March 26, 2017

Basic Truth: Jesus wants to be my friend forever.
Key Question: How can you love like Jesus?
Bottom Line: I can love everyone.
Memory Verse: “Love one another.” John 13:34, NIV
Bible Story Focus: I can love no matter what.

Prodigal Son • Luke 15:11-24

Make It Fun (Introductory Activities, 10 minutes)

1. Home

What You Need: “Home Puzzles” Activity Page

What You Do:
Before the Activity: Copy the “Home Puzzles” Activity Pages onto cardstock and cut apart. You’ll need one set of puzzles for each group.

During the Activity: Place the puzzles in separate piles for the children to put together. As you complete each puzzle, talk about the color of the home you see in the picture.

What You Say:
Before the Activity: “Today I have some puzzles of different colors of homes. Let’s put these puzzles together and then we’ll talk about what we see.”

During the Activity: “Let’s name the color of each of these different homes. (Point to each home and name the color for the children.) Wow, there are so many different colors of homes, aren’t there? Do any of your homes look like these?” (Allow time for kids to put the puzzles together.)

After the Activity: “In our Bible story today, we’ll hear about a son who left his home but then decided to come back. It’s one of my favorite stories in the Bible and I can’t wait for you to hear it!”

2. Bible Story

Read “The Lost Son” on pages 397-404 in The Beginners Bible.
**Make It Stick (Application Activities, 15 minutes)**

1. **Name That Emoji**

**What You Need:** “Emojis” Activity Page, craft sticks, scissors, and clear tape

**What You Do:**

*Before the Activity:* Copy the “Emojis” Activity Page onto yellow cardstock and cut out. Tape each emoji cutout to a craft stick. Each child will need one of each emoji.

*During the Activity:* Read the scenarios below and ask the children to choose an emoji to represent how they feel would feel in that situation and hold it up.

**What You Say:**

*During the Activity:* “Do you see these faces? Let’s talk about each one. *(Hold up each emoji and identify the emotion for the children: sad or angry.)* I want to give you a few examples and I want you to hold up the face that shows the way you would feel in that situation. For example: Your mom tells you to go to time out because you disobeyed. Hold up the face that would show how you feel. *(Pause.)* Yes, I would be sad about that too. Okay, here are some other examples. When I read each one, I want you to hold up the face to show how you would feel in that situation.”

**Scenarios:**

1. Your brother breaks your brand new toy.
2. You dropped your ice cream cone.
3. You can’t find your new stuffed animal.
4. You fight with your sister.
5. Your friend cuts in front of you in line.
6. Your brother eats the last cookie.
7. You want to play outside but it’s raining.
8. Your ball rolls into the storm drain.
9. Your mom accidentally stepped on your new LEGO® creation.
10. Your mom will not let you have another treat.

*After the Activity:* “Sometimes things happen that make us sad or angry. But God loves you all the time, no matter how you feel. He loves you when you’re really, really mad and when you’re super, super sad. And because He loves you, you can love others too, even when you’re sad or angry. **How can you love like Jesus? [Bottom Line] I can love everyone.**”
2. Connect the Heart

What You Need: “Story Pictures” and “Heart Outline” Activity Pages, white cardstock, scissors, crayons, and glue sticks

What You Do:
Before the Activity: Copy the “Story Pictures” Activity Page onto white cardstock and cut apart. You’ll need one set of “Story Pictures” per child. Copy the “Heart Outline” Activity Page onto white cardstock. Provide one per child. Set the crayons and glue sticks in the center of the table.

During the Activity: Point out each of the pictures, talk about what you see in each picture, and encourage the children to color them. When finished, pass out the “Heart Outline” Activity Page to each child and help them glue the pictures on the page in the order below:

1. Father and son
2. Money
3. Pig
4. Sad face

Encourage the children to draw lines to connect the dots and reveal the heart on the page, connecting all the pictures from the story in the correct order.

What You Say:
During the Activity: “These pictures will help us remember what happened in our Bible story today. In the first picture, there is a father and son. Remember how the son in our story today asked his dad for some money so he could leave home? (Pause.) The father agreed. What’s in the next picture? (Hold up picture and pause.) Yes, it’s the money his father gave to him. The son left home and spent ALL the money he had been given. Soon there was nothing left and he was hungry! In this picture what do you see? (Hold up picture and pause.) Yes, pigs! The son was so hungry that he went to work for a farmer feeding the pigs. But he was so sad and lonely. Then he decided to go home and apologize to his dad. He was worried about whether or not his father would forgive him. See this face? (Hold up sad face picture.) This shows how sad he was about what he’d done. But what did the father do when he saw his son on the road? (Pause.) He RAN out to meet him, gave him a big hug, and forgave his son because he loved him! The father loved his son no matter what. Great job, everyone! Now I want you to connect the dots on your page and tell me what you see. (Pause.) A heart! The lines and pictures connect to make a heart! How cool is that?”

After the Activity: “We connected all these pictures with a heart to remind us that God loves us no matter what, just like the father loved his son in our story today. And God wants us to love others that way too. You can love and I can love no matter what. That’s a BIG way to show love to everyone. How can you love like Jesus? [Bottom Line] I can love everyone. Let’s take these pictures home and you can tell your parents about our Bible story this week and remember that [Bottom Line] I can love everyone.”
3. Books of the Bible

What You Do:
Review the books of the Bible, Matthew – Philemon, with the children. Practice saying them in funny voices (whispering, squeaking like a mouse, etc.), motor activity (jumping, marching, etc.), or with hand motions (clapping, chomping like an alligator, etc.).

What You Say:
“OK, now we are going to learn the New Testament Books of the Bible. Do you know who we learn about in the New Testament? That’s right! We learn about Jesus! Let’s practice! Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1&2 Thessalonians. Can you say it with me?”

Make It Real (Small Group – Application & Prayer, 5 minutes)

Small Group Time
What You Need: “Memory Verse Card,” prayer journal and a pen.

SMALL GROUP LEADER (SGL): “Have you ever done something wrong and your mommy or daddy gave you a big hug because they still love you? (Pause for responses.) It feels good to be loved no matter what, doesn’t it? That’s what happened in today’s Bible story. The boy had gone away from his daddy and made a lot of wrong choices. He got sad and lonely and decided to go back to his daddy. When he did, his daddy was waiting with a big hug! His daddy still loved him and was so happy to see him!

“That’s the way Jesus loves everyone. Jesus loves everyone no matter what, and He will always be waiting when they come back. That’s why when we love people no matter what, we are loving people the way Jesus loves people. So tell me: How can you love like Jesus?”

CHILDREN and SGL: [Bottom Line] “I can love everyone!”

SGL: “Yes you can! And loving everyone no matter what is the most awesome way to love like Jesus!

“Okay, who’s ready to get a sticker/hand stamp for saying the Bible verse we’ve been learning? (Pause for responses.) Well, what are we waiting for? Stand up and we’ll say it together one time with the motions and then anyone who wants to try and say it can have a turn. Here we go!”

CHILDREN and SGL: “Love (hug yourself and twist) one another (point to all your friends), John 13:34.” (Open your hands like a book.)

(Give each child the opportunity to say the verse on his own. Have your stickers/hand stamp ready to give when they say it.)
SGL: “I am so proud of you! It makes me happy when you learn these Bible verses, because they help you do what God wants you to do. And loving everyone is definitely one of the things God wants us to do!

“Hmm, that gives me an idea for our prayer journal. I’ll write each of your names in our prayer journal. When I say your name, I want you to put a red heart sticker by your name and say: [Bottom Line] ‘I can love everyone.’ Then we will say a cheer for you. Yep! We’re going to cheer for each other today!”

(Open the prayer journal and hold your fun pen. Write each child’s name and give them a red heart sticker. Remember to print their names so the children can recognize their names and the letters. As you say each child’s name let them place their red heart sticker by their name, say the Bottom Line, and then lead the group in saying the “Friend Cheer” for that child.)

CHILDREN and SGL: “Yay, [child’s name], you can do it! Yay, [child’s name], yes, you can!”

SGL: “Now everyone put your hand on top of mine. When I count to three, I want everyone to say: [Bottom Line] ‘I can love everyone!’ Ready? One, two, three!”

CHILDREN and SGL: [Bottom Line] “I can love everyone!”

SGL: “Yes, you can! (Clap hands.) Okay, now let’s use our listening ears and be very quiet. It’s time to pray.”

Prayer
SGL: “Dear God, thank You for such a special time learning how to love everyone the way Jesus loves everyone. I pray that (name each child) will grow up to help others, share when they have a little or a lot, and love everyone no matter what, just like Jesus. Thank You for loving us no matter what and for giving us Jesus to be our friend forever. We love You, God. In Jesus’ name, amen.”

Get Ready to Dismiss (Think ORANGE)

- Place take-home creations and this month’s Parent Cue in each child’s paper bag.
- Greet parents at the door and tell them that this month preschoolers are learning that [Bottom Line] I can love everyone.
- Encourage parents to repeat the Bottom Line at home and help their child understand that [Bottom Line] I can love everyone.
- Encourage parents to use the activities found in Parent CUE to reinforce this month’s Bottom Line: [Bottom Line] I can love everyone AND this month’s Memory Verse.
Luke 15:11-24
Prodigal Son

I can love no matter what.