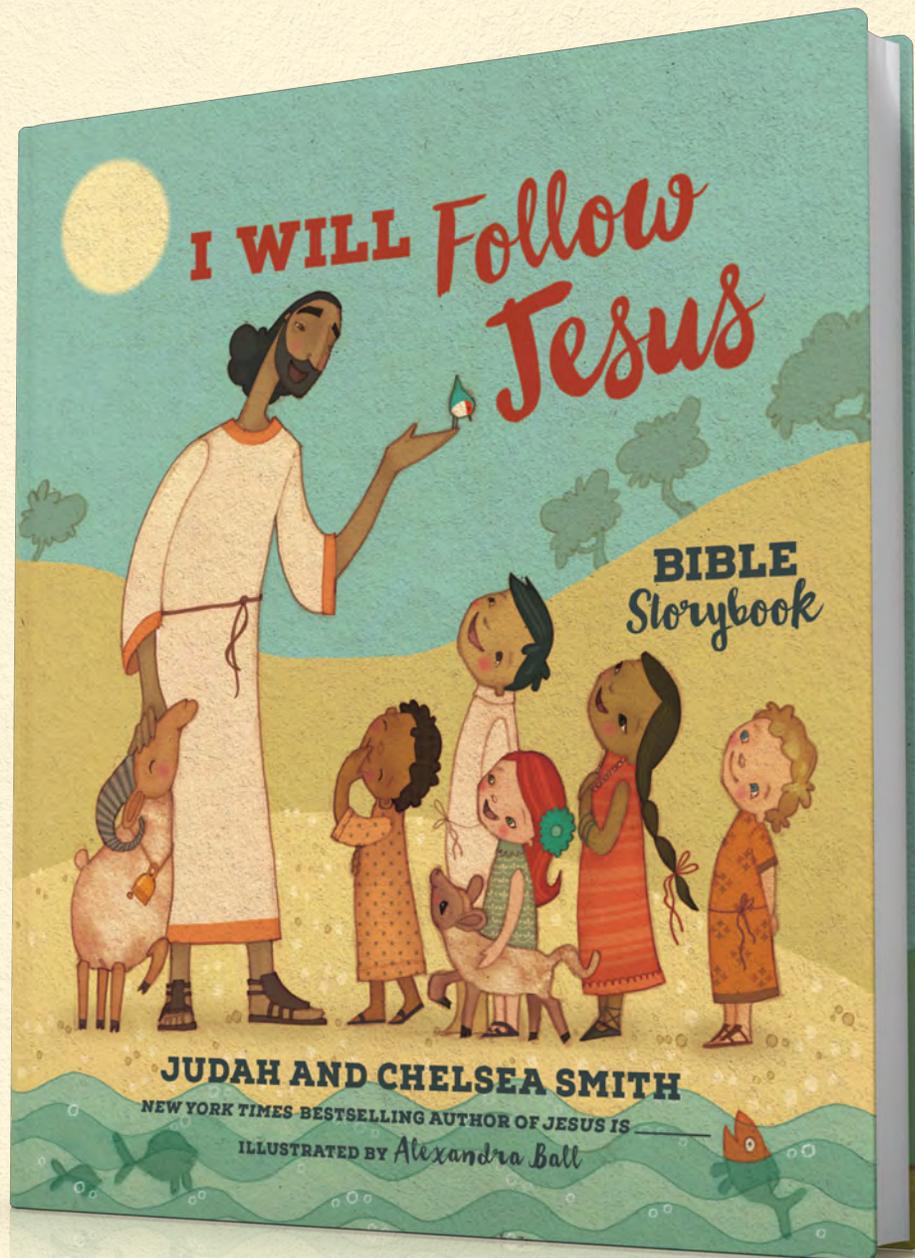
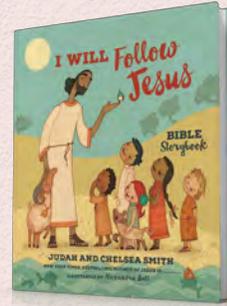


I Will Follow Jesus Bible Storybook Curriculum



Lesson Book
Perfect for Ages 4-5

Thanks for downloading the *I Will Follow Jesus Bible Storybook* Curriculum!



It means the world to us you are using the *I Will Follow Jesus Bible Storybook* curriculum! It is a labor of love and we hope it helps you in your mission to show the children in your kid's ministry exactly who Jesus is.

There are so many ways to communicate the gospel to a child. Some work better than others. This means HOW we choose to communicate who Jesus is, is almost as important as WHAT we say. We wrote these messages in a way that children will find simple, fun, and easy to grasp. As you get started, here are a few details we hope will help you squeeze as much goodness out of them as possible! Each message in the *I Will Follow Jesus Bible Storybook* curriculum:

TELLS A STORY

Everyone loves a great story. Stories paint a picture and make us feel. We connect with them on emotional and visceral levels. Jesus used stories to turn lifeless facts people knew about God into life-giving truth they could relate to. Each message strives to tell the story about a Biblical character and how their personal story points us to Jesus.

HAS ONE MAIN POINT

Growing up it seemed the more points a sermon had the more "in-depth" it was. The problem was, we forgot 99% of what we heard by the time we left the parking lot. If we can't retain more than one or two concepts as adults, why in the world would we expect kids to fare any better? Each message in the *I Will Follow Jesus Bible Storybook* curriculum concludes with one main point. Easy. Simple. Significant.

FOCUS ON WHAT JESUS DID RATHER THAN WHAT WE DO

The Gospel is all about what Jesus did for us, not what we do for Him. We don't want children to leave church fixated on what they should do to earn God's approval. Instead, we want kids consumed with everything Jesus did for them. Does Jesus give us rules that show us the way life works best? Yup! Can we do any of them without His power? Nope! Our goal is to show them that everything we do is in response to what He already did!

SHOULD BE COMMUNICATED IN TWO DIFFERENT WAYS

This is confusing. Let us explain. The 4-and-5-year-old and the Kindergarten–5th grade messages are very different. When using the 4-and-5-year-old curriculum, the speaker will read the story section out of the *I Will Follow Jesus Bible Storybook*. Think story time with a concluding thought and prayer.

The Kindergarten–5th grade messages, are meant to be preached rather than read. We recommend the communicator read through the message notes ahead of time to internalize the details and the main point. It's one thing to read notes off of a page. It is something entirely different when you paint a picture and communicate the story in a way that is energetic, passionate and fun!

The fact you are in some way connected to children's ministry makes you OUR HERO! We pray the *I Will Follow Jesus Bible Storybook* curriculum serves the incredible kids and leaders in your children's ministry by reinforcing the gospel story in simple, beautiful ways that they too will choose to follow Jesus forever.

We love you!

Judah and Chelsea Smith – Lead Pastors, The City Church
Damon Strom - City Kids Pastor, The City Church

Chapter 1: God Makes Everything

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

THE BIBLE

Genesis 1

INTRODUCTION

Do you know that Jesus loves you and made you just the way He wanted you to be?

Even if people say mean or unkind things about us, we know that Jesus made us exactly how He wanted us.

TRANSITION

In today's story, we learn how God made everything we see—including you and me!

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on pages 4-5: God Makes Everything]*

One time when I was a kid, my friends and cousins laughed at me. They said I had the biggest head they had ever seen!

At first, that made me feel kind of bad. Was something wrong with my head? But then I remembered something: God made me just the way I am. And He thinks I'm perfect!

When God created the world, He made everything just how He wanted it: the stars, the animals, the trees, the flowers. But even more than that, He thought about you and me! We are His absolute very most favorite part of creation.

Everything started with God. Before there were plants or people or planets, God was there.

God decided to create the world and everything else in the universe. The first thing He did was create light. That was day number one.

On day two, He made the wide blue sky that is high above our heads.

On day three, He made the ocean for swimming, the beach for building sandcastles, the ground for walking, the flowers for smelling, and the trees for climbing.

On day four, He created the hot yellow sun, the cool white moon, and the tiny stars twinkling in the night sky.

On day five, He made fish and sharks and whales, along with everything that swims in the oceans. Then he made the birds that sing in the morning and fly high in the sky all day.

On day six, God started by making the animals that live on the ground, like cats and dogs and lions and giraffes. Then He made the most special part of all of creation: people. He created a man and a

woman, and He loved them very much.

When He was done, God looked around. He liked what He had made. He liked it a lot.

He said with a smile, "It is very good." And He decided to take a day off just to enjoy all the amazing things He had made.

CONCLUSION

So if someone says your head is too big, or you are too short or too tall, or you don't run fast enough or sing pretty enough, just remember this: God thinks you are perfect!

God loves you just how you are. God likes to watch you play and have fun. He loves to hear you laugh and sing. You are amazing.

When you climb a tree, jump in the ocean, smell a flower, or chase a squirrel, remember this: God made all those things, and He likes them a lot. But His favorite part of creation is YOU.

PRAYER

Dear Jesus, thank You for making me just how You wanted me to be, and for loving me just as I am. I am amazing and perfect because You created me.

Chapter 2: God is Our Friend

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

THE BIBLE

Genesis 2

INTRODUCTION

Who here has a best friend?

Best friends are the best!

(Ask two or three kids the following questions.)

What is the name of your best friend? What are your favorite things to do together?

TRANSITION

I have an amazing story to tell you! This story is about three best friends. Their names are God, Adam, and Eve.

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on pages 6-7: God is Our Friend]*

When God first made the world, there was no one to live in it. So God said, "I have a great idea! I am going to create people. They will be my friends." He started by making the first man. God picked up a handful of dirt and breathed into it. Suddenly, it became a real person! God named him Adam.

God gave Adam a beautiful garden to live in called Eden. It had green grass, blue rivers, friendly animals, and trees full of delicious fruit. It was Adam's home, and it was awesome.

But Adam was lonely. So God said, "Adam, you need a friend too. I'm going to create a wife for you!" So while Adam was asleep, God took out one of Adam's ribs and made it into a woman. Adam named the woman Eve.

Adam and Eve were perfect for each other. They loved each other, and they were husband and wife. God loved them too, and He liked to spend time with them in the garden that He had made for them. All of God's creation was good, but the best part of it all was that God and people were together, and they were friends.

CONCLUSION

God wants to be YOUR friend! And guess what? He's the best friend you could ever have. God is always with you, even though you can't see Him. He will love you no matter what. He loves you when you are happy and when you are sad. He loves you when you are nice and even when you act mean. You can talk to God about anything, whenever you want. He is always listening, and He loves when you pray and talk to Him. God loves to spend time with you!"

PRAYER

Jesus, thank You for loving me. I want You to be my best friend. I love You. Amen.

Chapter 3: A Bad Decision

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

THE BIBLE

Genesis 3:6 (MSG)

When the Woman saw that the tree looked like good eating and realized what she would get out of it—she'd know everything!—she took and ate the fruit and then gave some to her husband, and he ate.

INTRODUCTION

One time I got mad at my (sister/brother) and said mean things to (her/him). We got in a fight.

When our parents found out, we were in trouble. I tried to say it was all (her/his) fault—that (she/he) was mean and rude to me.

But my parents knew the truth. It was my fault too.

We got in trouble because our parents loved us and wanted to help us live better.

My (sister/brother) and I said sorry. We hugged each other and prayed together.

TRANSITION

Just like my (sister/brother) and me, the story of Adam and Eve shows us how God loves us even when we make really big mistakes.

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on pages 8-9: A Bad Decision]*

God loved Adam and Eve, and they loved God. They never did bad things, and they were friends with God.

God told Adam and Eve, "I want you to be happy and safe. I made the Garden of Eden for you to live in. You can eat any the fruit from any trees you want—except that one over there. If you eat from that tree, you will be punished."

One day, Eve saw a snake. She thought it was nice, but it was actually a bad snake.

Then something crazy happened. The snake talked to her! It said, "Eve, eat the fruit from that tree—even though God said not to. It will make you smart and strong like God."

Adam and Eve knew they shouldn't eat it, but they did anyway. Suddenly, they weren't happy anymore. They felt terrible!

God called to them, "Adam and Eve, where are you?"

But instead of talking to God like they used to, they ran away and hid. They were sad, embarrassed, and scared.

God was sad too. He told Adam and Eve, "I love you. But you have to be punished because you disobeyed. You will leave the Garden of Eden forever. You will have pain in your lives, and one day you will die."

God still loved them and took care of them. He promised that someday there wouldn't be any more pain or dying. He had a plan to help everyone in the world.

CONCLUSION

Can you think of a time when you made a mistake and got in trouble? Maybe by a parent or a teacher? That isn't fun at all! Especially if you get punished.

When someone punishes, it doesn't mean the person don't love you. Actually, it means that person DOES love you a lot! He or she cares about you and wants to help you live better.

God had to punish Adam and Eve because they disobeyed Him, but He still loved them. Just like with Adam and Eve, God loves us even when we make mistakes.

PRAYER

Jesus, thank You for loving me enough to tell me when I am doing wrong things. Help me follow and obey You always.

Chapter 4: The Floating Zoo

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

INTRODUCTION

Who has a favorite T-shirt that you LOVE to wear?

Have you ever accidentally spilled a big glob of food or poured juice on your favorite shirt?

AHHH! It's terrible!

The worst is when you get a stain you can't get rid of.

TRANSITION

The Bible says that sin stains our lives like that big glob of spaghetti sauce on your favorite shirt. Jesus is the only one who can get rid of it!

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on pages 12-13: The Floating Zoo]*

In our story today, we'll learn about a man named Noah, and how not even all the water in the world can wash away sin!

The only thing strong enough to wash away sin is Jesus' love!

CONCLUSION

Jesus loves You and wants to wash away the stain called sin.

PRAYER

Jesus, thank You for loving me and thank You for washing away my sin!

Chapter 5: A Promise in the Sky

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

INTRODUCTION

We love the Bible!

Why? Because the Bible shows us Who Jesus is!

Every story in the Bible helps us to see how much Jesus loves us.

TRANSITION

Today, we are going to learn more about a man named Noah and how much God loves us.

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on pages 14-15: A Promise in the Sky]*

Who remembers who Noah was?

Who remembers what Noah built? That's right! God asked Noah to build a HUMUNGOUS boat called an ark.

God turned the whole earth into an ocean, and the ark kept Noah, his family, and two of every animal safe!

Noah, his family, and the animals were in the boat for a long time. A really, really, really long time. Even after the rain stopped, there was still water everywhere.

Everyone was tired of being inside the boat. They wanted to get out and find some nice grass to play on. Well, the dogs and cats wanted to play on the grass—the cows just wanted to eat it! But they had to wait for the water to dry up.

A few times, Noah opened a window and let a bird fly out to look for land. One day, the bird returned with a fresh green leaf in its mouth. That meant trees were growing and the water was drying up!

They kept waiting. And waiting. And waiting. Finally, the water was gone, and they opened the door. Everyone was so excited! The birds flew circles in the sky. The animals jumped and rolled on the grass. Then Noah and his family thanked God for saving them.

God knew that the next time it rained, people might be scared that another flood would destroy the world. So he made a rainbow in the sky.

Noah and his family saw it and said, "Wow! That is beautiful! What does it mean?"

God said, "I will never flood the earth again. Every time you see a rainbow, remember my promise to take care of you."

CONCLUSION

Have you ever seen a rainbow? Next time you see one, remember how much God loves you.

Remember that God promises to keep you safe.

Noah believed that God loved him and wanted to take care of him. Noah obeyed God because he loved Him, and God kept Noah and his family safe.

God does the same thing for us. He loves us and wants us to be safe. So He tells us to follow and obey Him. When we follow God, He promises to watch out for us and save us from danger. He loves to take care of us!

PRAYER

Dear Jesus, thank You for keeping me safe. I know You love me and watch out for me. I want to obey You because I love You.

Chapter 6: God's Really Big Promises

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

THE BIBLE

Genesis 15:5–6 (MSG)

Then he (God) took him outside and said, "Look at the sky. Count the stars. Can you do it? Count your descendants (or children)! You're going to have a big family, Abram!" And he believed! Believed God!

INTRODUCTION

I love stories! Who wants to hear a great story?!

TRANSITION

A long time ago, there was a man in the Bible who was best friends with God.

This man believed what God said because he knew God loved him. He even believed God when, one day, God made Abraham a crazy incredible promise!

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on pages 18-19: God's Really Big Promises]*

Around 250 years after God saved His friend Noah and Noah's family from the flood, God found another friend. This man was named Abraham.

One day, God talked with His friend Abraham and asked him to do something CRAZY!

A long time after Noah, there was another man who loved and followed God. His name was Abraham.

One day, God said, "Abraham, I want you and your family to leave your home. I will show you where to go."

Abraham must have wondered what God was up to. Why should he leave his home?

Then God said, "I have big plans for you. I want to give you a very big family. You are going to have as many kids, grandkids, and great-grandkids as there are stars in the nighttime sky!

Abraham didn't have any kids, so that sounded impossible. Then God said, "Also, I want to give you your own country. And I want to make you rich so you can help lots of people."

Abraham believed God so much that he obeyed Him completely. He and Sarah packed up and left their home.

They traveled for many years. Sometimes life was hard. They had to cross hot, dry deserts and watch out for bad people who might want to hurt them.

But they always believed God would do what he promised. That is called faith. They knew God

would take care of them even though they didn't understand where they were going.

God loved Abraham's faith, and He called Abraham His friend.

CONCLUSION

Jesus wants to be your best friend, just like He was with Abraham.

We can believe what Jesus says and have faith just like Abraham did.

PRAYER

Jesus, thank You for loving me. I believe what You say.

Chapter 7: A Happy Miracle

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

VISUAL AID NEEDED: A baby doll

THE BIBLE

Genesis 18:14 (NLT)

Is anything too hard for the Lord? I will return about this time next year, and Sarah will have a son.

INTRODUCTION

Who has a baby brother or sister?

(Hold up the baby doll.)

Babies are funny. They are chubby. They fall over when they try to stand up, and sometimes they smell stinky. PEE-YEW!

TRANSITION

Today, we get to hear a story about a special baby in the Bible and how we can believe everything that Jesus says!

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on page 21: A Happy Miracle]*

Last week, we talked about a man named Abraham who lived a long time ago.

Abraham was best friends with God and he believed what God said. This is called faith.

Now we get to find out what God did next for Abraham!

Abraham was almost 100 years old, and his wife, Sarah, was 90. But they still didn't have any kids. That made them sad! They really wanted to have children, but now they were too old.

But God had not forgotten His promise to give Abraham as many kids, grandkids, and great-grandkids as the stars in the sky.

One afternoon, three angels came to visit Abraham. Abraham asked them to sit down and eat lunch with him. The angels told Abraham, "Do you remember God's promise? God says that in one year, you and your wife Sarah will have a son."

Sarah couldn't believe it. She thought they were joking, and she laughed out loud. It was impossible for them to have kids! They were too old.

God said to Sarah, "Why did you laugh? Nothing is too hard for me. Just believe."

One year later, just like God said, Sarah gave birth to a baby boy. Sarah laughed again—but now it was because she was so happy! Abraham and Sarah named the baby Isaac, which means "laughter."

As Abraham and Sarah held baby Isaac in their arms, they were happy. God had kept His promise, even when it seemed impossible.

CONCLUSION

Nothing is impossible for Jesus!

Just as He did for Abraham and Sarah, Jesus always keeps His promises.

We can trust Jesus all the time.

Question: Does Jesus love you no matter what? YES!

Question: Can we believe what Jesus says? YES!

PRAYER

Jesus, I believe what You say. I know You love me no matter what!

Chapter 8: The Hardest Test

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

THE BIBLE

Hebrews 11:17 (MSG)

By faith, Abraham, at the time of testing, offered Isaac back to God.

INTRODUCTION

Last week, we learned about a old man named Abraham and how God gave him and his wife, Sarah, a baby boy when he was 95 years old!

That is old!

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on pages 22-23: The Hardest Test]*

Isaac grew. He wasn't a baby anymore—now he was a big boy. He loved his dad, and his dad loved him a lot.

God talked to Abraham and said, "I know you love your son, but you need to do something that is very hard. Give Isaac back to me. He is going to die and come be with me in heaven."

What? Abraham didn't understand. God had promised to give Abraham a big family. Why should Abraham let his son die?

But he knew that he needed to obey God, even when he didn't understand. God would take care of Isaac.

Abraham took Isaac to the top of a mountain. He began to give Isaac to God.

Suddenly God said, "Abraham, stop! Don't give Isaac back to me. He isn't gong to die. I just wanted to make sure that you trust me completely. You are amazing, Abraham! You were even willing to give me your son."

Then God showed Abraham a ram that was nearby. So Abraham gave the ram to God instead of Isaac.

God was very happy with Abraham. He told him, "I will bless you and your family very much because you were willing to obey Me."

CONCLUSION

The Bible says that Abraham trusted God. He believed God's promises, and that made God very happy.

God knows that sometimes we do bad things. He knows we aren't perfect. But He wants us to trust Him and believe that He loves us anyway.

When we believe that, it makes God happy! We are friends with God because we trust Him, just like Abraham.

PRAYER

Jesus, I know You love me. I trust You and I believe Your promises. You will take care of me and love me forever.

Chapter 9: Joseph's New Coat

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

INTRODUCTION

Have you ever been stuck before? Maybe you stepped in the mud and your boots got stuck!

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on pages 26-27: Joseph's New Coat]*

Isaac grew up. He had a son named Jacob, who also grew up and had twelve sons. That's a lot of kids!

Jacob loved all his kids, but he especially loved one named Joseph.

He gave Joseph an awesome, colorful coat as a gift. That made Joseph's brothers jealous. They hated Joseph, and they were mean and rude to him.

One day, the brothers decided to hurt Joseph. They ripped off his coat and threw him into a deep hole in the ground. Then they sold him to some people that were going to another country called Egypt.

The brothers put animal blood on Joseph's ripped coat and showed it to their father. They said, "We found this. Is it Joseph's?" Jacob started crying. He thought wild animals had killed his son, and he was very sad.

In Egypt, Joseph became the slave of a man named Potiphar. God helped Joseph be Potiphar's best worker ever. Joseph was in charge of everything Potiphar owned.

Joseph always obeyed God and did what was good. But once, Potiphar's wife tried to get him to do something bad.

Joseph shouted, "No!" and ran away.

That made Potiphar's wife mad, so she had Joseph put in jail. He must have thought, "This is crazy! I didn't do anything wrong. First I'm a slave. Now I'm a prisoner. Why, God?"

But even in jail, God helped Joseph. The guard in charge of the jail liked Joseph so much that he put him in charge of the whole jail.

Even though Joseph was alone and far from home, God always took care of him.

CONCLUSION

Jesus promises you in Matthew 28:20, "I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Just like He was with Joseph, Jesus is always with us and He is always ready to help us!

PRAYER

Thank you, Jesus, for helping me and always taking care of me!

Chapter 10: Joseph Saves Everyone

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on pages 28-29: Joseph Saves Everyone]*
Last week, we talked about Joseph.

His mean brothers sold him as a slave, and then he was thrown into jail even though he didn't do anything wrong!

But God loved Joseph and helped him while he was in jail.

Today, we get to find out what happens next!

One night, two of the prisoners in Joseph's jail had strange dreams. They told Joseph about their dreams, and something funny happened. God told Joseph what the dreams meant. The two prisoners were super surprised!

A long time later, Pharaoh also had a dream. He was the ruler of Egypt, and he was scared. He knew God was telling him something important in the dream, but he didn't understand it.

Someone told him, "Pharaoh, I know a man named Joseph who can tell you what your dream means."

So Pharaoh told Joseph, "Tell me what God is saying, and I'll put you in charge of all of Egypt." God told Joseph what the dream meant. He said Egypt was going to have seven years with lots of food, and then seven years with no food. They needed to save their food now so they wouldn't starve later. Pharaoh put Joseph in charge so he could save people from starving.

Seven good years went by, and then the bad years started. One day, when no one had any food except for Egypt, some people came to ask Joseph for food. They were his brothers!

The brothers didn't recognize Joseph. When they found out, they were scared. They thought Joseph was mad at them and that he would hurt them.

But Joseph forgave them for being mean. He knew God took care of him so he could save his family.

Then Joseph's dad and brothers all moved to Egypt. Joseph was happy because he wasn't alone, and God always took care of him.

CONCLUSION

Joseph didn't always understand why he had so many problems. But he trusted God anyway, and he waited for God to help him. And God did!

What things do you need God's help with? Maybe you have a friend who is sick. Or maybe your parents need God's help, or you are scared about something.

You can always trust God! He sees you and knows what you need. God always has a plan for your life. Even when you feel sad or alone, God is there. He is planning to give you good things.

PRAYER

Dear Jesus, help me to always trust You, even when I don't understand what is happening or when I feel stuck. Thank You for watching out for me and helping me with my problems.

Chapter 11: A Baby in a Basket

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

INTRODUCTION

In our amazing story today, we learn about a chubby baby named Moses, how he rode down a river in a basket, and how much God loved him!

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on pages 32-33: A Baby in a Basket]*

Joseph's family lived in Egypt for hundreds of years. They had so many grandkids and great-grandkids that they became a huge nation called Israel. They called themselves Israelites.

But the Egyptians started to be afraid of Israel, so they made the Israelites their prisoners and slaves. Pharaoh, the leader of Egypt, was a bad man. He tried to kill all the Israelite baby boys. One Israelite woman had a baby boy named Moses. She loved him and didn't want him to die.

She made a little basket out of river plants and laid baby Moses in it. She put the basket in a river and let it float away. She was sad, but she wanted to keep Moses safe.

Pharaoh's daughter was at the river, and she saw the floating basket. When she heard baby Moses crying, she wanted to save him.

Moses' older sister, Miriam, was watching to see what happened to Moses. She asked Pharaoh's daughter, "Do you want me to find someone to take care of the baby for you?"

"That's a great idea!" Pharaoh's daughter said.

Miriam went and got her mother. She was so happy! She took care of Moses when he was a baby. When Moses got older, he went to live in Pharaoh's palace.

CONCLUSION

Jesus is right there to help us and take care of us.

Moses couldn't do anything to help himself, but Jesus rescued him!

Jesus rescues us and takes care of you and me!

PRAYER

Thank You, Jesus, for taking care of me! I love You.

Chapter 12: A Talking Bush

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

INTRODUCTION

Today, we are going to talk about a man named Moses.
Moses was one of God's chosen people, the Israelites.
The Israelites were slaves to another group of people, the Egyptians.

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on pages 34-35: A Talking Bush]*

Moses grew up as part of Pharaoh's family, but he knew he was actually an Israelite. He loved and followed God, and he was sad because Egypt was hurting his friends and family. He tried to help Israel, but that just made Pharaoh mad at him.

So Moses left Egypt and the palace to live in the desert. He became a shepherd and took care of smelly sheep! One day while he was with his sheep, Moses saw something very strange. It was a bush on fire, but it didn't burn up. It just kept burning and burning. *What in the world is that?* Moses thought. This I've got to see!

He walked up to the bush, and suddenly God spoke to him from the fire. "Moses! Moses!"

"Y-Y-Y-Yes?" said Moses. He was a little scared. He had never seen a talking fiery bush before! "H-H-H-Here I am."

God said, "I am your God, and I want you to rescue Israel from Egypt."

Moses was even more scared now. "But God, I tried that already. It didn't work. You need to find someone else—I'm not strong enough."

But God said, "Moses, I am strong enough, and that's all you need. I will be with you and I will help you. If you go in My power, you will rescue Israel."

Moses was still afraid. He didn't think he could do it. But he knew God would be with him, so he went to Egypt to help the Israelites.

CONCLUSION

Moses did not need to be afraid, because he knew God was with him!

Have you ever faced a situation that scared you?

We all have. But just like Moses, we don't need to be afraid, because God is with us!

PRAYER

Jesus, will You help me remember that You are with me all the time? Thank You for loving me so much!

Chapter 13: Plagues & Passover

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

INTRODUCTION

We love the Bible! Every story in it is true, and every story helps us see how much Jesus loves us! Today's story is about a man named Moses, ten miracles, and special dinner called Passover.

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on pages 36-37: Plagues and Passover]*

Moses went to Egypt and saw Pharaoh, the leader of Egypt. Moses told him, "Pharaoh, God says to let His people go! Don't make them be slaves anymore."

But Pharaoh said, "No! I won't let them go. They are my slaves forever."

Moses told Pharaoh, "If you don't, God is going to punish you. I'm warning you—you need to obey God right now."

But Pharaoh would not listen. So God punished Egypt to try to get Pharaoh to change his mind. God turned their river into blood, and he sent frogs and flies that covered everything. It was disgusting

But Pharaoh still wouldn't listen to God.

Next all the cows and sheep died. Then the Egyptians got giant blisters all over their skin. After that, hail knocked down all the plants, and then millions of grasshoppers came and ate everything green that was left. But Pharaoh still wouldn't change his mind.

Last of all, God sent an angel to kill one person in every family in Egypt. But no Israelites died!

Finally, Pharaoh decided to let Israel go free.

God told Israel to eat a special meal called Passover. Every year, they would eat this meal together and remember how God set them free from Egypt.

CONCLUSION

Just like God rescued the Israelites from Egypt, Jesus rescues us from sin! He loves you and me so much that He died on the cross so that He could be our best friend!

PRAYER

Thank You for loving every boy and girl here, Jesus! Thank You for dying on the cross for us!

Chapter 14: A Road Through the Sea

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

INTRODUCTION

Have you ever been stuck before? Maybe you fell over on your bike and the bike landed on top of you? Maybe while you were wrestling, your brother or sister jumped on top of you and you couldn't move. Being stuck is no fun!

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on pages 38-39: A Road Through the Sea]*

Today's story is about a time when the Israelites got stuck between an army and an ocean!

How would God get them out?

The Israelites left Egypt as fast as they could, just in case Pharaoh changed his mind—which he did. He gathered his army and chased the Israelites to bring them back to Egypt.

The Egyptians caught up to Israel right when Israel came to the edge of a huge sea called the Red Sea. The Israelites were very scared. "We can't get away!" they said. "Are we going to die?"

Moses said, "Don't be afraid. God will save us. You'll see! Just believe."

God told Moses to raise his staff above the sea. Moses obeyed, and suddenly a strong wind started to blow. The wind made the sea split into two giant walls of water, and the ground in the middle was dry! The Israelites crossed the sea safely.

The Egyptians started to follow them. But as soon as Israel came out on the other side, God let the walls of water come back down. The waves swept away the Egyptian army. Israel was safe on the other side, and their enemies were gone.

CONCLUSION

Moses rescued the Israelites when they were trapped by the Red Sea.

God also sent Jesus to rescue us when we were trapped in sin.

Jesus died on the cross and rose from the dead to make us free—free to be loved by Him and love Him back!

PRAYER

I want to say yes to Jesus' love for me.

Chapter 15: Rules on a Mountain

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

INTRODUCTION

We love Jesus because He loved us first!

We love the Bible because the Bible shows us Who Jesus is!

Every story in the Bible is true!

Today we are going to learn how Jesus obeyed the rules for us!

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on pages 40-41: Rules on a Mountain]*

Israel travelled toward the land God had promised to give Abraham a long time before. They stopped at a mountain called Mount Sinai.

The mountain was covered with fire and smoke, and God spoke to the people. They were scared. They were afraid that he would hurt them.

But God told Israel, "You are my special people. I love you and I want you to trust me, love me, and follow me. I'm going to give you some rules to help you."

Then God told Moses to climb up to the top of Mount Sinai so He could give Moses His rules. God told Israel that He was their God, and that they shouldn't lie, steal, disobey their parents, or do other bad things.

God also told Israel that if they sinned (that means if they disobeyed the rules), they could kill a sheep or another animal, and God would forgive their sin. That is called a sacrifice.

The people were still a little scared. They knew that they made mistakes sometimes, and they were afraid God would be mad at them.

But Moses told them not to worry. God was on their side. He would help them. God wanted to be their friend. He wanted to help them live good, fun lives. That was why He gave them His rules and told them to follow Him.

CONCLUSION

Moses was Israel's leader for many years. He loved and obeyed God, and he helped Israel follow God.

Following God doesn't mean being perfect, though! We all make mistakes, even if we try not to.

Following God means believing that God loves us. It means loving and knowing Him.

Jesus is our sacrifice for sins. That means that because Jesus died, God forgets all our mistakes and

forgives all our sins.

We can follow God without being afraid, even though we sometimes do bad things. God is on our side and He loves us, just like He loved Israel.

PRAYER

Jesus, I know You love me. Thank You for forgiving me when I make mistakes. I know You are with me and You are on my side.

Chapter 16: Rahab Saves the Spies

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

INTRODUCTION

Jesus loves you SO MUCH!

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on page 45: Rahab Saves the Spies]*

In our story today from the Bible, we will learn about a woman named Rahab and the fact that Jesus cares about us!

After a long time, Israel came to the land that God had promised them. It was going to be their new home. But there were people who didn't want the Israelites to live there. Some of these people lived in a town called Jericho.

Joshua was the leader of the Israelites. He sent two spies to sneak into Jericho. They went into the home of a woman named Rahab. But someone found out the spies were there, so soldiers came to search her house.

Before the soldiers got there, Rahab took the spies up to the roof of her house, which was part of a huge wall around the city. She hid them from the soldiers. The soldiers thought the spies had left already.

After the soldiers were gone, Rahab went up on the roof to talk to the spies. "I know that God has given this land to you," she said. "Promise me that you will keep me and my family safe when you come live here."

They told her that if she helped them get away safely, they would protect her. So Rahab did. She tied a red rope to her window and dropped it down outside the city wall. The spies climbed down the rope and got away from Jericho.

They hurried back to Joshua. They said, "It's time to go fight Jericho! God has given us this land. We can do it!"

CONCLUSION

Joshua trusted God to help him defeat Jericho, and Rahab trusted God to save her and her family.

Jesus is there to help us no matter what it is that we face.

We trust Jesus to help us just like Joshua and Rahab did!

PRAYER

Jesus, thank You for loving me. Thank You for helping me with big stuff and small stuff.

Chapter 17: Shouting Down Walls

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

INTRODUCTION

Boys and girls, did you know that Jesus wants to help you?

Nothing is too big or too small for Him! He loves you!

In today's story from the Bible, we get to learn about how God helped a man named Joshua and a woman named Rahab.

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on page 46-47: Shouting Down Walls]*

Jericho had a huge, strong wall around it. The Israelites wondered, "How are we going to get inside?"

God had a plan. He told Joshua and the Israelites to march around Jericho each day for six days while the priests blew their trumpets. On the seventh day, He told them to march around it seven times, and then shout.

That seemed like a strange plan. How would marching and playing trumpets and shouting knock down a wall?

But the Israelites believed God and obeyed. The first day, they marched one time around the city. The priests blew their trumpets but the people didn't say anything. Not even a word. They did that for six days in a row.

On the seventh day, everyone got up at sunrise. They marched around Jericho seven times. When they finished, Joshua said, "Now shout as loud as you can, because God is giving you this city!"

So everybody shouted. It was the loudest shout any of them had ever heard!

Suddenly, the wall cracked. Pieces started to fall. The whole wall crumbled and tumbled to the ground.

Joshua and the Israelites went into Jericho. They found Rahab and her family and let them stay with Israel.

Israel won! It was their city now. God gave them the victory because they believed in him.

CONCLUSION

God wants to help you with the things that are important to you. It doesn't matter how hard they are.

God is bigger and stronger than any problem.

It's just like my homework. When I prayed about it, God helped me get it done. It still took some

work, of course. But God helped me have a good attitude and finish what I had to do.

Is there anything in your life you need help with? You can always ask God! He loves you and wants to help you.

PRAYER

Dear Jesus, I know You are bigger and stronger than any problem. Thank You that You take care of me. I will always trust You.

Chapter 18: Let Me Go With You

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

INTRODUCTION

My family isn't perfect. Have you ever argued with your brother or sister before?

My family argues sometimes, too. But we still love each other.

Family was God's idea. He knew we needed people to watch out for us and love us. What would life be like if we didn't have our families?

Today's story is about Ruth and Naomi. It shows us how important it is to love the people around us.

They might not be perfect, but they are our family.

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on page 50-51: Let Me Go With You]*

There wasn't enough food in Israel one year. A man named Elimelech and his wife, Naomi, decided to move their family to a country called Moab because there was more food there.

While they were there, Elimelech died. That was hard for Naomi, but it got worse—her two sons died too.

Naomi was all alone and very sad. She didn't know what to do. Then she heard that there was food in Israel again, so she decided to go home.

She talked to her sons' wives, who were from Moab. "I'm going to go back to Israel," she said. "You should stay here in your country."

One of the women stayed in Moab. But the other one, a beautiful and kind woman named Ruth, didn't want to. Ruth loved Naomi, and she wanted to go with her and take care of her.

Ruth told Naomi, "Please let me go with you! I will go wherever you go. I will live wherever you live. And your God will be my God too."

Naomi was so happy! She was no longer alone. She had a wonderful new daughter, Ruth, to help her.

So Naomi went back to her home in Israel with Ruth walking beside her.

CONCLUSION

God loves us and invites us to be in His family.

Because Jesus loves us, we love our Mom, Dad, brothers, and sisters.

How can we love them?

Obey our parents the first time they ask.

Use kind words with our brothers and sisters.

PRAYER

Jesus, thank You for bringing me into Your family. Help me to love my family just like You love me.

Chapter 19: An Unexpected Harvest

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

INTRODUCTION

Boys and girls, we are going to hear an incredible true story today about a woman who didn't have any food and a rich man who helped her!

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on page 52-53: An Unexpected Harvest]*

Ruth lived with her mother-in-law, Naomi, in Bethlehem. They needed food to eat. So one day, Ruth decided to walk behind the farmers in their fields and pick up grain they dropped on the ground.

She could bring the grain back to Naomi so they could eat.

The field Ruth went to belonged to a man named Boaz. Boaz saw Ruth in the field. He had heard that she was taking care of Naomi.

He told Ruth, "You are so kind to help Naomi! I want to help you. You can eat lunch with my workers. I'll make sure you are taken care of." Then he told his workers to let extra grain fall down so Ruth would find it.

Ruth went home with a lot of food! Ruth told Naomi about Boaz, and Naomi was very excited. She knew that Boaz was a good man. Naomi told Ruth to work in Boaz's field for a long time. So Ruth did.

Boaz liked Ruth a lot—and she liked him too. After a while, they decided to get married. Soon, Boaz and Ruth had a baby boy. They named him Obed.

Ruth was kind to her mother-in-law, and God blessed her very much. Now she had a home, a husband, and a son.

CONCLUSION

Ruth knew her family was important. She loved Naomi so much that she even went to another country to take care of her. Then God gave Ruth a bigger family: a husband and a son.

God wants to help you love your family. They love you, and they take care of you—even if they aren't perfect sometimes.

God gave you the family you were born into. And besides that, God also made you part of His family. And that is the best family of all.

PRAYER

Jesus, thank You for my family. Thank You that they love and care for me. Help me to love them too.

Chapter 20: God Makes My Heart Happy

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

INTRODUCTION

If I fell down playing basketball or riding my bike when I was a kid, I always wanted to see my dad or mom. I knew they would hug me, hold me, and help me until I felt better.

The Bible says that God is our Father in heaven. He loves us so much. When we are hurt or sad, it makes Him sad too. He wants to help us feel better. He wants us to be safe and happy.

This story is about a woman named Hannah who was very sad. But God helped her heart be happy.

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on pages 56-57: God Makes My Heart Happy]*

Hannah was a woman who loved God. But she was sad because she didn't have any children. She really wanted a baby.

There was another woman that was mean to Hannah. She made fun of Hannah because she didn't have any kids. That made Hannah even more sad, and she cried a lot. She didn't know what to do.

Then she had an idea. She could ask God for a baby! She knew God could do a miracle.

Hannah went to God's temple to pray. She asked God for a child. She said that if she had a baby boy, she would give him to God.

God answered her prayer, and soon she had a baby! She named the boy Samuel. Hannah was so excited that she sang and praised God.

She said, "God makes my heart happy! He makes me strong and hears my prayers. There is no one as big and strong and awesome as God!"

Hannah loved Samuel, but she didn't forget her promise to God. When Samuel was a little older, Hannah took him to the temple. Hannah knew that Samuel would love and follow God his whole life.

CONCLUSION

Have you ever felt sad? Maybe your favorite toy broke, or your pet doggy ran away, or someone in your family got hurt, and it made your heart sad.

God knows what is in your heart. He knows how you feel. And He wants to hug you and hold you, just like your family or your friends. He wants to take care of you until you feel better. Even when sad things happen, Jesus still loves you. He will take care of you and help your heart be happy again.

PRAYER

Jesus, thank You for taking care of me even when I'm sad. I know You are always with me. Thank You for helping me and taking care of me. You make my heart happy!

Chapter 21: "Who is Calling Me?"

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

INTRODUCTION

How many of you know what your Mom or Dad's voice sounds like?

You could even be in a noisy crowd of people and still recognize your parents' voices calling you.

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on pages 60-61: Who is Calling Me?]*

Samuel grew up in the temple, and he helped the people who came to pray to God. One night, Samuel was asleep in his bedroom in the temple. It was quiet, peaceful, and dark.

Suddenly someone shouted, "Samuel!"

Samuel woke up. He looked around. No one was there! He was a little bit scared. He ran and asked his friend Eli who lived in the temple too. "Did you call me?"

Eli said, "No, go back to sleep. You must be dreaming." Samuel went back to bed.

"Samuel!" The voice shouted again.

Samuel still didn't see anyone. He started to wonder if God was speaking to him.

Then he heard the voice one more time: "Samuel. Samuel!"

This time he said, "God? Is that you? I'm listening!"

It was God! God wanted to talk to Samuel. He told him things that would happen in the future. Samuel became a prophet, which means he heard God's voice and told His words to other people. All of his life, Samuel was ready to listen to God and follow Him.

CONCLUSION

Just like Samuel, God knows your name! He wants to talk with you.

You might not hear Him talk out loud, but you can hear God's voice in your heart through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is God living inside of you. He talks to you. He helps you know that God loves you. He shows you how to be nice to other people.

Part of following Jesus is learning to hear and obey His voice. He wants to show you how to live a happy, good, fun life.

PRAYER

Dear Jesus, I know that You hear me when I pray. Thank You for listening to me, and thank You for talking to me. Help me learn to listen to Your voice in my heart.

Chapter 22: An Unlikely King

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

INTRODUCTION

Who knows what a president is?

Who knows what a king is?

That's right! A king is someone who is a leader of a whole country!

A leader is someone who helps other people.

All of you are leaders!

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on pages 64-65: An Unlikely King]*

In today's story from the Bible, God picks a young boy named David to be the leader of his country, Israel.

Samuel grew up. He always helped the Israelites follow God.

One day, God told Samuel that it was time to choose a new king for Israel. "Go to the home of Jesse in Bethlehem," God said. "I want one of his sons to be king."

Samuel went to Bethlehem and found Jesse and his family. First, Samuel saw Jesse's oldest son. "He looks like a king! I bet it's him!" thought Samuel.

"No, it's not him," said God. "You can only see the outside of people, but I see what is really in their hearts."

One after another, Samuel looked at Jesse's sons. There were seven of them. But God did not choose any of them!

Samuel was confused. Finally he said, "Jesse, do you have any other sons?"

"Well, I didn't bring my youngest son, David," said Jesse. "He's still little. He is at home watching our sheep."

"Bring him!" said Samuel.

When David arrived, God told Samuel, "This is the one! David will be king of Israel!" David was little, but he was the one God picked.

Samuel knew that when David grew up, he would become king. From then on, God was with David and helped him be a good leader.

CONCLUSION

Just like Jesus loved David, Jesus loves you!

He chose you to be a leader to help other people—just like He helps you!

PRAYER

Jesus, thank You for loving me and helping me to be kind to others.

Chapter 23: David & The Giant

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

INTRODUCTION

Who knows what a giant is?

A giant is a humongous, super-tall person!

Today's story is about a mean giant, a little boy named David, and how God helped David!

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on pages 66-67: David and the Giant*

The Philistines were people who didn't love God and didn't like Israel.

One day, they sent an army to attack the Israelites.

One of the bad soldiers was a giant named Goliath. He was huge and strong and mean. Goliath yelled at Israel, "Send someone to fight me! If he beats me, you win. But if I beat him, we win!"

But none of the Israelites wanted to fight him. He was too big and strong.

Then David came. David was still a kid, but he knew about danger. He always protected his sheep from lions and bears with a sling—a weapon that could throw rocks fast and hard.

David was a little bit scared. This bad guy was huge, and David was small. But he knew God was bigger and stronger than any giant.

David picked up some rocks and ran toward Goliath. Goliath laughed at him. "You're just a boy! You can't win."

"You're wrong!" David said. "God is with me, and He will help me beat you."

With his sling, David threw a rock at Goliath as hard as he could. Wham! It hit the giant in the head. Goliath fell down. David won the fight!

Israel cheered. They were safe because David was brave and trusted God.

CONCLUSION

Do you ever feel scared?

Jesus loves you just like He loved David.

Jesus wants to help you just like He helped David!

PRAYER

Jesus, thank You for loving us so much and helping us every day! We trust You!

Chapter 24: Best Friends

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

INTRODUCTION

Who remembers David? He was the young king of Israel who God helped to beat the giant, Goliath.

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on pages 68-69: Best Friends]*

David was very brave, like a superhero, and people liked him. This made the king of Israel, King Saul, very jealous. He didn't want David to take over as king.

David had a friend named Jonathan. Jonathan was King Saul's son. Jonathan and David were best friends. They loved to talk, play, and eat together.

Then Jonathan found out his dad wanted to kill David. He told David, "You need to run away and hide. My dad is mad and wants to hurt you."

Jonathan and David hugged each other. They knew they might not see each other again. David promised to take care of Jonathan's family when David became king.

David had to hide from King Saul for a long time. But David and Jonathan stayed friends. Jonathan always encouraged David to follow God.

King Saul and Jonathan died in a war against Israel's enemies. David was sad that his friend had died. He missed him very much.

David became king of Israel. But he didn't forget his promise to Jonathan. He found Jonathan's family and took care of them.

CONCLUSION

David was a great leader. God helped him be Israel's best king ever. David always remembered that it was God who made him great. God was the one who helped David love and help the people.

Just like David, God wants to help YOU help other people. How can you do that? There are lots of ways! You can be a friend to someone who is lonely. You can share with someone who needs something you have. You can say nice things to someone who is sad. And most of all, you can tell others about God's love.

PRAYER

Dear Jesus, please help me be a good friend and leader. I want to help my family and friends. Thank You for loving me, and help me tell other people how much You love them too.

Chapter 25: Fire on the Mountain

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

INTRODUCTION

I remember disobeying my parents a few times when I was a kid. Uh-oh! That was always a bad idea. I usually ended up getting in trouble.

My parents weren't being mean, of course. They were helping me live the right way.

Israel didn't always obey God, either. So God sent prophets to talk to them. A prophet is someone who tells people what God wants them to know.

The prophets reminded people how much God loved them. They told people to be nice to one another, obey God, and love God. Those are good things for us to remember, too!

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on pages 72-73: Fire on the Mountain]*

A long time after David was king, the Israelites forgot about God. They didn't love him or follow him anymore. Instead they followed an idol, which is a fake god, named Baal.

God was sad that Israel had forgotten Him. He sent many prophets to remind Israel how much He loved them.

One of the prophets was named Elijah. God told Elijah that it was time to show Israel that they should follow God, not Baal.

Elijah brought everyone to the top of a mountain. He shouted, "I am going to show you that God is real and that Baal is fake. I will build an altar to God, and you build an altar to Baal. Then we will pray. If God is real, he will send fire to my altar. If Baal is real, he will send fire to your altar." The people who followed Baal went first. They prayed and sang and danced to Baal for a whole day, but no fire came.

Then it was Elijah's turn. He prayed, "God, show Israel that You are the real God. Show them that You are strong and they should follow you."

Suddenly, fire shot out of the sky! It burned up the altar. Everyone knew that God was real. They needed to love and follow Him, not idols.

CONCLUSION

Even though we can't see Him, Jesus is just as real as you and me!

We trust Him because we know He loves us!

PRAYER

Jesus, thank You for showing me who You are and helping me to know You are my best friend!

Chapter 26: Swallowed by a Fish

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

THE BIBLE

Matthew 12:40 (NLT)

For as Jonah was in the belly of the great fish for three days and three nights, so will the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth for three days and three nights.

INTRODUCTION

Sometimes when our mommies and daddies ask us to do something we don't like, we feel like saying no!

But what should we say when our mommies and daddies ask us to do something? YES!

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on pages 74-75: Swallowed by a Fish]*

In our story from the Bible today, we are going to learn about a man named Jonah who learned how to say yes to God!

Jonah was another one of God's prophets. He told people about God and helped them follow him. One day, God told Jonah, "Go to the city of Nineveh and tell them about me."

But there was a problem. Jonah didn't want to go. He knew that Nineveh was a bad place. The people there did not love God, and they did a lot of mean things.

So Jonah tried to run away from God. He got on a boat that was going far away.

But then there was a huge storm, and the boat was about to sink. Jonah knew God was talking to him. He told the people on the boat, "The storm is my fault! If you throw me in the ocean, the storm will stop."

So the people threw him in the ocean. Right away, the storm stopped. But now Jonah was out in the middle of the ocean. Was he going to drown?

Then something crazy happened. God sent a huge fish to save Jonah. The fish swallowed Jonah alive! But it didn't hurt him. Instead, Jonah was inside the fish's stomach for three days. After that, the fish spit Jonah out onto the beach. He was safe—but he probably smelled pretty bad!

Jonah was ready to obey God. He went to Nineveh and told them about God. The people listened to Jonah and decided to follow God. Jonah learned that God loves everyone, even people that do bad things.

CONCLUSION

God sent lots of prophets to help Israel follow Him. They were good people, and they helped the children of Israel a lot. But the greatest prophet of all is Jesus!

Jesus came down from heaven because He wanted to show us what God thinks about us. He wanted to show us how to follow God.

And do you know what Jesus came to tell us?

That He loves us! All the time, no matter what, more than we could ever imagine. That is God's message to you and me. Jesus helps us follow God.

PRAYER

Jesus, thank you for loving me no matter what. Thank you for telling me how much God loves me and for showing me how to follow God.

Chapter 27: Saved from the Fire

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

THE BIBLE

Daniel 3:16–17 (NLT)

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego replied, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you. If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God whom we serve is able to save us. He will rescue us from your power, Your Majesty."

MAIN POINT [Read the story on pages 78-79: Saved from the Fire]

Some people don't know that God loves them. They might not even believe God is real. But God still cares about them.

When we follow God, we help other people know God, too. When they see us, they see how good God is and how much He loves everyone.

That's what three guys with funny-sounding names learned in this story. They had to decide if they were going to follow God or not. They did the right thing, and God took care of them. And because of that, many other people learned about God.

One day, the king of Babylon made a giant gold statue. Then he ordered everyone to kneel down and worship the statue.

Every person got on their knees and worshipped—except three brave men named Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. They were Israelites, and they loved God. They didn't want to bow down to a statue. They knew they should only follow the real God, not an idol.

Now the king was really mad. These three people were disobeying him! So he had his soldiers tie Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego up and throw them into a huge and very hot fire.

The king looked into the fire. Then he looked again. Something was weird! He counted the men.

One . . . two . . . three . . . FOUR!

Four men? There were supposed to be three. And they weren't burning up! They were just talking together—they looked like they were having fun!

The king was confused. And scared. He yelled, "Look! There are four people in there! And the fourth one looks like the Son of God."

He told Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to come out of the fire. Everyone was surprised. They weren't hurt at all! God had saved them.

The king knew he was wrong to make everyone worship his statue. He told people they should follow the real God—the God who saved Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

CONCLUSION

Do you know who the fourth man was in the fire with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego? It was Jesus! He was there to take care of them.

The three friends were probably scared when the king said to throw them in the fire. But they trusted God. And God saved them from the fire.

Then the men were able to tell everyone about how good God is and how much He loves us all.

Sometimes it might seem a little scary to do good things, but remember: God will take care of you!

And you can help show others how to follow Jesus.

PRAYER

Dear Jesus, I know You are always with me, even when things seem scary. Thank You for protecting me and caring for me. Help me follow You and show others how to follow you, too.

Chapter 28: No Lunch for Lions

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

THE BIBLE

Daniel 6:22 (NLT)

My God sent his angel to shut the lions' mouths so that they would not hurt me, for I have been found innocent in his sight.

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on pages 82-83: No Lunch for Lions]*

Daniel was a prophet of God. He lived in a city called Babylon. Daniel was honest, smart, and good, and the king of Babylon liked him. But some mean people were jealous of Daniel. They wanted to hurt him. So they tricked the king into making a very dumb law.

The law said people could only pray to the king—no one else. If they disobeyed, they would be thrown into a lions' den, which was a hole in the ground filled with lions. When Daniel heard this, he wasn't afraid. He still prayed to God.

The mean people saw him and told the king, "Oh king, your friend Daniel disobeyed your law! He prayed to God. He must die."

The king was sad. He didn't want to let the lions eat Daniel, but he had to follow the law. So Daniel was thrown into the lions' den. The king went home. He was too worried to eat or sleep.

In the morning, the king ran to the lions' den. He yelled, "Daniel, are you alive? Did God save you?"

Daniel yelled back, "I'm fine! God sent an angel to keep the lions from eating me!"

The king was happy that Daniel was safe. He was so amazed that God saved Daniel that he made a new law. He told everyone they should follow God.

CONCLUSION

Can you imagine what it would be like to have lions all around you? That must have been super scary.

But then imagine an angel appearing in front of you. All of a sudden you wouldn't be scared, because you would know God is with you.

Daniel knew that it was better to follow God than other people, because God could always take care of him. That is how it is for you, too. God loves you, He is with you, and He takes care of you. You can trust Him.

PRAYER

Jesus, thank You for always being with me. Help me follow You no matter what other people say. I know You love me and You will protect me.

Chapter 29: A Very Brave Queen

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

THE BIBLE

Esther 8:3 (NLT)

Then Esther went again before the king, falling down at his feet and begging him with tears to stop the evil plot devised by Haman the Agagite against the Jews.

INTRODUCTION

Have you ever felt afraid? It's okay if you do. We all get scared sometimes: scared of being alone, scared of the dark, scared of going to the doctor, or scared of a mean person at school.

When we are scared, God helps us be brave. He tells us that we can trust Him. He loves us and will always be with us.

In this story, a girl named Esther learned how to trust God and be brave even when she was afraid.

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on pages 86-87: A Very Brave Queen]*

Esther was an Israelite woman. She was kind and very beautiful, and she loved God. Esther didn't have a mom or dad. She lived with her uncle, Mordecai.

One day, the king of Persia wanted to find a woman to be queen. He looked all over for the most beautiful, wonderful person. When he found Esther, he liked her best. Esther became queen.

But there was a bad man named Haman who didn't like Esther's uncle. Haman was so mad at Mordecai that he wanted to hurt all the Israelites.

Mordecai told Esther, "Talk to the king! Tell him about Haman, and that we are all in danger."

Esther said, "There is a law that says I can't talk to the king unless he calls me first. I could be killed! Besides, Haman is the king's friend."

But Esther was very brave, and she decided to do it anyway. She knocked on the king's door.

The king wasn't mad at all! He was happy to see her. "What do you need, Esther? I will give you anything."

Esther said, "Save my life! Your friend Haman is trying to kill all the Israelites, including my uncle and me."

The king said, "I won't let that happen!" He stopped Haman's bad plan. He didn't let anyone hurt Esther or her people.

Because Esther was brave, she saved Israel from danger.

CONCLUSION

It's okay to feel afraid sometimes. But you don't have to stay afraid. You can remember that God is with you. You can't see Him, but He is there. He is taking care of you and helping you.

When you are scared, try not to think so much about the thing that scares you. Instead, think about Jesus. Think about how big and strong He is. Think about how much Jesus loves you.

Remember, God is always taking care of you!

PRAYER

Jesus, thank You for taking care of me. Help me to be brave even when I'm scared. I trust You and I love You.

Chapter 30: A Strange Visitor

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

VISUAL AID NEEDED: A picture of an NFL player (Seattle Seahawks recommended)

INTRODUCTION

Who knows what the word *famous* means?

That's right! A famous person is someone everyone knows.

When I was little, I wanted to be famous. I thought if I could do COOL THINGS, like score a lot of touchdowns or be the world's best singer, it would make me special and everyone would love me.

TRANSITION

Do you think Jesus loves us because we can do cool things? No! He loves us no matter what, even if we can't do cool things, and His love makes us special!

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on pages 92-93: A Strange Visitor]*

Today we're going to learn about a young girl named Mary. God used her to do something AMAZING!

CONCLUSION

Mary trusted God because she knew God loved her!

She believed God would do amazing things through her. And guess what? GOD DID!

Jesus loves you, and you are special to Him!

When we say yes to Jesus' love for us, He uses us to do amazing and incredible things!

PRAYER

Jesus, thank You for loving me. Please use me to do amazing things!

Chapter 31: A Baby in a Manger

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

INTRODUCTION

One of the happiest days of your mom and dad's lives was the day YOU WERE BORN!

When you came out of your mommy's tummy, they felt so happy and proud and excited!

They loved you with their whole heart!

Have you ever held a little baby? Babies can't do much except sleep, eat, and cry. But they are so special. Everyone loves them.

Jesus was the most special baby of all. Do you know why? Because Jesus is God. Jesus came to Earth so He could help all of us. He started out as a little baby, just like you and I did. But when He grew up, He became the King and Savior of the world.

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on page 97: A Baby in a Manger]*

Mary was very pregnant. Her tummy was getting huge! Jesus was going to be born any day now.

But Mary had to go on a long trip. She went with Joseph, the man who was going to be her husband. They had to go to a town called Bethlehem.

When they got to Bethlehem, there was a problem. They didn't have a place to stay. All the hotels were full! What were they going to do?

Finally they found a place to sleep—with the cows and goats and donkeys! It probably smelled bad. But it was all they could find.

Soon, Jesus was born. Mary wrapped Baby Jesus in cloths to keep Him warm. When it was time for Him to take a nap, she put Him in a manger. That's a box that usually holds food for the animals. The animals must have wondered why someone was sleeping in their food box!

The people in the town didn't know it yet, but the little Baby asleep in the manger was God. And one day, He would be their Savior.

CONCLUSION

Jesus loves you and me so much He left heaven and was born as a baby.

He did it to help us.

Jesus is our best friend!

PRAYER

Jesus, thank You for loving me so much! I love You too.

Chapter 32: A Sky Full of Angels

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

THE BIBLE

Luke 2:8–9 (NLT)

That night there were shepherds staying in the fields nearby, guarding their flocks of sheep. Suddenly, an angel of the Lord appeared among them, and the radiance of the Lord's glory surrounded them.

INTRODUCTION

Christmas is all about Jesus!

Jesus loves us so much that He left His home in heaven to come help us!

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on page 98-99: A Sky Full of Angels]*

The same night baby Jesus was born, while He was asleep in the manger, there were some shepherds nearby that were taking care of their sheep out in the fields.

Suddenly, they saw an angel! The shepherds were scared. They didn't know what was going to happen.

But the angel said to them, "Don't be afraid! I have good news—news that will make you happy!

Today your Savior has been born. His name is Jesus. Go meet Him! You'll find Him wrapped in cloths and asleep in a manger."

Then many more angels appeared. The sky was full of them! They all praised God and said, "God is greater than everything, and He gives peace to everyone because He loves you so much."

When the angels disappeared, the shepherds said to each other, "Let's go see this baby the angel told us about!"

They went to Bethlehem as fast as they could. They found Mary and Joseph, and they saw Jesus lying in a manger.

The shepherds were so excited that they had found Jesus. When they left, they told everyone that Jesus was born.

CONCLUSION

Jesus wanted the shepherds to know He came to help them.

Jesus wants you and me to know that He came to help us!

PRAYER

Jesus, thank You for loving every boy and girl here. You are our best friend!

Chapter 33: Follow That Star

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

THE BIBLE

Matthew 2:1–2 (NLT)

Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the reign of King Herod. About that time some wise men from eastern lands arrived in Jerusalem, asking, “Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star as it rose, and we have come to worship him.”

INTRODUCTION

Who loves Christmas?

Christmas is all about Jesus!

We celebrate Christmas because Jesus came to earth to help us!

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on page 100-101: Follow That Star]*

After Jesus was born, some wise men from a faraway country saw a special star in the sky. They knew that this star meant a King had been born in Israel. They decided to go find Him and take Him presents.

They came to Jerusalem and started asking people where the new King was. But nobody knew. They didn't know yet that baby Jesus would be their Savior and King.

When the king of Judea, a man named Herod, heard about this, he was not happy. He didn't want another king to take his place!

He told the wise men, “When you find this king, come tell me. I want to worship Him too!” But King Herod was lying. He didn't want to worship the new King. He wanted to hurt Him.

The wise men went to Bethlehem. Then they saw the star again. It had moved right over Jesus' house to show them where He was. The wise men had found the real King—Jesus!

They bowed down and worshipped Jesus. Then they opened up treasure boxes and gave Jesus special gifts.

In the night, an angel told them not to go back to King Herod. So they went home a different way, and they didn't tell Herod where Jesus was.

God helped the wise men find Jesus, and He kept Jesus safe from the bad king who wanted to hurt Him.

CONCLUSION

Jesus was just a tiny baby, but He was going to be the King and Savior of the world. That's why Mary and Joseph were so happy. That's why the shepherds came to see Him. And that's why the wise men

brought Him presents.

What was so special about Jesus? Jesus is God! And He came to Earth to help everyone.

When Jesus was born, everything changed. Now God wasn't just in Heaven—He was living with people. Through Jesus, God started His great plan to save us all from sin, pain, and death.

PRAYER

Jesus, thank You for being born! I know that You came to Earth to save me and to love me. Amen.

Chapter 34: This is My House

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

INTRODUCTION

Where is your favorite place to visit?

In today's story from the Bible, we find out what Jesus' favorite place was when He was a boy! It was church!

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on page 104-105: This is My House]*

When Jesus was twelve years old, He went with his parents to Jerusalem for a special holiday called Passover. It was a long trip from their home to Jerusalem, so they went together with lots of other people.

When the holiday was over, Jesus' parents started walking home with all their family and friends. Joseph thought Jesus was with Mary. Mary thought Jesus was with Joseph.

But they were both wrong. Jesus was still in Jerusalem. He had been left behind! When Joseph and Mary realized that, they were super worried. Was Jesus okay? Had something bad happened to him?

They hurried back to Jerusalem as fast as they could and looked all over the city for their son.

When they finally found him, He was in the temple! He wasn't crying. He wasn't lonely. He didn't even seem scared. He was listening to the teachers and asking them questions about God.

Mary and Joseph were glad to find Him. Jesus must have been happy to see them too, but He was having fun talking with the teachers in the temple about God.

Jesus said, "Why were you worried? God is My father, and this is My house. I am safe and happy with God."

CONCLUSION

The Bible says that God is our Father. So when we are with Him, it's like we are at home.

For Jesus, going to the temple was a good way to be with God. How can you be with God? One way is to go to church, where you pray, sing songs to God, and learn about how much God loves you.

But God isn't just at church. He is everywhere. He is always with you. You can talk to Him at any time—in your room, in the car, or at the school playground. When you are with Him, you are home.

PRAYER

Dear Jesus, thank You for always being with me. I know I can talk to You any time I want to, and You always hear me. Amen.

Chapter 35: This is My Son

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

INTRODUCTION

(Tell the kids a one-minute story about a time when you were younger and your dad or mom watched you do something, like play on a sports team, and then told you they were proud of you!)

Did you know that God is proud of you? You make Him so happy that every time He looks at you, He smiles.

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on page 108-109: This is My Son]*

Jesus had a cousin named John. John was different than most people. He lived in the desert. His clothes were made of camel hair. He ate bugs and honey. But John loved God with all his heart, and he loved his cousin Jesus too.

John told everybody about Jesus. It was his favorite thing to do. He told people that they needed to listen to Jesus, believe Him, and obey Him. Lots of people believed in Jesus because of John.

Something really cool started to happen. People who didn't care about God before came to John to learn about God. He baptized many of them in a river. "Baptize" means that John would dip them under the water for a second. People did this to show everyone they were sorry for the bad things they had done, and that they had decided to love and follow God.

One day, Jesus came to John to be baptized. John was surprised. He knew that Jesus hadn't done bad things. He told Jesus, "You should baptize me!"

Jesus said, "No, God wants you to baptize Me." Jesus hadn't done bad things, but He wanted to show that He loved and followed God.

So John baptized Jesus. When Jesus came out of the water, He heard a voice from heaven. It was God's voice. God said, "This is my Son, and I love Him! He makes me so happy and proud!"

CONCLUSION

If you love Jesus, you are part of God's family. You are God's son or daughter. He loves you more than anyone in the whole world loves you.

Even if you've done some bad things—and we all have—God still loves you. He is happy that you belong to Him. When God sees you, He wants to shout down from heaven, just like He did for Jesus: "You are my child! I love you and I am so proud of you!"

PRAYER

Jesus, thank You for cheering for me and loving me, no matter what. I know I am special to You, and You are proud of me. Amen.

Chapter 36: Who is My Neighbor?

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

INTRODUCTION

(Pretend like you don't the answer to this question. Play it up and have fun!)

Who are we supposed to be kind to? Just people we know?

Oh... I know, we only need to be kind to people in our family!

I'll bet we only need to be kind to people that are kind to us, huh?!

NO?

Who does Jesus want us to be kind to? EVERYONE!

TRANSITION

In our story today from the Bible, Jesus shows us how we can be kind to everyone we meet! Why? Because Jesus is kind to us!

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on pages 112-113: Who is Calling Me?]*

"Jesus was a great storyteller. People loved to listen to Him Jesus because His stories were exciting, and they showed them how to be happier, nicer people.

One day Jesus talked about a Bible verse that says, "Love your neighbor."

Someone asked Jesus, "Who is my neighbor?"

So Jesus told them a story about a Jewish man who went on a trip. While the man was walking along, suddenly some bad men jumped out! They stole all his things, they hurt him, and then they ran away and left him lying on the road.

A priest walked by. He knew the man needed help, but he didn't stop to help him. Then someone who worked in the temple walked by, but he didn't stop to help either.

Then a Samaritan man walked by. Samaritans were people from another country, and the Jewish people didn't like them very much. The Jewish people thought Samaritans didn't love God.

But the Samaritan man stopped to help anyway. He put bandages on the man's cuts and paid for him to have a place to stay until he felt better.

After Jesus finished the story, He asked the people listening to Him, "Which man was the real neighbor? Which man helped the person who was hurt?" Everyone said, "The Samaritan!" And they were right.

The people realized that Jesus wants us to love and help everyone who needs it, not just people who are like us.”

CONCLUSION

(Ask the kids)

Who is someone you can be kind to today?

PRAYER

Jesus, thank You for being so kind to us even when we make bad choices. Please help me to be kind to others.

Chapter 37: You Are Always My Son

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

INTRODUCTION

When we get in trouble with our Mommy or Daddy, do they stop loving us?

NO WAY!

Our Mommies and Daddies love us even when we don't obey them.

TRANSITION

In the same way, Jesus loves us even when we make wrong choices.

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on pages 114-115: You Are Always My Son]*

"Jesus told people a story to show them God loves everyone, even when we do bad things.

He told them about a man who had two sons. The younger son said, "Dad, I know someday you'll give me half of everything you own. I want it now! Will you give it to me?"

The father gave the money to his son. It was a lot of money!

The son left. He spent the money very quickly. He had big, expensive parties. He bought everything he wanted, and he did anything he wanted.

Soon, all the money was gone. Now the son was poor. He had to start working for a pig farmer. His job was to feed pigs all day long.

The boy was tired and sad and stinky. He was so hungry that even the disgusting pig food was starting to look good.

What am I doing? The boy thought. I should go home. My dad probably won't love me anymore because I've been a bad son. But maybe he'll let me work for him instead of being his son.

When the boy got close to his house, his dad was looking for him because he missed him so much. The father saw his son coming and ran to meet him. He was so happy to see his son! They hugged each other for a long time.

"I'm sorry, Dad." The boy said.

"You are my son and I will always love you, even when you do bad things," his dad said. "Welcome home!"

CONCLUSION

Have you ever disobeyed your mom or dad? I know I have. I remember doing things I knew I wasn't supposed to do. That made my parents sad, and it made me sad, too. But they loved me and they

forgave me.

It's the same with God. We should try to do what is right. We don't want to make God sad. But even when we make mistakes, we need to know something: we are still God's children, and He still loves us. No matter what happens, God is on our side. He is with us, He takes care of us, and He forgives us.

PRAYER

Dear Jesus, thank you for always forgiving me. I'm sorry I make mistakes sometimes, but I know that you still love me. I will always be your child, and I will always love you. Amen.

Chapter 38: The Boy Who Shared His Lunch

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

INTRODUCTION

What do you want to be when you grow up?

That is so cool!

Do you know Jesus is going to help you do BIG, WONDERFUL, FUN things!

Jesus has a BIG PLAN for each one of you!

TRANSITION

In today's true story from the Bible, we get to hear a story about how Jesus helped a kid like you and me do BIG THINGS!

THE BIBLE

Matthew 14

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on pages 118-119: The Boy Who Shared His Lunch]*

"Everyone wanted to listen to Jesus. He told stories about God's love and about how people should live.

One day he started talking, and thousands and thousands of people came to hear him. After they had listened a long time, everyone was hungry. But there was no place nearby to eat.

Jesus' disciples didn't know what to do. How could they feed all these people? Did anyone have any food they could share?

They found a boy who had brought a lunch. He had some pieces of bread and some fish. It was only enough for one boy—not for everyone. But they took the boy to meet Jesus.

The boy must have been excited to see Jesus. But he probably wondered how his little lunch was going to help this huge crowd.

Jesus wasn't worried. He told everyone to sit down. He picked up the bread. He thanked God for it, and then He broke it into pieces. He did the same thing with the fish. Then He started giving pieces to the hungry people.

Everyone realized something strange was happening: the bread and the fish weren't running out!

Everyone got some. In fact, everyone ate all they wanted. And when they were done, the disciples filled twelve baskets with leftover food.

It was a miracle! Jesus used the boy's little lunch to feed the whole crowd."

CONCLUSION

Do you know Jesus cares about us and wants to help us?

We are important to Him.

When we need something, are sick or feeling afraid or alone, we can ask Jesus to help us and He will!

You are important to Jesus!

PRAYER

Jesus thank You for caring about me. Thank You for helping me!

Chapter 39: Jesus Makes the Waves Behave

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

THE BIBLE

Mark 4

INTRODUCTION

Who here has ever taken a trip on a boat before?

Riding in a boat is fun!

But what would it feel like to ride in a boat...in the middle of a big storm? Scary, right?

TRANSITION

In today's story from the Bible, Jesus and His best friends took a ride in a boat and ran into a BIG, SCARY, STORM! Let's find out what happened!

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on pages 121-122: Jesus Makes the Waves Behave]*

One evening Jesus and His disciples got into a boat to go across the Sea of Galilee. Jesus was tired.

He had been teaching people all day. So when they got into the boat, Jesus put His head on a pillow and went to sleep.

But then, the sky got dark. The wind started to blow really hard. There were big, scary clouds and lots of rain. It was a storm!

The waves got so high that water was filling the boat. The disciples were scared. They thought they were going to die.

"We're going to sink!" they shouted at Jesus. "Don't you care?"

Jesus woke up and looked around. He wasn't afraid. He looked out at the wind and waves and said, "Be quiet!"

Immediately the wind and waves calmed down.

What in the world? The disciples thought. How did he do that?

Jesus looked at his disciples. They looked at Him. "Why were you so afraid?" Jesus asked them. "Don't you believe I will take care of you?"

The disciples were still surprised that even the wind and waves obeyed Jesus, but they were very glad to be alive! They realized Jesus would always take care of them.

CONCLUSION

Sometimes, you might not feel very big. Or like the disciples in the boat, you might think your problems are too scary.

Jesus did many more miracles than these. He wanted us to see that no matter what, God will always take care of us. He loves us, and He is big enough and strong enough to help us.

Do you need God's help? Do you need a miracle? You can always pray and ask God for what you need. He loves to help us!

PRAYER

Dear Jesus, I know you can do anything. Please help me trust you even when I feel scared. Thank you for always taking care of me. Amen.

Chapter 40: Super Water

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

THE BIBLE

John 4

INTRODUCTION

Today's story from the Bible shows us that Jesus' love is the best thing in all the world!

TRANSITION

In our story today from the Bible, Jesus shows us how we can be kind to everyone we meet! Why? Because Jesus is kind to us!

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on pages 124-125: Super Water]*

When you are super thirsty, what do you want? A bag of chips? A bowl of popcorn? A candy bar?

No—you usually want something to drink, like a nice cold cup of water.

Just like your body needs water to live, your soul needs Jesus. Do you know what your soul is? It's the invisible part of you. It's your heart, your thoughts, and your feelings.

You and I need Jesus even more than we need water. That's what the woman in this story found out.

Jesus and his disciples were on a trip. It was very hot outside, and Jesus was tired.

They came to a little town. Jesus sat down to rest beside a well while His disciples went into the town to get them all some food.

A woman came to the well to get some water. Jesus asked her, "Can I have a drink of water?"

The woman was surprised. She didn't know this man. She said, "Why are you asking me for a drink?"

Jesus knew the woman was sad and needed to know about God's love. He told her, "Actually, I have something better than this water. I can give you living water. You'll never be thirsty again!"

That sounded like a good idea to the woman! Getting water out of a well every day is hard work.

But Jesus wasn't talking about the wet stuff that you drink. He was talking about being saved and knowing God. That is like water for our hearts, because it makes us happy. It helps us live forever in Heaven.

Jesus told the woman about God. She was so excited that she ran back to town and told everyone about Jesus, and the whole town came to hear Jesus talk about God's love.

CONCLUSION

The woman at the well needed something more important than water on a hot day. She needed to find happiness, peace, and life on the inside—in her soul. She needed to know that God loved her and wanted to forgive her sins.

That is exactly what happened when she met Jesus. He told her how to know God and follow Him. That made her very happy.

When you have Jesus in your heart, He makes your soul healthy, happy, and satisfied.

PRAYER

Dear Jesus, thank you for making my heart happy. Thank you for giving me your love and peace. Please help me be full of your life, and help me tell other people about your love, too. Amen.

Chapter 41: Get Down from that Tree!

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

THE BIBLE

Luke 19

INTRODUCTION

Who here has ever climbed a tree before? Isn't it fun?

TRANSITION

Today's story from the Bible is about a man named Zacchaeus who climbed a tree to see Jesus!

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on pages 128-129: Get Down From That Tree!]*

It's easier to climb up a tree than down. Have you ever noticed that? You reach up and grab one branch, then another, then another—and suddenly you look down, and you can't believe how high up you are! So very, very carefully, you climb down. Or you just call for someone to help you.

This story is about a man who climbed a tree. That's kind of strange, right? Usually kids climb trees, not adults. But he had a really good reason to climb this tree.

"Jesus is coming to town!" someone shouted. "Come listen to Him!"

Everyone was excited. They loved to hear Jesus talk about God. They ran to the road where Jesus was walking.

A man named Zacchaeus really wanted to see Jesus. Zacchaeus wasn't a very good man. He stole money from people. No one liked him. But he wanted to know about Jesus.

Zacchaeus had a problem though: He wasn't very tall. He couldn't see over the people in front of him. What could he do?

Suddenly he had a great idea. He ran to a tree by the road and climbed up into the branches. Now he could see everything!

When Jesus walked by the tree, He stopped. He looked up. "Zacchaeus!" he said. "Come down from the tree! I'm going to eat lunch at your house today!"

What? Zacchaeus thought. Why would Jesus eat with me?

They ate lunch together. They talked about God. When Zacchaeus realized that Jesus loved him so much, he started to feel sorry for the bad things he had done. He told Jesus, "I'm going to stop stealing. I'm going to give the money back. I want to live the right way!"

God's love helped Zacchaeus become a better person. He was so happy he had met Jesus.

CONCLUSION

The thing that I like most about this story is that Jesus is a friend to everyone, even bad people.

Zacchaeus had made a lot of mistakes. He had stolen money and he had been mean to people. So he probably thought Jesus wouldn't want to talk to him.

But Jesus found Zacchaeus up in that tree. Jesus didn't get mad at him or laugh at him. Instead, He told Zacchaeus He wanted to be friends. He wanted to eat with him and talk to him about God.

No matter we do, Jesus is always our friend!

PRAYER

Jesus, thank You that You are always my friend. Thank You for loving me and helping me even when I make mistakes. Help me follow You always. Amen.

Chapter 42: A Soldier Who Believed Jesus

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

THE BIBLE

Luke 7

INTRODUCTION

Jesus is always ready to help us!

TRANSITION

In today's true story from the Bible, we learn about a kind soldier, a sick person, and Jesus!

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on page 133: A Soldier Who Believed Jesus]*

A Roman soldier had a servant that was very, very sick. The soldier wanted to help his servant. He had heard about Jesus, so he sent some people to talk to Jesus.

"Please," they said. "This soldier loves God and needs your help. Come heal his servant."

Jesus started walking toward the soldier's house. But before He got there, the soldier sent Jesus a message. The message said, "Jesus, I know you are busy, and I know you can heal my servant.

You don't need to bother coming all the way here. Just say the word, and I know my servant will be healed."

Jesus was surprised. Lots of people didn't believe Jesus. But this Roman soldier did. He knew Jesus wanted to help and that He could do miracles. He knew even Jesus' words could heal people.

When the messengers got back to the soldier's house, the servant was not sick at all anymore. The soldier was right: Jesus had healed his servant.

Jesus loves it when we believe that He can help us.

CONCLUSION

Jesus loves you and always wants to help you!

PRAYER

Jesus, thank You for loving me and for helping me every day!

Chapter 43: The Little Girl Who Lived

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

THE BIBLE

Luke 8

INTRODUCTION

Raise your hand if you have been sick before. We all have!

Do you feel good or bad when you are sick?

That's right, you feel bad!

Isn't it great when our mommies and daddies help us feel better when we are sick?

TRANSITION

Do you know that Jesus is so strong and powerful that He can help us feel better when we are sick?

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on pages 134-135: The Little Girl Who Lived]*

Jairus was a Jewish teacher who loved God. But Jairus was sad, because his daughter was very sick. He was afraid she was going to die.

Jairus heard that Jesus was nearby, so he went to find him. "Jesus," he said. "Please come heal my daughter."

Jesus went with Jairus to his house. But before they got there, someone from Jairus's house came up to them.

They said, "Jairus, we are so sorry! Your daughter has died! It's too late to help her. Don't bother Jesus with it anymore."

Jesus looked at Jairus and said, "Don't be afraid. Just believe in me. Your daughter will be okay."

When they got to the house, everyone was crying. Jesus said, "Why are you making all this noise crying? Don't be sad. The little girl is going to live."

Everyone was confused. She was dead. How could she live again?

Jesus went into the girl's room and held her hand. "Little girl, get up!" he said.

Then something amazing happened. The girl opened her eyes! She was alive!

She stood up and began to walk around. She probably gave her dad and mom a huge hug. Then she wanted something to eat.

Jairus was so happy his daughter was alive. Jesus did an amazing miracle.

CONCLUSION

Isn't it awesome that Jesus healed sicknesses and raised people from the dead? These stories show us that there is nothing too hard for Jesus.

If you are feeling sick, you might need to go to the doctor or take medicine. But there is one more thing you can do—you can pray and ask Jesus to help you feel better! He loves you and takes care of you all the time. He loves to do miracles for you.

PRAYER

Jesus, thank You for taking care of me when I am hurt or sick. Help me always remember how much You love me and how big and strong You are. Amen.

Chapter 44: Even Rocks Can Praise God

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

THE BIBLE

Luke 19; Mark 11

INTRODUCTION

When we tell our mommies and daddies, “I love you,” it makes them feel so good!

TRANSITION

Did you know that God likes it when we tell Him that we love Him, too? One way to do that is to sing songs to God. Another way is to pray and tell God that you love Him.

We call those songs and prayers worship. Worship is like giving God a big hug! God loves it when we enjoy His love and when we love Him back.

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on pages 138-139: Even Rocks Can Praise God]*

Jesus and His disciples were going into the city of Jerusalem. Jesus rode on a donkey while His disciples walked near Him.

The people in the city were excited when they heard Jesus was coming. When Jesus came close, some people cut tree branches and laid them on the road. Other people took off their coats and put them down on the ground to make a special path for Jesus.

As Jesus went by, people shouted because they were so happy for all the things God did for them through Jesus. “God is so good to us! Blessings on Jesus the King!” They praised God, which means they talked about how wonderful God is.

The people made so much noise that the entire city got excited. Everyone wanted to know about Jesus—who He was and where He came from.

Some of the Jewish leaders were mad because the people were shouting and singing and praising God. They told Jesus, “Tell the people following you to be quiet!”

But Jesus knew that God wants us to praise Him. He told the leaders, “If they are quiet, even the rocks will start singing about how good God is!”

CONCLUSION

What are some good things that God has done for you? Just like you say thank you to your parents or teachers, it’s good to say thank you to God.

God loves it when we remember that He is good to us and that He takes care of us. He wants us to know how much He loves us.

When you pray and sing songs to God, think about all the things He has done for you. Worship Him

and love Him because He is so good to you!

PRAYER

Jesus, thank You for my friends, my family, my church, my home, and all the amazing things You do for me. I know You are good to me, and I love to worship You!

Chapter 45: You Are My Best Friends

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

THE BIBLE

Luke 22; John 13

INTRODUCTION

What do you like to do with your friends? For me, I love to hang out, laugh, talk, and play sports with my friends.

I'm so glad God gave us friends. They are a lot of fun. They help us when we are sad, and they share with us and take care of us.

TRANSITION

Did you know that Jesus is your friend? He's the best friend you could ever have, because He is always with you. He loves you so much, as this story tells us.

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on pages 142-143: You Are My Best Friends]*

Jesus and His disciples celebrated a special holiday called the Passover. Every year during Passover, Jewish families ate a meal together and remembered how God saved them from Egypt a long, long time ago.

Jesus looked at His disciples and said, "You are my best friends. I love you so much, and I will always take care of you."

Then he said something that made them sad: "This is the last time I will celebrate Passover until we are all together in Heaven."

Jesus knew it was almost time for Him to die. He was going to give His life to save everyone who loved Him and trusted in Him.

Jesus said, "Always remember how much I love you. Remember that I am with you and that I take care of you. Remember that I am giving my life for you because I love you so much."

Then Jesus said that one of his friends, someone eating with them right then, was going to do something bad. He was going to tell Jesus' enemies where He was so they could put him in jail and kill him. Jesus also said that all of the disciples would run away and leave Jesus alone.

Peter said, "I'll never do that! I'll protect you!" The other disciples said the same thing. They didn't understand what Jesus was talking about, but they wanted to help Him.

Then they all left the house and went to a garden to pray.

CONCLUSION

Jesus' disciples were sad because He had to leave. They were going to miss Him. But Jesus told

them He wasn't leaving forever. He was going to go to Heaven for a little while, but soon His friends would see Him again in Heaven.

Jesus also told His friends that He wasn't going to leave them alone. He was going to send the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is God, and He lives inside of us and helps us follow God. It's like having our best friend living inside our heart. Through the Holy Spirit, Jesus is always with us.

PRAYER

Dear Jesus, thank You for being my best friend. I know You are always with me. I love You and I am so glad we are friends. Amen.

Chapter 46: Jesus Goes to Jail

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

THE BIBLE

Luke 22; John 18

INTRODUCTION

Sometimes we have to do things we don't want to do. Maybe they are little things, like going to bed when we would rather watch a movie. Or maybe they are big things, like moving to another city and saying goodbye to our friends.

TRANSITION

Jesus had to do a very hard thing. He had to die. Why? Because that was the punishment for sin. Jesus didn't sin, though—everyone else did. But Jesus was punished instead of us. That is what He wanted to do, even though it was hard. He died for our sins so we wouldn't have to.

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on pages 146-147: Jesus Goes to Jail]*

Jesus and His disciples were praying in a garden called Gethsemane. It was late at night.

Jesus was sad because He knew He had to die. It was the only way to save the world.

Suddenly, some soldiers came into the garden! They had torches and swords, and they were looking for Jesus.

Why were they there? Because the Jewish leaders were jealous that people liked Jesus so much.

They sent soldiers to arrest Him. They wanted to kill Him.

One of Jesus' disciples, named Judas, was leading the soldiers! He betrayed Jesus by helping the soldiers find Him.

The disciples wanted to fight. Peter grabbed his sword and cut off a man's ear! But Jesus stopped His disciples from fighting. Then He healed the man's ear.

Jesus said, "If I needed help, I could ask God to send a sky full of angels to rescue Me. But I am not going to do that. What is going to happen next is part of God's plan."

Then the soldiers arrested Jesus and took him to jail. Jesus' disciples were so scared that they ran away and hid. Even Peter ran away, although he stayed close enough to see where they were taking Jesus.

CONCLUSION

Jesus loved us so much, and He trusted God so much, that He did something very hard. He died for our sins. I'm so glad that Jesus obeyed God even when it was hard!

Sometimes you will have to do hard things. Jesus understands, and He wants to help you. He knows what it is like to do something that you don't want to do.

When you follow Jesus, He helps you do what is right. He helps you be brave and strong to do what you need to do.

PRAYER

Dear Jesus, You teach me how to be strong and brave. Thank You for helping me follow You. I want to do what is right and good, and I know You will show me how. Amen.

Chapter 47: Peter Learns to Be Brave

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

THE BIBLE

Luke 22; John 18

INTRODUCTION

I have friends who love to do things like climb mountains and jump out of airplanes with parachutes. Those things sound really scary to me! I don't think I would ever do anything like that.

And you know what? That's okay. We can all be brave in our own way. Being brave doesn't mean doing crazy things. It just means doing the right thing, even when you are scared.

TRANSITION

In this story, one of Jesus' friends learns that God wants to help us be brave.

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on pages 150-151: Peter Learns to Be Brave]*

Jesus had been arrested, and Peter was scared. He sat outside the place where Jesus was. What would happen to Jesus? What would happen to Peter?

A girl walked up to Peter. "You are a friend of Jesus!" she said.

"No, I'm not!" Peter lied. "I don't even know who you are talking about!"

Peter was scared and didn't want to tell people he was Jesus' friend. He thought he might get thrown in jail too.

Two more people asked Peter if he was Jesus' friend. He said the same thing: "No! I don't know him at all!"

Then suddenly, Peter heard something.

Cock-a-doodle-doo!

It was a rooster! Then Peter remembered something Jesus said before he was arrested: "Peter, before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times." That meant that Peter would say he didn't love Jesus, that he didn't even know Him.

Peter was very, very sad. He knew he hadn't been a good friend to Jesus. He had run away. He had lied.

Peter walked away and cried for a long time.

But that wasn't the end of the story. Jesus had also told Peter, "After you deny Me, you will be sorry. You will love Me and follow Me even more. And you will help other people know Me too."

Jesus wasn't mad at Peter for his mistakes. He wanted to help him learn and become a better friend than ever before.

Peter didn't know it, but that was going to happen very soon! Peter became a brave person who told everyone about Jesus.

CONCLUSION

Jesus knew that Peter was scared. Jesus didn't get mad at Peter for that. Instead, He helped him learn how to be brave even when he was afraid.

At first, Peter was too scared to talk about Jesus, but he didn't stay that way. Just a few days later, Peter became the bravest person around. He told everyone about Jesus.

Do you know how Peter became brave? By following Jesus. When you spend time with Jesus, fear doesn't stop you anymore. Jesus helps you be brave.

PRAYER

Jesus, thank You for making me brave. Thank You for showing me how to do the right thing even if I feel afraid. Amen.

Chapter 48: A Very Sad Day

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

THE BIBLE

Luke 22; John 18

INTRODUCTION

When the police catch someone who has done something bad, like robbing a bank, they usually put the person in jail. Jail is for people who disobey the law and who should be punished.

TRANSITION

The Bible says that we have all done bad things. Those bad things are called sins.

We have disobeyed God, and we need to be punished.

But God didn't want us to be punished, so He sent His Son Jesus to take our punishment. That is what this story is about. Jesus died on the cross so that we wouldn't have to die.

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on pages 154-155: A Very Sad Day]*

The Jewish leaders wanted to kill Jesus. Jesus knew He had to die. He didn't fight the leaders or the soldiers.

The soldiers were very mean to Jesus. They hurt Him and they made fun of Him. Then they took Him outside the city to the place where they killed criminals, or people who had done bad things.

They put Jesus on a cross. Two criminals were there too. They were on crosses on each side of Jesus. One of them made fun of Jesus, but the other one believed in Jesus.

"Jesus, take me to Heaven with You," the criminal told Jesus.

Jesus told him, "Yes, I will! Today, you and I will be together in Heaven!"

Soon after that, Jesus said, "It is finished." Jesus knew that His work on earth was done. He had obeyed God, and He gave His life for all of us.

Then Jesus died. Suddenly the sky turned black. Everyone was scared. Even the soldiers knew that Jesus wasn't a criminal. He was God, and they were afraid because they had killed Him.

A man who loved Jesus took His body down from the cross. He put Jesus in a tomb, which was a cave where dead people were buried. He put a big rock in front of the door so that no one could get in.

Everyone was sad. But God was about to do the biggest miracle of all.

CONCLUSION

What It Means to Follow Jesus

Jesus loved us so much that He died instead of us. He was punished for our mistakes and sins. That would be like you getting punished for something that your brother or sister did wrong. That doesn't sound fair, does it?

But Jesus wanted to take our punishment because He loves us so much. He wanted all of our sins to be forgiven and forgotten.

Because of Jesus, we don't have to be punished. We can live forever with God in Heaven.

PRAYER

Dear Jesus, thank You for dying for my sins. Thank You for loving me so much and for forgiving me. I know that You have saved me, and I know that I will be with You in Heaven forever. Amen.

Chapter 49: A Very, Very, Very Happy Day

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

THE BIBLE

Luke 24; John 20

INTRODUCTION

One of my favorite days of the year is Easter

Who doesn't love Easter? You get to decorate eggs, eat candy, and receive Easter baskets.

Who loves chocolate candy? Snickers, Reese's, Baby Ruth?

Who loves fruity candy? Sour Patch Kids, jelly beans?

More than anything, I love Easter because is a day we remember that Jesus is alive!

That's what Easter is really about—not eggs, rabbits, or candy. It's about Jesus coming back to life. We call that the resurrection.

TRANSITION

Jesus died on the cross to take away the punishment for our sins, but that wasn't the end of the story.

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on pages 158-159: A Very, Very, Very Happy Day]*

After Jesus died, all of His friends were sad. They missed Him so much. They didn't understand why He had to die.

On the third day after He died, two women walked to Jesus' tomb. They wondered how they would get inside because they knew a big rock was blocking the door.

But when they got to the tomb, they were surprised. The rock had been moved. The door was open. They went into the tomb, and they found an even bigger surprise. Jesus was not in the tomb! It was empty—except for two angels.

The angel told them, "Go tell Jesus' friends that He is alive! He was dead, but God made Him alive again. Soon you will see Him."

The women were very excited. They ran to look for Jesus' disciples. When the women found the disciples, they told them that Jesus was alive.

At first the disciples didn't believe it. They went and saw the empty tomb. It seemed too good to be true—but it was true! They couldn't wait to see Jesus.

Later, Jesus came and talked to all of them. They were so happy to see Him that they wanted to

jump and dance and sing. Jesus was alive!

CONCLUSION

Jesus is still alive and He loves you! Let's talk with Jesus and tell Him how much we love Him!

PRAYER

Jesus, thank You for loving us and being our best friend!

Chapter 50: The Stranger on the Road

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

THE BIBLE

Luke 24

INTRODUCTION

Have you ever felt sad before?

We all have! Sometimes we feel sad when we get hurt, break our favorite toy, or don't get to watch TV when we want to.

TRANSITION

It is okay to feel sad. But do you know that Jesus wants to help turn our sadness into joy?

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on pages 160-161: The Stranger on the Road]*

In our story today, Jesus helps two people go from sad to joyful!

Two of Jesus' friends were walking along a dusty road outside Jerusalem. They were on their way to a little town called Emmaus. As they walked, they talked about Jesus.

All of a sudden they found a third man, a stranger, walking on the road. The man said, "What are you talking about?"

The two friends told the stranger, "About Jesus! Haven't you heard? He was dead, but now some people say He is alive. It sounds impossible, but could it be true? We don't know!"

The stranger laughed. He said, "Why is that so hard to believe? The whole Bible talks about Jesus. It tells us that Jesus had to die for the bad things we have all done, but that He would come back to life. This was God's plan."

When the men got to Emmaus, the two friends asked the stranger to stay with them. They sat down to eat dinner together.

The stranger picked up some bread and thanked God for it. He broke it into pieces and gave it to them.

The men looked at him in surprise. That was what Jesus used to do.

Suddenly, the stranger disappeared! He wasn't a stranger after all—He was Jesus!

The two friends were so excited they jumped up from the table and hurried back to Jerusalem. They found the disciples and told them what had happened.

Everyone was happy. Jesus was alive!

CONCLUSION

The two strangers were so sad Jesus died. Have you ever felt sad before? We all have.

The next time you feel sad, remember that Jesus is always with you and wants to help turn your sadness into joy! All we need to do is ask for His help!

PRAYER

Jesus, thank You for loving me. Thank You for caring about how I feel. Please help me when I feel sad to remember You love me!

Chapter 51: Jesus Goes to Heaven

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

THE BIBLE

Matthew 28; Acts 1

INTRODUCTION

We love the Bible! It is God's letter to us. Every story in the Bible is true and shows us Who Jesus is.

TRANSITION

In our story today, Jesus goes back to heaven by flying up into the clouds! But before He leaves, He tells us about the Holy Spirit!

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on pages 162-163: Jesus Goes to Heaven]*

After Jesus came back to life, He talked to many of the people who loved and followed Him. He taught them more about God. He told them, "Go tell the whole world how much God loves them. Help them follow God and live good lives."

Jesus also told them to stay in Jerusalem for a little while. He said He would send the Holy Spirit to them. The Holy Spirit is God, and He lives inside of us and helps us follow God.

After Jesus said this, He prayed for His disciples. Then, while they were watching Him, He began to float up into the sky! He went into a cloud and disappeared.

Then two angels appeared. "Why are you looking up into the sky?" they asked. "Jesus has gone to Heaven, but one day He will come back."

The disciples went back to Jerusalem to wait for the Holy Spirit. They were happy because they knew that Jesus would one day come back to be with them.

CONCLUSION

Jesus died for our sins, and then He came back to life. He loves us and He forgives our sins. That is good news!

Jesus told His disciples to tell that good news to the whole world. He told them to tell everyone about Jesus and His love and forgiveness.

Guess what? You can do that too! You can tell people about how much Jesus loves them.

Jesus is in Heaven now, but He also lives in our hearts through the Holy Spirit. And one day, He will take us to Heaven with Him.

PRAYER

Dear Jesus, I am so glad You are alive! I know You live in my heart. Thank You for loving me and forgiving me. I will always follow You. Amen.

Chapter 52: The Holy Spirit Comes Down

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

THE BIBLE

Acts 2

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on pages 166-167: The Holy Spirit Comes Down]*

Waiting for Christmas or your birthday is hard, isn't it? You know that you are going to get presents, and you know you are going to love them. So you are super excited. But it's so hard to wait!

Then, when you finally get to open your presents, it is a lot of fun. You get to enjoy new toys, wear new clothes, and play with new games.

When Jesus was going back to Heaven, He promised His disciples that He would send the best present ever: the Holy Spirit. How exciting is that?

A few days after Jesus went up to Heaven, all the disciples were together in a room. They were waiting for God to send the Holy Spirit to come and live inside of them.

Suddenly, they heard a loud noise! It sounded like wind—but that didn't make sense because they were inside a house. Then little flames of fire appeared on top of everyone's heads. That was really weird! Then they started to speak in different languages—languages they had never learned.

It was the Holy Spirit, just like Jesus had promised!

People outside the house heard all the noise and ran over to see what was going on. Some of the people were from other countries. They could understand the funny languages that the disciples were talking in, and they were so surprised to hear them talking about how good God was in their own languages.

Peter saw how surprised people were, so he started to talk to everyone. "Friends and neighbors! We aren't crazy like you might think. We love God, and God has sent the Holy Spirit to fill us with His love and power. He wants you to know how much He loves you. He wants you to follow Him, and He wants to be with you too!"

The people listened to Peter. That day, 3,000 people decided to follow Jesus. It was a great day!

CONCLUSION

When the Holy Spirit came, people were so excited. They had been waiting for God to come live inside of them, and now He was here!

You can't see the Holy Spirit, but He lives inside of you too. That means that no matter where you are, God is always with you. He is always there to help you.

God is bigger and stronger than anything. He has all the power in the world. He can help you do

amazing things, because He lives in you.

PRAYER

Dear Jesus, thank You for the gift of the Holy Spirit. I know You are always with me everywhere I go, and You help me do amazing things. Help me always be full of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Chapter 53: Jesus' First Followers

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

THE BIBLE

Acts 2

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on pages 170-171: Jesus' First Followers]*

Let's say you are playing with your favorite toy. Then a friend walks up. He sees your toy and says, "Can I play with that?"

What would you do? Would you share?

Sometimes, it can be hard to share. But sharing what you have with other people is one of the best ways to love people. God loves it when you are generous. That means that you share what you have with other people.

In this story, God helps Jesus followers learn to love each other and be generous.

Thousands of people believed in Jesus and followed Him. They knew He was God and that He had died for their sins, and they knew He came back to life and was in Heaven.

Jesus' disciples were the leaders of these Jesus followers. They did many miracles because the Holy Spirit had given them power. Everyone who followed Jesus listened to them. They taught the new followers of Jesus more about God.

The people who followed Jesus were called Christians. They all loved each other, and they ate together, prayed together, and talked about Jesus together. The Christians were very generous. Everyone shared with each other. No one was poor, because they took care of each other.

This big group of Christians was called the church. Many people who were not Christians saw the good things that the Christians did. Some of them decided to become Christians too. And so, the church grew bigger and bigger.

Some of the Jewish leaders didn't like this, and they caused a lot of trouble. They hurt some Christians and put some of them in jail.

But God helped the church and the people who followed Him. The church kept growing.

The Christians preached about Jesus in Jerusalem, in other towns, and even in other countries. People in many different countries learned about Jesus' love for them.

CONCLUSION

In this story, the Holy Spirit helped people be full of God's love. And because they loved each other, they shared with each other. That made God happy. He loves it when we take care of each other.

Think about your family and friends. How can you be a generous person? Who can you share your things with?

God wants to help you love people so much that you share with them. When you are generous, it tells people that they are important and loved. It also helps them understand how much God loves them.

PRAYER

Jesus, thank You for being so generous to me. You have given me a lot of good things, and I want to share with others. Help me love people and be generous to them. Amen.

Chapter 54: Jumping for Joy

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

THE BIBLE

Acts 3

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on pages 174-175: Jumping for Joy]*

Do you remember what Peter did when Jesus was arrested? He was so scared that he lied. He said he didn't even know Jesus, because he was afraid he would be put in jail too.

Peter wasn't perfect. He was a normal person, just like you and me. But something happened. The Holy Spirit filled Peter, and he became a brave preacher who told everyone about Jesus. Peter couldn't wait to tell everyone about God's love and power.

In these stories, we see that God loves everyone, and He wants to help us do amazing things just like Peter.

One day, Peter and John went to the temple to pray. They saw a man there whose legs didn't work right. He couldn't walk, so he always sat by the gate asking people for money. When he saw Peter and John, he asked them for money too.

Peter looked at the man and said, "Look at us!" The man looked up, because he thought Peter was going to give him some money.

Peter said, "I don't have any money. But I have something even better that I want to give you. In the name of Jesus, be healed and walk!" Then he grabbed the man's hand and helped him stand up.

As the man stood up, his legs were healed! He stood. Then he walked. Then he started jumping up and down, praising God.

All the people that were watching were so amazed. They could hardly believe it when they saw the man walking and jumping. It was a miracle!

Peter told everyone about Jesus. He told them that God's power and love were a gift to them through Jesus, and they needed to trust in Him. Many people believed Peter and followed Jesus.

CONCLUSION

Jesus loves us so much that He wants to help us with big problems and little ones! No problem is too big for Jesus!

PRAYER

Thank You for loving me, Jesus. Please help me when I feel sad or get hurt. You are the best!

Chapter 55: Good News for Everyone

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

THE BIBLE

Acts 10

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on pages 176-177: Good News for Everyone]*

Cornelius was a Roman soldier who loved God. But he didn't know about Jesus.

One afternoon, an angel appeared to him. "Cornelius!" the angel said. "Go find a man named Peter, and he will tell you something important." So Cornelius sent messengers to find Peter.

Before the people found Peter, though, Peter had a weird dream. He saw a giant sheet in the sky filled with animals. In the dream, God told Peter to eat the animals. Peter knew that was against the rules that God had given the Jewish people.

"But God," Peter said, "I thought I wasn't supposed to eat those."

God said, "If I say something is okay, then it's okay."

Peter woke up confused. What did that mean?

Just then, Cornelius' people showed up. They wanted Peter to go with them to Cornelius' house. But there was a problem. They weren't Jewish people, so Peter thought he couldn't talk to them.

Then God told Peter, "This is what your dream meant. I say it's okay to talk to them, so it's okay!

I want you to tell them about Jesus too, instead of just the Jewish people. The good news is for everyone in the whole world!"

So Peter went to Cornelius' house and told them the good news about Jesus.

CONCLUSION

Peter learned that God loves everyone—not just the Jewish people, but everyone in the whole world. That means you and me too! Even before we were born, God knew our names. He was already thinking about how He would show us His love.

God loved the world so much that He sent Peter and many other people to tell them the good news about Jesus. But there are a lot of people that don't know about Jesus yet. You and I can help them!

We can tell them that God loves them and that Jesus died for them.

PRAYER

Dear Jesus, thank You for loving me even before I was born. Help me to tell other people about Your love so they can follow You too. Amen.

Chapter 56: Philip and the Chariot

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

THE BIBLE

Acts 8

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on pages 180-181: Philip and the Chariot]*

When I am excited about something, I can't wait to talk about it. For example, if we are going to the beach for vacation, I tell everyone about it. Or if I buy new clothes and I love them, I show them to anyone I can. Or if my favorite football team wins, I talk to everyone about it.

You might do the same thing. When we are excited and happy, we want to share the good news with other people.

This story is about a man who was so excited about the good news of Jesus that he wanted to tell everyone.

Philip was a Jesus follower who loved to tell people about Jesus. One day, an angel appeared to him and said, "Philip, leave Jerusalem and walk down the road that goes through the desert."

So Philip obeyed. Suddenly, he saw a man in a chariot coming down the road. God told Philip, "Go up to that chariot."

Philip ran to the chariot. When he got close, he could hear that the man was reading the Bible out loud to himself. "Do you understand what you are reading?" Philip asked.

"No," said the man. "I'm confused. I need someone to explain it to me." He asked Philip to ride in the chariot with him and help him understand the Bible.

Philip started telling the man what the Bible says about Jesus. The man was so excited to hear about Jesus' love for him that he became a Christian and was baptized right then.

Then Philip disappeared! God took him away and sent him to another town, where he told more people about Jesus.

The man in the chariot probably didn't even get to say goodbye. But he was very happy because Philip had told him about Jesus' love.

CONCLUSION

Philip was happy to know God. When he found someone who needed to hear the good news, it was easy for him to talk about it.

It isn't hard to tell people about God's love for them. If you see someone who is sad or needs help, you can say something like this: "Did you know that Jesus loves you? He wants to help you. Do you want me to pray for you?"

God will show people His love through you. All you have to do is be ready to talk about the good news.

PRAYER

Jesus, I am so happy to follow You. I want to help other people know You too. Help me always be ready to talk about You. Thank You that You show people everywhere how to follow You. Amen.

Chapter 57: The Voice from the Sky

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

THE BIBLE

Acts 9

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on pages 184-185: The Voice from the Sky]*

I like to talk a lot. Maybe too much! And a few times, I've said things that I thought were right, but they turned out to be wrong.

Have you ever done that? It's kind of embarrassing. It's not easy to say, "I was wrong. Please forgive me."

These stories are about a man who thought he was right about God. He thought he knew who God was and what it meant to follow God. But he was really, really wrong.

And when God showed him that, it changed everything.

More and more people began to follow Jesus, and some of the Jewish leaders did not like it. One man was especially angry at Christians. His name was Saul, and he tried to find Christians and put them in jail.

One day, Saul decided to go to the town of Damascus to look for any Christians he could arrest. He was walking along the road when suddenly a bright light from the sky flashed around him! Saul fell to the ground. Then he heard a voice: "Saul, why are you treating me so badly?"

Saul was so scared! "W-w-who are you?" asked Saul.

"I am Jesus," said the voice. "I want you to follow Me instead of trying to hurt Me. Now get up and go into Damascus. Someone there will help you."

When Saul got up from the ground, he couldn't see anything. He was blind. His friends helped him go into Damascus.

After three days, God sent a Christian named Ananias to pray for Saul. God healed Saul's eyes. Now he could see again. And even better than that, he knew Jesus had forgiven him and loved him.

Saul's name was later changed to Paul. Paul became an important leader in the church. He told many people around the world about Jesus.

CONCLUSION

Jesus loved Saul even when Saul did bad things.

Jesus loves us even when we do bad things.

But Jesus also helped Saul change and want to do the right thing.

Jesus will help us change and want to obey!

PRAYER

Jesus, thank You for loving me even when I do wrong things. Thank You for changing me and helping me become who You made me to be!

Chapter 58: A Crazy Boat Ride

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

THE BIBLE

Acts 27–28

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on pages 186-187: A Crazy Boat Ride]*

Paul and some of his friends needed to go to Rome. They got on a ship and started sailing across the sea.

After they had gone part of the way, there was a huge storm! The wind and the waves smashed the ship so hard that the sailors thought they were going to die.

The storm lasted for days. Many people were too scared to eat. One day Paul told them, “Last night, an angel told me that all of us will live. Be brave! God will take care of us.”

After awhile, they saw land. They thought they were safe.

But before they could reach the shore, the ship got stuck on rocks out in the ocean. The waves began to break the ship into pieces. Everyone jumped off the ship and swam or floated to shore.

They were finally safe—but they were wet and cold. They lit a fire to get dry and warm up.

Suddenly, a poisonous snake crawled out of some wood and bit Paul! Everyone thought he would die, but he didn't. God protected him.

When the people on the island saw the miracle, they asked Paul to come pray for sick people. Paul prayed for a lot of people on the island, and God healed them. Paul told the people about Jesus.

Even though the shipwreck had seemed like a bad thing, God used it to help many people and to show them His love and power.

CONCLUSION

Jesus loves You so much! Just like He helped Paul when bad things happened, He will help us!

PRAYER

Jesus, help us to remember You love us and want to help us when bad things happen. You turn bad into good!

Chapter 59: An Earthquake in Jail

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

THE BIBLE

Acts 16

INTRODUCTION

Have you ever had someone get mad at you before? I have!

Maybe you took their toy without asking.

Maybe you didn't obey your mom the first time.

It is no fun when someone gets mad at you.

TRANSITION

Paul and his friend, Silas, knew what it was like to have people get mad at them. In our story today, they learn that Jesus is always with us even when bad things happen.

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on pages 188-189: An Earthquake in Jail]*

Some people were mad at Paul and his friend, Silas, because they were preaching about Jesus.

These people got the police to arrest Paul and Silas. The police were not very nice. They hit them, put them in chains, and locked them in jail.

In the middle of the night, Paul and Silas were praying and singing to God while the other prisoners listened. They trusted in God and knew He would take care of them.

Suddenly there was a huge earthquake! The whole jail shook like it was going to fall down. The prison doors flew open and everyone's chains fell off.

When the jailor (that's the man in charge of the jail) saw the doors open, he was really scared. He thought all the prisoners had run away, and that he was going to be in trouble.

Paul yelled, "It's okay! We are all still here!"

The jailor was amazed that they hadn't run away. He asked Paul and Silas, "What do I need to do to be saved?"

They said, "You don't have to do anything. Just believe in Jesus and you will be saved." Then they explained to him that Jesus loved him and died for him.

The jailor and his family believed in Jesus and decided to follow Him. The jailor washed Paul and Silas' cuts. He took them into his own home, and he gave them food to eat. He was so happy that he and his family had come to know Jesus.

CONCLUSION

Before Paul met Jesus, he thought God only loved people who did good things. He thought we had to work really, really hard and be really, really good to go to Heaven.

But Paul was wrong.

Jesus showed Paul that God loves everyone. And He told Paul that we don't go to Heaven because we are good—we go to Heaven because we trust and believe in Jesus.

That is the good news of Jesus. He loves us no matter what, and He forgives all of our sins when we trust in Him.

PRAYER

Dear Jesus, thank You for loving me and saving me. I believe that You died for my sins, and I know that You have already forgiven me. Amen.

Chapter 60: Heaven is Awesome

Age Group: 4–5 Years Old

THE BIBLE

Revelation 22

MAIN POINT *[Read the story on pages 192-193: Heaven is Awesome]*

If you could go anywhere in the world, where would you go? I would probably pick Disneyland. I might want to go to Hawaii or New York.

The Bible tells us about a place that is even better than those places. It's called Heaven. Heaven is God's home. And because we are God's children, someday it will be our home too.

In this story, God shows a man named John what Heaven will be like.

John was one of Jesus' disciples. He told many people about Jesus. Some people didn't like that. They put him in jail to try to stop him. That didn't keep John from loving Jesus and praying, though. One day when John was praying, Jesus gave him a vision. A vision is kind of like a dream, except John was awake.

In the vision, John saw a lot of things that God was going to do in the world. He heard God promise to always take care of the people that love Him and follow Him.

Then Jesus showed John what Heaven looked like. It was awesome! Everything was beautiful and perfect. The streets were made out of gold. Everyone was happy. No one was sick or hurt, no one cried, no one did bad things, and no one ever died.

Jesus told John, "I am going to come back soon! Tell everyone to wait for me and to follow me."

God showed John that everyone who follows Jesus is going to live in Heaven forever with God. It is the perfect home, and God made it just for us!

CONCLUSION

My favorite place isn't Disneyland or Hawaii. It's my home. I love to be with my family at our house.

That is kind of what Heaven will feel like—like coming home. But it will be better than any home on Earth, because God will be there. God will make sure that everything is perfect. We won't ever be sad or lonely or hurt.

Heaven is God's gift to everyone who follows Jesus. Someday we will live there with Him and with each other forever.

PRAYER

Dear Jesus, thank You for making Heaven for me. I know that someday I will go to Heaven with You. I love You, and I want to live with You forever. Amen.