

Bible Point

Jesus loves us.

Bible Verse

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

Growing Closer to Jesus

Children will

- learn that Jesus loves children,
- discover a new way to say “I love you,” and
- share a prayer with a friend.

Teacher Enrichment

Bible Basis

■ Jesus loves children.



Some adults tend to look upon little children as having little value. Adults in Jesus' day did that, too. In fact, it appears that Jesus' disciples didn't value children so very much when they tried to keep the children from being brought to Jesus. But Jesus cares for everyone—and perhaps especially for little children! Jesus wanted the children to be brought to him, and he blessed them. Your children can be happy in the fact that Jesus cares for them, even if they are little!



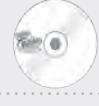








Prayer

- Read Matthew 18:4-5.
- What different slant does this passage put on Jesus' care for little ones?
- How are you welcoming Jesus in your life through the children you lead?
- Pray: God, I know you care about these little ones even more than I do. Help me to model your love for them by...

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: Making Friends —Make modeling dough friends.	Modeling dough, gingerbread-man cookie cutters, vinyl place mats	
	Option 2: Special Children —Take care of their special “children.”	Dolls, blankets, doll bottles	
	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 a story about Jesus’ love from Mark 10:14-16.	Paper towels, milk, paper cups	 
	Jesus Loves Us —Sing a song about Jesus’ love.	CD player	
Bible Activities	Interactive Bible Bulletin Board —Review the Bible story with Cuddles the Lamb as they create a bulletin board together.	Sun and cloud patterns (p. 150), yellow marker, scissors, tape, cotton balls, glue sticks	
	Sing It Out —Sing a song about Jesus’ love.	CD player	 
	Bible Craft —Make happy potato-print faces, and play a fun game about friendship.	Potatoes, knife, newspaper, marker, paper plate, paper towels, spoon, newsprint, light-colored tempera paint, paint smocks or grocery sacks	
	Bible Game —Play a game as they walk to a picture of Jesus.	Marker, paper plate	
Closing 	Happy Smiles —Say a prayer and have a snack.	Orange and apple slices, knife, 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.

teacher tips

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.

Option 1: Making Friends

SUPPLIES: vinyl place mats, modeling dough, gingerbread-man cookie cutters

Set vinyl place mats around a table, and place a small handful of modeling dough (recipe on page 13) on each one. Provide a few gingerbread-man cookie cutters. Show the children how to flatten the modeling dough by pressing it with the palms of their hands. Have the children use the cookie cutters to make "friends." Encourage children to tell about their friends. Ask questions such as "What's your friend's name?" and "What do you do with your friend?" Tell children that the Bible story today is about Jesus, our best friend, and that ► Jesus loves us.



Option 2: Special Children

SUPPLIES: dolls, blankets, doll bottles

Give children an opportunity to care for their own "children." Provide dolls, blankets, and doll bottles. Encourage children to take special care of their children. Remind them that ► Jesus loves us and that he especially loves children. Circulate among the children, and make comments such as "Children are special," "You're taking good care of your children!" and "Taking care of others shows you love them." Remind children that Jesus takes good care of us because ► Jesus loves us.



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.



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.

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.

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

Bible Story Time

■ Bible Song

SUPPLIES: Bible, CD player



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."



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!



See page 5.

■ Bible Story: Jesus Loves Us

SUPPLIES: paper towels, paper cups, milk



Before class begins, please make sure the sensory items are still attached securely so children can touch them without danger of pulling the items off or putting them into their mouths.

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



Panel 1




Set paper towels 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 children. Once Jesus was teaching lots of mommies and daddies and children about God. Jesus'**

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helpers thought the children bothered Jesus, and they wanted the children to go away. But Jesus said, “Let the children come to me.” ► Jesus loves us, and Jesus loves all children.

Point to Panel 1 and ask:

- **What happened here?** (The boy spilled his milk.)



Say: **Even when we make a mistake, guess who loves us? Jesus loves us! Jesus might not like what we do, but Jesus loves us anyway.**

Ask: • **What did the boy spill?** (Milk.)

- **Have you ever spilled anything?** Pause. **What happened?** (I helped wipe it up; I said, “I’m sorry.”)

Say: **I have something good to taste.** Pour a small amount of milk in a paper cup for each child.

After each child has had a taste, ask:

- **How did that taste?** (Cold; good.)
- **What if we spilled our milk?** (We’d clean it up; we’d wipe up the spill.)

Set the paper cups aside. Say: **Let’s help the boy clean up the spill.** Have two children at a time come to the StoryBoard, and hand each a paper towel. Dribble a small amount of milk on the self-adhesive plastic covering on Panel 1. As children wipe away the milk with their paper towels, help them say, “Jesus loves us.” After everyone has had a turn, say: **Isn’t it good that ► Jesus loves us, no matter what we do?**

Panel 2



Reveal Panel 2.

- Ask: • **What’s this little girl doing?** (Sleeping; hugging her bear.)

Say: **Let’s say “good night” to the little girl. Pat the girl’s head and her teddy bear, and tell her “good night.”** Have children come to the StoryBoard in pairs. Encourage them to say, “Good night. Jesus loves you,” to the girl. Then ask:

- **Do you have a special teddy bear?** If any children brought teddy bears this week, have them show their bears now.

Then say: **Teddy bears are nice friends. But Jesus is our best friend because ► Jesus loves us. He’s with us all day and all night. Now let’s peek at the night light.** Have children cup their hands around the glow-in-the-dark sticker.

► **Jesus loves us all the time. I’ll be a big clock. When I tell the time, put your hand on your heart and say, “Jesus loves me!”**

Tick, tock, tick, tock—lunchtime! Pause for children to put their hands on their hearts and say the sentence. Then call out the following times:

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------|
| • breakfast time | • bedtime |
| • school time | • bath time |
| • dinnertime | • anytime |



You may wish to write each child’s name on his or her cup. Consider purchasing a small plastic cup for each child in your class. Let children decorate their cups with colorful markers.



Panel 3



Hold up Panel 3.

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

• **How can we help?** (Kiss his owie; put a bandage on it; tell him he'll be fine.)

Say: **When we care about someone, we want to help. Let's**

put bandages on the little boy's knees and a patch on his shorts. Hand two children each a bandage and one child the fabric patch. Try to choose children who haven't put bandages or the patch on yet.

Put the bandages on loosely, as you'll want to remove them before next week's lesson. When the bandages and the patch are in place, have the rest of the children come to the StoryBoard and pat the picture of the injured child's head. Encourage them to say, ► **"Jesus loves us"** with you.

When all the 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: **I'm happy that we helped the boy, aren't you? Let's ring the bell on his tricycle to show how happy we are that ► Jesus loves us.** Have children ring the bell on the handlebar.

I'm so glad that ► Jesus loves us all the time. Let's sing a song about Jesus' love.

teacher tips

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

BIBLE POINT ►

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■ 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."



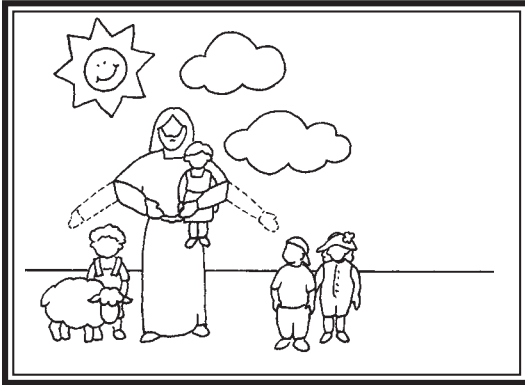
**Jesus loves us day or night.
We are precious in his sight.
Jesus loves us when we're sad.
Jesus loves us when we're glad.
Yes, Jesus loves us.
Yes, Jesus loves us.
Yes, Jesus loves us.
He loves us all the time.**

**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: sun and cloud patterns (p. 150), scissors, yellow marker, tape, cotton balls, glue sticks



Before class, photocopy the sun and cloud patterns at the end of this lesson. Color the sun bright yellow.

Remove the pictures of the children from the bulletin board. Have an adult helper hide the pictures in easy-to-find places around the room while you're gathering the children for this activity.



Bring out Cuddles the Lamb. Set cotton balls and glue sticks on a table.

Cuddles: Hello, boys and girls! I'm glad to see you. *(Have Cuddles look at the bulletin board and gasp.)* Oh! Where are the children?

Teacher: They're sitting right here, Cuddles.

Cuddles: No, no. The *pictures* of the children from the bulletin board.

Teacher: Well, they're in the room, too. Let's see if the children can each find a picture.

Help the children search for the pictures. When they have all found one, have them return to their places.

Teacher: Hold up the pictures you found.

Cuddles: Oh, good. The children are all here now. Let's get to work.

Teacher: We've been learning that ► Jesus loves us. Jesus wants children to be near him all the time. Let's put our pictures on the bulletin board near Jesus.

Help children tape the pictures on or beside Jesus. Each time a child places a picture, lead him or her in saying, "Jesus loves me." Wrap Jesus' arms around the pictures of the children. Hug children before they return to their places.

Teacher: One way to say "I love you" is with a hug. Find a friend to hug.

Encourage children to hug a friend or two. Be sure every child receives an affirmation.

Cuddles: The children on the bulletin board look so happy. Let's add a bright sun and some fluffy clouds to show what a nice day it is to be with Jesus.

Teacher: That's a good idea, Cuddles, but *any* day is a nice day to be with Jesus. Right, children?

Give each child a cotton ball. Have children use glue sticks to place their cotton balls on the paper clouds. Tape the sun and clouds to the bulletin board.

Cuddles: What a pretty picture! I'm so glad that ► Jesus loves us. Let's sing a song about Jesus' love.

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■ 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.
Yes, Jesus loves us.
Yes, Jesus loves us.
He loves us all the time.**



Say: **We've been learning that ► Jesus loves us. In fact, Jesus loves all people. We can make pictures of people to remind us that Jesus loves people.**

■ Bible Craft

SUPPLIES: potatoes, knife, paper towels, newspaper, light-colored tempera paint, paint smocks or grocery sacks, newsprint, paper plate, marker, spoon



Before class, cut potatoes in half so that the ends are circle shapes. Make sure the knife is out of children's reach. Also before class, remove the *surprise ball* from the Learning Lab.

Cover a table with newspaper. Place paper towels on a paper plate. Spoon two tablespoons of tempera paint on the paper towels. Help children put on paint smocks or grocery sacks with head and armholes cut out.

Hand each child a sheet of newsprint, and write his or her name on the back. Tell children they'll make "potato people" to remind them that ► *Jesus loves us*. Show children how to use markers to draw eyes, a nose, and a mouth on their papers. Then let children make potato-print heads over the faces by dipping potato halves in tempera paint and stamping them on the newsprint. As you work, ask children questions such as "Who loves us all the time?" and "Who are some people you love?"

Say: **While our potato people dry, let's play a fun game. Let's learn what it means to be near something and what it means to be far away.**

Have the children sit in a big circle on the floor. Roll the *surprise ball* to someone sitting far away from you and say: **I'm rolling this special friendship ball to someone far away from me.** When the child it rolls to picks up the ball, say: **Now everybody give a hug to someone sitting near you!** Encourage children to remain seated and only give hugs to those sitting immediately beside them.

Then have the child holding the ball roll it to someone far away from him or her. Say: **When the ball rolls to you, roll it to someone sitting far away.** Repeat the activity, having children continue to hug someone near them each time the ball is caught.

Then shake things up a little bit, once children have caught on. Say: **Now roll the ball to someone near you!** When a child receives the ball, encourage him or her to roll the ball to someone sitting relatively close by—one or two children away. Then instruct the child receiving the ball to go hug someone sitting far away from him or her. Have the child give the ball to the person he or she hugged and let the new child roll the ball to someone nearby. Continue as time allows.

Then say: **Jesus wanted all the children to be near him, not far away from him! It's so nice to know that Jesus wants us near him!**

Ask: • **What is something that's near you right now?** (My friend; the wall; you!)
 • **What is something that's far away?** (My house; my grandma; the moon.)
 • **How does it make you feel when you're near someone you love?** (Good; happy; nice.)

Say: **Knowing that ► *Jesus loves us* makes me happy! Let's use a happy face to play a fun game.**



■ Bible Game

SUPPLIES: paper plate, marker

Before class, draw a happy face on a paper plate.

Have children gather at the end of the room opposite the interactive bulletin board. Stand beside the picture of Jesus on the bulletin board. Say: **Jesus wanted the children to be near him because ► Jesus loves us. When you see the happy face** (hold up the paper plate), **walk toward the picture of Jesus on the bulletin board. When I hide the face, stop and stand still.**

Alternate showing and hiding the happy face. When children reach the bulletin board, encourage them to touch Jesus and say, “I love Jesus.”

Say: **Loving Jesus makes me smile. Let’s have a treat that makes us smile, too.**



Closing

■ Happy Smiles

SUPPLIES: oranges, apples, knife, napkins

Before class, separate orange segments and cut apples into half-circle slices. Put the knife out of children’s reach.

Gather children at the snack table, and hand each one a napkin. Hold an apple slice up to your mouth like a smile.

Ask: • **What does this look like?** (A mouth; a smile.)

• **Why do you think I have this happy smile?** (Because you’re happy; because Jesus loves us!)

Say: **I’m happy because we’ve been learning that ► Jesus loves us. Can you say that with me? Jesus loves us. And I’m so thankful. Let’s say a prayer to thank God for Jesus’ love. Dear God, thank you for Jesus’ love. Amen.**

After children have had their snack, remind them to take their potato people home.



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.

■ *Hug-a-Bug*

Play a game to reinforce showing love by giving hugs. Say: **I'm a hug, and you're little bugs. Can you show me how bugs crawl?** Pause while children respond. **I'll walk around and hug a bug. If you're that bug, then you can help hug the other bugs.** Continue until each "bug" has been hugged. Play again, choosing a child to be the hug.

■ *Partner Hearts*

Cut out various sizes and colors of hearts. Provide sheets of plain paper, and let each child work with a friend to create a picture or pattern using the heart cutouts. Help children get started by showing them how to make simple pictures such as flowers, a heart tower, or a circle of hearts. By not gluing the hearts to the paper, children can make as many different designs as time and their imaginations allow.

Patterns

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

