

October's B.I.G. Idea

We believe Jesus is the Messiah, God's most precious gift to us.

October's Bible Verse

You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.
Matthew 16:16

October's B.I.G. Theme

Jesus is the Messiah.

Lesson 7 ★ Jesus and the Children

Today's Bible Story

Mark 10:13-16

Objectives

- ★ Tweens will hear and explore the story of Jesus welcoming and blessing children.
- ★ Tweens will recognize that they are important to Jesus.
- ★ Tweens will discover that Jesus wants to have a relationship with them.

"When Jesus Christ asked little children to come to him, he didn't say only rich children, or white children, or children with two-parent families, or children who didn't have a mental or physical handicap. He said, 'Let all children come unto me.'"—Marian Wright Edelman

"Don't bother Grandpa; he's reading the paper." "Let Mom rest; she's tired." We often say such words to children when we feel that they are bothering others. We make statements like these because we want to teach children to respect others and their personal belongings. And indeed, teaching children to respect the privacy of others is vital for a child's well-being and the well-being of others. Setting boundaries for children is just good parenting and caretaking.

In today's lesson the disciples may have felt that they were setting healthy limitations and respecting Jesus by stopping the parents from bringing their children to Jesus. They knew Jesus was tired and busy, so they felt that he should not be bothered.

Boy, were they wrong! Jesus' response, "Let the little children come to me; do not stop them" (Mark 10:14), tells us a great deal about Jesus' character. He is saying that he's never too busy for you.

When it comes to being accessible to others—whether at work, church, or anywhere else—for our own well-being, we must set limitations. But Jesus is always accessible.

Today's lesson is one of many stories in the Gospels where there is evidence that Jesus is the Messiah, the one anointed by God for a special purpose according to God's plan. First, the people believe that Jesus is special since they are bringing their children to them. Next, Jesus teaches and proclaims with authority about the kingdom of God. And finally, Jesus touches and blesses the children.

During the lesson you will be providing opportunities for the tweens to feel that Jesus loves them and values them. Let them know that Jesus is accessible all the time. Just as you will read about parents bringing their children to Jesus, as a teacher you too, are bringing children to Jesus by introducing them to the character of Jesus—who Jesus is and how he cares for them.

Think about your own life. How has Jesus been available to you? How has Jesus used family, friends, neighbors, and even strangers to make you feel welcome? Can you think of some specific examples? Be prepared to share one or two with your class.

Now go and welcome the children. Bring them to Jesus, and let him touch their lives and bless them.

| Activity | Supplies |
|--|--|
| Invite them in . . . (15 minutes) | <i>Resources appear in bold</i> |
| For Adults Only | hot snack, napkins, streamers, paper, marker, table |
| All-Access Pass | blank 3x5 index cards, clear contact paper, markers, Christian music magazines, gluesticks, string or lanyard, scissors, paper punch |
| Things That Go Together | Leader—page 10 , marker, paper or cardboard, masking tape |
| . . . Into the Bible (30 minutes) | |
| Kingdom of God | Bibles, Leader—page 11 , pens or pencils |
| A Listening Game | Bible , drinking glasses (enough for half the class) |
| Diagram the Bible Story | Bibles, Leader—page 12 , roll of butcher paper, pencils, erasers |
| . . . Into Life (15 minutes) | |
| Life at the Common Ground | DVD , DVD player, television |
| Front Row With Jesus/ DVD (Music Video) | DVD, Student Guide—page 2 , DVD player, television |
| Giving the Blessing | Leader—page 13 |

DVD Summary

The Lucky Caller

TJ has won two tickets to the Jesus Jam concert. While TJ is really stoked at first, he loses steam when he discovers that his tickets are in the nosebleed section. But there is a sterling silver lining to his tickets that he hasn't learned about yet. And when he does, Micah also learns and grows from this emotional roller coaster.

LIVE BIG

The B.i.G. Idea

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God's most precious gift to us.

Choose one or more activities to introduce your tweens to the Bible story.

For Adults Only

Supplies: hot snack, napkins, streamers, paper, marker, table

Prepare

- ★ Prepare an aromatic snack—fresh, hot, cinnamon rolls, cupcakes, or warm chocolate chip cookies.
- ★ Lay napkins on the table.
- ★ Use streamers to rope off the area of the room where the snack will be.
- ★ Place the snack on the table where the kids can easily see it as they enter the room.
- ★ Place a large note on the table that reads, "This snack is for adults only."

Do ★ Try not to respond as the tweens protest (the snack will be eaten after the Bible story).

Live B.i.G. Jesus welcomes all ages. There are no barriers to Jesus the Messiah.

All-Access Pass

Supplies: blank 3x5 index cards, clear contact paper, markers, Christian music magazines, gluesticks, string or lanyard, scissors, paper punch

Be prepared to hear the tweens talk about many bands or singers who do not sing Christian music. Try not to judge their comments or their creations. Listen and learn about your tweens.

Prepare

- ★ Cut contact paper into individual pieces large enough to cover the front and back of each index card.

Do ★ Distribute an index card and a piece of contact paper to each tween.

- ★ Have them design a backstage pass to a concert they would like to see.
- ★ When finished, cover each pass with the contact paper to make them look authentic.
- ★ Punch a hole in the top of the card and put on a lanyard or string that is long enough to wear the pass around their neck.
- ★ Have the tweens get into groups of three to share their passes with each other. Allow 3-5 minutes for each group to discuss.

- ★ **Ask:** Who is someone you can't wait to see in concert? What does a backstage pass allow you to do at a concert? What if you needed a backstage pass to see Jesus? (*Allow time for reflection.*) Instead of a backstage pass, let's think about how we would design an all-access pass together. What would you include on it? What would it allow you to do?
- ★ Encourage the tweens to wear the passes around their necks for the remainder of the class.

Live B.i.G. Jesus the Messiah invites us into a personal relationship; no pass is required.

Things That Go Together

Supplies: Leader—page 10, marker, paper or cardboard, masking tape, scissors

Prepare

- ★ Copy Things That Go Together (**Leader—page 10**) and cut the cards apart. Be prepared to adjust which cards will be included as explained in the instructions.
- ★ Make two signs on large pieces of cardboard or paper. On one, write the name JESUS, and on the other, ME.
- ★ Prepare each sign to be hung with masking tape during the discussion. Place these signs facedown near the leader.

Do ★ Hand out one card to each tween; each should have a different card (unless there are more than thirty children).

- ★ Explain that their goal is to find the person who has the card that goes with their card. Show them the two cards that have been set aside as an example.
- ★ Have them travel around the room and search for their partner by announcing their word to one another.
- ★ After each tween has found his or her mate, have them sit together in pairs on the floor. Invite each pair to share how/why their things go together (for example, peanut butter doesn't taste as good without the jelly).
- ★ Hang the sign that says JESUS on the wall.
- ★ **Ask:** What goes with this word? (*Allow time for responses. Invite the tweens to explain their responses.*)
- ★ Place the sign that says ME on the wall.
- ★ **Ask:** What goes with this word? (*Allow sufficient time for reflection.*) Do these two cards go together? How/why do these go together? Do you feel like you and Jesus are a pair, or not? If you don't, why not? (*Allow time for silent reflection, maybe even discussion.*)
- ★ **Say:** Jesus welcomed the children to be touched and blessed by him. Do you feel our church welcomes children as Jesus does? (*Be prepared to hear anything. Be careful not to judge any comments you may hear. Remember, we want them to trust this space.*)

Live B.i.G. Jesus the Messiah invites each of us to be paired in a relationship with him.

Invite them in . . .

LIVE BIG

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Choose one or more activities to immerse your tweens in the Bible story.

Into the Bible

Kingdom of God

Supplies: Bibles, Leader—page 11, pens or pencils

Prepare

- ★ Make copies of Kingdom of God (Leader—page 11), enough for each person.

- Do** ★ Divide the class into pairs, or you can use the same pairs from the Things That Go Together activity.
- ★ Hand out the Bible Study.
 - ★ Invite the tweens to find their special study spot. Allow five minutes for this activity. If they do not finish, encourage them to continue the study at home.

Live B.i.G. Jesus teaches us that in order to enter the kingdom of God, we are to receive it as little children.

A Listening Game

Supplies: Bible, drinking glasses (enough for half the class)

- Do** ★ Divide the class into two groups.
- ★ **Say:** Group 1, I would like you to stay here with me. I want to share with you some very important words. Group 2, you can listen to me from the hallway. Please take a glass and go outside the door. Press the open end of the glass against the door (*demonstrate*) in order to hear me.
 - ★ Send Group 2 out the door and have them close the door.
 - ★ As the kids listen on the other side of the closed door, read Mark 10:14-15 aloud and offer the group a special blessing.
 - ★ Bring Group 2 back into the classroom.
 - ★ **Ask:** (Group 1) How did it feel to receive a special blessing in person? (Group 2) What did you hear? How did it feel to be sent outside to listen from afar rather than be part of the group inside? What was it like to hear Jesus' words but not to see him? How was being outside the door listening to Jesus' words like or unlike the way the children may have felt when they were gathered that day as Jesus was teaching? If you could have chosen to be inside or outside the room, which would you have chosen and why?

Live B.i.G. Jesus invites children to come to him, close enough to hear him and to be touched by him.

Diagram the Bible Story

Supplies: Bibles, Leader—page 12, roll of butcher paper, pencils, erasers

Prepare

- ★ Make copies of Messiah (Leader—p. 12), enough for each person.
- ★ Write on the board/paper: Mark 10:13-16, Where is Jesus?, Where are the children?, Where are the disciples?, Where are the adults that are listening to Jesus teach?

- Do** ★ Divide the class into groups of four.
- ★ Give each group a large piece of butcher paper, four pencils, and an eraser.
 - ★ Have each group read the Bible story. Based on the Scripture, the groups should diagram the location of Jesus, the children, the disciples, and the adults. Allow five minutes.
 - ★ When finished, allow each group to share their diagrams with the class.
 - ★ **Say:** The story describes how Jesus physically made space in the crowd for the children. He invited them to come forward and be closer to him. Christians believe Jesus is the Messiah (*review what Messiah means from the Reproducible*). In your groups, put on your detective hats. Read the story again (*have a different tween read*) looking for evidence that Jesus is the Messiah. (*Allow five minutes.*)
 - ★ **Say:** Okay, detectives, what evidence have you uncovered in this Bible story in Mark 10:13-16 that Jesus is the Messiah? (*The people believe that Jesus is special since they are bringing their children to him. Jesus teaches and proclaims with authority about the kingdom of God. Jesus touches and blesses the children.*)
 - ★ **Ask:** How do you think the children felt when the disciples wouldn't let them near Jesus? How do you feel being excluded from the snack today, just because you aren't an adult? How is this like the way the children were denied access to Jesus? How is this different? Do you think you can imagine how the children in our story felt being denied access to Jesus? What did Jesus tell the people about children? Why do you think the children were important to Jesus? Do you believe that you are important to Jesus?
 - ★ Remove the barrier around the snack and invite the children to enjoy the cinnamon rolls or whatever snack you prepared.

Live B.i.G. By learning about how Jesus welcomed the children, we learn about God. God invites everyone to receive the gift of a personal relationship with Jesus.

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We believe Jesus is the Messiah, God's most precious gift to us.

Choose one or more activities to connect your tweens' lives to the Bible story.

Life at the Common Ground

Supplies: DVD, DVD player, television

- Do** ★ **Ask:** Have you ever won anything?
★ Play the DVD.

Live B.i.G. Our friends at the Common Ground model ways to live as Christians, believing that Jesus is the Messiah.

Front Row With Jesus/DVD (Music Video)

Supplies: DVD (Music Video), Student Guide—page 2, DVD player, television

- Do** ★ **Ask:** If Jesus is the headlining act at the Jesus Jam, would you want to go? How close to the stage would you want to be?
★ Distribute the **Student Guides**, one per person.
★ Begin reading aloud on **Student Guide—page 2**, pausing to allow time for silent reflection.
★ When you finish reading (do not read the music lyrics aloud), play the song "Jesus Draw Me Close" and ask the class to close their eyes (if they are comfortable doing so) and imagine being near Jesus.
★ When finished, allow a moment of silence afterward for quiet prayer.
★ **Pray:** Thank you, Jesus, for inviting us all, children and adults, to be close to you. Continue to increase our awareness of your presence by the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Live B.i.G. Music can reach tweens in a special way, inviting them to open their hearts to Jesus.

Giving the Blessing

Supplies: Leader—page 13

Prepare

- ★ Be prepared to speak a blessing to each tween (either memorize it or write and post it in an area on the wall where you will be able to read it). You may speak the same blessing to each child or a different blessing for each child.
- ★ Refer to the Sample Blessings (**Leader—page 13**) for ideas.

Do

- ★ Invite the class to sit in a circle. The leader should stand in the middle.
- ★ **Ask:** In our Bible story when the children come to Jesus, he touches them and blesses them. Saying a blessing to a friend is a way of asking God to love and protect and care for that friend. We will close our time together today by blessing each other.
- ★ Invite one tween to stand before you.
- ★ Place your hands on that person's shoulders and speak a blessing.
- ★ Continue until all tweens have received a blessing.
- ★ **Pray:** Almighty God, we thank you for anointing your Son, Jesus, to be the Christ, the Messiah. We thank you for loving us. We pray together in Jesus' name. Amen.

Live B.i.G. Jesus touched and blessed the children. We demonstrate God's love when we touch and bless the tweens in our class.



Cut along the lines. Shuffle the cards. Distribute one card to each person. Keep one pair of cards to be used as an example as you explain the activity.

Note: Be prepared to adjust the distribution as needed. For example, you would use all the cards if you had thirty youth. If you have fifteen, you would only use eight pairs (and the leader would also receive a card).

| | |
|----------------------|----------------|
| Cup | Saucer |
| Peanut Butter | Jelly |
| Bacon | Eggs |
| Table | Chairs |
| Shoes | Socks |
| Chips | Salsa |
| Ball | Glove |
| Bees | Honey |
| Lock | Key |
| Salt | Pepper |
| Milk | Cookies |
| Needle | Thread |
| Nuts | Bolts |
| Pen | Paper |
| Fork | Knife |

Jesus says, "Let the little children come to me; do not stop them, for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it" (Mark 10:14-15).

Waiting for a King

For hundreds of years before Jesus was born, the Jewish people believed that God would send a KING from the family of David who would sit on the throne and rule the Jewish people fairly. This king would have special gifts of wisdom and power. But when asked if he was the King of the Jews, Jesus answered: "My kingdom is not from this world. . . You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world."

(John 18:36-37)

Jesus taught his followers to pray for the coming kingdom. "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. _____ Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And do not bring us to the time of trial, but rescue us from the evil one."

Look in Matthew 6:9-13.

Does this prayer sound familiar? What is another name for it?

Many of the prophets in the Old Testament (before Jesus) looked for the time when God would establish an everlasting era of peace, justice, and mercy. What is one thing you would like to see in this everlasting era?

Who do you believe rules or reigns in the kingdom of God?

At the Last Supper, Jesus makes a vow to his disciples. What is it? Look in Matthew 26:29, Mark 14:25, and Luke 22:18.

Christians believe that the kingdom of God began with the birth of Jesus. After the death and resurrection of Jesus, Paul teaches Christians about the coming Kingdom. Look in Philippians 3:20-21.

Can you put his words into your own words?

Christians believe that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah, the Anointed One, sent by God for a holy purpose: to die for our sins.

Messiah

"Anointed One"

Anointed means the consecration of (setting apart) someone or something for a holy purpose.

In Hebrew*: Anointed = *Mashiah*
In Greek*: Anointed = *Christos*

Jesus the Messiah = Jesus Christ

*The Old Testament was originally written in Hebrew and parts of the New Testament were originally written in Greek.

Jesus Says He Is Anointed

At the beginning of Jesus' ministry, he went home to Nazareth. In the synagogue on the sabbath day, he stood up to read, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor" (Luke 4:18-19).

But Jesus wasn't just reading words from the Scriptures, he was speaking about himself! When the people realized this, they drove him out of town. They even tried to throw him off the cliff, but he "passed through" them! (Based on Luke 4:28-30)

Jesus Says He Is the Messiah

The high priest asked him, "Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?" Jesus said, "I am; and 'you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of the Power,' and 'coming with the clouds of heaven.'" . . . All of them condemned him as deserving death.

Mark 14:61-62, 64

For the closing activity, select one of these blessings, or write one of your own.

*(Name), May the LORD bless you and keep you;
May the LORD make his face to shine upon you,
and be gracious to you;
May the LORD lift up his countenance upon you,
and give you peace.*

Taken from Numbers 6:24-26.

*(Name), May the road rise to meet you.
May the wind be always at your back.
May the sun shine warm upon your face.
And until we meet again,
May God hold you in the hollow of God's hand.*

Taken from an Irish blessing.

*(Name), May the Lord of peace give
you peace at all times in all ways.*

Taken from 2 Thessalonians 3:16.

*(Name), May the grace of our Lord
Jesus Christ be with your spirit.*

Taken from Galatians 6:18.

This picture is an image of the statue of Christ the Redeemer in Rio de Janeiro in Brazil.
Go to www.livebig.com to find out more.