



God's Unfolding Story

Bible Story: Paul Learned About Jesus (Acts 9:1-20)

Bible Phrase: "People at the church told other people about Jesus" (Acts 5:42).

Bible Truth: God wants me to learn 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

Please read Acts 9:1-20. The story of Paul's conversion from an ardent persecutor of Christians to the central figure in the Christian mission to Gentiles cannot be treated lightly. The entire world has benefited from his Christian witness, his intense life, and the words he penned in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Paul was initially known as Saul. He was born in Tarsus, the capital of Cilicia, a city rich in culture and academics. The university in Tarsus rivaled other universities in the area of learning. Saul also received training in Jerusalem in the rabbinical academy under Gamaliel, the most competent Jewish scholar of the day. Saul embodied the teachings of the Pharisees and became a member of this important religious party.

A strong adherent of the Mosaic law and the Jewish tradition, Saul saw Christianity as a great threat to his beliefs. He took action, imprisoning Christians and even threatening their lives. Saul was the only reported Pharisee to oppose Christianity so vehemently. Such actions reflected a restless spirit. He hastened to get the necessary documents to continue his crusade. Whom else could he stop? Yet the belief he was opposing would, remarkably and in God's timing, capture his own heart and change him forever.

Jesus would do whatever it would take to get Saul's attention. One day as Saul was heading toward Damascus, a flash of light from heaven surrounded him, and he fell to the ground. A voice asked, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" (Acts 9:4). Jesus Himself was addressing him! One commentary suggests Saul knew exactly what Jesus meant. Jesus told Saul to go into the city and wait for further instructions. The light had blinded him, so he had to be led to Damascus. He ate and drank nothing for three days.

Saul was not privy to how long he would wait, and waiting probably was not his strong suit. Still, as he waited, he surely thought, meditated, and

reflected on his life, taking seriously the voice from heaven.

During a three-day period he and a believer named Ananias had visions that they would meet. In sheer obedience Ananias went to Saul. When he laid his hands on Saul, Saul could see once again. And now he could see with spiritual eyes as well. At last Saul had peace in his life, as well as new insight and power. Right away he began to declare that Jesus was God's Son (see v. 20). Released from the chains of his religion and freed to a new life in Christ, Saul would make an extraordinary difference in this world. He was sold out to Christ. "For me, living is Christ and dying is gain," he would write (Phil. 1:21). Does Jesus mean as much to us? We must ask ourselves these questions: "Am I paying close attention to Christ? Do I love Him more than I love life, as Paul did?"

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
- Transportation toys

What to Do: Provide a small carpet if possible. Blocks are best located in a corner of the room away from the traffic flow.

Link to the Bible Story: As children build, be alert to opportunities to share the Bible Phrase or tell a part of the Bible story.

Art Center:

Marble Paint

Supplies:

- Black construction paper
- Yellow Paint
- 3 or 4 marbles
- Box lid or plastic shoebox or dishpan

What to Do: Cut construction paper the size of the bottom of the box, lid, or dishpan. Pour a small amount of paint in the center of the paper. Ask child to toss in the marbles over the paint and then roll the box back and forth. The marbles will make a design on the paper.

Link to the Bible Story: As children work, express that the yellow paint is a reminder of something from our Bible story. "In our story a man named Paul was walking along a road when Jesus caused a very bright light come down from heaven and surround him. The light was so bright it blinded him. Then Paul heard Jesus' voice speak to him. Paul became a devoted follower of Jesus."

Bible Learning Center:

Going to Church

Supplies:

- Copies of Activity Page "Going to Church" (Reproducible)
- Crayons or washable markers

What to Do: Invite children to look at each picture on the path to church. Decide if the object is something they would see on their way to church or would not see. Explain that if they would see the object on their way to church, they should draw a circle around the object, and if they would not see it they should draw an "X" over the object.

Link to the Bible Story: Express to preschoolers that we come to church to learn more about God and Jesus. Read the Bible Phrase and talk about the people in your church who help them learn about Jesus.

Home Living Center:

Role Play

Supplies:

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

What to Do: Home living items will encourage children to role play home activities such as cooking, cleaning, and caring for the baby.

Link to the Bible Story: As children play, look for opportunities to engage them in conversations about the Bible story, Bible Phrase, and Bible truth.

Puzzle Center:

Work Puzzles

Supplies:

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

What to Do: Encourage children to finish a puzzle before leaving the center. Offer guidance rather than doing the puzzle for the child.

Link to the Bible Story: As children work, take advantage of opportunities to say the Bible Phrase or to briefly tell the Bible story.

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 "Paul Learned about 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. (Refer to page 1.) Encourage children to say the six points with you.
- Comment to boys and girls that today's story is from the fifth point, **Jesus Began the Church**. (Point to that symbol on the cube.)
- Pause for a moment as if you are getting ready for the story. (Children will probably start shifting or even talking, which is fine.) Without saying anything and without frightening the children, do something to grab their attention such as: (1) bang two wooden blocks together

fairly loudly; (2) blow a whistle; (3) drop a book loudly; (4) pop a paper bag filled with air; or (5) holler "Wow!"

- Then ask, "What did you want to do when you heard that? Did you want to stop what you were doing and listen to find out what it was all about?"
- Express the following in your own words: "One day there was a man who needed to stop what he was doing and listen to Jesus. He needed to hear from Jesus because he was hurting Jesus by hurting His followers. So Jesus did something to get his attention. Listen to find out what Jesus did and how the people in the church helped."

Bible Story

Paul Learned about Jesus (Acts 9:1-20)

A long time ago, when the church was just getting started, there lived a young man named Paul [call him Paul throughout]. Paul wanted to please God but didn't understand who Jesus was. He did not believe Jesus was God's Son. He even tried to stop people from loving and following Jesus. He would travel from town to town and put people who loved Jesus in jail.

But Jesus loved Paul and wanted him to believe in Him and follow Him. Jesus did something very unusual to get Paul's attention. One day when Paul was walking on a road to another town, suddenly, a very, very bright light from heaven flashed around him. It was so bright that Paul fell to the ground. Then he heard a voice. The voice belonged to Jesus! Jesus said to Paul, "Paul, why are you trying to stop people from learning about Me? Why are you hurting people who are following Me?"

Paul cried out, "Lord, is that you?"

Jesus answered, "Yes, Paul, I am Jesus." Do you think Jesus had Paul's attention? Jesus told him to go to the next town and wait for more instructions.

The bright light had blinded Paul, so his friends had to lead him into the town. Paul obeyed Jesus and waited in the town, and he prayed. After three days a man named Ananias came to see Paul. Jesus had asked Ananias to go to Paul. When Ananias laid his hands on Paul, Paul could see!

Paul stayed in the city for a while, and he learned more about Jesus from the people in the church and the other disciples. Paul learned that Jesus loved him and had an important job for him to do. Paul spent the rest of his life telling others about Jesus.

Talk Time

1. Show the teaching picture for today's Bible story. Ask: "At the beginning of the story, did Paul love Jesus? Did Jesus love Paul? How did Jesus get Paul's attention? At the end of the story do you think Paul loved Jesus? How do we know he did?"
2. Say today's Bible Phrase together, "People at the church told other people about Jesus" (see Acts 5:42). Express to boys and girls that God loves each one of them and wants them to learn about Jesus, just as Paul learned about Him. Explain: "Parents, teachers, and pastors in church help us learn about Jesus." (If you have pictures of your church staff, show those to boys and girls and explain their roles.)
3. Close the Bible Story Time in prayer, thanking God for people in the church who help everyone learn about Jesus.

Craft Time

Make a Thank You Card

Supplies:

- Copies of "Thank You Card " (1 copy per child)
- Crayons or washable markers
- Stickers

What to Do: Invite children to draw a picture of themselves at church or a picture of someone at church who helps them learn about Jesus. Print the name of the person for whom the card has been made. Many preschoolers can sign their names. Assist in folding the cards. Children can decorate the outside of the cards with stickers and drawings.

Link to Bible Story: As children work, talk about the different people in your church that help them learn about Jesus.

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

Can You Guess?

Supplies:

- None needed

What to Do: Ask children to form a circle in the game time area. Choose a child to sit in the center of the group to begin the game. Have the child close his/her eyes. The teacher points to any child who wants to play, and that child stands behind the child in the center and says, "Jesus loves you." The teacher then asks, "Who is your friend?" The child tries to guess who was speaking from the sound of the child's voice. The one who spoke then becomes the one in the center.

At the close of the activity, remind boys and girls that in today's Bible story, Paul was blinded by a very bright light and Jesus spoke to him. Conclude that Paul learned Jesus loved him and wanted him to tell others about Him.

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





Resources and Supplies

New Testament Unit 10: Jesus Grew the Church
Lesson 1: Paul Learned about 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)

Activity Page "Going to Church" (1 copy per child)
"Thank You Card" (1 copy per child)
Teaching Picture "Paul Learned about Jesus" (1 copy per class)
"God's Unfolding Story Cube" (Cardstock—1 copy per class)
Parent Page (1 copy per child)

Additional Art and Bible Learning Materials

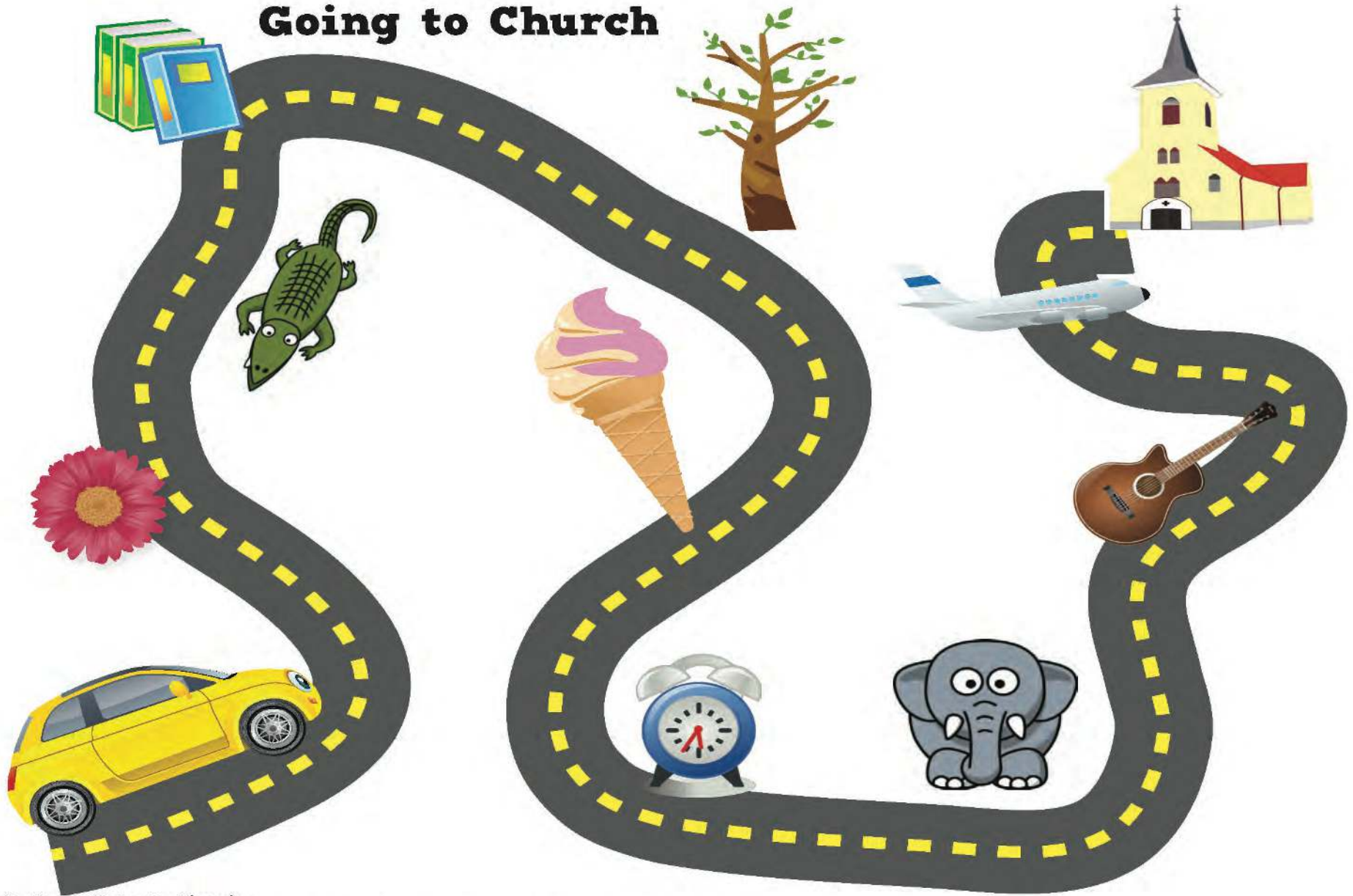
Black construction paper – 1 per child
3 or 4 marbles
Small box lid or plastic shoebox or dishpan
Yellow tempera paint

Additional Craft Time Materials

Stickers – Non fantasy, such as natural world, Bible time, people, shapes



Going to Church



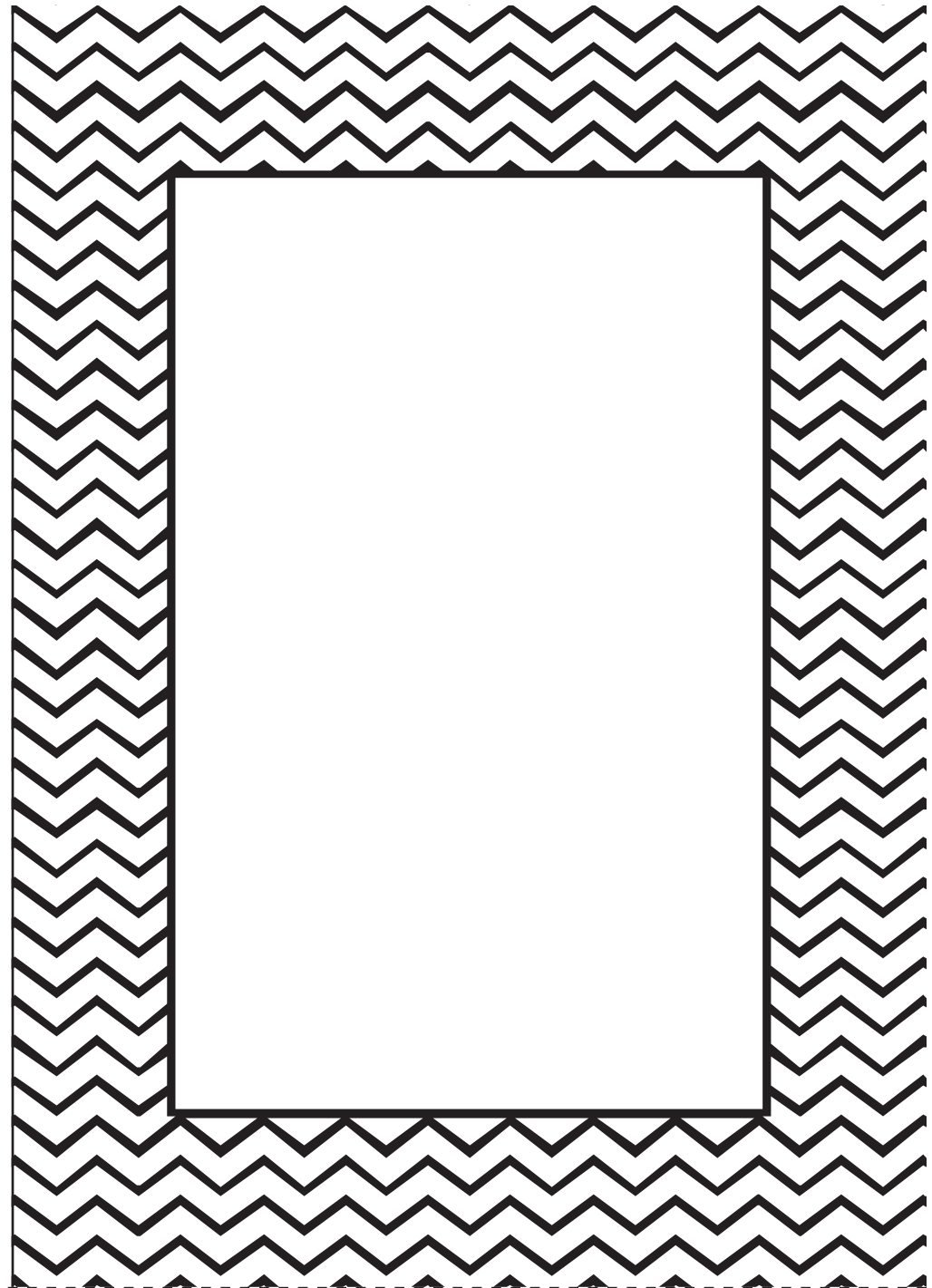
Activity Page: Going to Church

Instructions: Copy 1 sheet per child. Invite children to look at each picture on the path to church. Decide if the object is something they might see on their way to church. Draw a circle around objects they might see and draw an "X" over objects they would not see.

Dear _____

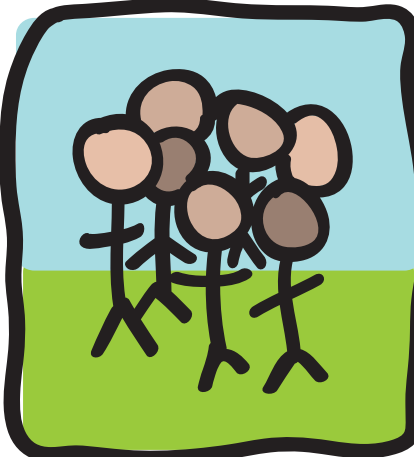
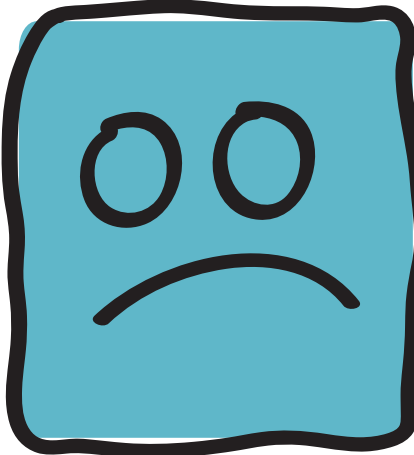
Thank you for
teaching me about
Jesus.

Love,



Craft: Thank You Card

Instructions: Copy 1 sheet per child. Invite children to draw a picture of themselves at church or a picture of someone at church that helps them learn about Jesus. Print the name of the person for whom the card is made. Decorate the outside of the card with stickers.



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



People at the church told other people about Jesus.
Acts 5:42