking God for the opportunity to meet and learn together once again. Remind them that they’ve learned a great deal about God, his love for us and his Son, Jesus. Explain that today they will learn about Jesus’ followers (disciples) and how they too can personally become disciples of him.

Object Lesson (5 minutes)

Show the group the picture of the sports team. Ask the children to raise their hands if they like or follow this team. Ask a few volunteers to share why. Explain that Jesus gained a following too. News of his teachings spread quickly and others wanted to learn more about the important things Jesus had to say, including just how much God loved each and every one of them—including children!

Scripture Story to Share (10 minutes)

Disciples

Jesus told his disciples and others that they were special to God. Why is this true? Why are YOU special to God? (If the children have their books, have them turn to pages 12 and 13 and look at the pictures.) This is the story of how the disciples first met Jesus.

One day as Jesus was walking along the shore of the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers—Simon, also called Peter, and Andrew—throwing a net into the water, for they fished for a living. Jesus called out to them, “Come, follow me, and I will show you how to fish for people!” And they left their nets at once and followed him.

A little farther up the shore he saw two other brothers, James and John, sitting in a boat with their father, Zebedee, repairing their nets. And he called them to come, too. They immediately followed him, leaving the boat and their father behind.

Matthew 4:18-22

As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at his tax collector's booth. "Follow me and be my disciple," Jesus said to him. So Matthew got up and followed him.

Later, Matthew invited Jesus and his disciples to his home as dinner guests, along with many tax collectors and other disreputable sinners. But when the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with such scum?" When Jesus heard this, he said, "Healthy people don't need a doctor—sick people do." Then he added, "Now go and learn the meaning of this Scripture: 'I want you to show mercy, not offer sacrifices.' For I have come to call not those who think they are righteous, but those who know they are sinners." *Matthew 9:9-13*

Share that Jesus taught people many things, including how much God loved each of them. Through his teaching, Jesus gained many followers. These followers were called "disciples."

What Do YOU Think? (5-10 minutes)

- What is happening in the pictures in your book?
- Who were some of the people Jesus called to help him?
- Who did Jesus say he came to call (or help)?
- Why do you think people wanted to follow Jesus?

Lesson Activity (5-10 minutes)

Ask the children to stand and invite them to play a game called "Disciples Do." Explain that you will be giving several sets of instructions, but that they must only do it when the instruction starts with the word "Disciples." If an instruction doesn't begin with the word "Disciples", all the children that follow the instruction must sit down and they are out. The game continues until only one disciple is left standing.

Tell the children that they can be disciple of Jesus, too, by choosing to believe in him and following the example set by him on earth. Invite the group to raise their hands and share specific ways they can act and choices they can make each day that follow the example Jesus set for us. (These include resisting temptation, loving God, caring for others, telling others God loves them, etc.)

You Should Know... (5 minutes)

The disciples not only believed in Jesus; they tried to follow the example set by him also.

Think About It! (5 minutes)

Jesus wants you to be his disciple too!

LESSON 8:

JESUS: SON OF THE ONE TRUE GOD



Learning Objectives

- Children will identify Jesus as Son of the one true God.
- Children will recognise specific ways Jesus demonstrated that he was God's Son.

Items Needed

- An example of genuine currency (or coin)
- Play money or “fake” currency (you can make it yourself)

Welcome & Introduction (5 minutes)

Warmly greet the children. Lead the group in prayer (or ask a volunteer to do so), thanking God for the opportunity to meet and learn together once again. Briefly ask them to raise their hand if they can recall who Jesus was. Call on a volunteer to share aloud. Explain that today they will learn about how Jesus demonstrated that he was the Son of the one true God.

Have you ever been afraid during a storm? What did you do? Just imagine how Jesus' disciples must have felt. Jesus and his disciples were in a boat on a lake at night.

But soon a fierce storm came up. High waves were breaking into the boat, and it began to fill with water. Jesus was sleeping at the back of the boat with his head on a cushion. The disciples woke him up, shouting, “Teacher, don’t you care that we’re going to drown?” When Jesus woke up, he rebuked the wind and said to the waves, “Silence! Be still!” Suddenly the wind stopped, and there was a great calm. Then he asked them, “Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?” The disciples were absolutely terrified. “Who is this man?” they asked each other. “Even the wind and waves obey him! *Mark 4:37-41*

Lesson Review (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the Review Activities section in the back of the teacher's guide. If time allows, review other previous stories as well.

Object Lesson (5 minutes)

Hold up the fake currency in one hand and the genuine currency in the other. Ask the children to point to the real or genuine money. Ask them how they knew the difference. Ask a few volunteers to share aloud. Point out that the people living during Jesus' time had the same decision to make. Was Jesus the “real deal”? Was he really the Son of the one true God, or was he a fake?

Scripture Story to Share (10 minutes)

(If the children have their books, have them turn to pages 14 through 19 and look at the pictures.)

Jesus Calms the Storm

A Girl Raised from the Dead

Jesus had the power to heal people's bodies. He even brought people back to life!

A man named Jairus asked Jesus to heal his sick daughter. Messengers arrived from the home of Jairus, the leader of the synagogue. They told him, "Your daughter is dead. There's no use troubling the Teacher now." But Jesus overheard them and said to Jairus, "Don't be afraid. Just have faith." Then Jesus stopped the crowd and wouldn't let anyone go with him except Peter, James, and John (the brother of James). When they came to the home of the synagogue leader, Jesus saw much commotion and weeping and wailing. He went inside and asked, "Why all this commotion and weeping? The child isn't dead; she's only asleep."

The crowd laughed at him. But he made them all leave, and he took the girl's father and mother and his three disciples into the room where the girl was lying. Holding her hand, he said to her, "Talitha kum," which means "Little girl, get up!" And the girl, who was twelve years old, immediately stood up and walked around! They were overwhelmed and totally amazed. *Mark 5:35b-42*

A Boy Has a Demon

Jesus is God's Son and is very powerful; more powerful than any evil force or demon.

The next day, after they had come down the mountain, a large crowd met Jesus. A man in the crowd called out to him, "Teacher, I beg you to look at my son, my only child. An evil spirit keeps seizing him, making him scream. It throws him into convulsions so that he foams at the mouth. It batters him and hardly ever leaves him alone. I begged your disciples to cast out the spirit, but they couldn't do it." Jesus said to the man, "Bring your son here." As the boy came forward, the demon knocked him to the ground and threw him into a violent convulsion. But Jesus rebuked the evil spirit and healed the boy. Then he gave him back to his father. Awe gripped the people as they saw this majestic display of God's power. *Luke 9:37-40, 41b-43a*

Explain that Jesus demonstrated that He had God's power over nature, sickness, and even death.

What Do YOU Think? (5-10 minutes)

- What is happening in the pictures in your book?
- Who was afraid of the storm?
- What was their response when Jesus calmed the storm?
- If Jesus demonstrated all of this power, do you think he can help you?

Lesson Activity (5-10 minutes)

Have the children sit in a circle. Select one child to be "it." He or she must walk around the outside of the circle. As he or she walks, they must tap the other children's heads and says whether they are a "zebra" or a "lion." Once someone is the "lion" they get up and try to chase "it" around the circle. The goal is to tap the person who is "it" before he or she is able to sit down in the "lion's" spot. If the "lion" is not able to do this, they become "it" for the next round and the game continues. If they do tap the "it" person, the person who was caught has to sit in the centre of the circle. Then the "lion" becomes "it" for the next round. The person in the middle can't leave the centre of the circle until another person is tapped and he is replaced. (Play as many rounds of this game as time allows.) Explain that in this game, no one ever knew who would be the "lion" until it was shouted out by the child who was "it." Everyone else was sitting in suspense, waiting and wondering. This is very much how the people of Jesus' time felt. They wondered if Jesus was really the Son of the one true God. Fortunately for all of us, he is!

You Should Know... (5 minutes)

Jesus proved that he was the Son of the one true God by showing his power over nature by calming the storm, over evil by casting out demons, and even over death by bringing a girl back to life! Jesus cared enough to help all of these people, and he wants to help you, too!

Think About It! (5 minutes)

Each time someone asked Jesus for help, he freely gave it. What can you ask Jesus for help with?

LESSON 9:

THE CROSS: JESUS' FREE GIFT TO US



Learning Objectives

- Children will understand that Jesus died on the cross as a sacrifice for our sins.
- Children will understand that acceptance of Jesus' gift of salvation repairs our relationship with God that sin had destroyed.

Lesson Review (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the Review Activities section in the back of the teacher's guide. If time allows, review other previous stories as well.

Items Needed

- A long piece of string (approximately 60 cm long)

Welcome & Introduction (5 minutes)

Smile and express how happy you are to see all the children. Lead the group in prayer (or ask a volunteer to do so), thanking God for the opportunity to meet and learn together once again. Share that you are very excited to share today's lesson with them because today they will learn about how Jesus ultimately was part of God's plan to bring us back to him by dying on a cross for our sins.

Scripture Story to Share (10 minutes)

(If the children have their books, have them turn to pages 20 through 23 and look at the pictures.)

Jesus Dies

Jesus didn't deserve to die, but he loved all of us so much that he died willingly in our place. Jesus took the punishment we deserved so our sins could be forgiven.

When they came to a place called The Skull, they nailed him to the cross. People who passed by said terrible things about Jesus. Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they don't know what they are doing." The crowd watched and the leaders scoffed. "He saved others," they said, "let him save himself if he is really God's Messiah, the Chosen One." The soldiers mocked him, too, by offering him a drink of sour wine. They called out to him, "If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!" A sign was fastened above him with these words: "This is the King of the Jews."

Object Lesson (5 minutes)

Ask for two volunteers. Have each volunteer hold an end of the string, pulling it tight between them. Ask the children to imagine that the string is much, much bigger and that it's pulled tight over a very large hole. Next, ask them to imagine that they must walk across it. How would they feel? Invite a few children to share their thoughts aloud. Next, point out that most of us would be afraid of falling. Collect the string and invite the volunteers to take their seats.

Next, ask the group to think back to Lesson 2 about Adam and Eve when they sinned. This first disobedient act against God is called "The Fall" and what a fall it was! It completely ruined their (and our) relationship with God. There was no way they could repair their broken relationship with God. Ask the children to imagine how Adam and Eve must have felt as they were sent out of the garden and away from God.

By this time it was about noon, and darkness fell across the whole land until three o'clock. The light from the sun was gone. Then Jesus shouted, "Father, I entrust my spirit into your hands!" And with those words he breathed his last. Jesus' followers buried Jesus' body in a tomb. A big stone was rolled against the entrance to the tomb.

Luke 23:33a, 34a, 35-38, 44-45a, 46

Jesus Comes Back to Life!

Jesus didn't just defeat sickness and demons. He defeated death, too!

Early on Sunday morning, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and found that the stone had been rolled away from the entrance. Mary was standing outside the tomb crying, and as she wept, she stooped and looked in. She saw two white-robed angels, one sitting at the head and the other at the foot of the place where the body of Jesus had been lying. "Dear woman, why are you crying?" the angels asked her. "Because they have taken away my Lord," she replied, "and I don't know where they have put him." She turned to leave and saw someone standing there. It was Jesus, but she didn't recognise him. "Dear woman, why are you crying?" Jesus asked her. "Who are you looking for?"

She thought he was the gardener. "Sir," she said, "if you have taken him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will go and get him." "Mary!" Jesus said. She turned to him and cried out, "Rabboni!" (which is Hebrew for "Teacher"). "Don't cling to me," Jesus said, "for I haven't yet ascended to the Father. But go find my brothers and tell them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" Mary Magdalene found the disciples and told them, "I have seen the Lord!" Then she gave them his message. **John 20:1, 11-18**

What Do YOU Think? (5-10 minutes)

- What is happening in the pictures in your book?
- What happened when Jesus died on the cross?
- Does Jesus have power over death?
- How do you think Mary felt when she saw Jesus?

Lesson Activity (5-10 minutes)

Invite the children to play a version of "it." Select a child to be "it." Whenever "it" catches someone, the child caught is "stuck in the mud." They cannot move and must stand with one of their arms out. The only way they can get unstuck is if a person passes under their arm. The game continues until all the players are stuck. The last person to be stuck is "it" for the next game. (Continue playing as time allows.)

Explain that we were all "stuck in the mud," but worse! We were all stuck in our own sin until Jesus died on the cross to help free us.

You Should Know... (5 minutes)

Jesus paid the price for our sins—YOUR sins—through his death on the cross.

Think About It! (5 minutes)

How does it feel to know Jesus died on the cross for you?

LESSON 10:

NEVER ALONE: ALWAYS WITH GOD

Learning Objectives

- Children will understand that when Jesus returned to heaven, God sent his Holy Spirit to be with his disciples.
- Children will understand that God's Holy Spirit lives inside everyone who accepts Jesus as their Saviour.

Items Needed

- A small object (to hold tightly in your fist)

Welcome & Introduction (5 minutes)

Welcome the children with a smile. Lead the group in prayer (or ask a volunteer to do so), thanking God for the opportunity to meet and learn together once again. Ask them to raise their hand if they've ever felt alone. Explain that today they will learn about Jesus' return to heaven, God's gift of the Holy Spirit, and why followers of Jesus are never truly alone.

Scripture Story to Share (10 minutes)

If the children have their books, have them turn to pages 24 through 27 and look at the pictures.)

Jesus Returns to Heaven

Jesus gave his disciples a very important job to do because of his love for all of us.

Then the eleven disciples left for Galilee, going to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. When they saw him, they worshiped him—but some of them doubted! Jesus came and told his disciples, "I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Matthew 28:16-20

Lesson Review (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the Review Activities section in the back of the teacher's guide. If time allows, review other previous stories as well.

Object Lesson (5 minutes)

Take a small object and hold it tightly in your fist. Ask a student to come and try to take it out of your hand (choose a smaller student that won't be able to do it). Have two more children try. Ask the children why none of them can take the object out of your hand. Explain that you are stronger, so whatever is in your hand is safe. Explain that this is what it is like when we give our lives to Jesus. He sends his Spirit into our hearts and seals us, so that we belong to God. There is no one more powerful than God, and nothing can take us away from him. Tell the children that now that Jesus died and rose again, anyone who believes in their heart and says with their mouth that Jesus is Lord will be saved. They will be given his Spirit. Explain that today they will learn about what it means to have God's Spirit in our hearts.

The Spirit of God Comes

God didn't leave his disciples alone. He sent a very special helper!

All the believers were meeting together in one place. Suddenly, there was a sound from heaven like the roaring of a mighty windstorm, and it filled the house where they were sitting. Then, what looked like flames or tongues of fire appeared and settled on each of them. And everyone present was filled with the Holy Spirit and began speaking in other languages, as the Holy Spirit gave them this ability.

At that time there were devout Jews from every nation living in Jerusalem. When they heard the loud noise, everyone came running, and they were bewildered to hear their own languages being spoken by the believers.

They were completely amazed. "How can this be?" they exclaimed. "These people are all from Galilee, and yet we hear them speaking in our own native languages!

They stood there amazed and perplexed. "What can this mean?" they asked each other.

Acts 2:1-8, 12

Peter replied, "Each of you must repent of your sins and turn to God, and be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Those who believed what Peter said were baptised and added to the church that day—about 3,000 in all. Acts 2:38, 41

What Do YOU Think? (5-10 minutes)

- What is happening in the pictures in your book?
- What did Jesus tell his disciples to do?
- What happened when God sent the Holy Spirit to Jesus' followers?
- God sent his Holy Spirit to be with all who choose to follow him. How does this show God cares for us?

Lesson Activity (5-10 minutes)

Invite the group to play a guessing game. Explain that you will be giving them some short, specific clues about one person in the room. (Clues might include what colour shirt the person is wearing, if they are a boy or a girl, etc.) Ask them to silently raise their hand (and keep it raised) as soon as they think they know who the person is. After giving several clues, ask a volunteer to guess who the person is. If the guess is correct, that person then gets to begin the game again by providing clues about another person they've selected. If the guess is incorrect, the game continues with more clues. (Several rounds may be played if time allows.) Explain that during the game, they were all dependent upon different clues to help them determine who the mystery person was. Explain that once we decide to follow Jesus and accept his gift of forgiveness, we can know that God's Holy Spirit is inside of us in much the same way. We will see clues or evidence of his presence through our actions, how we feel inside and the strength he gives us to fight temptation.

You Should Know... (5 minutes)

When Jesus returned to heaven, God sent his Holy Spirit to be with all of us on earth, even today!

Think About It! (5 minutes)

How can God's Holy Spirit living in you help you live a life that pleases him?

LESSON 11:

FOLLOWING JESUS: A GREAT WAY FOR EVERYDAY

Learning Objectives

- Children will understand God's promise of a better life today through a relationship with him.
- Children will understand that choices have good and bad consequences and that choosing to follow God's commands can help ensure their best possible future.

Items Needed

- A watch or small clock

Welcome & Introduction (5 minutes)

Briefly greet the children with genuine warmth and excitement. Lead the group in prayer (or ask a volunteer to do so), thanking God for the opportunity to meet and learn together once again. Share that today they will be learning about how they can start making their lives better, here and right now. Explain that today they will learn about how choosing to follow Jesus is a wise choice for their life tomorrow and today.

Lesson Review (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the Review Activities section in the back of the teacher's guide. If time allows, review other previous stories as well.

Object Lesson (5 minutes)

Hold up the watch (or small clock). Ask the children what you should do if it were to break. Should you try to fix it yourself or get the help of the person who designed it? Ask a few volunteers to share their thoughts. Explain that no one knows something better than the one who made it. It is the same way with us and God. As our creator, God is the one we should ultimately seek for help, advice and direction.

Scripture Story to Share (10 minutes)

God still loves and wants to teach all of us today, including YOU! We can learn about God in the Bible.

Today

God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it.
Ephesians 2:8-9

I am the gate. Those who come in through me will be saved. My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd sacrifices his life for the sheep. I am the good shepherd; I know my own sheep, and they know me, just as my Father knows me and I know the Father. So I sacrifice my life for the sheep.
John 10:9a, 10b-11, 14-15

I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me.
John 14:6

When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am. *John 14:3*

Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take. *Proverbs 3:6*

But when the Father sends the Advocate as my representative—that is, the Holy Spirit—he will teach you everything and will remind you of everything I have told you. *John 14:26*

In certain ways we are weak, but the Spirit is here to help us. For example, when we don't know what to pray for, the Spirit prays for us in ways that cannot be put into words. *Romans 8:26*

What Do YOU Think? (5-10 minutes)

- What is happening in the pictures in your book?
- How can we be saved?
- Through whom can you get to heaven?
- God is able and wants to help you everyday. How can you let him?

Lesson Activity (5-10 minutes)

Depending on the size of the group, choose two or more children to be “sharks.” Line the majority of the children (the “fish”) on one side of the field and have the “sharks” line up in the middle of the field. When you're ready to begin the game, instruct the sharks to say, “GO!” The fish must run from one side of the field to the other, trying not to get caught by the sharks. The fish that are “caught” (tapped) by the sharks now turn into sharks and help capture more fish. The fish line up on the opposite side of the field and the sharks line up in the middle. The game continues until one fish is left.

Share that the world can be filled with lots of things that can hurt us such as the “sharks” in this game. But choosing to follow and obey God can help us make wiser choices and help protect us from harm. In the game, the fish were only trying to get to the other end of the field. But if we want to get to the ultimate destination—heaven with God—then we must choose to accept and follow Jesus too! But we don't have to do this alone. The Holy Spirit who lives inside us will help us make right choices when we listen to him.

You Should Know... (5 minutes)

Wise choices will have good consequences. Poor choices will have bad consequences.

Think About It! (5 minutes)

How can knowing God's commands and following Jesus' examples help you make wise choices?

LESSON 12:

NOW AND FOREVER: PRESENT PROMISE & FUTURE HOPE

Learning Objectives

- Children will recognise that they can personally decide to accept Jesus' gift of salvation and seek to follow him.
- Children will understand their future hope of eternal life with God in heaven.

Items Needed

- A picture of a robot
- The small, wrapped empty box (from Lesson 1)

Welcome & Introduction (5 minutes)

Greet the children with genuine enthusiasm. Lead the group in prayer (or ask a volunteer to do so), thanking God for the opportunity to meet and learn together once again. Share that last time, they learned about how choosing to have a relationship with God can help make their lives better today. Explain that today they will learn about how exactly to do this.

Lesson Review (5 minutes)

Review the Bible story from the last lesson with the children. Methods of review are available in the Review Activities section in the back of the teacher's guide. If time allows, review other previous stories as well.

Object Lesson (5 minutes)

Hold up the picture of the robot. Explain that robots are created, and so are we. People create robots and God created us. Share that God is all-powerful. He created everything, and He could have created a bunch of robots to follow him. But he didn't. He created us, all with the ability to choose whether or not we want to love and follow him. God wants us to love him, but he wants us to *want* to love and follow him.

Summary

Turn to the Storyteller's Script on the inside back cover of the student book, and read the section titled "Summary" aloud to the group. Explain that when we accept Jesus' gift of forgiveness (and salvation) that we are promised a place in heaven with God in the future, but we're not left alone now in our everyday life either. We have the promise of God's Holy Spirit to help us.

What Do YOU Think? (5-10 minutes)

- What must we do to be forgiven and be saved?
- Why does this prove God's love for each of us?
- Will YOU accept Jesus' gift of forgiveness through his death on the cross?

Lesson Activity (5-10 minutes)

Hold up the same wrapped gift from Lesson 1. Explain that Jesus freely gave the gift of his own life so that each one of us could once again have a relationship with God. Share that while this gift of salvation has priceless value both for our lives today as well as our eternal lives tomorrow, we need only believe in him and accept it to receive it.

Read aloud the section titled “Next Steps” on the inside back cover of the student book. Invite the children to pray the prayer of salvation along with you.

Welcome the children who chose to say this prayer with you into the family of God! Share how thrilled you are that they decided to accept Jesus’ gift and ultimately God’s love. Invite them to keep their story book as a free gift and encourage them to read it often. Explain that it will encourage them in their new life in Jesus and help them share the Good News of God’s love with others.

You Should Know... (5 minutes)

God loves you yesterday, today and forever. When you believe in Jesus and choose to follow him, you can be assured that God’s Holy Spirit is with you now and that you will live with God in heaven forever.

Think About It! (5 minutes)

How can you share the Good News of God’s love and Jesus’ gift of salvation with others?

