



Lesson # 13

Jesus and Me

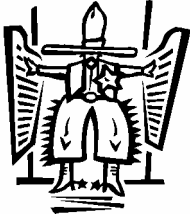


**Scripture Reference: John 3:16 and 14:6
 1 John 1:9**



Goal: Jesus is the Way to God.

From the time children begin toddling in the church nursery, we teach them that Jesus died on the cross to forgive their sins and three days later came back to life. This is the central theme in the New Testament. But as the children grow, in addition to presenting the Gospel story, we need to encourage them to enter into a personal relationship with Christ. This lesson is designed to help the children see the necessity of Jesus' death on the cross in a concrete and tangible way. By participating in the interactive activities listed, the children will also be given the opportunity to respond to Jesus' gesture of love by praying the sinner's prayer.



Opening Activity:

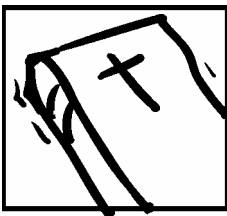
(For this activity, you will need masking tape. Ahead of time, make a large Tic-Tac-Toe grid on the floor using masking tape.)

Have the children play Human Tic-Tac-Toe. The object of the game is to get three X's or three O's in a row – vertically, horizontally, or diagonally. Place the children in two lines close to the grid. One line will be the X's; the other will be the O's. Have the X's cross their arms to form an X. Have the O's hold their arms over their heads to form an O. Each child will get a turn to go stand in a position on the grid. It is their choice where they want to stand. No one may tell them or point out to them where to stand.

Have the first person in the X line move to a place on the grid, then have the first person in the O line do the same. Continue alternately through the lines until one team wins or a draw is declared. Play additional games if desired, having the children return to stand in their lines behind any children who didn't get a turn in the previous game. You may also switch which team has X and O.

When finished, say: **When we play Tic-Tac-Toe or another game, we hope we will win, but we can't be certain we will. We may know some strategies or special moves to help us win, but we never know what moves the other player may make. So even though we hope to win, we can't be certain of it.**

There is something we can put our hope in that is certain. We can put our hope in Jesus. Today we're going to learn *why* we can put our hope in Him.



Bible Experience:

(For this activity, you will need a box of toothpicks, a bag of marshmallows, one sheet of black construction paper, two sheets of green construction paper, and Bibles.)

Gather the children in a circle on the floor or around a table. Say: **When God created people, He made them with needs. What are some things people need?** *food, shelter, clothing, air, water, family, friends, etc.* **What do you think is the most important thing people need?** *God*

People need God. They need to know God loves them. God loves them so much that He wants them to be a part of His family. However, there is a problem preventing that from happening.

Place a sheet of green construction paper on the floor. **Let's pretend this is a country. Ordinary people like us live here.**

Lay another sheet of green paper approximately 9 inches away from the first sheet parallel to it. **Over here is another country. God lives here.**

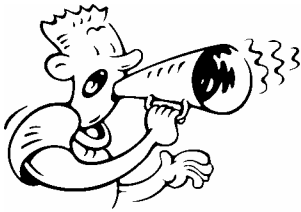
Slide a sheet of black construction paper between the two green sheets. **Between the two countries is a terrible black water river called "Sin River." This river is much too wide and the current is much too swift for anyone to swim across it.**

God loves the people. He wants them to come and join His family. The people truly want to come, but how can they when Sin River is in the way? What can we do to help them get to the other side? *build a bridge*

Have the children build a bridge using marshmallows and toothpicks. Then say: **Wow! You did a terrific job! Now the people can walk across the bridge to join God's family.**

The scene we just created was pretend. People can't build a bridge to get to God. But some things in the story are real. God really does love us, and He wants us to be members of His family. Our sins get in the way though. So God has provided a "bridge" for us. Let's look in the Bible to learn more about this "bridge."

Assist the children in looking up John 14:6; ask someone to read the verse. Then have the children turn in their Bibles to John 3:16; ask another child to read it. **Who is the "bridge" God has provided for us? Jesus is our bridge; He is our way to God. We're going to do a science experiment now to help us understand how Jesus helps us get past our sins.**



Life Application:

(For this activity, you will need a clear quart jar half-filled with water, small bottles of food coloring, ½ cup of bleach, and a large spoon for stirring.)

Set the jar of water in the middle of the table. Say: **This jar of water stands for you, for your life. You're a pretty good person. You try to be nice to others, and you live a clean life.**

Place the bottles of food coloring alongside the jar of water. **These bottles of food coloring stand for sins. What are some sins people commit? Usually when we think of sins, we think of really awful things like killing someone or stealing something. But sins can be little things too, like telling a lie, cheating on a test, or calling your brother a nasty name.**

No matter how good of persons we think we are, we all sin. For instance, even though I try to be a nice person, last week I ... Tell something you did that you shouldn't have. Pick up a bottle of food coloring and squeeze a drop into the jar of water and stir. **That was wrong, and now my life doesn't look as clean as it did.**

Have the children each think of something they have done in the past week that they shouldn't have. They don't have to say it aloud. Once they have thought of something, allow them to come one at a time and squeeze a drop of food coloring (any color) into the water and stir. It will end up looking black. **Our lives aren't looking so good anymore, are they? Our sins are dark and ugly. We deserve to be punished for them.**

Hold up container of bleach. **This bleach stands for Jesus. Jesus, who didn't have any sin in Him at all, said, "I'll take the punishment for your sins." And He was placed on a cross to die.** Pour bleach into jar of colored and stir. It will take some time, but the water will clear up.

When the water is clear, say: **Jesus died on the cross so our sins can be forgiven and we can be made clean again. But if we want Him to do those things for us, we need to tell Him. The Bible says...** Read 1 John 1:9.

Have the children close their eyes and bow their heads. **If you want Jesus to make you clean again, please silently repeat the prayer I'm going to say. If you're not ready to ask Him today, just sit quietly.** Lead the children in the salvation prayer, slowly reading one phrase at a time.

“Dear Jesus,

I’m sorry for the wrong things I’ve done. Please forgive me and help me to do what is right, not wrong. I want to be part of Your family. Come into my heart and fill it with Your love. Thank You for hearing my prayer and answering it. Thank You for letting me live forever with You in Heaven. Amen.”

Encourage any children who made a decision today to let you know before they leave at the end of Sunday School.



Closing Activity:

(For this activity, you will need a sheet of white construction paper for each child, an assortment of broken crayons with the wrappers taken off, and masking tape.)

To help the children remember the lesson, have them make a cross picture. Tear off small pieces of masking tape (about 1 inch long) and put them on the construction paper to form a large cross. The pieces of tape should overlap each other and be turned all different directions. Then lay a crayon on its side and rub it lightly over the cross. Repeat with two or three other colors. It will create a pastel effect.

When finished, say: **Today we have learned that we can put our hope in Jesus. Because He died on the cross, we can be forgiven of our sins and become members of God’s family. We can live forever with Him. Of that, we can be certain.**

The children may take their pictures home, or you may choose to display them in the classroom.