The Best Gift

My youngest grandson turned four years old this week. Before opening his gifts there was much curiosity about what was inside each one. If he had not been such a busy four year old he would probably have guessed what was inside by simply listening to all the clues that were floating around among the grown-ups.

The time of year is fast approaching when many of us wrap up surprises and place them under a Christmas tree to be unwrapped by family and friends. Aren't you a little curious about what is inside that package with your name on it?

God so loved the world that he gave us the gift of his Son. As I was looking over the lesson Prophecies Fulfilled in Jesus I was reminded once again about the number of clues God gave about the coming of the Messiah.

I love talking to children about this!

God Kept His Promises!

God sent all of these messages before Jesus was even born. God promised over and over that he would send Jesus. And guess what.

- Jesus was Abram's great, great, great…..grandson-just like God had promised.
- Jesus was a special child born to a special mother. Just like God told Isaiah.
- Jesus was born in the city of Bethlehem. Just like God told Micah.
- Mary had a baby and named him Jesus. Just like the angel said.
- Joseph married Mary and took care of Jesus. Just like the angel told him to.

For help teaching this lesson and links to download the pictures click here.

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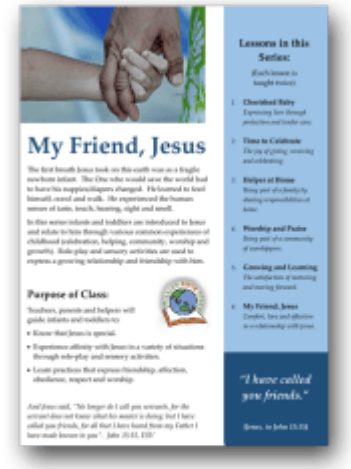
Oh, Baby!



My Friend Jesus
(6 Lessons)

After a long delay between lessons the “My Friend Jesus” series for Babies and Toddlers is now complete. Hopefully, it will help parents and teachers share the story of Jesus with little ones.

In this series infants and toddlers are introduced to Jesus and relate to him through various common experiences of childhood (celebration, helping, community, worship and growth). Role-play and sensory activities are used to express a growing relationship and friendship with him.

The first breath Jesus took on this earth was as a fragile newborn infant. The One who would save the world had to have his nappies/diapers changed. He learned to feed himself, crawl and walk. He experienced the human senses of taste, touch, hearing, sight and smell.

Infants and Toddlers can know that Jesus is special, experience affinity with Jesus through role-play and sensory activities. They can learn practices that express friendship, affection, obedience, respect and worship.

Lessons in this Series:

1. Cherished Baby
Expressing love through protection and tender care.

2. Time to Celebrate
The joy of giving, receiving and celebrating.

3. Helper at Home
Being part of a family by sharing responsibilities at home.

4. Worship and Praise
Being part of a community of worshipers.

5. Growing and Learning
The satisfaction of maturing and moving forward.

6. My Friend, Jesus
Comfort, love and affection in a relationship with Jesus.

My Friend Jesus
(6 Lessons)

[Download the complete set here](#).

[Go to the "My Friend Jesus page on this website.](#)

Additional Infant and Toddler Lessons

God Created
(6 Lessons)

God is With Me
(6 Lessons)

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‘Tis the Season to Teach Infants and Toddlers

The first breath Jesus took on this earth was as a fragile newborn infant. The One who would save the world had to have his nappies/diapers changed. He learned to feed himself, crawl and walk. He experienced the human senses of taste, touch, hearing, sight and smell.

“My Friend Jesus” is a series of lessons created especially for children under the age of three. In this series infants and toddlers are introduced to Jesus and relate to him through various common experiences of childhood (celebration, helping, community, worship and growth). Role-play and sensory activities are used to express a growing relationship and friendship with him.

Purpose of Class:

In these lessons teachers, parents and helpers will guide infants and toddlers to:

- Know that Jesus is special.
- Experience affinity with Jesus in a variety of situations through role-play and sensory activities.
- Learn practices that express friendship, affection, obedience, respect and worship.

> *And Jesus said, “No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you”. John 15:15, CEV*

“My Friend Jesus” Download Page

Downloads include:

My Friend Jesus_Theme Overview

Lesson 1: Cherished Baby (Click here to view or print lesson)
Expressing love through protection and tender care.

Lesson 2: Time to Celebrate
The joy of giving, receiving and celebrating.

Lesson 3: Helper at Home
Being part of a family by sharing responsibilities at home.

Lesson 4: Worship and Praise
Being part of a community of worshipers.

Lesson 5. Growing and Learning
The satisfaction of maturing and moving forward.

Lesson 6. My Friend, Jesus
Comfort, love and affection of a relationship with Jesus.

Infant and Toddler Teaching Instructions

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I Have Skeletons in My Closet

I have to be honest, Halloween is not exactly my favourite holiday. But one thing I really like about it is what happens afterwards. After the big rush (and sometimes even before) there are all sorts of skeletons on sale!

Why is this a good thing, you might ask? Why would I need to stock up on skeletons and stow them away in my closet?

It's simple…I'm a Bible teacher!

Ezekiel and the Valley of Dry Bones

Bones and skeletons are great visual aids and conversation starters for the story of Ezekiel and the Valley of Dry Bones from Ezekiel 37:1-14.

I love to tell this story of hope. This vision has the vital elements needed for a dramatic story. The kids love the "creepy" image of dry bones lying all over a valley. They can relate to how Ezekiel must have felt when the bones began rattling and coming together. Tendons and flesh formed on them and finally God breathed his spirit into them. If Ezekiel was hopeless because his people were in captivity he could finally understand how God had the power to bring a nation back to life.

Teaching Items in Post-Holiday Sales Bins

As a teacher I am always on the lookout for items that will help me share God's Word in ways children can best relate to. No one has to spend a lot of money or buy new things to teach children about God. But if you live in a place where after-holiday sales provide extremely cheap items then this may be a great opportunity. What are the holidays where you live?

After Christmas

- Creche and manger scenes (angels, wise men, animals, Joseph, Mary, Jesus, the manger itself), pictures of Jesus as a baby, stars and spices like the wise men brought. The obvious uses are for stories such as The Birth of Jesus and Wise Men and a Star.
- Gaudy plastic strings of gold and silver garland can make great "treasure" when you later tell the Parable of a Treasure & a Pearl.
- Greenery, artificial trees, candles and even twinkling lights bought in after-Christmas clearance sales really come in handy for costumes and acting out Bible stories later on.
- You're going to enjoy pulling twinkling lights out of storage when you tell the story of Jesus Teaches about Salt and Light.

After Valentines Day

- Heart decorations of all kinds. These could be used when talking about the heart.
- Stories that come to mind are Let My People Go! , John the Baptist and The Parable of a Sower and the Seeds

After Easter

- This is the obvious time to find things like books and figurines to help you later tell the story of the Burial and the Resurrection of Jesus.
- Since I teach infants and toddlers I sometimes use the little wind-up bunnies when I teach about Day 6-God Created Animals & People.
- And I like to have a few plastic eggs on hand throughout the year so I can put verses or pictures inside and let the children hunt for them. They are also great for telling the story of death, burial and resurrection of Jesus with Resurrection Eggs.

After Halloween

- Skeletons for teaching about Ezekiel & the Valley of Dry Bones
- Candy and lollies if you use those as game prizes.

After Thanksgiving

- We can give thanks throughout the year so I've sometimes used items on sale after this holiday to teach stories such as Jesus Heals Ten Lepers.
- And all of plastic fruit comes in handy for teaching about The Fruit of the Spirit.

Happy Teaching!

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Are You Teaching a Class or Sharing Christ with a Child?

I spent this week preparing for my Bible class that was scheduled for today. The class was for infants and toddlers and we were going to learn about the Birth of Jesus. I studied the Scripture and prepared the classroom.

We would start with a welcome time and then I would show them all sorts of animal families. We would look at toy ducks, cows and puppies and talk about Mummy, Daddy and Babies. Then I would tell the story of Joseph, Mary and Baby Jesus. I even prepared a little craft with Jesus in a manger. We would end the class by giving cuddles to baby dolls and rocking them to sleep. Everything was ready.

I knew I would not have many students but today…only one child showed up.

Only one child. People who are used to having lots of children in Bible Class might have questioned whether it is worth teaching if only one child turned up for class. For many of us who are with small churches this situation might happen quite often.

In the years that I have been a Bible Class Teacher there is one important thing that I have realised. I have realised that I am not here to TEACH A CLASS. A class is impersonal. A class is just a group of children. No, my calling is not to simply "teach a class". My honour and privilege is to SHARE CHRIST WITH EACH CHILD. I will share Christ whether I have one student or ten.

What's the difference between teaching a class and sharing Christ?

- If I'm teaching a class then I am disappointed that only one child attends. If I am sharing Christ then I see it as an opportunity to spend one-on-one time getting to know the heart of that child so that I can build a better relationship with him or her.
- If I'm teaching a class then one child is not worth my effort. If I'm sharing Christ then it is my pleasure to do whatever it takes to help that child get to know my precious friend, Jesus.
- If I'm teaching a class then one child is not worth my time. If I'm sharing Christ then it is not "my" time at all. God has granted me golden moments to affect a life for an eternity and I do not want to waste any of those moments pining for some false version of his will that I have created for myself.
- If I'm teaching a class then one child would be a waste of a good lesson. If I am sharing Christ then I know that my attitude IS

the lesson. I want the child to know that I have a personal relationship with God and so can they. Even when I am all alone I talk to God and he gives me his full attention. If God can give me his full attention then I can give mine to one child.

- If I'm teaching a class then I think God needs large numbers to do his work. If I am sharing Christ then it is because I believe in the all-sufficiency of Christ. God has plans for this child beyond anything I can imagine.

So back to today's Bible Class for infants and toddlers. Just one little child but I tried my best to share Christ with him. We held our bibles and turned the pages. He found the sticker inside the bible's cover that has a picture of Jesus. We sang about the bible. And then, when his mother and I least expected it…he said in a clear voice and with a proud smile on his face, "BIBLE".

So I got to experience a small step in a journey of a lifetime. Today, I had only one student. Today, I shared Christ with a child.

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