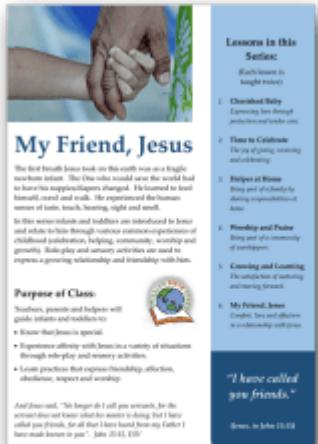


Oh, Baby!



My Friend, Jesus

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.

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:

- Students, 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 servants do not know what their master is doing. But I have called you friends, for all that I command you in how my Father I have sent me is for you." John 15:14, ESV

"I have called you friends."
John 15:14

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

Theme Overview:
God Created
Infants and Toddlers Bible Class

Purpose of Class:
Teachers, parents and helpers will guide infants and toddlers to:
▪ Review that God is the Creator of the World.
▪ Experience the wonder of His creation through sensory activities.
▪ Worship the Creator.

You are worthy our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your self they were created and have their being. *Revelation 4:11*

Lessons in this Series:
(Each lesson is taught twice)

1. From Darkness to Light and More: God created lights, day, moon, stars and more.
2. Seating in the Skies: God created the skies and more.
3. Sprink and Splash: God created water and the creatures that live in it.
4. Land and Sprouts: God created land and filled it with plants.
5. Animals, Animals Everywhere: God created the animals.
6. The Great Campfire: God created Adam and Eve and the first home for them.

God is With Me

The family home is a vital part of the world of infants and toddlers. In this series, play and sensory activities are used to help each child experience God's presence and respond to him. This is a necessary opportunity for experiencing what takes place in various parts of a house.

Purpose of Class:
Teachers, parents and helpers will guide infants and toddlers to:
▪ Know that God's presence is in everyday life.
▪ Experience God's presence in home situations through role-playing and sensory activities.
▪ Encouragement of obedience and respect for God in home situations.
▪ Encourage growth of love and respect for others in home situations.

[from Paul] "As you walk in, let your feet step my teaching, my rules and laws in, and you will come to follow and make our home with them. *John 3:21, NIV*"

Lessons in this Series:
(Each lesson is taught twice)

1. God is With Me Home: Aspiring and inspiring God's love in the family.
2. God is With Me at Play: Learning through play.
3. God is With Me Where I Take Care of Myself: Acting responsibly.
4. God is With Me When I Help Others: Learning to help.
5. God is With Me While I Eat: Learning to God's care.
6. God is With Me While I Sleep: Learning virtue and sharing.

"God is here to help you out, as you walk in, let your feet step my teaching, my rules and laws in, and you will come to follow and make our home with them. *John 3:21, NIV*"

*[Romans 12:2] "As you walk in, let your feet step my teaching, my rules and laws in, and you will come to follow and make our home with them. *John 3:21, NIV*"*

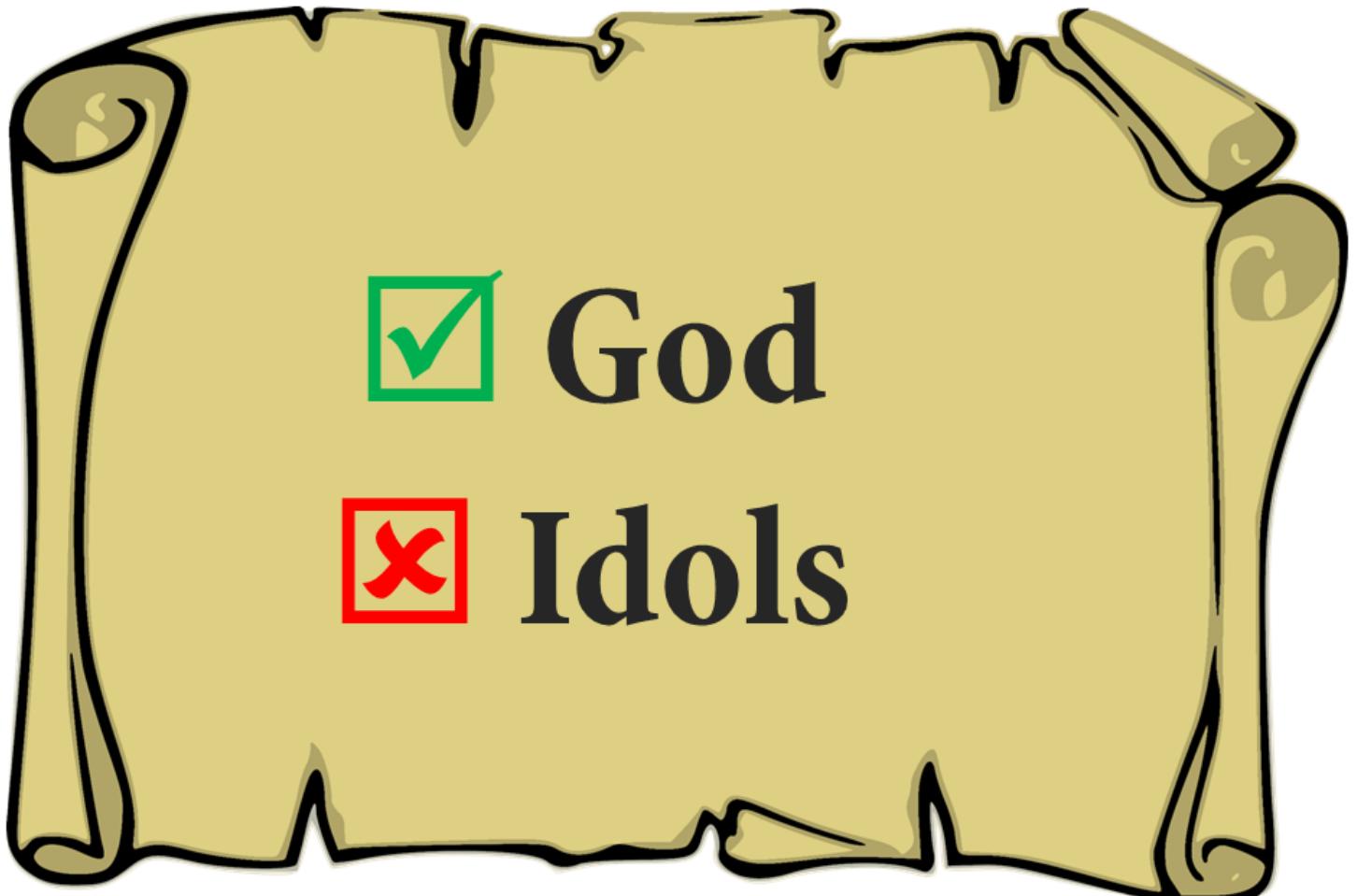
God Created
(6 Lessons)

God is With Me
(6 Lessons)

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When Destructive Behaviour is a Good Thing



If you asked me what my Bible Class was like this week I would have to say it was quite destructive...in a good way!

The 4 and 5 year old children have been learning about the [Divided Kingdom](#) and this particular lesson was about [King Josiah](#) and how he attempted to restore true worship of God in Judah. [2 Kings 22-23:30](#); [2 Chronicles 34-36](#)

As I read about [King Josiah](#) and his zealous destruction of idols and places of false worship I wrestled with how I would relate the severe actions of destruction and even death to the lives of these 4 and 5 year olds without giving them nightmares or encouraging destructive behaviour in general.

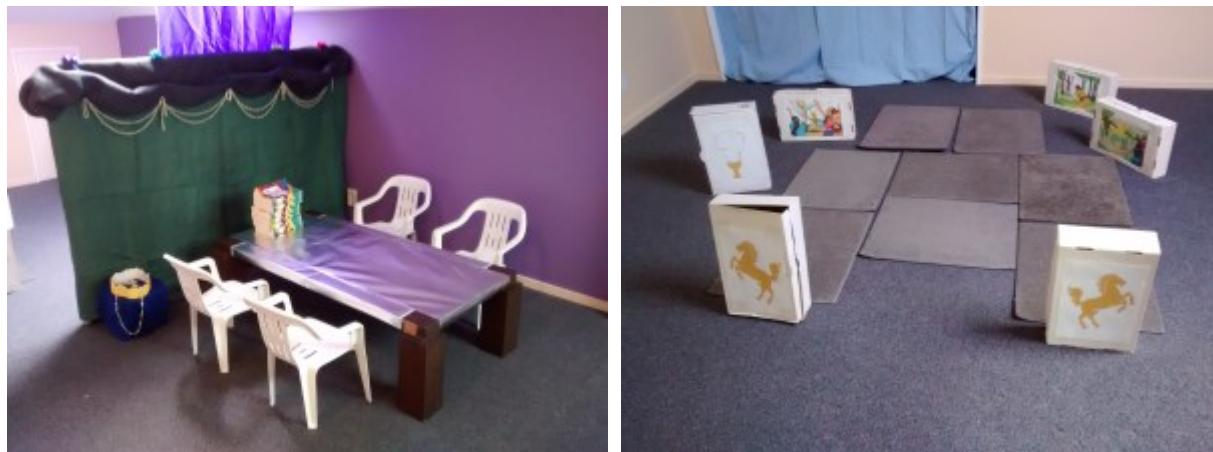
How do we relate tough lessons in the Bible to children?

Here's how I prepared for the lesson about Josiah. There were many actions and themes that children this age would find confusing and disturbing. So, as I read about Josiah, I tried to focus on God and then thought about how Josiah responded to him. Here's what I came up with:

- God is Holy and Josiah believed this passionately and wanted to honour him.
- God desires and commands our sole worship. Josiah was indignant about the prevalent idol worship in the kingdom.
- God expects to be taken seriously. Josiah took his kingship seriously and was determined to change his kingdom.
- God displays emotions but he always does the right thing. Josiah's anger, indignation and outrage did not lead him to sin. These emotions propelled him into actions that honoured God.
- God's Word is true. Josiah had respect for God's Word and obeyed it.
- God is concerned about everyone. As king, Josiah displayed leadership and shared God's Word with his people.

Trying to teach all of these would have been too much for 4 and 5 year olds to comprehend so I focused on just two main points that I thought they could best relate to. I felt confident in the priority of these choices since they are also how God started when he issued the 10 Commandments.

1. God is Holy.
2. Do not worship idols or anything else besides God.



God is Holy

We spent time in a "special" area I had created in our classroom. I wasn't trying to re-create the temple but I made the space special with some silver wrapping paper and some strings of gold beads that I found. As we sat in this space we read from God's special book, talked about the special tabernacle and temple and then spent some time talking about how God is different and holy.

Do Not Worship Idols

After sharing the Bible story we spent some time destroying idols! The children took turns finding a scroll I hid underneath some carpet tiles. If they found the scroll they "read" it.

Yes! for God.....No! for idols

Once they found and read the scroll they then followed Josiah's example in clearing out all of the idols. The biblical version is much more graphic. We expressed our outrage by kicking them and knocking them down. To conclude the class we gathered in and focused on God's holiness one more time.

For older children I would follow up by taping pictures of other “idols” on the boxes to show that anything we place as more important than God can be our idol. This might include possessions, beauty, sports...and the list goes on.

- [Click here to download instructions and pictures for the “Destroying Idols” activity.](#)
- [Click here for resources for teaching about Josiah.](#)

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What Bothers Jesus?



What bothers Jesus? His earliest disciples thought they knew.

“Some people brought their children to Jesus so that he could bless them by placing his hands on them. But his disciples told the people to stop bothering him.”

“When Jesus saw this, he became angry and said, “Let the children come to me! Don’t try to stop them. People who are like these little children belong to the kingdom of God. I promise you that you cannot get into God’s kingdom, unless you accept it the way a child does.”

“Then Jesus took the children in his arms and blessed them by placing his hands on them.”
Mark 10:13-16 Contemporary English Version (CEV)

The disciples thought that these children would bother Jesus but it seems very clear that the disciples themselves, the adults in this situation, were the real bother. In fact, their judgement on children led to one of the few times in Scripture when Jesus was recorded as being angry. The New International Version uses the word “indignant”.

So why is Jesus not bothered by children? After all, children are wiggly and curious and lacking in inhibition. If we are honest, we have to say they are often inconvenient to have around. They slow us down, exhaust us and generally cause havoc in what we like to call our “perfectly organised lives”.

Children force us to reorganise our priorities. Schedules are worked around nap times and curfews. Holidays are planned based on how “child friendly” the activities and accommodations are. Having a couple of children enrolled in sporting activities or music lessons means a couple’s once-spontaneous social life becomes a series of intricately planned and often postponed events.

And if that was not enough, they don’t seem to really care when we are doing the “important stuff” at church. They are obviously not impressed by long sermons or deep discussions about spiritual matters. They don’t seem to worry about the things we worry about. They choose action over contemplation almost every time.

If children are such a bother then why was Jesus indignant that the disciples would turn them away? Jesus points out that the disciples were turning away the very examples they needed to learn how to enter the kingdom of God. Ultimately, the disciples were the ones missing out.

Children in our communities, families and churches inspire us to act more like adults than we sometimes feel like acting. The

inconvenience they bring produces patience. Examining priorities helps us maintain focus. And practising an active faith makes us useful. To keep children safe we plan better. To secure their future we work harder. To help them engage we adapt and change.

Most of all, like the disciples, we adults are sometimes satisfied with walking alongside and talking about Jesus. Children on the other hand want to touch him and be embraced by him.

May we learn from the example of the young ones among us. This does not bother him at all.

[Click here for help in teaching the Bible lesson: Jesus Blesses the Children.](#)

THIS ARTICLE BY MARY NELSON WAS FIRST PUBLISHED IN "THE EDIFIER" BELMORE CHURCH OF CHRIST, MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA ON 11 OCTOBER 2015

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Yes, They are Listening

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sDINqVqCUwY&rel=0>

Sometimes we try our best and then wonder if children actually retain what we have taught them. I thought you might enjoy watching this video of children sharing what they have learned. I don't know about you, but these children certainly encourage me to keep teaching!

Although we may sometimes view the Bible as a collection of stories it is actually one story. It is God's Story. It is about how he has revealed himself to mankind throughout history.

Thank you to the Memorial Road Church of Christ in Edmond, Oklahoma, USA for allowing me to post this video on www.missionbibleclass.org

Thank you to the children on the video who are willing to share **The Story!**

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Bon Voyage



Those last few words can remain long in our memory. They draw everything together and mark the people and event as unique and special to this particular place and time. Imagine spending an evening with our friends in their home only to realise that they had gone to bed and left us on our own without saying goodbye. This would probably make us feel awkward and abandoned.

One of Paul's Goodbyes

As Paul traveled and shared the Gospel he had to say goodbye many times. These were often emotional occasions with tears, encouragement and even words of warning or advice. Here is one example:

We found a ship crossing over to Phoenicia, went on board and set sail. After sighting Cyprus and passing to the south of it, we sailed on to Syria. We landed at Tyre, where our ship was to unload its cargo. We sought out the disciples there and stayed with them seven days. Through the Spirit they urged Paul not to go on to Jerusalem. When it was time to leave, we left and continued on our way. All of them, including wives and children, accompanied us out of the city, and there on the beach we knelt to pray. After saying goodbye to each other, we went aboard the ship, and they returned home. Acts 21:2-6 NIV

How do children feel when they leave our Bible Classes?

When a child leaves Bible Class is he or she a ship full of fresh provisions being warmly fare-welled from a safe and friendly port? Or are the children drifting off toward open sea while the busy people back on shore seem to barely notice they have gone?

Take the time to draw everything together at the end of your teaching time. Solidify what you have taught, let the children know you are glad they came and give them courage to go out and put into practice the things God has moved them to do.

Concluding Activities

- Pray for and/or with the children. [Click here for prayer activities.](#)
- Join hands and sing a song together. [Click here for a song list.](#)
- Learn a memory verse and recite it together as a group.
[Click here for memory verse ideas.](#)
- Talk (and listen!) about the week ahead and how you and the children plan to apply God's Word and what you have learnt today. Conversational activities such as "Situation Cards" or "Things Matter" are helpful for this.
[Click here for situation cards instructions.](#)
[Click here for things matter instructions.](#)

Encouraging Last Words:

- I'm glad you were here today.
- You have blessed me today.
- Today is a good day because we were together.
- I'm going to remember today's class for a long time.
- I am so excited to see how you are going to be like Jesus this week.
- I'm looking forward to seeing you next time.
- I thank God for each of you. He is good to me to allow me to teach you.
- I have written your name down because I will be praying for you this week.

Individually, as They Walk Out the Door:

- Shake each child's hand
- Give a hug to each child
- Say "May God bless you" to each child by name.
- Say each child's name and a Spirit challenge. For example: "Suzy, may you be loving this week" or "Jacob, may you show Christian joy to people you meet."
- Give a card or note to each child. (This will require you to plan ahead, of course.) or
- Give a paper with a Scripture written on it.

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