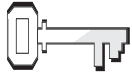


Let the Children Come



References

Luke 18:15-17;
The Desire of Ages,
pp. 511-517



Memory Verse

"Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these" (Luke 18:16).

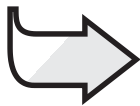


Objectives

The children will:
Know that Jesus welcomes children.

Feel happy and accepted as part of God's family.

Respond by showing Jesus' love to other children.



The Message

Children like me are welcome in God's family.

Monthly Theme

Jesus shows us how to love one another.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

Parents bring their children to Jesus and want Him to bless them. When the disciples see this, they tell the people to take the children away, that Jesus does not have time for them. Seeing this, Jesus welcomes the children and says that the kingdom of God belongs to children like these.

This is a lesson about community.

Jesus always welcomed children. When His disciples tried to send them away, Jesus told them not to. Everyone who wants to enter the kingdom of heaven needs a childlike faith.

Teacher Enrichment

"In the children who were brought in contact with Him, Jesus saw the men and women who should be heirs of His grace and subjects of His kingdom, and some of whom would become martyrs for His sake. He knew that these children would listen to Him and accept Him as their Redeemer far more readily than would grown-up people, many of whom were the worldly-wise and hardhearted. In His teaching He came down to their level. He, the Majesty of heaven, did not disdain to answer their questions, and simplify His important lessons to meet their childish understanding. He planted in their minds the seeds of truth, which in after years would spring up, and bear fruit unto eternal life.

"It is still true that children are the most susceptible to the teachings of the gospel; their hearts are open to divine influences, and strong to retain the lessons received. The little children may be Christians, having an experience in accordance with their years" (*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 512-515).

Room Decorations

See Lesson 10.

Program Overview

Lesson Section	Minutes	Activities	Materials Needed
Welcome	ongoing	Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled	none
1 Readiness Options	up to 10	A. <i>Welcome</i> B. <i>Diaper Relay</i> C. <i>I Like . . .</i>	disposable cups, garland of flowers, basin, water, towel, table two large dolls, two cloth diapers or disposable diapers, safety pins, table toy catalogs, baby/children's catalogs, paper, glue, scissors
Any Time Prayer and Praise*	up to 10	Fellowship Songbook Mission Offering Prayer	none <i>Sing for Joy</i> <i>Children's Mission</i> container none
2 Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story Memory Verse Bible Study	Bible-times costumes none Bibles
3 Applying the Lesson	up to 15	A. <i>101 Reasons</i> B. <i>A-Z Blessings</i>	beanbag or crumpled paper ball paper, marker
4 Sharing the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Baby Joy</i>	card stock, crayons/markers, paper, pencils, chalk/white board, chalk/marker

***Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.**

TEACHING THE LESSON

Welcome

Welcome students at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they are pleased/troubled about. Listen to last week’s memory verse and encourage the children to share any experiences from last week’s lesson study. Have them begin the readiness activity of your choice.



Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

You Need:

- disposable cups
- garland of flowers (real or artificial)
- basin
- water
- towel
- table

A. Welcome

Ask: **When you came in this morning how were you greeted? If you came from England, how would you greet someone?** (Shake hands.) Have the children shake hands. **If you met someone in Ghana, what would they do?** (Offer you a glass of water.) Give the children a drink of water. **If you met someone from Hawaii, what would they do?** (They would say “Aloha” and put a garland of flowers around your neck.) Show the garland. **How would a Hindu in India greet you?** (Hug the person and fold their hands in an attitude of prayer.) Have the children do this. **If you visit them at home they would wash your feet and give you a drink.** Show the towel and basin of water.

Debriefing

Ask: **What are all these greetings saying?** (You are welcome. I am happy to see you.) **How do you feel when someone smiles and says welcome?** (happy, the person wants me to be here) **If someone is grumpy and pushes you away, how do you feel?** (sad, lonely) **Today we will find out what happened when people tried to keep children away from Jesus. Our message for today is very special:**



CHILDREN LIKE ME ARE WELCOME IN GOD’S FAMILY.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- two large dolls
- two cloth diapers or disposable diapers
- safety pins
- table or other flat surface

B. Diaper Relay

In advance, set the two dolls, diapers and safety pins or disposable diapers on a table or other flat surface. Form two groups of children. Say: **We are going to have a relay race. You are to come to the table and put the diaper on the baby doll, walk with the doll to [name a point], and then bring the doll back and take off the diaper. The next person in line will do the same thing.** Continue until one group finishes.

Debriefing

Ask: **How hard was it to put the diaper on the doll? How much can a baby do for itself?** (nothing) **Sometimes people think children should not be included, but that’s not true. Today we will learn what happened when some people tried to keep children from Jesus. Our message for today says:**



CHILDREN LIKE ME ARE WELCOME IN GOD’S FAMILY.

Say that with me.

C. I Like ...

Distribute the supplies. Say: **We are going to make a collage of things we like. Find pictures of some things you like, cut them out, and glue them to our paper.** The finished collage may become a part of the room decorations.

Debriefing

Hold up the collage and ask: **Who likes** [name an object]? Repeat. **What is your favorite toy/activity? Who gave you the toy/takes you to that activity? Today we will find out what happened when some people tried to keep children from Jesus. Jesus wants children in His family. We are always welcome to come to Him. Our message tells us:**



CHILDREN LIKE ME ARE WELCOME IN GOD'S FAMILY.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- toy catalogs
- baby/children's catalogs
- large paper
- glue
- scissors

Prayer and Praise Any Time



Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Allow time for sharing from last week's lesson study and review last week's memory verse. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special warm greeting to all visitors.



Suggested Songs

- "O, How He Loves You and Me" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 28)
- "Jesus Loves Children" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 37)
- "The Family of God" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 139)
- "Praise Him, Praise Him" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 12)
- "More About Jesus" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 38)



Mission

Share a story from *Children's Mission*. Emphasize community in the story.



Offering

Say: **Jesus always welcomes children. When we come to Sabbath School we learn about how much Jesus loves us. Some children do not know about Jesus and His love. Our offerings help to tell them about Jesus and how much He loves them.**

You Need:

- container



Prayer

Jesus loves all of us. During our prayer this morning I am going to say: "Thank You, Jesus, for loving me." Then each of you can say, "Thank You, Jesus, for loving me."

Bible Lesson

You Need:

- Bible-times costumes

Experiencing the Story

Characters: Jesus; two or three of the taller children to be disciples. Other children form three groups of the people rushing to hear Jesus (sick people, mothers, and children).

Read or tell the story.

“Have you heard the news? Jesus is in town.” *[People whisper to each other.]* Over and over people in the town told one another the news. “Jesus is here.” Everyone wanted to see Jesus. Men left their work and hurried to hear Him. *[People hurry to hear Jesus. Some help sick people.]* Friends and families helped sick people to see Jesus. They had heard how He had healed others. Maybe He would heal them too.

Everyone was amazed! They watched Jesus heal blind men and women. They saw lame people get up and leap and jump as if they had always been able to run around. *[People who have been sick hop and jump.]*

When the mothers heard Jesus was there, they wanted to see Him too. They wanted Him to bless their children. The children were happy when they heard they were going to see Jesus. They loved Jesus. He smiled at them. He spoke kindly to them. He told them wonderful stories. He loved the flowers and other small gifts they brought Him.

[Hurry toward Jesus. Beckon to others.] As the mothers went through the town, they called to their friends, “Come with us to see Jesus.” The children told their friends too, and soon many mothers and children were hurrying to see Jesus.

[Walk at different paces.] Mothers

with small children could not go very fast. It took time for the toddlers to walk. Finally they all reached the ever increasing crowd around Jesus. They stood at the back trying to look over or around all the tall people in their way. *[Try to look over or around people.]* Some of the small children may have tried to crawl forward, but they could not get near Jesus.

Everyone wanted to see Jesus. Many were pushing, trying to get nearer. The mothers were desperate. It seemed hopeless. They wondered who would help them see Jesus. Maybe His helpers would.

[Mothers talk to disciples. Disciples shake heads and tell them to go away.] The disciples saw the children and shook their heads. “Go away. Can’t you see Jesus is busy? Can’t you see He is tired?”

[Jesus beckons children to come to Him.] Jesus saw what was happening and said, “Let the little children come to Me. Don’t stop them, because the kingdom of God belongs to those who are like these little children.”

[Children come to Jesus and sit near Him.] The disciples and the crowd were amazed. They created a path, and the mothers and their children hurried to Jesus. He spent a long time with them. He took the children onto His lap and blessed them. Maybe He told the mothers about good things to do to raise their children to love God.

Whatever Jesus said to the mothers and children that day, we can be sure that He was not angry at them for wanting to be with Him—He was happy! He was glad to talk with them. He loved them!

Jesus still cares about parents and children. He cares about you and your family. Jesus really is your friend.

Debriefing

Ask: **Why did the mothers want Jesus to see their children?**

Why did the disciples try to send the mothers and children away?

If you had been one of the children, what would you have thought when the disciples turned you away?

What would you have thought when Jesus said, "Let the children come to Me"?

What did Jesus mean when He said that adults have to become like small children? (It was not that they have to be childish; rather, they need the faith of a child.)

How do you feel knowing that children are welcome in God's family? Let's say our message together:



CHILDREN LIKE ME ARE WELCOME IN GOD'S FAMILY.

Memory Verse

Repeat the memory verse using the following actions to fit the words. Repeat until the children know the verse.

Let the little children	Point to each other.
come	Beckon.
to me,	Point upward.
and do not	Shake head.
hinder them,	Hold hand up, palm out to stop someone.
for the kingdom of God	Point upward.
belongs to such as these.	Point to children.
Luke 18:16	Palms together, then open.

Bible Study

Say: **The Bible tells about more instances when Jesus showed how much He loved children.**

Form three groups. Give each group one of the texts below and tell them to act it out. Adult helpers assist as needed.

Luke 9:38-43

John 4:46-54

Matthew 9:18, 19, 23-25

Debriefing

Ask: **What do these stories tell you about Jesus?** (He loved children. He helped children.)

How do you think the families felt after Jesus had healed or brought their children back to life? (happy, grateful)

What do you think it would be like to look at Jesus' face? Accept all answers.

Jesus' actions showed that children were important to Him, and that children are a part of God's kingdom. Let's say our message for today:



CHILDREN LIKE ME ARE WELCOME IN GOD'S FAMILY.

You Need:

• Bibles

3

Applying the Lesson

You Need:

- beanbag or crumpled paper ball

A. 101 Reasons

Ask the children to stand in a circle. Say: **I am going to throw the beanbag (paper ball) to someone. The person who catches it has to say: "Children like me are welcome in God's family because He loves me.**

Then that person will throw the beanbag (paper ball) to someone else. You are not to throw to the same person twice, until everyone has caught it once.

Continue until everyone has had a turn and then have the children sit down.

Debriefing

Ask: **What does it mean to you to know that God wants you to be part of His family?** (I feel happy, secure, grateful, good, etc.)

How can you show others that you are part of God's family? Allow discussion time. Encourage ideas such as helping as ushers in church, picking up hymnbooks, doing what you are asked to do at home.

It is wonderful to be part of God's family. Let's say our message together:



CHILDREN LIKE ME ARE WELCOME IN GOD'S FAMILY.

B. A-Z Blessings

In advance, write the letters of the alphabet on a sheet of paper.

Say: **Jesus showed the children that they were welcome to join His family when He told His disciples to let them come to Him. Let's go through the alphabet and see if we can find something for each letter that shows how much God loves us and wants us in His family. Encourage examples like A for air, B for bread, C for clothes, etc.**

Debriefing

Ask: **Are you welcome in God's family? How do you know?**

Just as Jesus welcomed the children when He lived on this earth, He wants us to come to Him now.

Let's sing together "Jesus Loves Me" (Sing for Joy, no. 27). Let's say our message together:



CHILDREN LIKE ME ARE WELCOME IN GOD'S FAMILY.

You Need:

- paper
- marker

4

Sharing the Lesson

Baby Joy

In advance, find out if there are any expectant mothers in your church. If not, contact a hospital or women's shelter.

Say: [Name] **is having a baby soon. We want to tell the mother and the baby how much God loves that little baby and wants him or her to be part of His family.**

What are some of the things a baby needs? Discuss and make a list. Choose some inexpensive items that the baby will need and put a star by them.

We are going to make up a care package for this mother and baby. Make a list of things and see if you can bring something next week.

Distribute the card stock and crayons/markers. **Let's make a welcome card for the baby. On your card write: CHILDREN ARE WELCOME IN GOD'S FAMILY.**

Debriefing

Admire the cards. **We will keep these cards and give them to the mother when we give her the care package.**

Has everyone got a list of the things we need? Try to bring something from the list next Sabbath.

How many of you have a younger brother or sister? Be sure to tell them that they are part of God's family.

Let's say our message together:



CHILDREN LIKE ME ARE WELCOME IN GOD'S FAMILY.

Closing

Gather in a circle and sing "His Banner Over Me Is Love" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 25). Close with prayer, asking God to help the children know that Jesus loves them and wants them in His family. Remind the children to take their "Baby Care" list home.

You Need:

- card stock
- crayons/markers
- paper
- pencils
- chalk/white board
- chalk/marker

Let the Children Come

References

Luke 18:15-17;
The Desire of Ages,
pp. 511-517

Memory Verse

“Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these” (Luke 18:16).

The Message

Children like me are welcome in God’s family.

Can you remember a time an important visitor came to your town? What did everyone do? Were there pictures in the newspaper? Did you stand and wave a flag? In our story today someone very important has just come to town. It may have happened like this . . .

“Have you heard the news? Jesus is in town.” Over and over people in the town told one another the news. “Jesus is here.” Everyone wanted to see Jesus. Men left their work and hurried to hear Him speak. Friends and families helped sick people get near Him. They had heard how He had healed others. Maybe He would heal them, too.

Everyone was amazed as they watched Jesus with the people. They saw blind men and women see again. They laughed with lame people who could leap and jump again. They saw mothers and fathers and children well again. Everyone was helped. No one was turned away.

When some of the mothers heard about Jesus, they wanted to see Him too. They wanted Him to bless their children. The children were excited! They were going to see Jesus!

Children everywhere loved Jesus. He smiled at them. He spoke kindly to them and told wonderful stories. He loved the flowers and other small gifts they brought Him.

Soon some of the mothers hur-

ried through the town. They called to their friends, “Come with us to see Jesus.” Children told their friends, and soon many were hurrying to see Jesus. But mothers with small children could not go very fast. It took time for the toddlers to walk.

Finally, all the mothers and children reached the crowd around Jesus. They stood at the back trying to look over all the tall people in their way. Some of the small children may have tried to crawl forward. But they could not get near Jesus. Everyone wanted to see Him. It seemed as if everyone was pushing, trying to get nearer. The mothers felt as if it were hopeless. Could anyone help them see Jesus? Maybe His disciples would help them.

The mothers led the children to the disciples. The disciples frowned at them. They shook their heads. “Go away. Can’t you see Jesus is busy? Can’t you see He is tired?”

Jesus saw what was happening. “Wait!” He said. “Let the little children come to Me. Don’t stop them. The kingdom of God belongs to people who are like these little children.”

The disciples and the crowd were amazed. The mothers and children hurried to Jesus. He spent a long time with them. He took the children onto His lap and blessed them. Maybe He told the mothers how much He loved the children. Maybe He talked about how they could raise their children to love God.

We don’t know what Jesus said to the mothers and children that day. But we can be sure that He was not angry at them for wanting to be with Him. He was happy! He was glad to talk with them!

Jesus always loves children and parents. And He wants you to come to Him today. He wants you to be a part of His family too.



Daily Activities

Sabbath

- This afternoon, go for a walk with your family. Imagine you are all walking to see Jesus. See who has the longest stride in your family. Who has the shortest? What is the difference?
- Thank God that you can run and walk and jump.

Sunday

- For family worship, read and discuss Luke 18:15-17. What did Jesus mean when He said the kingdom of God belongs to a child? Ask someone to pretend to be a disciple. See if you can get past them.
- Draw a picture of a child and write the memory verse on it. Cut it to make a puzzle. Put the puzzle together and say the verse. Use this to teach the verse to your family.
- Thank God for His never-ending love.

Monday

- Read and discuss Matthew 19:13-15 with your family. What did Jesus say to His disciples? Ask your parents to tell you when they learned that they were welcome in God's family.
- Make a welcome banner for your room. Use it to welcome people who come to see you.
- Thank God for welcoming children into His family.

Tuesday

- Ask your family to think of a friend who does not come to Sabbath School. Invite that person to come next Sabbath.
- Find some old magazines. Cut out pictures that tell you that God loves you. Draw a big heart and stick the pictures on it. Below the heart write "God loves me." Show it to your family.
- Sing praise songs, then thank God for giving you a family.

Wednesday

- Read and discuss Matthew 18:1-6 with your family. Why did Jesus tell His disciples that they should be like little children? Did He want them to play childish games? Did He mean something else?
- Ask your mother if you can make cookies. If possible, use people or heart cookie cutters. Share the cookies with your friends. Tell them that Jesus loves them and wants them to be part of His family too.
- Sing "The Family of God" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 139) before prayer. Pray for a friend who does not know that God loves them.

Thursday

- During family worship, read and discuss the story in Matthew 9:18, 19, 23-25. Think of other stories about Jesus helping children.
- Do something nice for someone today. Wash the dishes help look after baby brother or sister. Tell them that you love them and that they are part of God's family too.
- Use a stamp pad or finger paint to make a fingerprint family. Make one print for the head, one for the body, and two each for the arms and legs. Make as many people as are in your family.
- Ask God to bless your whole family, your aunts, uncles, cousins, and grandparents.

Friday

- Help your family get ready for Sabbath.
- For worship today, read Luke 18:15-17 and act out the story with your family. Say your memory verse together.
- Sing favorite praise songs, then thank God for the blessings of the Sabbath.