

1 Become a Friend of Jesus

Scripture

Selected verses including Luke 2:1-20 and Galatians 4:4-5

Memory Verse

“When the right time came, God sent his Son. . . . He did this so . . . we could become his children” Galatians 4:4-5 (NCV).

Bible Truth

Jesus is God’s Son. Jesus died for our sins.

Important Words

Sin—Disobeying God. Knowing what God wants, but choosing not to do it.

Trust—To depend on. To rely on.

Save—To make free from sin. To rescue.

Teacher Bible Study

God created the world and everything in it. God made the first man and woman, and called them Adam and Eve. They lived in a beautiful garden. There, the first two people sinned. They disobeyed God, so He sent them away from the garden. Many people have lived on earth. Every person wants his or her way instead of God’s way. Sin keeps people from being friends with God. God has always reached out to people. He wants them to ask forgiveness and be His friend.

God sent His Son, Jesus, to earth. Jesus came as a baby to Mary and Joseph. Jesus grew to be a man. Jesus taught the people about God and His love. Jesus told the people how much God loves them. He did special things to show He is God's Son. Jesus came to die for the sins of all people. He died so all people can be forgiven. Jesus died for you. He died for the children you teach.

Jesus died, but God brought Him back to life. Many people saw Him before He went back to heaven. He left His special helpers to carry on His work. You carry on His work by teaching children about God and His Son, Jesus.

You know how to become a child of God. You know how to become a friend of Jesus. You can help children know Jesus. Pray as you study this lesson, and ask God to help you teach the lesson. Some children believe in Jesus after watching a film or after hearing a lesson. Some children may come with a friend, but they do not know about Jesus. Help each child learn more about God and His love. Help each child grow to love Jesus more.

Teacher Help. Don't teach in a hurry. You may take more than one class time to teach the lesson.

Begin the Lesson

Choose the activities you need to begin the lesson. Use as many as you need. You do not have to use them all.

What Do You Know?

Choose a child to help you who the other children know. Ask the children to tell one thing they know about the child. Let all children have a turn. These facts can be funny or not.

Ask children to tell one thing they know about you. Again this can be funny or not. You can tell facts about yourself if necessary.

Ask children to tell you about Jesus. Let them take turns giving a sentence. Find out what the children already know about Jesus. Say, **Today we are going to learn more about Jesus.**

God's World

YOU NEED paper and pencil or crayons for each child.

Ask children to draw a big circle to look like the world. Let them draw land and water. You may need to draw this first to show them. Have children draw stick figures for people.

Say, **This is how the world looks to you today. I want to tell you how the world began. I will tell you about the most important Person on the earth.**

The Bible Lesson

Choose the activities you need to teach the Bible Lesson. You do not have to use them all. But be sure to tell the Bible story.

The Bible Story

YOU NEED Bible story pictures, if you have them. Use pictures of Adam and Eve, Creation, Jesus' birth, Jesus' death, and Jesus' going back to heaven. If you have student pages, use the four pictures for this story.

Jesus Came to Earth

God made the world and everything in it. God made a beautiful garden. He made people to live in this garden. The people were Adam and Eve. One sad day the people sinned. They did what God told them not to do. God sent them away from the garden. Adam and Eve had children. Their children disobeyed God too. Soon many people lived on the earth. Everyone disobeyed God. Every person wants his or her own way, instead of God's way. All people are born this way. You were born this way.

God is holy. Holy means completely good. God does not like sin. Sin keeps people from being God's children. Romans 3:23 (NCV) says: "All have sinned and are not good enough for God's glory." God, the Father, loves each person very much. God wants everyone to be His child.

God sent His Son, Jesus, to earth. Jesus came as a baby to Mary and Joseph. Jesus grew to be a man. Jesus taught the people about God, His love, and how to be His child. Jesus did special things to show He is God's Son. Jesus healed sick people. He made a dead man alive again.

Some people did not love Jesus. They did not believe His teachings. They did not believe He is God's Son. These people killed Jesus. But God brought Jesus back to life. Many people saw Him and talked with Him. Jesus went back to heaven to His Father. He asked His special helpers to carry on His work.

Jesus came to die for the sins of all people. Jesus died for your sins and mine. Jesus died for you, because He loves you. Jesus' death made a way for people to be children of God. Romans 5:8 (NCV) says: "God shows his great love for us in this way: Christ died for us while we were still sinners."

Bible Story Review

YOU NEED a soft ball or a piece of cloth and some string. If you do not have a ball, roll a piece of cloth into a round ball. Tie it together with string.

This game will review facts about Jesus. Have children make a circle to play a game. Start a sentence and throw the ball to the first child. Say, **Jesus is God's Son. He . . .** Let the child finish the sentence. (Possible answers are: Came as a baby to Mary and Joseph. Grew to be a man. Taught the people about God. Told the people God loved them. Did special things to show He is God's Son. Died on a cross for our sins.) After the child answers, tell the child to throw the ball to a child who has not answered. Keep playing this way until every child has a turn. Students may repeat answers. Help any child who cannot answer.

Why Is Jesus Important to Me?

YOU NEED paper. Tear a heart from the paper.

Say, **God loves you. He lives in heaven. He wants you to live with Him. But, you want to have your own way. Your way may not be God's way. Sin is disobeying God. It is knowing what God wants, but choosing not to do it. God does not like sin. Sin keeps you from being God's child. You must get rid of sin to be God's child. How do you get rid of sin?** (Let children answer.) **You trust Jesus because He died for your sins. You ask God to forgive you. You stop doing wrong things. You obey God by doing what Jesus taught. You do what is right. Then you become Jesus' friend.**

1 John 1:9 (NCV) says: “If we confess our sins, he will forgive our sins, because we can trust God to do what is right. He will cleanse us from all the wrongs we have done.”

Jesus’ friends do what is right. Jesus’ friends are happy. After they die, they live with God in heaven. John 1:12 (NCV) says: “To all who did accept him and believe in him he gave the right to become children of God.” Another verse says: “The Father has loved us so much that we are called children of God” 1 John 3:1a (NCV).

Have children sit in a circle. Show the heart you tore from the paper. Let one person be IT, who walks around the outside of the circle carrying the heart. IT taps lightly each person on the head or shoulder and says, “Jesus loves you.” Behind one person, IT stops. IT hands the person the heart and asks, “Do you want to be a friend of Jesus?” Let the person answer yes or no. Then IT sits down. The person with the heart goes around the circle. Continue until every person has a turn to receive the heart. If children answer no, do not talk about it at this time. Continue with the game. The next section will help children review how to become children of God by trusting Jesus as their best Friend.

God Wants to Forgive

YOU NEED three pieces of paper and a crayon or a marker. On each paper, write 1, 2, or 3 as large as possible. Hold up the right number as you talk about the steps to forgiveness. You asked children a question during the game. “Do you want to be a friend of Jesus?” Say, **To be a friend of Jesus, you must ask God to forgive your sins. Here is the way to do that.**

This will be a good review for children who already asked for forgiveness. Ask children to hold up three fingers. Tell them to point to one of the fingers as you list each step. Show the papers where you wrote 1, 2, or 3.

1. Tell God you have disobeyed Him.
2. Believe God loves you. Believe God sent His Son, Jesus, to make it possible for God to forgive you. Ask for and receive God's forgiveness.
3. Know for sure that Jesus is your Savior and best Friend. Begin to live as a child of God and friend of Jesus.

You may need to explain these steps to the children. Use any of the Bible verses used in this lesson. It is important to know that Jesus is your Savior.

Some children may want to pray for forgiveness. Use this prayer. Or let the child pray his or her own prayer.

Dear God, Thank You for sending Jesus to die on the Cross. Jesus died for the wrong things I have done. I have disobeyed You. I am sorry. Please forgive me. I want Jesus to be my Savior and best Friend. Help me to obey You every day. I believe You have forgiven me. Amen.

If you have student sheets, review these steps by doing "To Become Jesus' Friend." Have students print the missing words. (Answers are: 1. Tell God you have disobeyed Him. 2. Believe God loves you. Believe God sent His Son, Jesus, to make it possible for God to forgive you. Ask and receive God's forgiveness. 3. Know Jesus is your Savior and best Friend. Begin to live as a child of God.)

Do Your Friends Help?

Ask, **What is a good friend like?** (Let children answer.) Say, **Some of your friends have not become friends of Jesus. They may not understand the change in your life. They may make fun of you. They may say mean things. You may wonder if you did the right**

thing. Remember God loves you. Jesus is your best Friend. You may need to look for new friends. You need friends who are also friends of Jesus.

Help Yourself

YOU NEED paper, pencil, and an open box or container.

Print each of the sentences below on a piece of paper. Place the papers in an open box or any open container. Let children take turns choosing a paper. If the children can read, let them read the sentences. If not, you read the sentences. These are ways to help children become stronger in their friendship with Jesus. Say, **You can help your friendship with Jesus grow stronger. Do these things.**

1. Learn more about God. Listen to Bible stories. Read and remember verses from the Bible.
2. Talk to God. Thank Him for Jesus. Ask God to help you obey and do right.
3. Tell others about God's love.
4. Meet with other Christians to worship God.
5. If you disobey God, ask God to forgive you. Then keep on living as Jesus' friend.

If you have student sheets, do "To Become a Better Friend." The words are back to front instead of front to back. Let children write the answers. (Answers are: 1. Learn. 2. Talk. 3. Tell. 4. Meet. 5. Ask.)

Memory Activity

Read Galatians 4:4-5 (NCV) to the children. Then ask the children to say phrases as you say them.

“When the right time came,” (Let children repeat.)

God sent his Son. (Let children repeat.)

He did this so (Let children repeat.)

we could become (Let children repeat.)

his children.” (Let children repeat.)

Galatians 4:4-5 (Let children repeat.)

Have children do this activity several times. Let children say the verse from memory.

Say, **God wanted all people to be His children. Sin kept people from being God’s child. God sent His Son, Jesus, to die for our sins. When we ask God to forgive us, He will. And, He makes us His child, and Jesus becomes our best Friend. When we die, we go to heaven to live with God. That is a wonderful thought.** Let children praise God by clapping their hands or singing a praise song.

End the Lesson

Choose the activities you need to end the lesson. Use as many as you need. You do not have to use them all.

How Can I Be Sure?

YOU NEED a rock or any small object.

Hold a rock or other small object where all children can see it. Place the object in one of your hands. Make a fist with both hands. Transfer the object back and forth between the hands. Do not let children see the object as you do this. Hold your two fists before the children.

Ask, **Do you know where the object is?** Let children guess. Open the hand with the object. Play this game several times. Then say, **You could not see the object in my hand. You trusted the object was there. I moved it from hand to hand. Still you believed the object was there.**

We cannot see Jesus. He is a Friend we cannot see. We can still trust Him to be our Friend. We cannot see God. But we can talk to God in prayer. We can tell God anything. We can talk to God any time and anywhere. Jesus wants us to talk to God every day.

Closing Prayer

Let a child end the class with prayer. Idea: If a child cannot pray by himself or herself, say a prayer and have the children repeat after you. Thank God for sending Jesus. Thank God for forgiving our sins. Ask God to help each child obey Him and do what is right. Thank God for our best Friend, Jesus.

If children have any papers, send them home. Announce the next meeting.

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