

April 21, 2019

Bible Focus: God sent Jesus to be my friend forever.

Easter • *Matthew 26:20-30; 27:45-50; 28:1-7*

Memory Verse: “A friend loves at all times.” Proverbs 17:17, NIV

Key Question: Who is your friend?

Bottom Line: Jesus is my friend.

Basic Truth: Jesus wants to be my friend forever.

Bible (Large Group, 15 minutes)

Worship: Inviting People to Respond to God

What You Need: Paperclip “Memory Verse Card” in your Bible at Proverbs 17:17.”

HISTORYTELLER: “Yay! I’m so glad to see you today. It’s such a special day. It’s Easter. I can’t wait for you to hear today’s story, but first remind me: **Who is your friend?**”

CHILDREN and HISTORYTELLER: [*Bottom Line*] “**Jesus is my friend.**”

HISTORYTELLER: “Yes! Jesus is your friend. It doesn’t matter what else is going on, Jesus will always love you and be your friend. Let’s sing our song about that.

SFX: “*Doesn’t Matter*”

“Great singing, my friends. **Who is your friend?**”

CHILDREN and HISTORYTELLER: [*Bottom Line*] “**Jesus is my friend.**”

HISTORYTELLER: “Exactly. [*Bottom Line*] **Jesus is my friend**, and He loves us. That’s what the Bible says. Let’s practice our memory verse. Are you ready?”

A friend (hook your pointer fingers together) loves (hug yourself) at all times (stretch your arms out to each side with your palms facing up as you turn in a circle), Proverbs 17:17. (Open your hands like a book.) Do that with me.”

CHILDREN and HISTORYTELLER: “*A friend (hook your pointer fingers together) loves (hug yourself) at all times (stretch your arms out to each side with your palms facing up as you turn in a circle), Proverbs 17:17.*” (*Open your hands like a book.*) (*Repeat several times.*)

HISTORYTELLER: “I am so proud of you all! You are doing a GREAT job with that verse. **Who is your friend?**”

CHILDREN and HISTORYTELLER: *[Bottom Line]* “Jesus is my friend.”

Bible: Communicating God’s Truth in Engaging Ways

What You Need: Bible

HISTORYTELLER: “Today’s Bible Truth is so special. It’s the most important story in all of the Bible!

(Open the Bible and lay it aside.)

“The Bible Truth I am about to tell you is why we celebrate Easter and dress up in our pretty clothes and come to church and tell each other, ‘Happy Easter!’ Can you say, ‘Happy Easter’ with me? Let’s say it!”

CHILDREN and HISTORYTELLER: “Happy Easter!”

HISTORYTELLER: “The truth of Easter begins with God’s love for every person in the whole, wide world. That’s A LOT of love!

“Hey, I have an idea! Every time I say the word ‘love’ I want you to give yourself a BIG hug like this.

(Demonstrate.)

“Can you do that? Let’s practice. God LOVES you! I said the word ‘love,’ so give yourself a big hug!

“Good job! Be sure to listen, and every time I say ‘love,’ give yourself a big hug.

“Okay, back to the Easter story. God LOVED . . .

(Hug yourself while the children hug themselves.)

“. . . us soooooo much, He sent His Son to be our friend. Do you remember what God’s Son’s name is? *(Pause for response.)* Right again! JESUS!

“Jesus is God’s Son! God LOVED *(pause)* us so much He sent Jesus to be our friend forever.

(Begin talking more slowly with sadness in your voice.)

“That part of the story is happy. Now comes the sad part—the very, very sad part.

“Jesus told His friends that He had to go away, but He promised He would come back.

“One night, while Jesus was praying in a garden, some angry people came and took Jesus away. The angry people hurt Jesus . . . (*very somber*) . . . and He died. Jesus was gone. All of Jesus’ friends were so sad they cried. Can you show me your sad face? (*Pause.*)

“Some people put Jesus’ body in a tomb and then rolled a big stone in front of it. Three sad days went by. Can you count the days with me?

(*Hold up fingers while counting.*)

CHILDREN and HISTORYTELLER: “Day one, day two, day three!

HISTORYTELLER: (*Become animated and happy.*) “And then on day three, something AMAZING happened!

“This is the happiest part of the story! Are you ready?

“Some of Jesus’ friends went to the tomb, and when they got there the stone had been rolled away. JESUS WAS NOT THERE!

“At first, they were even more sad. Where was Jesus’ body? Did someone take Him? But then they learned the GOOD NEWS! Jesus had come back, just like He said He would!

“God LOVED (*pause and hug*) us so much He sent Jesus to be our friend forever.

“THAT is the good news! THAT is why we celebrate Easter! THAT is why the Easter story is the most important story in the Bible!

“Jesus is alive, and He wants to be YOUR friend forever! **Who is your friend?”**

CHILDREN and HISTORYTELLER: [*Bottom Line*] “Jesus is my friend!”

HISTORYTELLER: “He sure is!”

Offering and Prayer

SFX: “*Cannon*”

Bring volume down to signify prayer time.

HISTORYTELLER: “Let’s pray and thank God for LOVING (*pause and hug heart pillow*) us so much He sent Jesus to be our friend forever. Everyone put your hands in your lap and close your eyes.”

HISTORYTELLER: “Dear God, thank You for loving us so much that You sent us Your Son, Jesus, to be our friend forever. Thank You that He came back just like He promised. We are SO glad He is always with us. You are amazing, God, and we love You. In Jesus’ name, amen.”

Dismiss

“Well, that’s it for today. Have fun and I’ll see you next time. Bye!”

Start Music as children exit. Historyteller stands at the door as children exit.

CG: Full Video (If needed)