

THEME 1

We Are God's Gifts

The first theme in *A Time of Wonder* is designed to help children celebrate being unique and special. Each person has different gifts and talents to share. When we share our gifts and talents we bring glory to God.

Students begin this theme by celebrating ways they are special. Unit 2 looks closely at the five senses and how to use them as God wants us to. The changes we experience as we grow are highlighted in Unit 3. Unit 4 focuses on how children can contribute to others. Stories of Zacchaeus, David and the imagery of seeds are springboards for other activities. The theme concludes with Unit 5, a look at the fruit of the Spirit.

Theme 1 includes the following units:

- Unit 1: I Am Special
- Unit 2: The Five Senses
- Unit 3: We Change and Grow
- Unit 4: What Can We Share?
- Unit 5: The Fruit of the Spirit

Kindergarten—Unit 1

I Am Special

The transition to kindergarten is a momentous occasion for many young children. This beginning unit helps children feel valued and loved by their teachers, parents, and God. They will learn to know one another as they draw pictures and tell about themselves, their families, the adults who love them, and their young images of God. Teachers will learn a great deal about students' lives outside the school setting. We are each precious in God's sight!

LESSONS

1. Parable of the Lost Sheep
2. The Prodigal Son
3. Jesus Blesses the Children
4. Parable of the Lost Coin

Unit 1: I Am Special

Unit Information

SUMMARY

This unit is geared toward helping students discover who they are. The lessons also remind children that they are valued by their families, other adults, and God. Because each one was created in the image of God, they are all precious and valuable persons. Such feelings of value and self-worth are crucial at the beginning of the kindergarten year. Each student is an important member of the classroom community.

KEY BIBLE TEXTS

- Genesis 1:26
- Psalm 68:6
- Psalm 139:13-16
- Isaiah 43:1-7
- Ephesians 6:1-4
- 1 Corinthians 12:12-26
- Luke 15:1-32
- Mark 10:13-16

BIBLICAL BACKGROUND

Parable of the Lost Sheep

From the time people were first created in God's image, we have seen that God cares about us in a special way and that each of us is important. In the Old Testament, we find stories of God reaching out to people in many ways.

God is caretaker of both universe and individual. The psalmist acknowledged that God knew all about him—even to the depths of his being. Isaiah shares another picture of our importance to God. God says, "You are precious and honored in my sight," Isaiah 43:4. If God, who is greater than all else, has chosen to love us, then we are indeed special. First Corinthians shows that each of us is part of a body with a special function. Each function is important to the whole body.

The Prodigal Son

In Bible times, family was important. The many lists of genealogies in the Bible document that people knew their relationships to their ancestors and their standing in their families.

The notion of "family" was much broader than a nucleus of parents and children. When people discussed their families, they included their extended families, which spanned generations. David once wrote: "God sets the lonely in families," Psalm 68:6a.

Jesus Blesses the Children

In this story, the disciples failed to understand the value Jesus placed on children when it came to God's kingdom. Jesus wanted his disciples to understand that the kingdom of God was not something to be achieved, but was a gift to those who had simple faith.

Parable of the Lost Coin

Luke is the only gospel that contains this story. For the average woman of this time, 10 drachmas would have taken many months to save. This parable has a message similar to the parable of the lost sheep. God knows when we are lost and persistently reaches out to keep us close. We can know that God loves us because God cares enough about us to know what happens to us.

ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDINGS

- God created each of us to be unique and special.
- I am part of a family that loves me.
- I am part of a broader community that loves me.
- God loves each one of us.

WORSHIP / BIBLE MEMORY

Each day before you begin the lesson, light a candle (or use a battery-powered light) and call the children to worship with these activities:

1. Introduce the Bible memory verse by saying, “This year you are going to learn some important words from the Bible. We will practice these words here at school, and your parents will also help you learn them at home.” Read Psalm 139:14.

“The person who wrote this verse was thankful that God made him in such a wonderful way. He knew that God loved him and had done many other wonderful things. Say the words of the verse after me:

“I praise you . . . because I am fearfully and wonderfully made . . . your works are wonderful . . . I know that full well . . . Psalm 139:14.

“This verse helps you know how special you are.”

2. Practice the Bible memory verse with these motions:

I praise you (*hands lifted up*)
because I am fearfully and wonderfully made (*cross arms, hug self*)
your works are wonderful (*arms outstretched*)
I know that full well (*hands on top of head*)

3. Songs. Sing these words to the tune of “Freres Jacques”:

I am special (2 x) (*point to self*)
You are too (2 x) (*point to someone else*)
We are all God’s children (2 x) (*point heavenward*)
Hallelu, Hallelu (*raise hands*)

From *Jubilee Songbook*:

Jesus Loves Me, #7
Jesus Loves the Little Children, #14
God’s Family, #17
I Am Special, #22

4. Prayer. Each day thank God for something different:

For creating each one of us unique—Lesson 1
For giving us families who love us—Lesson 2

For giving us other adults who love us—Lesson 3
For loving us—Lesson 4

ASSESSING TEACHING / LEARNING

This unit focuses on giving students concrete messages that they are valuable and lovable. Observing the children and reflecting on their talk will provide you with information to assess whether they are internalizing what they are experiencing in this unit. Ask yourself, could the children easily think of ways they are special and of people who love them?

MEMORY PASSAGES

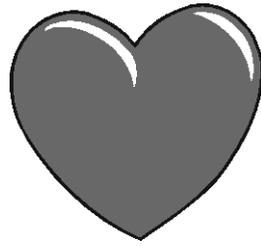
This unit offers the following verses for students to memorize: Psalm 139:14 and Isaiah 43:4 (*bonus*). You will find them in large format on pages 47-48, to copy as take-home sheets for students.



I praise you
because I am fearfully and
wonderfully made;
your works are wonderful,
I know that full well.

Psalm 139:14





You are precious
and honored in my sight,
and...I love you.

Isaiah 43:4



I Am Special

LESSON 1: PARABLE OF THE LOST SHEEP

Objective

Children will understand that God knows and values them as individuals. They will be able to tell one way they are unique.

Key Concepts

- God created me different from anyone else.
- I am glad to be me.

Text: Luke 15:1-7

Estimated Lesson Time: 30-40 minutes

Materials

- Props for telling Bible story: colored cloth, rock, toy sheep, people story figures
- Name cards (1 for each child)
- *Jubilee Songbook*
- White 9" x 12" construction paper, 1 sheet per child*
- Crayons, markers, paint, or other materials for self-portraits
- For fingerprint art: newspapers, art shirts, white paper, washable ink pads
- For Extend the Lesson, option two: cardboard strips (1 per child), marker, zip-close plastic bags
- For Extend the Lesson, option three: toy sheep
- For Extend the Lesson, option four: *I Like Me* by Nancy Carlson (Viking, 1997); and/or *Are You My Friend?* by Janice Derby (Herald Press, 1993)

* *The children will make an "I Am Special" booklet over the next four lessons. If you wish, you can staple four pieces of construction paper together ahead of time to form a booklet.*

Teacher Preparation

- Practice telling the story, using the props.
- Print each child's name on a name card (or use name cards already prepared for the classroom).
- If using Extend the Lesson options, prepare according to instructions on p. 51.

INTRODUCING THE LESSON

1. Worship and Bible memory. See Unit Information, page 45.

2. Use children's name cards to "call" them to the story area. Explain, "I'm going to show you something that each one of you owns all to yourself. It's something that makes you special." Hold up each name, one at a time. As each child recognizes his or her name, have the child come and sit down. *(If two children have the same first name, include their last names.)*

LESSON STEPS

1. Tell the Parable of the Lost Sheep. You will need a colored cloth, a rock, several toy sheep, and story figures of people. Tie a cloth around one figure's head, to resemble a shepherd.

Lay down the cloth to define the story area and direct children's eyes to your movements. Set several sheep to one side of cloth; put one sheep at opposite corner, "hiding" behind a rock. Stand the shepherd beside the large group of sheep.

Jesus told this story . . . There was a shepherd who took care of many sheep. (*Move shepherd around group of sheep.*) He had 100 sheep! The shepherd knew each of his sheep by name. When he wanted one of his sheep to come to him, he called its name. (*Have shepherd call for "Wooly" and move one sheep to his side.*)

One day, the shepherd counted his sheep—97, 98, 99 . . . Oh no! One of his sheep was missing. *I still have 99 sheep*, he thought. *Maybe that's enough.* But no, this shepherd cared about every single one of his sheep. He knew that "White Cloud" was gone. White Cloud was just a little sheep, but she was just as important to the shepherd as all of the other sheep.

"White Cloud! White Cloud!" he called. (*Move shepherd away from group of sheep, as if looking.*) But White Cloud didn't come. Where was she? The shepherd had to find her. So he packed some food and water and went looking for his lost sheep. He looked everywhere. (*Move shepherd to several different spots.*) No one had seen her.

(*Move shepherd to rock.*) Finally, the shepherd found White Cloud behind a rock. She had been frightened and alone! She gave a weak little "baa-aa." She was so happy to hear her shepherd's voice! The shepherd picked up the little sheep and carried her home on his shoulders. (*Help shepherd to "carry" sheep.*)

When he got home, the shepherd invited all his friends and neighbors to a party. (*Move other figures next to shepherd and sheep.*) He wanted everyone to know how happy he was that White Cloud was safe with him.

2. Wonder about the story, using the following statements:

- I wonder how the shepherd could tell his sheep from each other.
- I wonder why the shepherd made the dangerous trip to look for White Cloud.
- I wonder if God knows my name.

Then pray, "Thank you God for knowing our names. We are glad you made each one of us different and that you love each one of us. Amen."

3. Teach the song, "The Lord Is My Shepherd" (p. 20), or "Jesus Is My Shepherd Friend" (p. 21) from *Jubilee Songbook*. You may listen to the song(s) on the accompanying cassette or CD.

4. Play the game "Alike and Different." Ask one child to look at all the other children and find someone who is like her or him in some way. The chosen child stands next to the first child and tells how they are alike (*for example, "Joe is like me, because we both have brown hair."*) Then the first child tells how he or she and the chosen child are different (*"Joe and I are different, because his hair is straight. Mine is curly."*) Continue until everyone has had a turn.

5. "I Am Special" booklets. Have children begin their booklets with a self-portrait

page. Encourage them to include something in the picture that makes them special. Have them write their names on the portrait, if they can.

6. Fingerprint art. Have inkpads and blank paper available for children who finish earlier than others to make fingerprint pictures. Cover children's clothing with paint shirts. As children work, point out how each person's fingerprints are different. *Note: This activity may be more appealing to students than the self-portrait, so be sure to encourage them to take their time with their portraits.*

EXTEND THE LESSON

(These activities will extend the lesson to longer than 30-40 minutes.)

- **Trace hands and feet.** Have each child trace around a hand on the same sheet of paper as a friend. Are their hands the same size? If you're comfortable with children removing their shoes, have them trace their feet, too.
- **Name puzzles.** Ahead of time, write each child's name on a cardboard strip, then cut into pieces to make a puzzle. Put pieces into zip-close plastic bags and label with children's names. Distribute the puzzles and let the children put them together. If some finish before others, they may help solve a friend's puzzle.
- **Play "The Lost Sheep" game.** Have one child go out of the room while another hides a toy sheep. When the first child returns, have children take turns giving clues about where to find the sheep. This may be hard for the children to do without giving away too much. Model clues such as, "It's close to a window," or "It's under one of the desks."
- **Read books.** Read *I Like Me* by Nancy Carlson, then list together on chart paper "Things God and I like about me." Ask each child for one suggestion: "I am nice—Jenna," "I can run fast—Lucas," etc. Read in addition, or instead, *Are You My Friend?* by Janice Derby. Discuss how God made people different and loves each one of them. We can love all people, too.
- **Count 100 things.** Have the children notice how 99 things compare to the one sheep that was lost.

I Am Special

LESSON 2: THE PRODIGAL SON

Objective

Children will understand that they are part of a family on earth and also part of a spiritual family. They will hear that God and our families love us even when we do bad things.

Key Concepts

- God gave us families so we could care for one another.
- My family is unique and special.
- God, like a loving parent, loves us no matter what we do.

Text: Luke 15:11-32

Estimated Lesson Time: 30-40 minutes

Materials

- Bible
- Props for Bible story: headcloth, suitcase, bag of coins (real or pretend), bucket with pretend “pig food,” walking stick
- *Jubilee Songbook*
- Large tablet on easel, marker, correction tape
- “I Am Special” booklets *OR* white 9" x 12" construction paper (1 sheet per child)
- Art media (crayons, markers, paint, etc.) for family portraits
- For Extend the Lesson, option one: picture book(s) about a family

Teacher Preparation

- Practice telling the Bible story with props.
- Think of a story from your childhood for Lesson Step 5 (p. 54).

INTRODUCING THE LESSON

1. Worship and Bible memory. See Unit Information, page 45.

2. Learn a finger play. Teach the following finger play and repeat it several times.

(Consecutively raise fingers of one hand.)

This is the father, who cares for you;

This is the mother who loves you, too;

This is the brother, so big and tall;

This is the sister, who plays with her ball;

This is the baby, the littlest of all.

They love each other, big and small.

LESSON STEPS

1. Tell the story of the Prodigal Son. Use the props to tell this story in first person, taking on the role of the Prodigal Son. Before you put on the headcloth, explain that this is a story Jesus told about a young man. Show the children where it is found in the Bible (Luke 15:11-32).

I grew up as part of a family. I had a brother, and a father who loved me very much. I was happy. But when I grew up, I wanted to go and have some fun. I wanted to go to parties, eat a lot of good food, and see the world. But I needed money to do all these things. Where would I get money? Hmm . . .

My father had a lot of money. He had already told me that he would give me half of everything he had. Maybe if I asked him, he would give it to me now. So I went to my father and said, "Father, I want to go see the world. Please give me the money you promised me." My father kept his promise and gave me the money. (*Pick up bag of coins and shake it.*) It was a lot of money! My father was a rich man. I took the money and my walking stick (*pick up walking stick*) and everything I owned (*pick up suitcase*), and I set out to see the world. (*Walk around a little.*)

I traveled far away from home. I had lots of money, so I didn't need to get a job. I spent my money on lots of good food. (*Take out most of the coins and pretend to buy things, laying the money down.*) I bought my friends presents. I bought myself fancy clothes.

But then something bad happened. The place where I was living had no rain for a long time. It was hard to grow food, and it cost lots of money to buy food. I had spent all my money on fancy things and had none left to buy food. (*Take out few remaining coins and lay them down. Then shake money bag upside-down, to show it is empty.*) I had no money left to buy food. I needed a job to earn some money.

The only job I could find was feeding a farmer's pigs, out in the field. One day I took the pigs their food (*pick up bucket*). I was so hungry that even the pigs' food looked good to me. (*Pick up pieces of "pig food" and look at them longingly.*) I sat on the ground and thought about my family. My father had many workers on his farm. His workers had more to eat than I did right now! Maybe my father would hire me to be one of his workers, and I would have food to eat. I would go home and tell him I was sorry. Maybe he would give me a job. So I got up, quit my job feeding the pigs, and set off for home. (*Walk around, but leave suitcase behind.*)

As I came close to my house, I saw my father. He was running to meet me! He put his arms around me and kissed me. I said, "Father, I did bad things. I took the money you gave me and wasted it. I don't deserve to be your son anymore."

But my father told his workers, "Bring out a robe, the best one we have." The workers put the robe on me and put a ring on my finger and new sandals on my feet. (*Pretend to smooth your robe and admire your hands and feet.*) My father said, "I thought my son was lost, but he is found! I thought he was dead, but he is alive!" And then we had a big party—in honor of *me*! My father still loved me, even though I had spent all his money and done bad things.

2. Wonder about the story. Explain that Jesus told this story to show people what God is like. God always loves us, no matter what we do. Then wonder about the following statements:

- I wonder how the father felt when the son asked him for the money.

- I wonder if it was hard for the son to go back and say he was sorry.
- I wonder how God feels when I do bad things.
- I wonder what I can do when I feel sorry.

3. Pray together: “Thank you, God, for the Bible and the stories Jesus told. Thank you for loving us, even when we need to say we are sorry. Amen.”

4. Teach the song, “God’s Family,” page 26 in the *Jubilee Songbook*.

5. Share a story from your childhood about when you did something naughty and your mom and dad loved you anyway (*or share another true story*). Ask children to share some ways they know their moms and dads love them. Make a list on a large piece of paper. This would be a good time to prompt students’ learning of the words “my,” “mom,” and “dad.” Invite children to take turns writing these words when they appear in the list.

6. “I Am Special” booklets. Help children to do the second page of their booklet. Pass out single sheets or stapled booklets and invite children to draw their families. Make sure they include all members of the family and write all the names they can, even if they can just write one letter. If some finish early, ask them to add details that tell others what their families like to do.

7. Share the pictures. If there is time, invite children to share about their pictures with a partner. If the group is really patient, allow individuals to share with the whole group.

EXTEND THE LESSON

(These activities will extend the lesson to longer than 30-40 minutes.)

- **Read and compare.** There are many picture books about families. Read one to the children and then have them compare their families to the one in the story.
- **Love and forgiveness.** Role-play some situations where children might need to ask for forgiveness, either from a family member or a classmate. Ask a child to play each role in the situation. For example:

Your sister keeps a set of markers in her room. You sneak into her room and use them, but accidentally leave the cap off of one marker. When your sister asks if you used her markers, what do you say? Will your sister still love you, even though you ruined her marker?

Your dad asks you to clean up your toys before you go to your friend’s house to play. You don’t want to do it. You go to your friend’s house without picking up the toys. When you get home, you feel bad and go to your dad. What do you say? Will your dad still love you?

You are mean to your friend at school. You don’t feel like playing with your friend and tell him/her to go away. Your friend looks sad. Later, you want to play with your friend. What will you say? Will s/he forgive you?

Make up some of your own situations that apply to your class.

- **Adapt “The Farmer in the Dell”** with these words that remind children of how they are part of families:

The child in the family, the child in the family
Hi-ho the derry-o, the child in the family.

The child takes a mom, the child takes a mom
Hi-ho the derry-o, the child takes a mom.

The mom takes a child . . .

The child takes a sister . . .

The sister takes a dad . . .

The dad takes a child . . .

The child takes a grandma . . .

The grandma takes a grandchild . . .

The grandchild takes a grandpa . . .

The grandpa takes a grandchild . . .

The child takes an aunt . . .

The aunt takes a niece . . .

The niece takes an uncle . . .

The uncle takes a nephew . . .

I Am Special

LESSON 3: JESUS BLESSES THE CHILDREN

Objective

Children will understand that Jesus cared about children. They will be able to tell about some adults who care for them.

Key Concepts

- Jesus loves children.
- I am part of a broader community that loves me.

Text: Mark 10:13-16

Estimated Lesson Time: 30-40 minutes

Materials

- *Jubilee Songbook*
- Chart paper, markers, white cover-up tape
- “I Am Special” booklets *OR* white 9" x 12" construction paper (1 sheet per child)
- Art media (crayons, markers, paint, etc.) for booklet page
- Books about adults in the community, such as doctors, nurses, teachers, etc.
- For Extend the Lesson, option one: *Mama, Do You Love Me?* by Barbara Joosse (Scholastic, 1991), *Papa, Do You Love Me?* by Barbara Joosse (Chronicle Books, 2005), or *Love You Forever* by Robert Munsch (Firefly Books, 1995)
- For Extend the Lesson, option two: books for “lap reading” (see p. 58)
- For Extend the Lesson, option three: card stock, stickers, markers

Teacher Preparation

- Plan how to tell the story with children acting the parts.
- If using Extend the Lesson, option two, invite grandparents, nursing home residents, or a class of older children to read with your students.

INTRODUCING THE LESSON

1. Worship and Bible memory. See Unit Information, page 45.

2. Read the following Who Am I? riddles. Pause after each clue to see if children can guess who the person is.

I care about you. I go to your church. I know a lot about the Bible. I preach.
Who am I? (*pastor*)

I care about you. I help you stay healthy. You come see me when you are sick.
Who am I? (*doctor*)

I care about you. I see you almost every day. I help you learn things. I have a classroom. Who am I? (*teacher*)

I care about you. You might stay at my house at times. I am part of your family. I am older than your parents. Who am I? (*Grandma and/or Grandpa*)

I care about you. I go to your church. I like children. I teach children Bible stories. Who am I? *(Sunday school teacher)*

I care about you. I give you hugs. I have known you since you were born. I live at your house. Who am I? *(Mom and Dad)*

Say: "There are lots of adults who love you. Today we will act out a story that tells how much Jesus loves children, too."

LESSON STEPS

1. Tell the story, "Jesus Blesses the Children," acting it out with the children. Choose students to be Jesus (someone who won't act silly), parents, children, and disciples. Use everyone. Place Jesus in a chair in the center of your story area, the parents and children to one side, and the disciples to the other side. Narrate the story in the following way:

One day, some parents brought their children to Jesus. *(Parents and children move toward Jesus.)*

They were excited about having Jesus touch their children. They had heard many wonderful things about Jesus. He could heal sick people. He told people the right way to live. *(Parents and children look at Jesus, smile and cheer. Children reach their hands toward Jesus.)*

Jesus touched the children and smiled at them. He was happy to see them. But his friends, the disciples, thought the children were bothering Jesus. *(Disciples look angry.)* They told the parents to take their children away. *(Disciples "talk" to parents, maybe in a mean way, shaking their fingers at them.)*

Jesus told his friends, the disciples, that he wanted to see the children. *(Jesus motions for children to come back to him.)*

Jesus told everyone there, "Don't send the children away. I love children. Big people can learn something from children. Children know how to play with children who look different from them. Children know how to show others when they are happy. Children show people love by giving them hugs and kisses. Children believe that wonderful things can happen. I want big people to learn to do these things like children can."*

Then Jesus gently touched each child again and said good-bye.

**Jesus didn't use these words, but we think he said something like this.*

2. Wonder about the story, using the following statements:

- I wonder how the children felt when the disciples wanted to send them away.
- I wonder why Jesus said that big people could learn from children.
- I wonder what it would feel like to get a hug from Jesus.
- I wonder what big people I know love me like Jesus loves me.

3. Pray together: "Thank you, God, that you love children just as much as you love grown-ups. Thank you for adults who love us and take care of us. Amen."

4. Sing "Jesus loves the Little Children," page 23 in *Jubilee Songbook*. You can listen to it on the accompanying cassette or CD. *(The words are different from the traditional ones.)*

5. Write a thank-you letter. Gather children in front of an easel with chart paper. Together, write a joint letter from the children to an adult in the school

who cares about them (a classroom aide, the principal, librarian, custodian, nurse, school secretary, etc.). Prompt them to tell you ways this adult shows caring. (“Thank you for reading books to me,” “Thank you for giving me a band-aid when I’m hurt,” “Thank you for cleaning up my messes,” etc.) Use phrases that apply to most of the class. You can write most of the letter as children give you ideas, but let them come up and add a word or letters, depending on the abilities of your group. Dismiss the children to the next activity by calling them up to sign their names on the letter.

6. “I Am Special” booklets. Have children make the third page for their booklets, drawing adults in their lives that love them. Encourage them to include details in the picture that represent those adults. Ask all children who are capable to add names, words, or at least initial letter sounds to their picture.

7. As children finish, let them browse through books about community people who help take care of them (teachers, police, doctors, etc.).

EXTEND THE LESSON

(These activities will extend the lesson to longer than 30-40 minutes.)

- **Read a book:** *Mama, Do You Love Me?* or *Papa, Do You Love Me?* by Barbara Joosse, or *Love You Forever* by Robert Munsch.
- **Invite grandparents or residents of a local nursing home** to come in and do “lap reading” with your class. *OR*, invite the oldest class in your school to come to your room. If you have one adult/young adult for every 4-5 children, your students can take turns sitting on the adult’s lap while the others listen to the story. This will remind children of how Jesus blessed the children.
- **Make cards** for the important adults in the children’s lives. Provide card stock, stickers, and markers. Suggest cards for pastors, teachers, principal, childcare providers, grandparents, etc. Put key words on the chalkboard for children to copy onto their cards.

I Am Special

LESSON 4: PARABLE OF THE LOST COIN

Objective

Children will understand that God cares what happens to each of them. God is happy when children stay close to him.

Key Concepts

- God cares what happens to us.
- God loves us and wants us to know God cares about us.

Text: Luke 15:8-10

Estimated Lesson Time: 30-40 minutes

Materials

- Bible
- Individually wrapped candies (or stickers)
- Props for telling the Bible story: colored cloth, story figures, 10 dimes, candle and matches *OR* flashlight
- *Jubilee Songbook*
- *The Runaway Bunny* by Margaret Wise Brown (HarperTrophy, 2006)
- “I Am Special” booklets *OR* white 9" x 12" construction paper (1 sheet per child)
- Markers, crayons, or paints for booklet page
- Stuffed animals
- For Extend the Lesson, option two: nickels and dimes to count
- For Extend the Lesson, option three: “How Many Coins?” worksheet (p. 62)
- For Extend the Lesson, option four: “I See Dimes” take-home book (pp. 63-68)

Teacher Preparation

- Practice telling the Bible story with props.
- Hide wrapped candies or stickers around the room. Make sure there are more hidden than there are class members, because some may not be found. Hide candies in fairly easy-to-find places, but not so easy that they find most of them before Bible class. If children see some of the candies early, simply explain that those are for Bible time.
- If using Extend the Lesson, option four, make enough copies of the take-home book for each child to have one. Staple at fold.

INTRODUCING THE LESSON

1. Worship and Bible memory. See Unit Information, page 45.

2. Search for treasure. Tell the children that some things are lost—things that will make them happy when they find them. Explain that when they find one of these things, they must come back and sit down until all others have found one, too. Let the children wander around the room looking for the “treasure.” When everyone

has found one of the candies, unwrap them all at once and enjoy eating them together. Gather the wrappers, then ask the children the following questions:

- What did you think the treasure would be?
- Were you worried that you wouldn't find one?
- How did you feel when you saw the piece of candy?

Say, "Today I'm going to tell you a story about a woman who lost something. She spent a long time looking for it, just like you looked for the candy."

LESSON STEPS

1. Tell the Parable of the Lost Coin. Say, "The story today is found in the Bible in the book of Luke." Show the children where the story is found in the Bible (Luke 15:8-10). Lay out a cloth to define the story area. Set out one story figure and lay 9 dimes around her, in clear sight. Place several small stones or pieces of wood randomly on the cloth and put one dime underneath one of them.

Jesus was preaching to a large group of people. He told them this story . . .

There was a woman who had 10 silver coins. (*Point to the coins.*) She treasured those coins, because they were all she had. She counted her coins and knew where they were. One evening, she counted her coins. (*Move story figure around cloth, pausing in front of each dime.*) 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 . . . Oh no! One of her coins was gone!

The woman needed that coin! How could she find it? She needed more light. She lit a lamp (*light candle or turn on flashlight*) so she could find the coin. Was it under the chairs? (*Move story figure around the cloth, pretending to look.*) Was it in a cupboard?

Oh, there was so much dust in her house! She needed a broom. The woman got out a broom and swept under the cupboard. She used it to reach under the chairs. She swept under the bed. Where was that coin? (*Move story figure toward hidden dime.*) Finally, she found the coin! It was tucked away in a corner of her house. Because the woman looked so long and so carefully, now she had her coin back.

She was so happy (*make story figure jump up and down*) that she called her neighbors and friends. "Let's have a party! Come celebrate with me. I thought I had lost one of my coins, but I looked very hard and I found it!" The woman's friends and relatives came to celebrate. (*Move several story figures onto cloth.*) They were all glad that she had found her lost coin.

2. Wonder about the story. Explain that this is another story Jesus told to show people what God is like. Then think together about the following statements:

- I wonder why the woman cared so much about one lost coin.
- I wonder how she would have felt if she couldn't find her coin.
- I wonder if God cares about me as much as the woman cared about her coins.
- I wonder what I should do if I feel lost, like the coin.

3. Pray together: "God, you care a lot about each one of us. Help us to remember to talk to you when we feel lost or sad. We are glad you want us near you. Amen."

4. Sing "Jesus Loves Me," page 15 in *Jubilee Songbook*.

5. Read *The Runaway Bunny* by Margaret Wise Brown. Ask the children if their moms and dads are like the mom in the story. Would their parents wait for them to come back? What would their moms or dads do if they acted like the Runaway Bunny? Compare the mother in the story to God. Even when we do bad things and “run away,” God still cares about and loves us. We are special to God.

6. “I Am Special” booklets. For their final booklet pages, have children make pictures of themselves and God. If they struggle with this, give them image ideas:

- God as a grandpa, holding the child in his lap
- God as the wind blowing gently on the child
- God as the woman in the Bible story, looking for her coin (the child)
- God as a mother bear and the child as one of her cubs (Hosea 13:8)
- God as a dad, holding the child’s hand on a walk
- God as the mother bunny and the child as the Runaway Bunny.

Emphasize that God is like people they know who love them very much.

7. As some children finish before others, invite them to quietly act out the story of the Runaway Bunny with stuffed animals, in a corner of the room.

8. Gather to share the pictures. Ask children (if they can) to talk about why they drew God the way they did. Explain that no one knows what God looks like, because God is a spirit, not a human. But God loves, just as people love. Remind them again that God loves each of them very much and is happy when they stay close to God and don’t run away.

EXTEND THE LESSON

(These activities will extend the lesson to longer than 30-40 minutes.)

- **Plan a treasure hunt** with the children, for another class to enjoy. Have them help write clues for places in your room or places around the school.
- **Do the math.** Extend this lesson to math learning. Count 10 nickels by 5s or 10 dimes by 10s. Do this together, in small groups, or use play money for individuals to count. *(Most kindergartners cannot count by 5s or 10s on their own. They will need to do it with you or have lots of help.)*
- **“How Many Coins?”** Hand out the worksheet from page 62 and have children practice writing the number of coins under each box.
- **Expand on *The Runaway Bunny*.** Together, write another page or two for the book, making up your own scenario of what the baby bunny might do and the mother bunny say. “What if I . . .?”
- **“I See Dimes” take-home book.** Copy and staple the take-home book (pages 63-68). Read it together as a class, then send a copy home with each child.
- **Sing together.** Sing any or all of the songs from *Jubilee Songbook* that you have sung during this unit: Jesus Loves Me (p. 15), The Lord Is My Shepherd (p. 20), Jesus Is My Shepherd Friend (p. 21), Jesus Loves the Little Children (p. 23), God’s Family (p. 26).

How Many Coins?



___ dime



___ dimes



___ dimes



___ dimes



___ dimes



___ dimes



___ dimes



___ dimes



___ dimes



___ dimes



I See Dimes





I see 2 dimes.

I see 1 dime.



I see 4 dimes.



I see 3 dimes.



I see 6 dimes.



I see 5 dimes.



I see 8 dimes.



I see 7 dimes.



I see 10 dimes.



I see 9 dimes.