









God's Unfolding Story

Bible Story:
Where Was Jesus?
(Luke 2:41-52)

Bible Phrase: "Jesus is the Son of God" (John 20:31).

Bible Truth: God helps me know about Jesus.

-  1. God created everything
-  2. People disobeyed God.
-  3. God chose a special people.
-  4. God sent Jesus to help us.
-  5. Jesus began the Church.
-  6. Jesus is preparing heaven for us.

Suggested Schedule:

Arrival
Centers – 25 minutes
Clean-up Time – 5 minutes
Bible Story Time – 15 minutes
Craft Time – 10 minutes
Snack Time – 10 minutes
Game Time/Dismissal



Unfolding God's Story for Teachers

The Bible gives us only a few glimpses of Jesus' early years. Scholars believe there were other writings that told stories of His childhood and youth, but only those we read in Luke were selected for the Holy Scripture. So we are left to our imaginations as to what went on in the household of Mary and Joseph. We do know there were other children. One has to wonder if Jesus' divinity changed the family dynamics or if His humanness was more in the forefront. We can assume Mary wondered about the reasons for some of Jesus' actions and words. After the angel visited and His miraculous birth, Mary still did not fully understand the role of her Son. One has to imagine her tilting or shaking her head and possibly saying, humbly of course, "Really!"

Today's story is about a similar event. The family had attended a joyous celebration of the Passover Festival. Groups of people who had traveled to Jerusalem began their trips home. Jesus was 12 and had been coming to this festival every year since His birth. Surely He knew the routine. However, this year was different. He did not leave with the others. It was not until nightfall that His parents discovered He was not in the group. Panic gripped them as they returned to Jerusalem only to find Him three days later in the temple.

We do not know if God revealed Himself to Jesus in a one-time event or if gradually during those 12 years Jesus became aware of His unique Sonship. Whatever the case, at 12, Jesus knew God was His Father. This knowledge may have created questions and thoughts that led Jesus to the temple to sit among the teachers. Teachers of that day used lectures and questions as teaching tools. The teachers were amazed at His insightful questions and wise responses.

Mary and Joseph had not fully grasped all this. They just knew Jesus was missing. When He was discovered, they were surprised and somewhat

upset with His negligence. After letting Jesus know of their anxiety, He rather matter-of-factly replied, "Didn't you know I had to be in My Father's house?" That is where Mary may have said, again humbly, "Really!" In time, perhaps these events made more sense. Scripture says Jesus obeyed His parents and went home with them.

This story is important in that it gives us Jesus' revelation of Himself. He honored Mary and Joseph by obeying, but in a few more years He would begin a movement that would change the world. One can only imagine Mary said again, very, very humbly, "Really!"

Lesson Plan

Arrival

- Greet children at eye level and express how happy you are to see them.
- Be sure each child has a name tag and the security measures of your church are followed.
- Label all coats and personal belongings. Strongly encourage children who have brought items from home, such as toys and books, to place them on a shelf while they are working with other materials. Assure children their items will be safe and they can take them home at the end of the session.
- Help each child make a choice where he or she would like to begin his or her Center Time.

Center Time



Block Center

Build with Blocks

Supplies:

- Wooden blocks

What to Do: Provide a small carpet if possible. Blocks are best located in a corner of the room away from the traffic flow. Encourage preschoolers to work together to build and construct.

Link to Bible Story: As children work, look for opportunities in conversation to say the Bible Phrase or interject parts of the Bible Story. Explain that Mary and Joseph took Jesus to church; their church was called a temple.

Puzzle Center

Work Puzzles

Supplies:

- Offer a variety of non-fantasy wooden or cardboard puzzles for children to work.

What to Do:

Invite preschoolers to work puzzles. Encourage children to finish a puzzle before leaving the center. Give guidance rather than doing the puzzle for the child.

Link to Bible Story:

As children work, look for opportunities in conversation to say the Bible Phrase or briefly tell the Bible story.

Art Center

Make a Friends at Church Mural

Supplies:

- Long sheet of butcher paper or newsprint
- Crayons and washable markers
- Paper plates
- Glue
- Buttons, elbow macaroni, yarn, construction paper strips (optional)

What to Do: Tape the butcher paper to the wall or floor. Print the words "Friends at Church" across the top of the paper. Assist or show each preschooler how to trace around a paper plate. This will be the outline for their faces. Ask children to fill in with facial features. If you choose to provide the optional materials, invite children to add buttons for eyes, macaroni for eyebrows, yarn or construction paper strips for hair. Print each child's name under his or her picture. (If children would like to take home their faces, simply cut apart the mural.)

Link to Bible Story: Express when Jesus was a young boy, His parents walked to the temple in Jerusalem along with His friends and relatives. They went to the temple to worship and praise God. Jesus learned more about God at the temple. Talk about how we see our friends and learn about God when we come to church.

Home Living Center

Role Play Home Activities

Supplies:

- Small rocking chair, sink and stove unit and small table and chairs; plastic dishes, child pots and pans; doll items such as a doll bed, doll, doll bag, blanket, clothes, bottles and diapers.

What to Do: Arrange furniture in a corner of the room. Organize the dishes and other accessories. Children naturally are drawn to this center. Encourage preschoolers to pretend to get the baby doll ready to go to church.

Link to Bible Story: As children play, comment that Mary and Joseph walked to the temple each year in Jerusalem. Suggest to children they pretend to get the baby doll ready to go to church.

Bible Learning Center

Play a Feely Bag Game

Supplies:

- Large brown paper bag
- 8 to 10 small familiar objects from around the room such as toy cars, pretend food items, crayons, wooden blocks, child's scissors, toy dishes or cooking pans, paint brushes, puzzle pieces, etc.

What to Do: Cut a hole on one side, 4 inches from the bottom of the bag. The hole should be large enough for a child's hand, arm and objects to pass through. Fill the bag with the items, fold down the top and tape. Invite each child to reach inside and feel of an object. Ask questions to help them identify the object just by feeling. You could ask: "Is it hard or soft? Is it round or flat? Is it heavy or light? Do some parts of it move?" When the child thinks he or she knows what it is, have him or her remove the object through the hole. Talk about each child's guess.

Link to Bible Story: Express thanks to God for our church building where we can learn about God and enjoy activities with our friends.

Clean-up Time

Encourage preschoolers to help at clean-up time. Assign specific tasks for preschoolers to do such as placing all the crayons in the basket, throwing away the trash, gathering all the glue sticks, etc. Guide children to the Bible Story Time area.

Bible Story Time

Supplies:

- Bible
- Teaching Picture, "Where Was Jesus?" (Reproducible)
- God's Unfolding Story Cube (Reproducible/Cardstock)

Introduction

- Show the God's Unfolding Story Cube. Point to each symbol and tell *God's Unfolding Story*. (See page 1.) Encourage children to say the story with you.
- Comment to boys and girls today's Bible story is from the part **God sent Jesus to help us**. (Point to that face of the cube.)
- Express the following in your own words: Last week we heard the story of Anna and Simeon recognizing Jesus at church when He was a tiny baby. In this week's story, Jesus is older; He is about 12 years old. Every year since Jesus had been born,



He and His family had taken a trip to the temple in Jerusalem; but this year something happened that had Mary and Joseph a little worried. Listen to hear what happened.

Bible Story Where Was Jesus? (Luke 2:41-52)

When Jesus was 12 years old, His family traveled to the temple in Jerusalem. They had come to the temple every year since Jesus' birth. They went to temple to celebrate God and His blessings to their family. There were lots of people at the celebration. It was a happy time to sing and worship God in the temple.

The festival ended, and all the families started on their long trips home. Some people were walking; others perhaps were riding donkeys. Children probably were playing as they ran and skipped down the dusty road. Mary and Joseph thought Jesus was with His friends and relatives somewhere along the path.

The people walked for a whole day. It was time to rest for the night, but where was Jesus? Mary and Joseph asked their relatives, "Have you seen Jesus?" They asked some of Jesus' friends, "Have you seen Jesus?" No one had seen Jesus. Where was Jesus?

Mary and Joseph decided to return to Jerusalem. They may have asked others along the way if they had seen Jesus. They must have been tired and worried when they reached Jerusalem.

Three days later, Mary and Joseph went to the temple. Guess who they found? Jesus! He was sitting with the teachers, listening and asking questions to learn more about God. The teachers were very surprised because Jesus knew so much about God.

Mary said to Jesus, "Why didn't You leave with us? We have been looking everywhere, and we were so worried!" Jesus said to His parents, "Didn't you know I would be at the temple?"

Mary and Joseph were glad they found Jesus and that He was safe. Jesus obeyed His parents and went home. The Bible teaches us Jesus continued to grow bigger and stronger and to understand more about His heavenly Father.

Talk Time

1. Show the teaching picture for today's Bible Story. Ask the following: "Where were Jesus and His family at the beginning of the story? Did Jesus leave the festival with everyone else? How did Mary and Joseph feel when they could not find Jesus? Where was Jesus? Did Jesus obey His parents and go home with them?"
2. Read the Bible Phrase on the teaching picture. Say the phrase together. Comment that in our story, Jesus was learning more and more about God and His relationship to Him as His father.
3. Close Bible Story Time by inviting children to join you in Prayer Time. Allow any interested preschooler to pray. Conclude Prayer Time by thanking God for His Son, Jesus.
4. Direct children to Craft Time.

Craft Time

Make a Bible Phrase Visor

Supplies:

- Copies of Bible Verse Visor (Reproducible/Cardstock)
- Crayons or washable markers
- Hole puncher
- Nature stickers or foam self-adhesive stickers in various shapes
- Yarn

What to Do: Before the activity, cut out the visors, hole punch where indicated and tie a length of yarn through each hole. Invite children to color and decorate their visors. To wear, place one on each child's head and tie with the yarn.

Link to Bible Story: As children work, talk about the similarities and differences of Jesus going to the temple with His family and the children coming to church with their families. Such as temple vs. church; walking vs. riding in a car; long walk vs. short drive; both experience happy times at church; both sing and worship God; both learn more about God.

Snack Time

Be sure to wash hands or use hand sanitizer. Say a thank-you prayer to God for the snack. When snack time has ended, encourage preschoolers to help with cleaning up.

Game Time/Dismissal

Supplies:

- Copies of Footprints (Reproducible)
- Tape (optional)

What to Do: Before the game, hide footprints around the room or tape footprints to furniture or floors. Ask children to sit in a circle around you. Explain that you have hidden 10 footprints around the room. Dismiss children to find the footprints and return with them to the circle. Have children put the footprints in numerical order. Next, invite volunteers to choose a footprint. Ask children the questions on the footprints and see if they remember the answers from today's Bible Story.

Dismiss children as parents arrive. Be sure to follow the security procedures of your church.





Resources and Supplies

New Testament Unit 1: Jesus Is God's Son
Lesson 3: Where Was Jesus?

Standard Art Supplies

(Supplies that are generally in the room)

- Washable markers
- Crayons
- Child scissors
- Playdough and accessories
- Drawing paper
- Easel (optional)
- Glue/glue sticks
- Tempera paint, 4 colors
- Tape/masking tape
- Pencils/colored pencils
- Hole punch
- Teacher scissors
- Stapler/staples
- Permanent markers
- Watercolors
- Paintbrushes
- Yarn

Standard Equipment

(Equipment that is generally in the room)

- Small beanbag for Bible Story Time
- Assorted wooden/cardboard puzzles
- Set of wooden blocks
- Small cars and trucks
- Doll bed
- Baby doll (soft plastic)
- Stove/sink unit
- Play dishes/pots and pans
- Small table and chairs
- Small carpet for block area
- Play food items
- Storage shelf for blocks
- Tables and chairs for art, puzzles, and Bible Learning Center
- CD player/Children's Worship CDs

Reproducibles

(Included with the lesson plan downloads)

- "Bible Phrase Visor," 1 copy per child
- Game: "Footprints"

- Teaching Picture "Where Was Jesus?," 1 copy per class
- God's Unfolding Story Cube (Cardstock) 1 copy per class
- Parent Page, 1 copy per child

Optional: Coloring Page: "Where is Jesus?"

Additional Art Materials

- Long sheet of butcher paper or newsprint
- Paper plates
- Buttons
- Elbow macaroni
- Construction paper
- Large brown paper bag
- Nature stickers or self-adhesive foam shapes



Jesus is the Son of God. John 20:31

1.

How old was Jesus when he traveled to Jerusalem? (12 years old)

2.

The people traveled to the temple to celebrate God and His blessings. Do you think they had a happy time?

(Yes)

3.

When Jesus and his family started home, was Jesus with them? (No)

4.

Did his parents know that Jesus was not with them? (No)

Footprints

Instructions: Copy one set of 10 footprints per class. Cut out.

NT01 Lesson 3 Hours A & B Game Time

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5.

How do you think Mary and Joseph felt when they could not find Jesus?

(Worried, sad)

6.

Where did Mary and Joseph find Jesus? (In the temple)

7.

What was Jesus doing?
(Talking to the teachers)

8.

How do you think Mary and Joseph felt when they found Jesus? (Happy)

Footprints

Instructions: Copy one set of 10 footprints per class. Cut out.

NT01 Lesson 3 Hours A & B Game Time

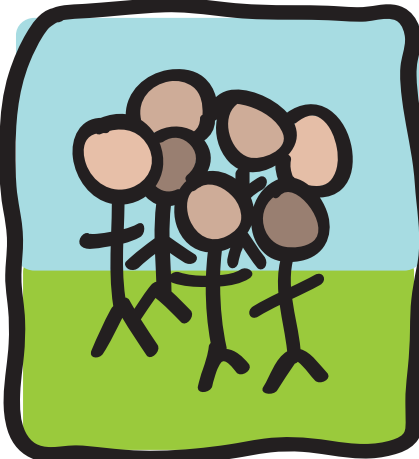
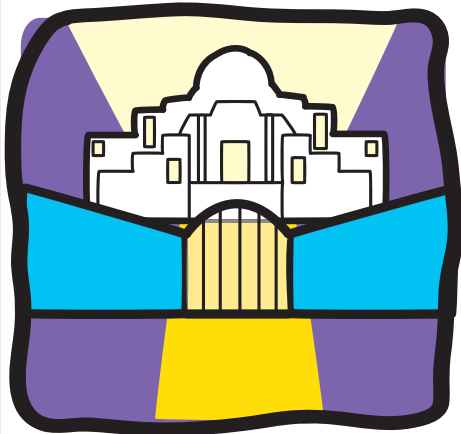
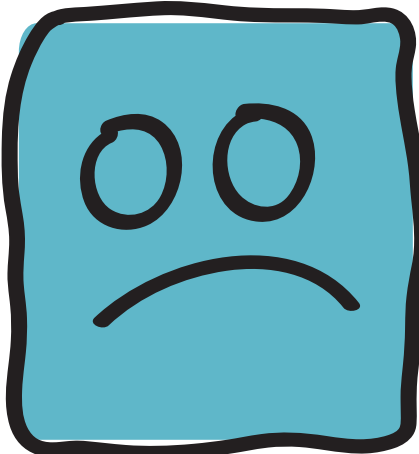
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9.

Did Jesus obey his parents and
go with them? (Yes)

10.

What is our Bible phrase for today?
(Jesus is the Son of God. John 20:31)



God's Unfolding Story Cube
Instructions: Cut out on dotted lines, fold on solid lines. Glue or tape to form a cube.