



Jesus is Our Teacher – The Prodigal Son

Luke 15:11-32

God Statement: Jesus is Our Teacher

KEY VERSE: “Jesus looked at them and said, ‘With people, this is impossible. But with God, all things are possible.’
(Matthew 19:26, NIRV)

CHECK-IN

Classroom Teacher

(until 15 minutes after the start of each service)

As kids check-in, please have them wash their hands or use hand sanitizer before entering your classroom. Then they can participate in the various activities and games in your classroom. 10 minutes after the start of your service time, ask the kids to clean up their activities and toys so you can begin the Explore Activity at 15 minutes after the start of service.

EXPLORE ACTIVITY

Classroom Teacher

(15 minutes)

The Explore Activity is a chance to get the kids thinking about the upcoming Bible story for the day. Encourage your kids to engage with the activity as they prepare for the lesson.

DISCUSS: Jesus is Our Teacher

In today's lesson, we are going to learn about how Jesus is our teacher.

SAY:

Does anyone remember the God statement right now? Jesus is our what? Teacher, that's right! Do you remember what the name of the special stories we've been learning about is? Parables, that's right. Parables are special stories Jesus would tell to teach an important lesson about God. What did we learn last week? *Let kids respond – the parable of the lost sheep.*

We've got one more parable to learn about today, and I wonder if any of you have heard of this one before. I'm going to describe it and see if you know the name of it. It's about a guy who decided to run away from home. His dad missed him a lot. The son had a very hard time on his own, and eventually came back to his dad. Do you know the name of this one? The parable of the Prodigal Son, that's right! Do you remember what happened when the son returned? They had a party! We're going to learn more about this last parable later, but first, let's play a game.

PLAY:

To get the kids thinking about the lesson, they can do this activity!

Have You Ever... Smile & Frown Game

Supplies: happy & frowning face cut outs

Say: *It is so great to know that even when we make poor choices, God loves us and forgives us! He is our teacher, our father, and our savior and He loves us so much! Today we are going to learn about a special story where a son is forgiven! Let's see if he has ever made some of the choices we have!*

Directions: Place a happy face on one side of the room and the frown on the other. Have children stand in the middle of the room. Give examples of choices and have children run to the side of the room to indicate if it's something they have done (smile) or haven't done (frown).

Ask questions like this:

- Have you ever.....taken a toy from a friend (be honest! It's ok to answer honestly in this game. We always want to be honest, even if we have made mistakes before.)
- Have you ever...lied about something?
- Have you ever...helped someone in need?
- Have you ever....Been nice to a new kid at school?
- Have you ever.... yelled at a friend?
- Have you ever..... taken something that didn't belong to you?
- Have you ever.....not listened to a grown up when you were supposed to?

LARGE GROUP

(25 minutes)

Each week, Large Group will consist of an introduction, worship, the Bible lesson, worship response, and the blessing.

WELCOME & EXPECTATIONS

Host

Depending on your age group, either find a designated space in your classroom or join the other classes for Large Group in the specified location.

As children enter into Large Group time, welcome and greet the children, telling them you're excited to have them joining this evening/morning.

Expectations Slide

Once everyone has found their seat, the host will use the Large Group expectations slide to go over the rules. Encourage various children to take turns reading the rules.

**** After Expectations, transition the power point to the Bible Challenge slide..****

BIBLE CHALLENGE

Host

Use this time to get kids engaged in large group and introduce/review the current Bible Challenge.

New Testament Books of the Bible

Share with the kids about our current Bible Challenge:

Our current Bible Challenge is for kids to memorize the Books of the NEW Testament right now. Use the song provided in the PowerPoint to help the kids practice the song each week. Encourage kids to take a "Bible Challenge" card home to remind them to practice at home as well!

****After Bible Challenge, transition the power point to the "Worship" slide.****

KEY VERSE

Host

Before you start worship, introduce/review the key Bible verse for the quarter. This is a great opportunity for you to talk about the importance of God's Word and encourage the kids to work on memorizing the verse each week.

Use the Key Verse Motions Video on Plex (or sent in weekly email) to learn the motions prior to Large Group.

**“Jesus looked at them and said, ‘With people, this is impossible. But with God, all things are possible.’
(Matthew 19:26, NIRV)”**

**** After the Introduction, transition the power point to the Worship songs and invite the Worship Leader up front to lead the kids in worship. ****

OPENING WORSHIP

Worship Leader

While the video is playing the opening worship songs, encourage the kids to sing and dance along. Don't forget to set the example by participating alongside them!

Kids may participate in the worship however they feel led. Encourage kids to find a way that helps them worship best but remind them that it's not time to goof off or talk to friends. If you have someone leading the worship up front, you can even invite a few kids to help.

**** After Worship, transition the power point into the Bible Story video where the kids will hear about the lesson for the day. ****

BIBLE STORY

Lesson Video

Remind the group before starting the video to follow the expectations for Large Group.

THIS WEEK'S LESSON: Jesus is Our Teacher – The Prodigal Son

Encourage kids to listen and engage with the lesson as they watch the teaching video.

**** After the video finishes, turn on soft worship music (with or without lyrics) to transition into Worship Response. This should be background music to help set the tone for a quiet reflection time with God. ****

WORSHIP RESPONSE

Host

Worship Response is an opportunity for the kids to apply what they just learned and to respond to what God is doing in their life. *Have the kids sit in a place where they can be still and reflect independently.* Then read through the Worship Response prompts below as you lead the kids through the time.

Supplies: markers/pens, paper, envelopes with address labels

Jesus is a good teacher. He tells stories that have deeper meanings so that we can learn more about Him and what He wants for us! Let's take a minute to think about our story today. We learned about the prodigal son and his brother and dad. Did the prodigal son always do the right thing? *Let kids respond.* No! He made a lot of mistakes. Did the

brother always do the right thing too? *Let kids respond.* Not really because his heart was angry and he had a bad attitude!

But, the best part of the story is that the dad was so happy when his family was all back together! The dad is kind of like God. God loves each of us so much and He forgives us, even when we do bad things.

Let's read two verses in the Bible together.

- 1 John 1:9 – ***“But God is faithful and fair. If we confess our sins, He will forgive our sins. He will forgive every wrong thing we have done. He will make us pure.”***
- Psalm 86:5 – ***“Lord, you are forgiving and good. You are full of love for all who call out to you.”***

Let's take some time to listen to God. You can talk to Him, too.

- Do you have some sins in your heart you can confess to Him right now?
- Maybe from this morning or yesterday or even from a while ago?
- God loves you, and He is always ready to forgive you.

Let kids sit quietly and listen to God for 30 seconds to a minute. Then, explain the response activity for them to participate in. Kids will each get to write a letter to God that they can take home.

Have you ever gotten a letter in the mail? It's so exciting when we get to open a letter and read a special note from someone. We're going to write a letter today! We aren't really going to mail this letter, but we're going to write a letter to God! God wants to hear from us, and He gets so excited to talk to us. You can write about your day, what's on your mind, ask for forgiveness, or just tell him anything.

Pass out letters and envelopes. Let kids spend 3-5 minutes writing their letters while soft music plays in the background.

Then, seal up your letter and take it home. Put it somewhere you can see it, and let it remind you that God loves you, God will forgive you, and God wants to talk to you!

Close time in prayer.

******After Worship Response, transition the power point to the closing Worship videos and invite the Worship Leader to come back up.******

CLOSING WORSHIP

Worship Leader

Play the closing worship song included in the power point and encourage the kids to sing and praise along.

This closing song is intended to be a transition for the kids to finish processing and reflecting on the lesson before transitioning to the small group time.

****After Worship or Bible Story, transition the power point to the “Compassion International” slide.****

COMPASSION & OFFERING

Host

Before closing large group, take a moment to highlight and discuss each campus' Compassion sponsor child. Explain a little about the Compassion child's life and the impact their offering has for this child (info should be provided on cards in classroom). Then remind kids that if anyone brought offering, now is the time to come forward to donate.

Ask a child to come up and pray for the offering and their Compassion child.

****After Compassion & Offering, transition the power point to the “Announcement” slide. The host will discuss any current announcements.****

ANNOUNCEMENTS & SPECIAL MISSIONS FOCUS – ELIC & Iraq

Host

Take this opportunity to cover any announcements and special missions focus for the kids, such as upcoming events or reminders, like bringing food donations for Feeding Families. Use the slides provided in the Power Point to display important announcements.

Say: For the next couple of weeks, we're going to be focusing on what God is doing in the country of Iraq. Have any of you heard of the country of Iraq before or know where it is on the map? ***Point to Iraq on the classroom map.*** This is where Iraq is, and it's pretty far away, isn't it? Well, in the country of Iraq, there is a lot of violence, war, and division, especially amongst people who believe different things about God.

Say: There is an organization called ELIC – let's say that together, ELIC – who sends teachers to this country of Iraq to help teach the English language. ELIC started sending English teachers to Iraq and other countries because they felt God calling them to do so!

Say: Through teaching English, these followers of Jesus have had many opportunities to share God's love with the people they encounter in Iraq. Isn't that amazing? In a country with so much pain, violence, and hurt, God is still finding ways to show His love!

Say: It's probably not easy to be a teacher in this country... Do you think that would be easy to live somewhere you don't know and teach people another language? Especially in a place with so much division? Let's take a few minutes and pray for the ELIC teachers

there – that God would continue to protect them and give them opportunities to share His love.

Invite a kid to come up and pray for the ELIC teachers. Encourage kids to take a prayer card at checkout to continue praying at home.

******After Announcements, transition the power point to the “Blessing” slide. The host will lead the class in receiving the blessing for the day.******

BLESSING

Host

Read the verse and blessing over the kids before closing Large Group. Encourage the kids to stand and open their hands to receive the blessing as a truth that they can take with them this week and hide in their hearts.

Find a friend to give the blessing to this week. Ask if you can put your hand on their shoulder. Look at them and say this sentence. Say:

“Friend, you are forgiven. Jesus loves you.”

SMALL GROUP

Classroom Teachers

(10 minutes)

As part of Remember & Celebrate, use this time to chat with kids about all they have to be thankful for and enjoy a snack together.

Younger Kids:

This time is optional for younger kids, depending on if you feel like the kids are still listening and participating well.

1. **What did you learn about God from our story today?**

2. **Read/Recap today’s story: Luke 15: 11-32**

What did the son do when he was given inheritance (money) from his father? (He spent it all and became poor).

3. **How did the father respond to his son that had done bad things? How did he treat him when he came home? (He welcomed him home with open arms! He hugged him. He threw a party. He was happy to have him home!)**

4. **Even when we sin, God welcomes us back to Him with open arms. He forgives us when we confess our sins and He celebrates with us when we choose to do the right thing and ask for forgiveness. How does this make you feel?**
5. **Do you ever feel afraid to tell the truth or try again after you have done something wrong?**

Spend time sharing prayer requests before closing small group in prayer.

Older Kids:

Encourage the kids to utilize their personal Bibles or the classroom Bibles to read the Scripture as a group.

1. **What did you learn about God from our story today?**
2. **Read scripture: Luke 15: 11-14**
 - a. **What did the son do when he was given inheritance (money) from his father?** (He spent it all and became poor).
3. **Read scripture: Luke 15:20-25**
 - a. **How did the father respond to his son that had sinned (done bad things)? How did he treat him when he came home?:** (He welcomed him home with open arms! He hugged him. He threw a party. He was happy to have him home!)
4. **Even when we sin, God welcomes us back to Him with open arms. He forgives us when we confess our sins and He celebrates with us when we choose to do the right thing and ask for forgiveness. How does this make you feel?**
5. **Do you ever feel afraid to tell the truth or try again after you have done something wrong?**

Spend time sharing prayer requests before closing small group in prayer.

RESPOND ACTIVITY

Classroom Teacher

(10 minutes)

DISCUSS:

If you have extra time at the end of your lesson and small group time, the kids can participate in this activity.

MAKE: Prodigal Son Coloring Page

Supplies: 1 coloring page per child, markers/crayons

Directions: Pass out coloring page and crayons, etc. for kids to color. This can also be sent home if there is not enough time in class to complete.

***Say:** It's so exciting to remember that our God forgives us. Even when we make mistakes, God forgives our sins and is always there for us. He wants us to run to Him, ask for forgiveness, and then make better choices. Even when we mess up or make a mistake, He will always be there for us, just like the prodigal son! Let's color a picture to remind us of this wonderful story.*

CHECK-OUT

Classroom Teacher

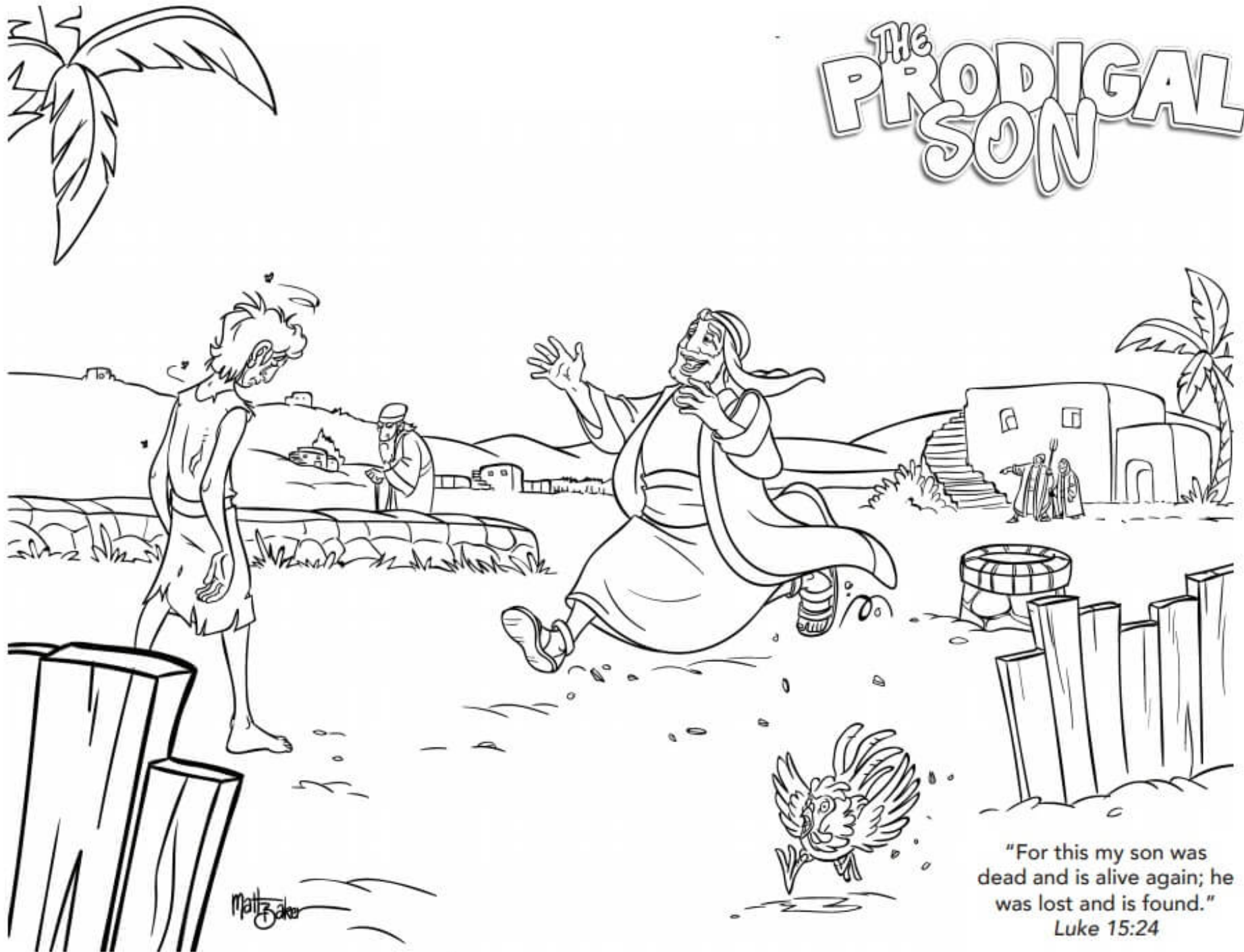
(end of service)

As parents arrive for check-out, the kids can continue participating in the Respond Activities or the classroom games and toys.





THE PRODIGAL SON



"For this my son was
dead and is alive again; he
was lost and is found."
Luke 15:24