



WEEK FOUR – JANUARY 2025 – PRESCHOOL

Bible Story: *Zacchaeus | Luke 19:1-10*

Key Question: *Who is always a good friend?*

Bottom Line: *Jesus is always a good friend.*

Memory Verse: *“A friend loves you all the time.” Proverbs 17:17, NCV*

Basic Truth: *Jesus wants to be my friend forever*

Series Overview: Have you ever seen a bunch of preschoolers jumping in rain puddles? So many giggles! So much excitement! And do you know that feeling you get when you step outside and feel the sunshine on your face for the first time in a week? Pure happiness! Our preschoolers experience a wide range of emotions every day. They feel sad, happy, afraid, nervous, excited—sometimes all in the same hour! Our preschoolers will grow up and experience a lot of different situations and emotions. We want children to know that Jesus is a friend that loves them at ALL times—a friend that will never leave them! That’s why, this month, we are talking about THE best friend—the One who is ALWAYS a good friend. Rain or shine, Jesus is always a good friend of mine!

9:05 - 9:20 | 11:05 – 11:20 | EARLY ARRIVERS ACTIVITY

Opening Small Group Activity

Move: An activity that uses a preschooler’s natural desire to move to help them learn

What You Need: N/A

What You Do:

- Gather children in an open area of the room.
- Encourage children to move their bodies and pose like different weather conditions
- Introduce the Bottom Line.

What You Say:

- *BEFORE THE ACTIVITY*
 - “Everyone, come over here with me! We’re going to use our bodies to pretend to be different kinds of weather. Make sure you have plenty of room. Are you ready?”
- *DURING THE ACTIVITY*
 - “I want you to use your body to pretend to be a big, bright sun. Make your arms like a great big circle, and stand up high on your tip toes. Now spread your arms out like sunshine rays. *(Pause.)* Great job! Now let’s be sad, gray rain clouds. Lean your body over and sway your body slowly back and forth. *(Pause.)* Great job! Can you be rain? Let your fingers be the rain drops! Raise your arms and bring them down with your fingers wiggling like rain drops falling. *(Pause.)* Wonderful! Okay, our last movement is a thunderstorm. Thunderstorms are big and loud. Let’s stomp like thunder, clap like lightning, and sway like the wind! *(Pause.)* You sure do have great moves. You did a great job pretending to be the weather.”
- *AFTER THE ACTIVITY*

- “In our Bible Story today, we’re going to learn about Someone who is always a good friend, rain or shine, no matter the weather!”

9:20 - 9:50 | 11:20 – 11:50 – LARGE GROUP

Story Focus: Jesus is a good friend when I am happy. Zacchaeus is a tax collector which means his job is to take money from people. One day, Zacchaeus hears that Jesus is coming to the town where he lives. Zacchaeus wants to see Jesus so badly that he climbs a tree to get a better view. When Jesus sees Zacchaeus, Jesus tells him to come down and that He is going to Zacchaeus’ house. Wow! Zacchaeus is so happy that Jesus is his friend that Zacchaeus wants to love people the way Jesus loves him. So, Zacchaeus gives back all the money he had taken from the people! Jesus is a good friend to Zacchaeus when he was a tax collector and when he was a happy friend of Jesus, because Jesus is always a good friend.

9:50 – 10:10 | 11:50 – 12:10 – SMALL GROUP

Sing the Memory Verse

[Hear From God | Memory Verse Review]

Move: an activity that uses a preschooler’s natural desire to move to help them learn

What You Need: N/A

What You Do:

- Gather in your activity area, and say the Memory Verse and motions together.
- Lead children to sing the Memory Verse to the tune of “London Bridge Is Falling Down.”

- Connect the Memory Verse to the Bottom Line.

What You Say:

- *BEFORE THE ACTIVITY*
 - “Friends, come gather here with me! We’re learning a great Memory Verse this month! Let’s do the motions as we say it together. ‘A friend (*hook index fingers twice*) loves you (*cross arms over chest*) all the time,’ (*tap wrist*) Proverbs 17:17. (*Open hands like a book.*) Great job!”
- *DURING THE ACTIVITY*
 - “Now, let’s sing our Memory Verse together. I’ll sing it through one time, then we can sing it together. (*Sing to the tune of “London Bridge Is Falling Down.”*)
 - “A friend loves at all times.
“At all times.
“At all times.
“A friend loves at all times.
“Proverbs 17:17.
 - “Now let’s sing it together! (*Repeat the song several times.*) That was fantastic, friends!”
- *AFTER THE ACTIVITY*
 - ““The Bible teaches us that Jesus wants to be our friend forever and loves us all the time—when we’re afraid, or excited, sad, or happy. **[Bottom Line] Jesus is always a good friend. Who is always a good friend? [Bottom Line] Jesus is always a good friend.** Let’s say that one more time, friends! **Who is always a good friend? [Bottom Line] Jesus is always a good friend.**”

Happy Faces

[Talk About God | Bible Story Review]

Play: An activity that encourages preschoolers to follow guidelines while having fun and learning new concepts

What You Need: Smiley-face disposable plates, jumbo craft sticks, and masking tape

What You Do:

- Make a happy-face plate for yourself by taping a smiley-face disposable plate to a jumbo craft stick
- Give each child a smiley-face plate
- Assist the children as they tape their face to a craft stick.
- Review the Bible Story using the smiley faces.
- Review the Bottom Line

What You Say:

- *BEFORE THE ACTIVITY*
 - “(Hold a smiley-face plate on a stick in front of your face.) “Hey, friends! Come sit with me! We’re going to talk about today’s Bible Story!”
- *DURING THE ACTIVITY*
 - “First, everyone is going to make a happy face on a stick, because Zacchaeus was happy in our Bible Story! (Give each child a smiley-face plate or a happy-face cutout, and a craft stick. Assist with taping when needed.) Okay everyone, hold up your happy face! (Hold up your happy face.) Wonderful! You can put your happy face down now, but get ready to hold them up every time you hear me say the word, ‘HAPPY!’ Are you ready?
 - “Our story was about a man named Zacchaeus. Zacchaeus was a tax collector. People did not like him because he took money that wasn’t his. One day, Zacchaeus heard that Jesus was coming to his town. Zacchaeus was so HAPPY (hold up your happy face) that he climbed a tree so he could see Jesus! (Put your happy face down.) Jesus went to the tree Zacchaeus was in and told him to come down because He wanted to go to Zacchaeus’ house! Wow! Zacchaeus was so HAPPY (hold up your happy face) Jesus wanted to go to his house, that he quickly climbed down the tree! (Put your happy face down.) Jesus spent time with Zacchaeus at his house. This made Zacchaeus very

HAPPY! (*Hold up your happy face, and then put it down.*) Zacchaeus went and gave back all the money he took. This made lots of people very HAPPY!” (*Hold up your happy face, and then put it down.*)

- *AFTER THE ACTIVITY*
 - “Jesus was a good friend to Zacchaeus when Zacchaeus was happy. Zacchaeus learned how to be a good friend by spending time with Jesus, because [*Bottom Line*] **Jesus is always a good friend. Who is always a good friend? [*Bottom Line*] Jesus is always a good friend!**”