JESUS LOVES THE CHILDREN

Scripture to Study: Matthew 19:13-15; Mark 10:14
Central Truth: Jesus has time for children.
Memory Verse: Matthew 19:14, "Let the little children come unto Me."
God's Animal: The Zebra
Supplementary Lesson: Puppet Skit — "You Are Important To God"
Additional Supplementary Lesson: Story — "God Has Time For Sally"
Visual Aids: Jesus (16), Children (22), Angel (26), Disciples (35), Mothers of children (use 31 and 42 if you wish)

Outline:

I. Jesus was with His disciples one day when some folks brought their children to Him.
   A. The people wanted Jesus to bless their children.
   B. Jesus' disciples wouldn't let the people bring the children to him. They didn't think Jesus was interested in them.
      1. Jesus has time for children.
      2. They are as important to Him as big folks!
   C. Jesus stopped His disciples.
      1. He ordered them to let the children pass through and come to Him.
      2. The Lord told His disciples that the kingdom of Heaven was full of children.
   D. Jesus laid His hands on the children and blessed them.

II. God loves little children.
   A. Jesus said that children have guardian angels.
B. Guardian angels are always with children to protect them.

C. God has time to listen to every child's prayer.
   1. When we pray, we should expect the answer.
   2. We pray to our Heavenly Father in Jesus' Name.

III. When we ask Jesus to come into our hearts, we become God's children.

A. God doesn't have any grandchildren. All He has are children. If our parents have Jesus in their hearts, and we do not, it will not make us God's children.

B. When Jesus comes into our hearts, the Holy Spirit makes us brand new on the inside. We become God's children.

C. Once we have Jesus inside us, we must act like God's kids, not the devil's kids.

D. If we do make a mistake or do something bad, we should pray and ask God to forgive us.
   1. Jesus doesn't leave us when we sin, but we should ask the Father God to forgive us when we do something wrong.
   2. God will always forgive us when we ask.
GOD'S ANIMAL THE ZEBRA

Have you ever seen a horse with striped pajamas? Zebras look much like a horse with striped pajamas. Although zebras are not exactly like horses, they are members of the horse family.

Zebras have hooves, legs, and bodies much like that of a horse. A zebra's neck is a little shorter than a horse's neck and his tail is like the tail of a donkey. Have you ever wondered about a zebra's stripes? Is he really black with white stripes, or white with black stripes? If you look closely, you will see that the zebra has no stripes on the inside of his legs or the underside of his belly. These areas are white, so the zebra is really white with black stripes.

Zebras are hard to train. Although their bodies are much like horses, their personalities are much different. Although all zebras have stripes, no two zebras are exactly alike. Each set of stripes is different. Each zebra is a special creation of God.

You, too, are a special creation of God. There is no one else in all the world who is exactly like you. Even your fingerprints are different from any one else's. No two people are exactly alike. That's one of the reasons God loves you. There's no one else on earth to fill your shoes.

No one else can ever be you. That's why it's important to be yourself. Don't wish that you were someone else. Be you. God made you special. So give your life to Him and let Him help you find the reason that you are here. Learn a lesson from the zebra. Everyone is a unique and special creation from God.
YOU ARE IMPORTANT TO GOD

CHARACTERS: Darlin' Duck, Teacher

DARLIN' DUCK: Boy, my life is dull. I'm just a nobody. I've never done anything special.

TEACHER: I wouldn't say that, Darlin'.

DARLIN' DUCK: Oh, but you don't know how unimportant I am. I'm just a nobody. Nobody even listens to me when I talk.

TEACHER: Well, we're listening to you right now.

DARLIN' DUCK: That's only because you're trying to be nice to me.

TEACHER: Darlin', why are you so depressed? Why are you so sad?

DARLIN' DUCK: I just feel like I don't amount to much. I'm just a nobody.

TEACHER: Don't say you're a nobody, Darlin'. You're important.

DARLIN' DUCK: Me, important? What important thing have I ever done?

TEACHER: Darlin', you've done something more important than being the President of the United States!

DARLIN' DUCK: Me? I've never done anything that important.

TEACHER: Yes, you have. When you asked Jesus to come into your heart, you did something very important.

DARLIN' DUCK: But lots of people do that.

TEACHER: I know lots of people do it, but it's still important. It's the most important thing you'll ever do, and it's important to God.

DARLIN' DUCK: Do you really think God knows me, Teacher?

TEACHER: Sure, He does, Darlin'. He knows who you are. He knows how many hairs we have on our heads. The Bible says so.

DARLIN' DUCK: I have lots of feathers on my head!

TEACHER: Well, He knows all about you anyway, and you're very special to God.

DARLIN' DUCK: But, I'm just a little duckling.

TEACHER: That doesn't matter. Children are very important to God, too. Don't you know what Jesus did?

DARLIN' DUCK: What did Jesus do?
Jesus took time to lay hands on some children and bless them.

What did He do that for?

Because He knew that children are very important to God's kingdom. Children have a special place in God's heart.

You mean we're all special whether we're big or small?

That's right. God thinks we're all very special, and we're very important.

Do you mean that I can do things for Jesus right now while I'm still little?

Sure, you can do things for Jesus even though you're small.

Well, what can I do?

It's very important for you to obey your parents. God thinks that's very important; obeying your parents is one of the rules of the Bible.

Really? Obeying your parents is important to God?

Of course it is. Telling others about Jesus is important, too.

I've done that before. I told my friends about Jesus just the other day.

See, Darlin'. You've done some very important things!

Yes, I guess I have. I feel much better now. Thanks, Teacher.

You're welcome, Darlin'. Don't let the devil tell you that you're not important. God's Word says you are!

I won't. Good-bye everyone.

Good-bye Darlin'.
"Mommy, could I talk to you about something?"
"What is it now, Sally?"
"Well, I wanted to talk to you about a new doll."
"Sally, I can't get you a new doll right now. You go on and play."
"But Mother...
"Right now, Sally. I don't have time to listen. I have work to do."

Sally hung her head and walked out of the room. She had only wanted to talk to her mother for just a minute. Sally's old doll, Cindy, was beginning to fall apart. Sally thought maybe her mother would have some work for her to do so she could make money to buy a new doll. But now her mother wouldn't listen. Her mother was just too busy.

Sally walked into the living room. There sat her dad reading the newspaper. Maybe he would listen.
"Dad."
"What is it, Sally?"
"Can I talk to you a minute about a new doll?"

"Well, Sally, I'm trying to read this newspaper. Can we talk about this later? I'm busy."

Sally walked away. Nobody would listen. Who could she talk to? Sally knew her mom and dad loved her, but, sometimes they were too busy and didn't have time to talk. She needed someone that she could talk to at any time. Someone who was never too busy to listen.

Suddenly, Sally remembered her Sunday School lesson about Jesus and the children. Jesus always had time to talk to people — even to children. Sally went to her bedroom and knelt beside her bed. She had a long talk with Jesus. Afterwards, she felt so relieved. Sally had just had a talk with her best friend!

One week passed and the mailman brought a package to the door.
"It's for you, Sally."

Sally's mother was puzzled because the package was from Uncle Bob and he never sent presents except on birthdays, and it surely wasn't Sally's birthday. Sally opened the package and inside was a new doll! A brand new doll just for her.

"You must have prayed for that doll," said Mother. Sally smiled and took her new doll outside to play. She thanked Jesus that He was never too busy to listen to children.
JESUS AND LAZARUS

Scripture to Study: John 11:1-45

Central Truth: Life and love are mightier than death.

Memory Verse: I Corinthians 13:8, "Love never fails."

God's Animal: The Bear

Supplementary Lesson: Story — "Heaven Is A Happy Place"

Additional Supplementary Lesson: Puppet Skit — "Darlin' And The Mummy"

Visual Aids: Crowd (5), Jesus (16), Lazarus in grave clothes (19), Open tomb (20), Martha (24), Mary (25), Lazarus (28), Disciples (35)

Outline:

I. Jesus received word that His friend Lazarus was sick.
   A. Jesus was ministering in another town.
      1. Lazarus' sisters, Mary and Martha, sent someone to tell Jesus to come and help Lazarus.
      2. Jesus should be the first one we go to when we need help.
   B. Jesus loved Lazarus very much.
      1. He did not want Lazarus to be sick.
      2. Jesus doesn't want you to be sick, either.
      3. The devil is the one who tries to make people sick and die.

II. Before Jesus reached Lazarus' house, Lazarus died.
   A. Jesus did not become upset or afraid.
      1. Jesus knew that Lazarus would be all right.
      2. No matter how bad our problem may be, it is never too late for God to help us.
B. Lazarus had been dead for four days. People had gathered at his house to mourn and weep.

C. Jesus was moved with love when he saw how sad Mary and Martha were.

III. Jesus went with Mary and Martha to Lazarus' tomb.

A. Lazarus was buried in a cave and a large stone covered the opening of the tomb.

B. Jesus commanded that the stone be rolled away.
   1. Martha cried out to Jesus, "Lord, he has been dead for four days. His body stinks by now."
   2. Jesus reminded Martha to believe and trust Him and that she would see God work.

C. Jesus looked toward Heaven and thanked God for hearing His prayer. Then He yelled out loudly, "Lazarus, come forth!"

IV. Lazarus received life because Jesus was not moved by what He saw, but He was moved by love instead.

A. When Jesus cried out, Lazarus came forth still bound up in his grave clothes.

B. Jesus told the people to loose Lazarus and to let him go free.

C. Many who saw what had happened believed on Jesus.

D. The life and love of God are stronger than death.
GOD'S ANIMAL THE BEAR

Mr. Bear is one of the biggest animals in the forest. His cousin, the Alaskan brown bear, can be as tall as your ceiling and weighs more than seven daddies! Bears are big!

Bears like to eat mice, ground squirrels, and fish. For dessert, there's nothing like honey for Mr. Bear. He will tear a beehive apart just to get to the honey. His old, tough hide is so thick and shaggy that bee stings do not hurt him. The sting has no effect on Mr. Bear at all!

Every winter, bears go into their dens for a long winter nap. This is called hibernation. They sleep for several weeks, never eating or waking up at all during this time. Then they wake up full of energy and life, ready for spring.

There is a lesson you can learn from Mr. Bear. Every child of God is like Mr. Bear. We may go to sleep one day, but we will all rise again. God wants you to live a long time on the earth. He wants you to grow up and enjoy life. All the Christians who have died and gone to Heaven are just like the bears. They are asleep in Jesus, but soon they will rise again. And just like Mr. Bear, the sting of death does not hurt them.

Bears never lose fights with other animals. Because of their strength, they always win. Jesus died on the cross and was buried, but after three days, He rose again! He did not lose the fight with death — and we don't have to either!
STORY

HEAVEN IS A HAPPY PLACE

Timmy was very sad. Big tears rolled down his cheeks. His dog, Roscoe, had just died. Roscoe was an old dog, and he had simply lived out his life. "Why did God make Roscoe die?" asked Timmy.

"God did not make him die," said Mom. "Roscoe was fifteen years old and his body just wore out."

"But why didn't God make us to always live and never die?" asked Timmy.

"He did make us that way," replied Mom. "It wasn't ever God's plan for men or pets to die."

"Then why do things die?" Timmy asked.

"Well," said Mom, "do you remember that the Bible tells us how God created Adam and Eve and how He made the garden of Eden?"

"Yes, ma'am," said Timmy. "It was a good place and there was nothing bad there."

"That's right," Mom replied. "But Adam and Eve disobeyed God and let death come into the world." Then Mom sat down by Timmy and told him all about Adam's sin.

"So, it's death that causes pets to die?" asked Timmy.

"That's right," said Mom, "and death is the devil's helper!"

"Well, isn't Jesus going to stop the devil from making people die?" asked Timmy.

"He sure is!" Mom said with excitement. "And you can have a dog that will live forever!"

"When will this happen?" asked Timmy.

"It will happen when Jesus comes to take us to live with Him," said Mom.

"What is Jesus' house like?" asked Timmy.

"Jesus lives in a place called Heaven, and it is more beautiful than anything you can ever think of. There are beautiful trees and gardens there," said Mom.

"Can I play in the gardens?" wondered Timmy.

"Sure you can," said Mom. "You can swim in the River of Life, too."

"But I'll drown!" exclaimed Timmy. "I can't swim."

"You'll be able to breathe under water in the River of Life," said Mom. "It's full of life!"

"Heaven must be a neat place," said Timmy.

"It sure is," said Mom. "And Jesus is there, too."

"Nobody dies or gets sick there?" asked Timmy.
"That's right," said Mom. "We can keep sickness away with God's Word here in this life, but in Heaven, we won't ever have to fight it again."

"What do the kids do?" he asked.

"They play and worship God and sing and never get spankings . . ."

"Heaven sounds like fun!" exclaimed Timmy. "Do the bad people hurt the good people there?"

"Timmy, there are no bad people in Heaven at all," explained Mom. "The people who don't love Jesus don't get to go."

"Then we'd better tell the bad people to love Jesus so they can go," said Timmy.

"That's right," Mom agreed. "That's what God wants us to do. We should help others go to Heaven."

"Will Roscoe be there?" asked Timmy.

"If you want him to be there, he will be there," said Mom. "The Bible says that in God's presence our joy will be full, so if you are missing Roscoe, you can have him when you go to be with Jesus."

"Mom," said Timmy, "Jesus is good to us, isn't He?"

"He certainly is," Mom answered. "He loves us with all His heart."
PUFFET SKIT

DARLIN' AND THE MUMMY

CHARACTERS: Darlin' Duck, Teacher

DARLIN' DUCK: You won't believe it, Teacher!
TEACHER: What won't I believe, Darlin'?
DARLIN' DUCK: You won't believe what I saw when I was flying through Bible land.
TEACHER: What did you see, Darlin'?
DARLIN' DUCK: I saw a mummy!
TEACHER: A mummy?
DARLIN' DUCK: I told you that you wouldn't believe it.
TEACHER: Now, Darlin', it's not that I don't believe you. Just tell me exactly what you think you saw.
DARLIN' DUCK: I didn't think I saw it — I did see a mummy!
TEACHER: Okay, tell me what happened.
DARLIN' DUCK: Well, I was flying over Bible land, and I saw Jesus and two ladies standing in front of some sort of cave. There was a whole crowd of people watching Jesus, and some of the people were crying.
TEACHER: Where was the mummy, Darlin'?
DARLIN' DUCK: I haven't gotten to that part yet.
TEACHER: Oh, I'm sorry. Go ahead and finish your story.
DARLIN' DUCK: Well, all of a sudden Jesus said something, but I couldn't hear what He said. Then some men ran over to the cave and moved a big rock, and out of the cave popped a real mummy!
TEACHER: Oh, Darlin', now I know what you're talking about. I was just telling the boys and girls about that story from the Bible today.
DARLIN' DUCK: You knew about the mummy, too?
TEACHER: Well, it wasn't exactly a mummy that you saw, Darlin'. What you saw was Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead.
DARLIN' DUCK: Lazarus? Who was he?
TEACHER: He was one of Jesus' friends. He got sick and died and his sisters, Mary and Martha, wrapped him in grave clothes and buried him in a tomb. You saw Lazarus coming out of the tomb when he was still wrapped in his grave clothes.
DARLIN' DUCK: Well, if he was dead, how come I saw him walking?
TEACHER: Darlin', he was dead, but Jesus did a miracle and raised him from the dead. You see, it wasn't God's will for the devil to kill Lazarus.
DARLIN' DUCK: The devil killed him, but God raised him up.
TEACHER: That's right. The Bible tells us that the devil is the one who steals, kills, and destroys, but Jesus is more powerful than the devil.
DARLIN' DUCK: I'm sure glad that Jesus is stronger than death and we don't have to be afraid of the devil — or of mummies!
TEACHER: Me too, Darlin'. Me too!
JESUS GOES TO THE CROSS

Scripture to Study: Matthew 27:27-50; John 18:3-40
Central Truth: Jesus died for our sins because He loved us.
Memory Verse: John 3:16, "For God so loved the world, He gave His only Son."
God's Animal: The Frog
Supplementary Lesson: Story — "Papa's Terrible Fight"
Additional Supplementary Lesson: Story — "Fluffy"
Visual Aids: Jesus (16), Pilate (29), Angry mob (34), Disciples (35), Soldier (36), Jesus on the cross (38)

Outline:

I. Jesus was taken by a mob to be crucified.
   A. While Jesus was praying, soldiers came to get Him. Jesus asked the soldiers whom they were looking for.
   B. The men told Jesus, "We've come for Jesus of Nazareth." When Jesus told them that He was the one they wanted, the men fell backwards onto the ground.
      1. The men were weakened by the power of God in Jesus.
      2. Jesus had the power to stop them from killing Him.
      3. Out of obedience to God, Jesus humbled Himself and gave Himself over to be crucified.
   C. As the soldiers grabbed Jesus, Peter took his sword and cut off one man's ear.
      1. Jesus healed the soldier's ear.
      2. We should always do good, even to those who dislike us.
II. Jesus was taken to a judgment hall to be condemned.

A. All alone, Jesus stood before Pontius Pilate, His judge.
   1. The soldiers put a crown of thorns on His head and made fun of Him.
   2. He was beaten with a whip.
   3. Jesus was treated shamefully and with terrible hatred.

B. Although He had done no wrong, the people said that Jesus must die.

III. Jesus went to the cross.

A. Jesus was not angry as He was being crucified. He knew He was dying so we could be free from sin.
   1. Jesus’ hands and feet were nailed to the cross.
   2. He was hung between two thieves like a common criminal.

B. Even in death, Jesus still had compassion for the lost.
   1. Jesus forgave one of the thieves at His side when the thief recognized Jesus as the Son of God.
   2. Jesus asked His Father to forgive the men who crucified Him.

C. Jesus took our sins and sicknesses in His own body as He hung on the cross.
   1. Jesus made it easy for us to receive eternal life. All we must do is believe that He is the Son of God and that He is alive, and we must confess Him as our Lord.
   2. Jesus also made it easy for us to be healed. The Bible says that the stripes that were placed on His back with a whip were for our healing.
GOD'S ANIMAL THE FROG

God made a very special animal and gave him a green suit to wear. You can find him around almost any pond and he's sure to let you know he's there by croaking as loud as he can. He's Mr. Frog!

Mr. Frog is a very special creature. He can live in the water or on the land. He likes to eat flies and he has a very special way of catching them. Mr. Frog sticks out his long sticky tongue in the flash of an eye and catches the fly totally off-guard. The unsuspecting fly becomes Mr. Frog's dinner. After his stomach is full, Mr. Frog makes his happy sound, "Ribbet, ribbet."

The lesson you should learn about the frog is very important. Mr. Frog has big back legs. They are very strong and he can hop a long way. God wants you to be just like Mr. Frog. He wants you to be able to hop!

"Hop?" you say. "Why should boys or girls hop?"

God wants us to hop right over our problems. Sometimes the devil puts traps before us. We can be like a spiritual frog and hop right over them and not be caught. This is what God wants us to do.

If Satan tries to make you sick, hop right over that sickness by saying, "By Jesus' stripes, I am healed."

If he tries to make you act ugly, hop right over that ugliness by saying, "I will love everybody, because Jesus lives in me."

If the enemy tries to get you to disobey your mother and daddy, just hop right over that temptation and say, "No, I'm going to hop over with God's Word. The Bible says, 'Children obey your parents in the Lord.'"

When we speak God's Word to the devil, we're like frogs. We're hopping over the temptation. When you speak God's Word, you are being a spiritual frog and you're hopping right over all the problems and the cares of this life.
STORY

PAPA'S TERRIBLE FIGHT

Brindle Bear and his big brother Arlis were wrestling in the leaves outside the den. Mother was inside boiling roots and preparing dinner. It was a beautiful evening and the bears were happy because Papa was soon to come home.

In the distance, a familiar sound could be heard. It grew louder and louder until Brindle and Arlis stopped their wrestling. Mother rushed out of the den and listened to the sound. She raised her nose in the air to sniff the scent on the wind. "It is Papa!" she cried with joy. "Papa's come home!"

Brindle and Arlis ran down the path leaving Mother to follow after. Sure enough, it was Papa Bear, and he was so happy to see his family. He picked up little Brindle and gave him a bear hug. Arlis was next and when Papa put him down, it was Mom's turn for a hug. Brindle and Arlis closed their eyes and giggled when Mom and Papa rubbed their noses together. Brindle was so happy that Papa was home.

After dinner, Papa told stories of fishing in a stream where the fish were so big that it took two meals to eat just one. "When will you take us there?" asked Brindle.

"It is far away over the mountains," said Papa. "You are not able to climb well enough yet. But when you are ready, we shall all move there. It is a far better place than the forest where we live."

Papa had no sooner spoken than Arlis stood up and told him about the terrible grizzly bear that had driven them from the honey tree. Papa's face was most serious when he listened to Arlis telling about the evil bear. "Tomorrow I will go to meet the big bear," said Papa. "I will drive him from the tree so that you may have the honey."

Brindle was excited about the honey but at the same time, he wondered what would happen when Papa met the big bear. The big bear seemed to be much larger than Papa. Brindle did not like to think about the big bear at all.

Early the next morning, Papa rose and stirred his family. "It is time to go to the honey tree. Today I will drive the grizzly bear away from the tree," said Papa.

Down the trail went the bear family. Past the stream, past the meadow, past the flowers, and up the hill that led to the honey tree. Brindle was excited about getting to eat the honey again. But he was really frightened. He did not want his Papa to be hurt.

"Papa, must you fight with the grizzly bear?" asked Brindle.

"Sadly, I must," replied Papa. "The honey tree is ours and the grizzly bear does not belong here. If I do not drive him away, he will bring others like him to our forest and we will not be able to live here."

Down the hill went the bear family until they came to the place where the honey tree stood. And there, to the surprise of all, stood not one grizzly bear, but two. Both of them were evil and ugly, but Papa was not afraid.
Papa ran toward the tree and attacked the bears. "This tree belongs to my family," he said. There were growls and roars and a terrible fight. Brindle covered his eyes. Papa fought bravely and drove the two bears away, but he was hurt very badly. As he walked back to his family, he stumbled and fell. And then he couldn't move — he could only lie on the ground.

Brindle and Arlis ran to their Mother's side. She hugged them close as they cried.

TEACHER'S NOTE:

Compare Papa to Christ who came to this earth from a better world to redeem us from sin and death — symbolized by the two evil bears. Papa's fight is like the Crucifixion, though he does not die. In the next story, he will recover as a type of the Resurrection. The land of beautiful streams with abundant fish can be compared to Heaven. The honey tree can be likened to eternal life.
STORY

FLUFFY

Billy's favorite pastime was playing with Fluffy, his little black and white puppy. Every day Billy went outside to play with Fluffy in the yard. Billy rolled across the grass and Fluffy jumped and played beside him. Fluffy licked Billy as he rolled in the grass. Billy had taught Fluffy to do all sorts of tricks. He could roll over or sit up. He could even jump over a stick. Billy thought Fluffy was the greatest dog in all the world.

One morning Billy went outside to call Fluffy.
"Fluffy," he yelled. "Fluffy!"

Fluffy did not come. Billy looked all over the yard. He looked in Fluffy's dog house. He searched the flower beds, but Fluffy was gone! Billy found a hole in the fence, and on the ground beside the hole lay Fluffy's collar.

Billy began to cry, "Fluffy's gone. My favorite dog is gone!"

"Now, Billy," said Mom as she looked at the hole in the fence. "Don't cry. We'll find Fluffy."

Mom took Billy to the car and they drove up and down the streets looking for Fluffy. Billy saw big dogs and little dogs. He saw brown dogs and black dogs. But he didn't see Fluffy. They drove for hours, but Fluffy was nowhere to be found.

"Don't be sad, Billy," said Mom. "We'll get you another dog."

Billy looked sad. He didn't want another dog. He wanted Fluffy.

Mom drove toward a shopping center and parked outside the supermarket. She got out her shopping list for supper.

"May I go look at the puppies in the pet shop next door?" asked Billy as Mom walked toward the grocery store.

"Sure," she called back. "Don't be too long."

Billy went into the pet shop and looked at the puppies. He looked at collie puppies and terriers. He looked at cocker spaniels and German shepherds. Suddenly, he heard a familiar bark. It was Fluffy!

"Fluffy!" called Billy, as he ran to the cage where his little dog was. The owner of the pet shop walked over to the boy.

"Do you know this dog?" asked the owner.

"Do I?" answered Billy. "He's mine!"

"Well that depends," said the man. Billy looked at him. He was a lean man with a sour face.

"You can have this dog for forty dollars!" said the owner.

"Forty dollars!" Billy shouted. "But I don't have forty dollars."
He tried to explain that Fluffy had gotten out of the yard, but the man wouldn't listen. Billy looked at his dog.

"I'll get you back, Fluffy. I promise."

Billy left the store to find his mother. He told her that he had found Fluffy, but by the time they got back to the pet shop, it had closed.

That evening, Dad told Billy that he would give him forty dollars to buy Fluffy back. Billy was so excited! Now he and his best friend would be together again.

The next day, Billy went with Mom to the pet shop.

"We came to get Fluffy," said Billy to the owner as he entered the shop.

The man looked at Billy and his mother with a cruel grin.

"You're too late," he said. "I sold that dog early this morning to a family named Jones."

Billy wanted to cry. Mom was angry. They went to the car.

"What are we going to do now?" asked Billy.

Mom drove Billy home and they looked through the phone book for the Jones family that bought Fluffy. Mom called every Jones in the phone book asking, "Did you buy a black and white puppy today?" Finally she found the right family.

Billy looked closely as Mom pulled the car in front of the Jones' house. Slowly he and his mother went to the door and knocked.

"What do you want?" snarled a little boy as he opened the door. He was holding Fluffy.

"We want to buy your dog," said Billy's mother. "We're willing to give you more than you paid for him."

"I don't want to sell him," said the boy.

Billy interrupted, "But I'll give you a bicycle and my new football if you'll let me have Fluffy back."

The boy thought for a moment and finally said, "It's a deal. But you bring me the bicycle and the football first — then you can have the dog."

Billy's mother drove the car home as fast as she could. They loaded the bicycle and the football into the car and drove back to the Jones' house. They took the things to the door and traded with the boy.

At last! Fluffy was home again and Billy was never so happy in all his life.

"Fluffy," said Billy as he held the little puppy in his hands. I would have given that boy anything to get you back. I love you with all my heart."

Fluffy licked Billy's face and they rolled together in the grass.
THE RESURRECTION

Scripture to Study: John 20:1-20

Central Truth: We can have joy because Jesus defeated death and the devil.

Memory Verse: John 3:16, "For God so loved the world, He gave His only Son."

God's Animal: The Fox

Supplementary Lesson: Story — "Papa Lives Again"

Additional Supplementary Lesson: Story — "Cecil And The Owl"

Visual Aids: Jesus (16), Open tomb (20), Angel (26), Mary Magdalene (31), Soldier (36), Jesus on the cross (38), Peter (45)

Outline:

I. While Jesus' body was in the grave, His spirit was in the heart of the earth.
   A. Jesus became sin while He was on the cross. His heart became wicked with the sin of all men poured into it (I Corinthians 5:21).
      1. He did not sin or do any wrong thing.
      2. Jesus was paying for the sin of all men.
      3. Jesus was punished for our sins on the cross.
   B. When Jesus died and His spirit went into hell, the devil was happy (Ephesians 4:8-10).
      1. He thought that he had finally destroyed Jesus.
      2. Satan had been trying to kill Jesus for a long time.
      3. The devil didn't know that God had planned for Jesus to die so He could be resurrected (I Corinthians 2:8).
   C. After three days and nights, Jesus' spirit received strength and He defeated Satan.
1. God’s plan had worked! Jesus had whipped Satan on his own territory.

2. Because of what Jesus did, we now have power over the devil, too.

II. Jesus’ spirit came back to earth, got into His body and rose again!

A. Jesus’ body was in a tomb guarded by Roman soldiers.

1. The tomb was like a small room in the side of a hill.

2. There was a large stone covering the door of the tomb.

B. When Jesus’ spirit returned to His body, there was a great earthquake.

1. Angels appeared and rolled the stone away from the mouth of the tomb.

2. When the soldiers saw this, they fainted.

III. Jesus’ friends came to visit the tomb where Jesus lay.

A. When they arrived, they found the stone rolled away and Jesus’ body missing.

B. They thought that Jesus’ body had been stolen.

C. The disciples forgot what Jesus had told them earlier. He had said that He would die, but in three days He would rise again.

D. Later, Jesus showed Himself to His friends and then they knew that He was really alive.

E. Now that Jesus has risen from the dead, all who believe on Him can have a pure and clean heart because He put away our sins!
   (I Corinthians 5:17, 21)
GOD'S ANIMAL THE FOX

Foxes are very smart animals. Sometimes they can be very sneaky. Very few people ever see foxes because they hide so well. They like to stay out of sight. It's hard to see a fox.

What do foxes look like? There are many kinds of foxes, but all of them have some things in common. Foxes are small animals, not much bigger than a house cat. They all have pointed ears, pointed noses, and bushy tails. Some foxes are red. Some are gray. Some are brown.

The fox has been hunted for hundreds of years because he is such a hard fellow to catch. Some men would like to have his pretty coat, too. In some places, men will ride horses and use huge packs of dogs to chase foxes. The fox will usually give a long chase to his pursuers. He's a very smart fellow. The fox will run through logs, run in circles, and do his best to confuse the dogs. He's very hard to catch.

Jesus was a spiritual fox. He was very smart. When Jesus let himself be nailed to the cross, the devil was excited. He thought that he had finally beaten Jesus. Can Jesus be whipped? NO! But Jesus died and He went to hell for three days and nights. The devil was so happy. He thought that Jesus was defeated. Jesus was suffering for our sins. He wasn't planning to stay dead or to stay in hell like the devil wanted.

After three days and nights, the Holy Spirit went down to hell to raise Jesus up. Jesus got up and beat the devil and took away his keys. Then, Jesus came back to the earth, got into His body, and arose from the dead. Jesus out-foxed the devil. Had the devil known that when Jesus died on the cross, it would make men free from sin, he would not have had his people kill Jesus.

Jesus out-smarted the devil. You can be a fox and out-smart the devil by obeying God's Word.
STORY

PAPA LIVES AGAIN

Brindle's eyes were filled with tears. Papa lay on the ground. His eyes did not open. His body did not move. He was barely alive and his wounds were deep. Mother turned her cubs away and led them back down the trail toward their den.

"What about Papa?" cried Brindle. "We can't leave him now." Mother's eyes were filled with tears as she grabbed Brindle by the neck and carried him away. Brother Arlis, too, was crying.

"Papa is badly hurt," cried Mother. "We will not see him again."

How sad Brindle felt as he thought of what Papa had done. He had bravely fought the two evil bears who had captured the honey tree. But Papa would lose his life for his bravery. How much Brindle loved his Papa. How unselfish he was to risk his own safety to fight his enemies and save his family.

"I may not see Papa again," said Brindle, "but I will never forget him and what he did for me."

Mother, Brother Arlis, and Brindle stopped at the top of the hill that looked down upon the honey tree. There lay Papa, still and silent. "Good-bye, Papa," said Mother.

"Good-bye, Papa," said Arlis.

"Good-bye, Papa," said Brindle.

But suddenly, Papa moved.

The bears watched anxiously as Papa's big bear body began to roll about. In an instant, he was on his feet, and he began to roar. It was a mighty roar that could be heard throughout the forest. Papa was all right.

Mother, Brindle, and Brother Arlis bounded down the hill as fast as their legs could scamper. They ran to Papa's side and began to shout wildly for joy.

"We thought that we would not see you again," said Brindle. "You're alive, and you're still with us."

"Of course I am," said Papa. "Surely you did not think I would leave you."

The bears were so happy. After a time of hugs and squeezes, Papa led his family to the honey tree and the bears ate their fill. Brindle's tummy was so full that he thought it would burst.

The next day, Papa rose early and woke the family. "It is time to travel on," he said. "I am going over the mountain to the streams of water to catch fish for dinner."

"But what about us?" asked Brindle.

"You will stay here and eat the honey until you grow big and strong," answered Papa. "Then, when the time is ready, I will stand on the top of the mountain and roar with a loud voice."
"Will we hear you?" asked Arlis.

"You will hear me," said Papa. "And when you hear me, follow the path that I walk on now. I will meet you and lead you to the place where the streams are filled with wonderful fish."

"Good-bye, Papa," said Mother as Papa walked away. This time, there were no tears in anyone’s eyes. Papa had driven away the evil bears and the honey tree was open to all. And Brindle knew that soon Papa would roar from the mountain top and the whole family would join him in their wonderful new home.

TEACHER’S NOTE:
This story is an excellent picture of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. Papa is a type of Christ, the honey tree represents eternal life, and the shout from the mountain top is the catching away of the Church.

If you feel that Papa’s wounding is too serious for the age group you are teaching, then adapt the story by lessening the damage done in the bear’s fight. While we did not go into graphic detail, we did want to convey the feelings Christ’s disciples might have had when they saw their leader was dead.

Papa’s wounds are not fatal and he does not rise from the dead. His family only thinks that he will not recover. We did not attempt to portray a complete picture of resurrection because we’re dealing with a fictional setting.
"Papa," asked Cecil, the mouse, "Phooey, Louie and I would like to go on a camp-out. May we, Papa?"

"Please, Papa," added Louie. "We'll keep a sharp eye out for the cat."

"The cat is gone!" shouted Phooey. "The dog chased him out of the house and off the property. We don't have to be afraid of him anymore."

"Wait, wait, wait," said Papa. "Listen to me and quit being so noisy. The cat is gone and the dog won't bother you, but there are other big animals to watch out for. Old Man Owl lives in the barn and he chases mice all the time."

"But we won't go near the barn," said Phooey.

"The owl flies all over the yard at night," warned Papa. "His eyes are keen and he sees well in the darkness."

"We'll camp in the tall grass," said Louie. "The owl can't see us there."

"Please let us camp out, Papa," begged Cecil.

"Quiet!" said Papa Mouse. "I was going to let you camp in the yard, but I want to warn you of its dangers."

"Hooray! Hooray! We're going camping!" shouted Cecil, Louie, and Phooey.

The twins and Cecil worked furiously packing their gear. Soon, it was all bundled up — bed rolls, cheese, water, cups, and cooking gear. The three mice loaded their bags and left for the back yard.

"Stay in the tall grass," reminded Papa.

The twins and Cecil ran hurriedly across the kitchen floor past the old sleeping dog and squeezed themselves through a crack in the door to the outside. The three tiny mice went hopping down the steps and started across the yard to where the tall grass was. It was three times taller than Cecil and dark green. Phooey and Louie put up their tiny mouse tent while Cecil made the campfire. Then they all played hide and seek among the long green blades of grass.

Phooey met a nice beetle and asked him many questions about the outdoors. Mr. Beetle wanted Phooey to stay in the tall grass because of the owl. Louie played tag with a grasshopper. Cecil found a little snake and told him all about his family.

Soon night came, and the mouse brothers went to camp to eat delicious cheese.

"I get to pray for the food," said Louie.

"It's my turn," said Phooey. "You prayed at lunch!"

"We'll all pray for the food," said Cecil. The mouse brothers prayed, lifting their hands and thanking God. They ate the cheese and drank the water they brought and told camping stories until they were so sleepy, they had to go to bed. Into the tiny bed rolls in the tiny mouse tent they crawled. Soon they were all three fast asleep.
The moon was bright and the night was clear. Old Man Owl flew out of the barn and began his search for little creatures to eat. He flew over the camp of the mouse brothers, but he couldn’t see it because it was hidden in the tall grass. He circled the yard high in the air, looking for the slightest motion on the ground below.

"Help! Help!"

The cry woke the three mice. Cecil, the oldest and bravest, stuck his head out of the tent. Just a yard away was a tiny lizard with a broken leg. Old Man Owl was dipping at the poor lizard. The lizard was trying to make it into the tall, thick grass.

"We’ve got to help the lizard," said Cecil.

"But how?" asked Louie. "We’ll get eaten by that owl sure enough if we try to fight him!"

"We’re going to spread out and yell at him," schemed Cecil, "and maybe he’ll get taken up with us and forget the lizard."

"I don’t want to be eaten by an owl just to save some old lizard," said Phooey. "I don’t like lizards that much!"

"We’ll jump back into the grass when the owl gets near," said Cecil. "Come on, let’s go!"

So the mice spread out along the edge of the grass and jumped into the open, yelling at the owl. The owl was so excited at the sight of three plump little mice, that he left the lizard alone. The tiny lizard crawled to safety in the thick grass.

Old Man Owl recognized that Cecil was the fattest and biggest of the mice. The big bird dove quickly at Cecil. Cecil jumped toward the grass but it was too late! The owl’s sharp claws snatched Cecil up, and away he flew toward the barn.

Phooey and Louie were frightened. Poor Cecil. The twins ran toward the house and crawled up the steps. They squeezed through the crack and ran toward home across the kitchen floor.

"Papa, Mama!" shouted the twins. "Cecil has been eaten by the owl." Then the twins told their father how Cecil had given himself for the crippled lizard.

"Cecil is like Jesus," said Papa. "Jesus gave Himself to die for the sins of others. I am proud of Cecil. He saved the lizard’s life."

The mouse family was so grieved at Cecil’s death that they did not notice a dark figure enter the doorway. The dark figure walked over and put its hand on Papa’s shoulder. It was Cecil!

"Papa, it’s me, Cecil." The family hugged Cecil joyously.

Cecil explained what had happened. "When Old Man Owl flew me to the barn, he saw a big rat running around by the cow’s stall. The owl dropped me in a haystack to chase the rat and I ran home as fast as I could."

The twins learned a lesson. They were happy to have Cecil, but they were glad he had saved the lizard. Cecil was a lot like Jesus!
JEHOSHAPHAHAT'S SINGING ARMY

Scripture to Study: II Chronicles 19:4 — 20:30
Central Truth: We can have joy through the power of praise.
Memory Verse: Nehemiah 8:10, "The joy of the Lord is our strength."
God's Animal: The Canary
Supplementary Lesson: Puppet Skit — "Darlin' Learns To Praise"
Additional Supplementary Lesson: Object Lesson — "Don't Blow Out Your Praise!"
Visual Aids: Enemy army (32), Jehoshaphat's praisers (39), Jehoshaphat (43), Judah's soldiers (44)

Outline:

I. Jehoshaphat, the King of Judah, was a man who loved the Lord.

A. He wanted everyone in his kingdom to know about God and worship Him.
B. He made all his helpers obey the Word of God.
C. He helped the chief priest to do work for God. We can help God's work by:
   1. Praying
   2. Going to church
   3. Giving offerings
D. Jehoshaphat lived every day to please God.

II. Men from nearby kingdoms came to destroy Judah.

A. The devil did not like Jehoshaphat and his work for the Lord, and he caused the wicked men to come against God's people.
   1. We are not afraid of Satan.
   2. Jesus paralyzed him.
B. The troublesome neighbors, Ammon and Moab, sent thousands of soldiers to fight Judah.
   1. Their army was much larger than Jehoshaphat's.
   2. When Jehoshaphat heard of their approach, he told the people of Judah to fast and pray.
   3. He reminded God of His Word.

C. The Lord spoke through a man and told Judah that they would not even have to fight.
   1. God said that the battle was His, and He would fight for Jehoshaphat.
   2. God responded to His Word spoken in faith by Jehoshaphat.

III. God honored the faith of His people in Judah.
   A. Jehoshaphat and God's people went to battle.
      1. Jehoshaphat put people in the front of the army who were singing and praising God.
      2. These people were joyful and thanked God for the victory before it happened.
      3. We should thank God for the answer to our problem before we see it
   B. When the people of Judah came to the battleground, the enemy soldiers were already dead.
      1. Jehoshaphat's men spent three days picking up the dead men's possessions.
      2. The people were full of joy and praised God once again for His help.
   C. Jesus fought Satan for us, and now we can enjoy the blessings of God.
      1. Just like Jehoshaphat, we must walk by faith.
      2. Only faith pleases God.
      3. When we walk by faith, God will move in our lives, too
GOD'S ANIMAL THE CANARY

Have you ever heard a canary sing? Canaries are small birds not even as big as a robin, and they can't talk like a parrot or a myna bird, but when they open their beaks to sing, they can make the most beautiful sounds.

Some canaries are yellow, others are white, and some are even brown. They aren't very pretty, but they can make wonderful music when they sing. Canaries are very happy birds. They like to sing when they hear music or when other birds are singing, and they even like to sing when they are all alone.

Canaries remind us that we should praise God every day. Psalm 150:6 says, "Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord." If you are alive and breathing, you should praise the Lord!

Sometimes we may not feel like singing and worshipping God, but if we worship God by faith and praise Him because His Word tells us to, pretty soon our feelings will change and we will stir up the joy that is in our hearts.

Praising God is a good way to act out our faith when we are believing for an answer to prayer. Thanking God before we see our answer shows that we are trusting in the Bible and what it says about our situation more than we are trusting what we can see with our eyes. When we are acting in faith, the Bible says we are pleasing God, and we know the answer is on its way.

Now that's something to sing about!
PUPPET SKIT

DARLIN' LEARNS TO PRAISE

CHARACTERS: Darlin' Duck, Teacher

(Darlin' enters class singing loudly.)

DARLIN' DUCK: Praise the Lord, praise the Lord.
TEACHER: Darlin', sh-h-h! Why are you singing so loud?
DARLIN' DUCK: I'm praising the Lord. Don't you ever praise the Lord?
TEACHER: Sure, we praise the Lord, don't we children?
DARLIN' DUCK: Well, they don't have their hands lifted up.
TEACHER: They will. Lift your hands, class.
DARLIN' DUCK: Good! Now let's say, praise the Lord.
TEACHER: Praise the Lord.
DARLIN' DUCK: Let's say, glory to God.
TEACHER: Glory to God!
DARLIN' DUCK: These kids know how to praise the Lord.
TEACHER: Is it important to praise God?
DARLIN' DUCK: Is it important? That's why God made us. He made us so we could love Him and praise Him.
TEACHER: But Darlin', you're just a duck. Are ducks supposed to praise the Lord?
DARLIN' DUCK: The Bible says, "Let everything that has breath praise the Lord."
TEACHER: Well, you have breath.
DARLIN' DUCK: Then, I can praise the Lord!
TEACHER: What are some ways we can praise the Lord, Darlin'?
DARLIN' DUCK: We can lift up our hands and tell the Lord how much we love Him.
TEACHER: What is your favorite way to praise the Lord?
DARLIN' DUCK: I like to sing. That's a good way to praise God.
TEACHER: Did you know that praising God is like saying "thank you"?
DARLIN' DUCK: It's always nice to thank the person who gives us things. God gives us good things every day.
TEACHER: He heals us and keeps us well.
DARLIN' DUCK: He gives us food to eat.
TEACHER: He helps our mothers and fathers take care of us.
DARLIN' DUCK: He keeps us from being afraid at night.
TEACHER: We have a lot to praise God for. Do you think the boys and girls know how to praise God now, Darlin'?
DARLIN' DUCK: I think they know how. I'm going to go praise the Lord some more! Good-bye, everyone!
OBJECT LESSON

DON'T BLOW OUT YOUR PRAISE

Scripture Reference: Matthew 5:14-16, "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven."

Materials Needed: One regular birthday candle and one trick birthday candle that re-lights after being blown out

To Prepare: Have all items laid out on the table before class begins.

Lesson:

Boys and girls, Jesus wants us to shine forever. We're a light to the world. We're just like candles that shine in the darkness. We can show other people how to live.

The devil is in the business of blowing out people's candles. He likes people to walk in darkness. He wants people to do bad things because sin causes our hearts to grow dark, dark, dark. Some people don't have very much light. They don't have Jesus living inside them. So, when the devil comes along and blows out their candle (have the regular candle in your hand and blow it out), he blows out their life. All the light and shining things that they have done are all gone. Their lights are blown out.

The devil can't do that to someone who has eternal life. If you have eternal life, you have Jesus in your heart. And if you have Jesus in your heart, you're going to shine forever. The devil won't be able to blow out your candle because Jesus will cause you to light right back up.

You see, if we have Jesus in our hearts, we're going to live forever and ever. Even though our bodies might die, our spirits will never cease to live. We'll still live on with God in Heaven.

(Blow out the trick candle and let it re-light.) You see when we have Jesus in our heart, the devil can't blow out our light. We keep coming right back. (Blow out the trick candle again.)

Nothing can come along to destroy our light. We'll always shine for Jesus if we have eternal life.