

Bible Point

Jesus is our friend.

Bible Verse

Jesus is our friend (adapted from John 15:15).

Growing Closer to Jesus

- Children will
- see that friends share,
 - know that Jesus helps them, and
 - realize they can help Jesus.

Teacher Enrichment

Bible Basis

- **We can be a friend to Jesus.**

**Mark 5:21-24,
35-42; Luke
17:11-14;
John 6:1-13**



When we think of Jesus feeding the 5,000, we seldom remember that the count of 5,000 was only the men. Including women and children, who knows how many people Jesus must have fed that day! Jesus worked a true miracle, but remember that it started with a boy's lunch. Jesus can do miracles in our lives, but sometimes we must first offer all we have and are to him. Your little ones can begin to follow Jesus by sharing with their friends.

Prayer

- Read Romans 12:9-13.
- As an adult, how do you think you can “help” Jesus?
- How are you using the gifts and talents God's given you to serve him?
- Pray: Lord, thank you for all you've done for me. Help me do what you'd have me do in serving you. Help me to...

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: Fishy Fun —Enjoy water play with pretend fish.	Washtub, water, plastic tablecloth, towel, bathtub toys such as floating fish and ducks	
	Option 2: Best Bread —Prepare a treat to share.	Cinnamon-sugar mixture, bread, margarine, plastic knives, paper plate, napkins	
	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 Is Our Friend —Interact with sensory items on the StoryBoard as they hear the story of Jesus feeding the 5,000 from John 6:1-13.	Fish-shaped crackers, paper, tape	
	Sharing Song —Sing a song about being a friend, and play a fun game.	CD player, fish pattern (p. 111), construction paper, scissors, tape	
Bible Activities	Interactive Bible Bulletin Board —Review the Bible story with Cuddles the Lamb as they create a bulletin board together.	Bread and fish patterns (p. 111), scissors, tape, stickers, laundry basket	
	Sing It Out —Sing a song about being a friend.	CD player	
	Bible Craft —Create unusual fish pictures.	Fish pattern (p. 111), paper, newspaper, paintbrushes, white craft glue, two plastic bowls, cereal flakes	
	Bible Game —Pretend to be bread and fish.		
Closing 	Feeding Friends —Say a prayer and have a snack.	Treats from Option 2 or another snack, laundry basket, 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 is our friend.**
- 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.

BIBLE POINT



Option 1: Fishy Fun

SUPPLIES: plastic tablecloth, washtub, water, floating toys, towel

Cover one corner of the floor with an old plastic tablecloth. Set a washtub half filled with water on the tablecloth. Provide a variety of floating bathtub toys. Include fish, ducks, turtles, or whales made of sponge or plastic. Invite children to play with the water toys. Ask the children if they’ve ever been fishing or eaten fish for dinner. Tell them that they’ll hear a story about a little boy who shared his fish with Jesus because ► Jesus is our friend. Help children use a towel to dry their hands.



Option 2: Best Bread

SUPPLIES: bread, softened margarine, plastic knives, paper plate, cinnamon-sugar mixture, napkins

Have children wash their hands. Help each child spread softened margarine on a half slice of bread and sprinkle on cinnamon-sugar. As the children work, ask them if they’ve ever shared a treat with a friend. Remind them that ► Jesus is our friend and he wants us to share with other people. Tell the children they’ll share their treats with everyone in the class later.

Be sure to have children make enough treats for each person in the room. Place the treats on a paper plate, and set them aside. Assure children that they’ll eat their snacks soon.



BIBLE POINT



teacher tips

Have children clean their hands with wet wipes or moist paper towels if that’s handier than a trip to the bathroom. Also, have a parent volunteer help with this activity. To make the treats more inviting and theme-appropriate, use fish- or heart-shaped cookie cutters to cut the bread before spreading it with margarine. (A heart turned sideways looks like a fish!) Let children add chocolate chips for eyes.

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 is our friend.** 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 learn a song about the Bible.** Using the CD (track 3), lead children in singing "God's Special Book" to the tune of "Row, Row, Row Your Boat."

**SING**

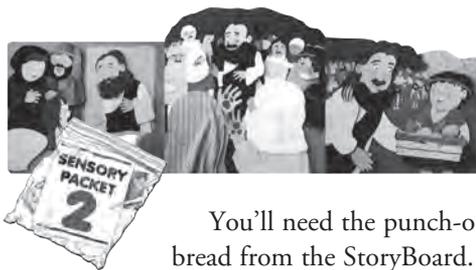
This is God's special book.
Yes, it's God's book you see!
I learn about all God has done,
And his love for me!

(Repeat.)

Bible!

■ Bible Story: Jesus Is Our Friend

SUPPLIES: paper, tape, fish-shaped crackers



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

You'll need the punch-outs of the two fish and the five loaves of bread from the StoryBoard. Slide the basket from Sensory Packet 2 into the opening on Panel 3, and place the fish and bread in the basket. Cover Panel 3 with a sheet of paper. Make sure that the figure of the little girl on Panel 1 is lying down and that the red color card is showing through the spots on the lepers' hands on Panel 2.

Set the fish-shaped crackers behind you.

Panels 1 & 2



Hold the folded StoryBoard. Say: **Raise your hand if you have a friend. Pause for children to respond. Put your finger on your nose if you know who our best friend is.** Pause, and then ask:

• **Who’s our best friend?** (Jesus; God; Mommy; Daddy.)

Say: **We’ve been learning that ► Jesus is our friend.** Open the StoryBoard to reveal Panels 1 and 2. Review the last two lessons’ Bible stories by encouraging the children to find and touch the following:

- the men with spots (touch the spots; then turn the color card to flesh-colored),
- the girl who Jesus made healthy again (help the girl sit up),
- a bandage (touch the bandage),
- Jesus (touch Jesus’ beard on both panels),
- the man who thanked Jesus (touch a spotted man), and
- the mommy and daddy who were Jesus’ friends (touch the mommy and daddy).



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



Panel 3



Say: **Today we’ll hear another Bible story about a little boy who shared his lunch with his special friend—Jesus. Let’s see what our StoryBoard shows us!** Have a child remove the paper covering Panel 3.

Ask: • **What do you see in the picture?** (A boy with a basket; Jesus and a boy; lots of people.)

Say: **Jesus had been teaching people about God all day. It was almost supper time. Everyone’s tummy was making funny sounds. Does your tummy make funny sounds when you’re hungry? Rub your tummy like you do when you’re hungry.** Pause.

Jesus cared about the people because ► Jesus is our friend. Jesus told his helpers to feed the people. But where could they buy enough food to feed them? They saw a little boy with a basket. What do you think was in his basket? Allow the children to touch the basket and peek inside. Have children tell what they see (bread and fish).

Ask: • **How much bread and how many fish are there?** Show your fingers, and have children imitate you while you count the bread and fish.

• **Would you share your lunch with Jesus?** (Yes; no, I’d be hungry.)

Say: **The little boy shared his lunch with Jesus. Jesus said a prayer to thank God for the food. Close your eyes like you’re praying. Keep them closed!** While children have their eyes closed, fill the basket on Panel 3 with fish-shaped crackers. **Jesus told his helpers to give the people the food in the basket. This story makes me hungry. Let’s see what’s in the basket.** Have each child reach in the basket and pull out a cracker to eat.



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



Jesus took the bread and fish and did something that no one else could do. He made the bread and fish feed everyone! ► *Jesus is our friend.* He loves us and cares for us. He wants us to love him, too. When we believe in Jesus, he'll be our forever friend and we can live with him in heaven. He wants us to be his friends.

And friends share with each other, don't they? We can share with others, just as the little boy shared. Let's sing a song about sharing!

■ Sharing Song

SUPPLIES: CD player, fish pattern (p. 111), scissors, construction paper, tape



Before class, remove the *large rainbow spring* from the Learning Lab. Photocopy the small fish pattern to make two small fish shapes on construction paper. Cut out the shapes and tape a fish to either end of the spring. Hold the two ends of the spring together, compressed so that it's folded up accordion-style.

Using the CD (track 8), lead children in singing the "Sharing Song" to the tune of "Jesus Loves Me." Lead the children in doing the motions in parentheses.



SING

I will share a smile with you. (*Make a big smile.*)

I will share a hug with you. (*Hug someone.*)

I will share my love with you. (*Put your hand on your heart.*)

That is what a friend can do. (*Point to a friend.*)

Yes, I will share. (*Nod your head.*)

Yes, I will share. (*Nod your head.*)

Yes, I will share. (*Nod your head.*)

That's what a friend can do. (*Point to a friend.*)

(*Repeat.*)

Say: **Thank you for sharing your singing voices with me! We've been learning about a little boy who shared his lunch, and about how Jesus made that lunch feed bunches and bunches of people!**

Stand in front of the children holding the *large rainbow spring*. Say: **Jesus is such a good friend! He loves to help us and give us everything we need. Jesus helped his friends a long time ago by taking those two little fish** (show the two fish on either end of the spring), **and making them go a long, long way!** Stretch the spring out to its full extent. Have a helper hold one end of the spring while you hold the other.

Say: **I'll bet that Jesus' friends thanked him for stretching those two little fish out to be enough to feed a big crowd! When a friend does something nice for you, it's important to say "thank you." Let's thank Jesus right now for all the things he gives us every day! We can thank him for food, for our mommies and daddies, our brothers and sisters, our pets, our friends, our**

houses, and our clothes. What do you want to thank Jesus for? Let's play a game while we thank Jesus!

Play a favorite song from the CD in the Learning Lab, and hold one end of the spring while another adult holds the other end. Let each child in turn walk underneath the spring, limbo-style. As each child goes under the spring, have all the children shout, "Thank you, Jesus, for..." and then let the child going underneath shout out whatever he or she wants to thank Jesus for.

If you have time, let children play again. After the game, have them sit near the Interactive Bible Bulletin Board to prepare for the next activity.

Once children are seated, ask:

- **How does it make you feel when someone says "thank you" to you?**

(Good, happy.)

- **How do you think Jesus feels when we thank him for all he does for us?**

(Good, happy.)

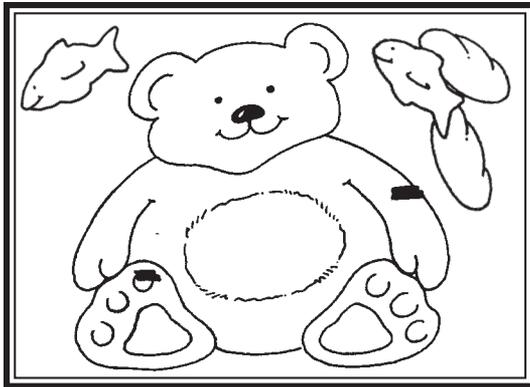
Say: **It's good to thank Jesus for all he does for us! Let's see if Cuddles knows that ► Jesus is our friend.**



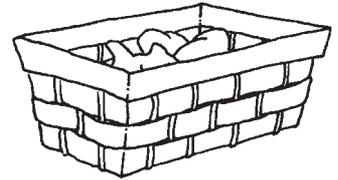
Bible Activities

■ Interactive Bible Bulletin Board

SUPPLIES: bread and fish patterns (p. 111), tape, laundry basket, page of stickers, scissors



Before class, photocopy and cut out the bread and fish patterns. Place the cutouts in a laundry basket. Tape a page of stickers to one of Cuddles' front legs. Be sure there's a sticker for each child and a few extras for Cuddles to keep. Cut a slit in the bear's mouth so that children can "feed" the bear at the end of the activity. Be sure the bottom and sides of the bear are securely fastened so the pictures of food don't fall through.



When the children have finished feeding the bear, say: **It's time to share a song with our friends.**

Bring out Cuddles the Lamb. Go through the following script; then put Cuddles away out of sight.

Cuddles: Hi, boys and girls. *(Waving the stickers)* Did you see my neat stickers?

Teacher: They're nice, Cuddles. Are you going to share them?

Cuddles: Share? If I share my stickers, I won't have any left!

Teacher: We've been learning that ► *Jesus is our friend*. And friends share with each other, just like the little boy in our Bible story shared with Jesus. Children, what did the little boy share with Jesus?

Wait for children to tell about the bread and fish.

Teacher: Jesus made the bread and fish feed everyone. And there was even some left over.

Cuddles: Well, all the children are my friends! I want to share my stickers with them.

Have Cuddles hand each child a sticker to put on his or her clothes.

Teacher: Boys and girls, what can we say after someone has shared with us?

Lead children in saying thank you to Cuddles.

Teacher: Now let's share with our friendly bear on the bulletin board.

Have each child choose a picture of bread or fish from the basket. Help children "feed the bear" by slipping the bread or fish picture into the bear's mouth. As each picture is fed to the bear, have children say, "I like to share."

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teacher tips

Very young children learn when they're able to model their actions after an adult. Join in games, songs, and action rhymes. Your participation shows toddlers how to do the activity, and they always enjoy a grown-up friend joining their play.

Sing It Out

SUPPLIES: CD player



Using the CD (track 8), lead children in singing the "Sharing Song" to the tune of "Jesus Loves Me." Lead the children in doing the motions in parentheses.



I will share a smile with you. *(Make a big smile.)*

I will share a hug with you. *(Hug someone.)*

I will share my love with you. *(Put your hand on your heart.)*

That is what a friend can do. *(Point to a friend.)*

Yes, I will share. *(Nod your head.)*

Yes, I will share. *(Nod your head.)*

Yes, I will share. *(Nod your head.)*

That's what a friend can do. *(Point to a friend.)*

(Repeat.)

Say: ► ***Jesus is our friend***, just as he was a friend to all those hungry people in the Bible story. Jesus fed them bread and fish. Let's make fun fish pictures.

■ Bible Craft

SUPPLIES: fish pattern (p. 111), paper, newspaper, paintbrushes, plastic bowls, white craft glue, thin cereal flakes

Before class, make enough photocopies of the large fish pattern for each child to have one. Do not cut out the fish.

Cover a table with newspaper. Gather children at the table. Hand each child a paintbrush and a fish outline. Set two plastic bowls of white craft glue on the table.

Give each child a handful of thin cereal flakes, and tell children not to eat the cereal. Assure them that they'll eat some later. Show children how to brush glue on the fish and stick cereal flakes on as scales. When the children have finished, set the pictures aside to dry.

Give each child a small handful of cereal to eat. Talk about ways friends share, such as sharing food or toys. Remind children that ► ***Jesus is our friend***, and he helps us find ways to share with others.

Say: **Jesus fed 5,000 people with bread and fish. Let's play a game to remind us of how Jesus fed the people with bread and fish.**

■ Bible Game

SUPPLIES: none

Say: **When I say "fish," swim around the room. When I say "bread," stand still and straight like a slice of bread. Let's try that once. Fish.** Join the children and "swim" around the room for a few seconds. Then say: **Bread.** Stop with the children and stand still.

If you have older toddlers in your class, allow them each a turn to be the caller. When you're finished with the game, say: **Now quietly swim over here and sit on the floor.** Pause for children to respond. **Jesus was a good friend to feed those hungry people. And the little boy who shared his bread and fish was a good friend to Jesus. ► *Jesus is our friend*. We can be Jesus' friends, too. We can help people and share with them. Let's share a snack with our friends.**



Always have an adult supervise the craft project. Make sure all craft items are too large to be choked on or swallowed.



Closing

■ Feeding Friends

SUPPLIES: bread treats from Option 2 (or another snack), laundry basket, napkins

Have children clean their hands. Place the plate of bread treats from Option 2 or another snack in a laundry basket. Form pairs, and hand each child a napkin.

Say: ► ***Jesus is our friend*. We have friends in our class, too. Let's eat a delicious snack with our friends today.** Choose two children to hold the basket and carefully carry it to each child. Help each child take a treat and set it on his or her napkin.



Say: **Look at your friend and say, “You’re my friend.”** Pause while children affirm each other. **Let’s fold our hands and thank God for friends.** Pray: **Dear God, thank you for our friend Jesus. Thank you for the friends in our class. Amen.**

After children have finished eating, have them throw their napkins in the wastebasket. Remind them to take their fish pictures 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.

■ **Fishbowl**

Before class, cut out a variety of fish from multicolored paper. Place the fish in a fishbowl or another clear plastic container. Allow children to take turns drawing out a fish and telling its color. Help children with the names of colors when necessary. Remind children that ► *Jesus is our friend* and that he gives us fish to eat and to look at.

■ **Bread 'n' Fish Hop**

Scatter the bread and fish pictures from the StoryBoard on the floor. When you say “bread” or “fish,” have children hop to a picture of the item named and stand on the picture. If a child doesn’t have a picture to stand on, he or she may be the next caller.

Patterns

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

