

Jesus Loves Us

Bible Basis: Mark 10:14-16

Imagine a celebrity today on his way to a big movie premiere. Surrounded by “handlers,” he hurries from his car into the theater, basking in the admiration of his fans but not stopping to give anyone special attention. This may be the picture the disciples had of Jesus. They saw it as their job to keep the masses away from Jesus—especially those as insignificant as children.

But as he did many times in his ministry, Jesus challenged the status quo. He knew the Pharisees’ hearts were set against him. They didn’t want to learn from him or follow him; they just wanted to lure him into one of their traps (Mark 10:2). So Jesus turned his attention to those with tender hearts: the children (and their parents!).

It’s easy for us to picture Jesus laying his hand on a child’s head and giving a few words of blessing. But he did more than that; he took the children in his arms and hugged them! And then he blessed them.

Your students are precious to God, regardless of their age or influence. Help them see the mercy and grace God offers in Jesus to every person everywhere.

Jesus loves us.

Lesson	Emphasis	Page
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Toddlers & 2s

Parent Page

Jesus Loves Us

For the next four weeks, the toddlers and 2s class will be learning that Jesus loves them. They will have opportunities to touch, taste, hear, and see things that will help them learn about Jesus' love.

Tips for Ts and 2s

What more joyous theme to teach about than love—and who is more loving and lovable than Jesus? Your inquisitive toddler will be surprised and delighted to know that Jesus loves everyone, including children. Have fun reliving the awe and wonder of Jesus with your little one—and remember, we are able to love because Jesus loves us!

Together Time

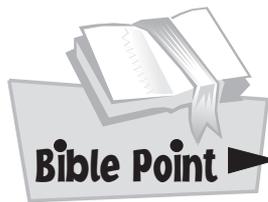
- Cut five pairs of hearts from a discarded wallpaper book, construction paper, or wrapping paper. Place the hearts in a lunch sack. Take turns drawing out hearts and matching them in pairs. Talk about how much Jesus loves us and how much we love him.
- Join your toddler in playing with an old clock or a toy clock. Turn the hands and repeat the following rhyme: “Tick, tock, tick, tock—Jesus loves me round the clock!” Talk about the fact that Jesus loves us all the time. Encourage your toddler to tell “times” Jesus loves him or her such as bedtime, lunchtime, and bath time.
- Sing this song from class with your toddler:

Jesus Loves Us

(sung to the tune of “Jesus Loves Me”)

**Jesus loves us day or night.
We are precious in his sight.
Jesus loves us when we're sad.
Jesus loves us when we're glad.
Yes, Jesus loves us.
Yes, Jesus loves us.
Yes, Jesus loves us.
He loves us all the time.**

**Jesus loves us day or night.
We are precious in his sight.
Jesus loves us when we're sad.
Jesus loves us when we're glad.
Yes, Jesus loves us.
Yes, Jesus loves us.
Yes, Jesus loves us.
He loves us all the time.**



Bible Point

Jesus loves us.

Bible Verse

Jesus loves children (adapted from Mark 10:14).

Growing Closer to Jesus

- Children will
- know that Jesus loves them,
 - realize that Jesus cares for them all the time, and
 - discover ways to show their love.

Teacher Enrichment

Bible Basis

■ Jesus loves everyone.

**Mark
10:14-16**



When you've been a Christian for a while, it's easy to think that God loves you in a special way; that he loves you more than all those other people who don't obey him! But the truth is that God loves everyone! He loves the worst sinner as much as he loves you or me. He loves everyone all the time. He doesn't love the sins people commit, but he loves the people even when they sin.

Prayer

- Read 1 John 4:7-12.
- How should God's love for us affect the way we live?
- How can you make more room for God's love in your life?
- Pray: Lord, some people are just hard to love. Help me to love...

Before the Lesson

- Collect items for the activities you plan to use, referring to the Classroom Supplies and Learning Lab Supplies listed in the chart on the next page.
- Pray for the children in your class and for God's direction in teaching the lesson.

This Lesson at a Glance

	What Children Will Do	Classroom Supplies	Learning Lab Supplies
Arrival Activities Direct children to one or more of the optional activities until everyone arrives.	Welcome Time —Receive a warm welcome from the teacher and Cuddles the Lamb.	Name tags (p. 8), marker, tape or safety pins	
	Option 1: All of Us —Make decorations to hang on their walls.	Magazines, catalogs, scissors, box, paper plates, transparent tape, ribbon or yarn	
	Option 2: Look, It's Me —Stand in a special box and tell about themselves.	Large cardboard box, transparent tape, bows	
	Pick-Up Time —Sing a song as they help clean up the room.	CD player	
Bible Story Time	Bible Song —Sing a song about the Bible.	Bible, CD player	
	Jesus Loves Us —Interact with sensory items on the StoryBoard as they hear the story of Jesus' love for children in Mark 10:14-16.	Tissue, dark crayon	 
	Jesus Loves Us —Sing a song about Jesus' love.	CD player	
Bible Activities	Interactive Bible Bulletin Board —Create a bulletin board with Cuddles the Lamb, and learn that Jesus loves everyone.	Light blue and green paper; scissors; Jesus, lamb, and children patterns (p. 138); transparent tape; crayons; live or artificial flowers; perfume	 
	Sing It Out —Sing a song about Jesus' love.	CD player	 
	Bible Craft —Make "huggy friends" to remind them that Jesus loves them.	Paper plates, crayons, red construction paper, transparent tape, scissors, marker	
	Bible Game —Sing a fun action song.		
 Closing	Love Pretzels —Say a prayer and have a snack.	Pretzel twists, apple juice, cups, napkins	

*See the end of this lesson for extra-time ideas and supplies.

Arrival Activities

■ Welcome Time

SUPPLIES: name tags (p. 8), tape or safety pins, marker



- Use Cuddles the Lamb to help you greet each child by name and with a warm smile.
- Tape or pin a name tag to each child's clothing.
- Say: **Today we're going to learn that ► Jesus loves us!**
- Place Cuddles out of sight so the children won't be distracted by him during the next activity.



◀ **BIBLE POINT**

■ Option 1: All of Us

SUPPLIES: magazines and catalogs, scissors, box, ribbon or yarn, paper plates, transparent tape

Before class, cut pictures of people from magazines and catalogs. Include people of all ages and ethnic origins. Place the pictures in a box. Cut 6-inch lengths of ribbon or yarn to use as picture hangers.

Set out paper plates, the box of pictures, ribbon or yarn, and transparent tape. As children arrive, let them choose two or three pictures. Have children tape their pictures to paper plates. Then tape a loop of ribbon or yarn to the top of each plate as a hanger. As the children work, tell them they're going to hear a Bible story about someone who has enough love for all the people in the whole world. Remind children that ► Jesus loves us.



If you wish to provide soothing background music as the children arrive, play a CD of your choice. Music helps calm reluctant children and helps them become at ease with new surroundings.



◀ **BIBLE POINT**

■ Option 2: Look, It's Me!

SUPPLIES: large cardboard box, bows, tape

Set a large cardboard box in a corner of the room. Tape bows on the box to make it look special. Have children take turns standing in the "Me" box and telling their names, how old they are, or what their favorite foods are. After each child has had a turn in the Me box, encourage the other children to clap. Tell the children they'll learn about someone who loves them just the way they are. Point out that ► Jesus loves us and that he thinks children are very special.



■ Pick-Up Time

SUPPLIES: CD player



As Arrival Activities draw to a close, gently mention that it will soon be time to clean up. Encourage children to help you pick up things in the room as you lead them in singing "Let's Pick Up All Our Things." Use the CD (track 2), and sing the song to the tune of "Looby Loo."

teacher tips

After pick-up time, accompany the children to the story area. Have the adults in the room join the children in the story area to show the children that this is an important time.



SING

Let's pick up all our things.
Let's pick up all our things.
Let's pick up all our things
And put them all away.

Everyone here can help.
Everyone here can help.
Everyone here can help.
Let's put it all away.

Let's pick up all our things.
Let's pick up all our things.
Let's pick up all our things.
It's time to stop our play.

Bible Story Time

■ Bible Song

SUPPLIES: Bible, CD player



BIBLE POINT



track 3

Say: ► **Jesus loves us.** How do we know that? **The Bible tells us.** Show children the Bible. **The Bible is God's special book. The Bible tells us about God. Let's sing a song about the Bible.** Using the CD (track 3), lead the children in singing "God's Special Book" to the tune of "Row, Row, Row Your Boat."

teacher tips

Understanding Your Toddlers' and 2s' Spiritual Development

Toddlers and 2s...

- pray short, simple prayers.
- learn that God made everything.
- learn that the Bible is a book about God and Jesus.
- learn about God as a loving and kind Father.
- sing and talk about God.

This Bible story is featured in *My First Hands-On Bible™*. Order several now for your ministry at group.com.



SING

This is God's special book.
Yes, it's God's book you see!
I learn about all God has done,
And his love for me!

(Repeat.)

Bible!

■ Bible Story: Jesus Loves Us

SUPPLIES: tissue, dark crayon



Before class begins, prepare your StoryBoard by following the assembly instructions provided in the Learning Lab. The purpose of the StoryBoard is to

provide an interactive, sensory learning opportunity for your toddlers and 2s. Please attach the sensory items (especially the bell) securely so the children can touch them without danger of pulling the items off or putting them into their mouths.

Panel 1

Before this activity, use the dark crayon to make a mark on the self-adhesive plastic covering.



Set the dark crayon and a tissue beside you. Fold back the StoryBoard so children see only Panel 1, which shows the boy holding the crayons. Say: **We're going to hear a Bible story today about how much ► Jesus loves us. Once Jesus' helpers thought children bothered Jesus, and they wanted the children to go away. But Jesus said, "Let the children come to me." ► Jesus loves children, and Jesus loves all of you.**

Ask: • **What did the boy in this picture do?** (Marked on the wall; did a bad thing; spilled his milk.)

Say: **Sometimes we make mistakes like coloring where we shouldn't or spilling milk. But that doesn't mean we're bad. Did you know that ► Jesus loves us even when we make mistakes? ► Jesus loves children all the time. Let's touch the spilled milk.** Have children touch the spilled milk, and then ask:

- **What do we do if we spill milk?** (Say "I'm sorry"; wipe it up.)
- **Who loves us all the time?** (Jesus; God.)

Say: **Let's make marks on the StoryBoard. Then I'll help you wipe them off.** Help one child at a time make a mark on the StoryBoard "wall" with the dark crayon. Then, using a tissue, help the child erase the mark and say, ► "Jesus loves us."



Say: ► **Jesus loves us no matter what we do. But it's important to say we're sorry and not do it again. Jesus loves us all the time. Let's see who else Jesus loves.**

Panel 2



Reveal Panel 2, which shows a child in bed with a cuddly teddy bear and a night light by the bed.

Ask: • **What's the girl doing?** (Sleeping; hugging a teddy bear.)

- **What do you do at bedtime?** (Brush my teeth; say prayers; kiss Mommy and Daddy; hear a story.)

Have children find and point to the following items in the picture:

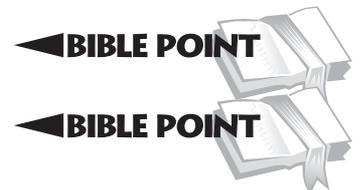
- the girl
- the teddy bear
- the rainbow-and-cloud wallpaper
- the cross on the wall
- the blanket

Say: **Let's say "good night" to the girl. Pat her teddy bear, and tell the girl "good night."** When everyone has had a turn, ask:

- **How did the teddy bear feel?** (Soft; fuzzy; furry.)
- **Do you have a special friend like a teddy bear?** Allow children to tell about their special nighttime friends.

Say: **Teddy bears are special friends. But we have a much better friend. Who's our special friend? Allow a few guesses. Jesus is our special friend because ► Jesus loves us. He's with us all the time.**

Ask: • **Does a night light help you sleep?** (Yes, I like the light; no, I don't have one.)




teacher tips

Invite children to bring in their special nighttime friends next week. Or bring in a stuffed animal of your own to share. Children understand the safe, warm, loved feeling they get with special dolls, animals, and blankets—and this helps them begin to understand how much Jesus loves them.

**BIBLE POINT** ▶**BIBLE POINT** ▶**BIBLE POINT** ▶

teacher tips

Important: Put the StoryBoard away and out of reach of children.

Say: **Let's peek at the night light.** Show children how to cup their hands around the glow-in-the-dark sticker and then open their hands just enough to peek inside. When you're finished, ask:

• **Why do some people have night lights?** (For light; so it won't be so dark; because they're afraid of the dark.)

Say: **Night lights and teddy bears are nice. But Jesus keeps us safe because ▶ Jesus loves us.**

Panel 3

Unfold Panel 3.

Ask: • **Oh, my! What happened here?** (A boy fell; he's hurt; a boy is crying.)

• **How does the boy feel?** (Sad; he has an owie.)

Say: **I think we can help, don't you? Let's put bandages on his hurt knees.**

Have two children each put a bandage on one of the boy's knees. Place the bandages on loosely, as you'll want to remove them before next week's lesson. (You will apply two bandages during each lesson.) When the bandages are in place, have children pat the injured child's head, and encourage them to say, ▶ "Jesus loves us" with you.

After children have returned to their seats, ask:

• **Did you ever get hurt? How?** Allow children to tell about times they hurt themselves.

• **How did you feel?** (Sad; I cried.)

Say: **Sometimes we're happy, and sometimes we cry like the boy in the picture. But ▶ Jesus loves us when we're happy or sad. Let's fix the boy's shorts.** Let children take turns putting the fabric patch on the boy's shorts.

Let's ring the bell on the boy's tricycle to show we're happy that ▶ Jesus loves us. When all the children have rung the bell, say: **Let's sing a song about how much ▶ Jesus loves us.**

■ Jesus Loves Us

SUPPLIES: CD player



Using the CD (track 9), lead the children in singing "Jesus Loves Us" to the tune of "Jesus Loves Me."



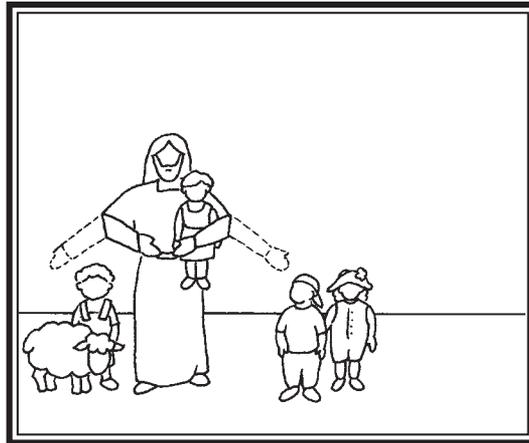
Jesus loves us day or night.
We are precious in his sight.
Jesus loves us when we're sad.
Jesus loves us when we're glad.
Yes, Jesus loves us.
Yes, Jesus loves us.
Yes, Jesus loves us.
He loves us all the time.

Jesus loves us day or night.
We are precious in his sight.
Jesus loves us when we're sad.
Jesus loves us when we're glad.
Yes, Jesus loves us.
Yes, Jesus loves us.
Yes, Jesus loves us.
He loves us all the time.

Bible Activities

■ Interactive Bible Bulletin Board

SUPPLIES: light blue paper; green paper; tape or stapler; children, lamb, and Jesus patterns (p. 138); scissors; a bouquet of different kinds of flowers (live or artificial); perfume or body spray; crayons



Before class, cover the top three-quarters of a bulletin board with light blue paper. Cover the bottom quarter with green paper. Photocopy the patterns at the end of the lesson. Be sure to cut out a child pattern for each child and the lamb pattern for Cuddles. Lightly spray the flowers and the *small fuzzy flower* with the perfume.

Tape the figure of Jesus to the bulletin board. Fold Jesus' arms inward on the dotted lines.



Bring out Cuddles the Lamb.

- **Teacher:** Hello, Cuddles. I'm glad you're here today. We have something wonderful to tell you.
- **Cuddles:** Oh, boy! A secret!
- **Teacher:** It's not a secret, Cuddles. Children, let's tell Cuddles who loves us all the time.
Help children say, "Jesus loves us."
- **Cuddles:** Jesus loves me *all the time*?
- **Teacher:** That's right! *All* the time.
- **Cuddles:** Even when I spill my water?
- **Teacher:** Yes. ► *Jesus loves us* all the time! Cuddles, we're getting ready to make a bulletin board. Would you like to help?
- **Cuddles:** I sure would! I like to be a helper.

Have Cuddles hand each child a picture of a boy or girl. Give children a few minutes to color their pictures. Then help each child tape his or her picture to the bulletin board near the figure of Jesus. Each time a child places a picture, lead him or her in saying, ► “Jesus loves us.” Position one or two pictures in Jesus’ arms; then fold and tape the arms over the paper children to hold them in place. Keep track of which pictures are taped to Jesus’ arms so each child has a chance for his or her figure to be “hugged” during the module. Have Cuddles tape his picture to the bulletin board.

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Say: **Jesus is hugging children in our bulletin board picture. We can show Jesus’ love by giving warm hugs.** Have Cuddles hug each child.

Then have children sit in a circle on the floor. Bring out the *small fuzzy flower* and have it say: **Hello, friends! Do you remember me—Fuzz Z. Flower? You all are such special new friends that I want to introduce you to some of my special old friends!** Bring out the bouquet of flowers. Then have the *fuzzy flower* say: **These are my friends! I love them so much! See how each one of my friends is different? There are so many different colors and kinds of flowers in my bunch of friends!** Make the *fuzzy flower* sniff the different flowers and say: **Oh, they all smell so beautiful! I smell beautiful, too—would you like to sniff?**

Pass the *fuzzy flower* around for each child to sniff. When the flower comes back to you, have it say: **As I got to visit with each of you just now, I noticed something. You’re all different, too! Some of you have brown hair, some yellow hair, some black hair. Some of you are little. Some of you are bigger. Every single one of you is special and different from anybody else!**

Pretend to whisper to the *fuzzy flower*. Then have the flower look back at the kids and say: **Really? I didn’t know that! Hey, friends! Did you know that Jesus loves everyone? Not just grown-ups! Not just one kind of people. Jesus loves all of us! That’s so exciting it makes me want to shout! Let’s make lots of different happy noises to tell Jesus how happy we are that he loves everyone!** Have children stand, and have the flower lead them in making different happy noises, such as “Yippee!” “Hooray!” “Whoo-hoo!” and so forth.

Have children sit down. Have the flower ask the children:

- **Does Jesus love you when you do nice things?** (Yes.)
- **Does Jesus still love you when you do things that aren’t so nice?** (Yes.)

Why? (Because he’s our friend; because he’s nice; he loves us.)

Then say: **I love knowing that ► Jesus loves us! We can spread Jesus’ love to others. You know, singing is a way to show Jesus’ love. Let’s do some singing right now!**



BIBLE POINT ►

■ Sing It Out

SUPPLIES: CD player



Using the CD (track 9), let Cuddles help you lead the children in singing “Jesus Loves Us” to the tune of “Jesus Loves Me.” Set Cuddles out of sight when you finish the song.



**Jesus loves us day or night.
We are precious in his sight.
Jesus loves us when we're sad.
Jesus loves us when we're glad.
Yes, Jesus loves us.
Yes, Jesus loves us.
Yes, Jesus loves us.
He loves us all the time.**

**Jesus loves us day or night.
We are precious in his sight.
Jesus loves us when we're sad.
Jesus loves us when we're glad.
Yes, Jesus loves us.
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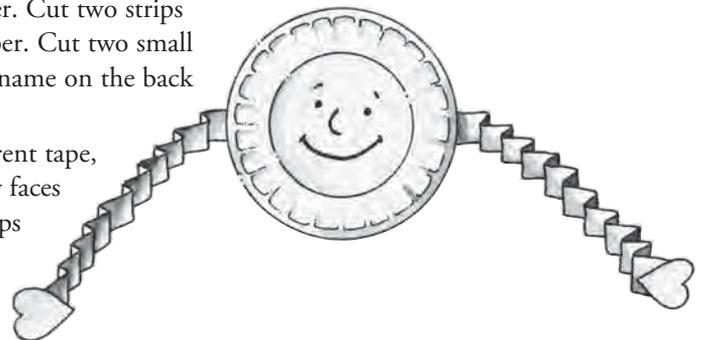
Say: **There are lots of ways to show love. Giving a hug is a nice way to say “I love you.” Let’s make cute “huggy friends.”**

■ Bible Craft

SUPPLIES: red construction paper, scissors, marker, transparent tape, paper plates, crayons

Before class, cut 1x9-inch strips of red construction paper. Cut two strips for each child. Accordion-fold the strips of construction paper. Cut two small construction paper hearts for each child. Write each child’s name on the back of a paper plate.

Set out the construction paper strips and hearts, transparent tape, and crayons. Hand out paper plates, and help children draw faces on them. Have children each tape two accordion-folded strips to their paper plates to represent arms. Tape a heart to the end of each paper strip to represent hands. Let children wrap the arms around their shoulders as love hugs. Say: **Giving a hug is a way to show love. Give yourself a love hug and remember that ▶ Jesus loves us.**





BIBLE POINT

Bible Game

SUPPLIES: none

Say: ► ***Jesus loves us. We love lots of people, too. We love our families. We love our friends. Let's sing a song about friends.***

Have the children sit in a circle while one child walks around the inside of the circle. Help the children sing "I'm Looking for a Friend," without the CD, to the tune of "The Farmer in the Dell."



SING

**I'm looking for a friend
To take a walk with me.
Will you be my friend today
And take a walk with me?**

Have the child walking around the circle find a friend and hold his or her hand. Continue singing the song until all the children are holding hands. Then say: **Let's pray. Dear God, thank you for Jesus' love. Amen. Now we can have a special snack that will remind us of Jesus' love!**



teacher tips

Be sure you're the last one chosen in this activity so that a child won't feel bad about being last.



See page 5.

Closing

Love Pretzels

SUPPLIES: small pretzel twists, apple juice, cups, napkins

Say: **Today we learned that ► *Jesus loves us. Can you say that with me?*** Lead children in repeating the Bible Point: ► ***Jesus loves us. Today we have special love pretzels to eat. Hold up a pretzel. See how the pretzel looks like a hug? Show the children how the pretzel looks like two arms wrapping around to give a hug. Before we eat our pretzels, find a friend and give your friend a hug.*** Pause for children to affirm each other with hugs.

Gather children at the snack table. Hand each child two pretzels on a napkin and a half cup of apple juice. When they've finished, have children toss their napkins and cups into the wastebasket.

As children are leaving, give each one a hug and be sure each has his or her "huggy friend" to take home.



teacher tips

Toddlers enjoy helping and can learn cleanup responsibilities. As children are gathering at the snack table, make it a habit to place a wastebasket next to the table. When the children have finished with their snacks, have them drop any paper items or leftover food into the basket. Always use a plastic bag to line the wastebasket for quick cleanups.



Growing closer to Jesus extends beyond the classroom.

Photocopy the "Parent Page" handout (p. 126) for this module, and send it home with your children. Encourage parents to use the handout to plan meaningful family activities to reinforce this module's topic.



For Extra Time

If you have a long class time or want to add additional elements to your lesson, try one of the following activities.

■ **Who Loves Me?**

Set modeling dough and several heart-shaped cookie cutters on a table. Show children how to flatten the dough with the palms of their hands. Use cookie cutters to cut dough hearts. Ask the children what a heart stands for, and then ask each one to tell about someone who loves him or her. Remind the children that Jesus loves everyone.

■ **Colorful Hearts**

Cut out a paper heart for each child. Set out crayons, colorful paper scraps, and glue sticks. Let the children decorate and color the hearts with colorful paper scraps and crayons. As they work, encourage them to tell you who loves them all the time, who loves them if they're happy or sad, and who loves them no matter what they do. Encourage the children to say, ► "Jesus loves us" with you.

Patterns

Cut loosely around each pattern instead of cutting exactly on the outlines.

