



**GOD IS
ALWAYS
WITH US**

If you look for Me wholeheartedly, you will find Me
Jeremiah 29:13

I am with you always, even to the end of the age.

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GOD IS ALWAYS WITH US
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Letter to the leaders

God is always with us! Wow, isn't that such an amazing thought, that no matter where we go God is there. Just reading this this may make you feel encouraged but this term we want the children to find this out for themselves.

Our aim is for them to see God saying it over and over again in His word. Some of the verses we will focus on are:

Matthew 28:20 Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.

Jeremiah 29:13 If you look for Me wholeheartedly, you will find Me.

Genesis 28:15 God said: "I am with you. And I will protect you wherever you go".

1 Chronicles 16:11 Search for the Lord and for His strength; continually seek Him.

Malachi 3:6 "I, the Lord, do not change.".

John 5:17 Jesus replied, "My Father is always working, and so am I."

John 14:6 Jesus told him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me."

Jeremiah 1:7-8 The LORD replied, "Don't say, 'I'm too young,' for you must go wherever I send you and say whatever I tell you. And don't be afraid of the people, for I will be with you and will protect you. I, the LORD, have spoken!"

Many children, and even us leaders, go through times that can feel overwhelming and often we forget that God is always with us! By looking at people from the Bible we hope to show them that no matter the situation, God is always there! God is there when we are afraid. God is there when we've messed up. God is there when things seem impossible. God is there if others say He is not. God is even there when we do not notice. **God is always there!**

Each one of these stories reveals more and more about who God is. We see that He never changes, He is always working, and He always makes a way to be with us. When we get to know God intimately, we will be able to ignore everything getting in the way of us trusting that **GOD IS ALWAYS THERE!**

Please prepare well from the Bible. In putting this curriculum together, God has revealed so much to us and we hope you can discover these eye-opening truths for yourselves too.

Lesson 1: God is always here. (Everyone's story)

Main focus for the lesson:

- God was always there and is still always here.
- God wants us to be close to Him, like He created us to be.

1) Memory Verse

- Matthew 28:20

“Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

Idea to teach the memory verse.











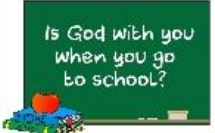


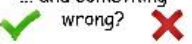
<https://youtu.be/1NlaraqTHR4> I Am with You Always (Matthew 28:19-20) – Lifeway Kids Worship

Have the song playing on repeat as the children arrive and participate in the hands on activity.

2) Hands on

Leaders lay the picture cards on the floor. Children take turns to throw a stone or bottle top to try and land on a picture. When it does, the question is asked to the whole group. E.g. “Was God there before anything was created?” The children answer every question in the same way **“Yes, God is always here.”**

These same cards can be used on arrival every week but adapting the game. You could hide them and when one is found they all have to run to a spot and answer the question. Or it can be included in hopscotch that when they get to each block with a picture they answer the question.

Was God there before anything was created?	Was God there when the first bird flapped its wings? 	Was God there when Adam took his first breath? 	Was God there when Eve was created? 
Was God there when Adam and Eve hid from Him? 	Was God there when He spoke to Moses from the burning bush? 	Was God there when He saved the people from Egypt? 	Was God there when nations turned their backs on Him? 
Was God there when the enemy armies attacked His people? 	Was God there when Jesus was born? 	Was God there when Jesus died on the cross? 	Was God there when you were created? 
Is God with you when you go to school? 	Is God with you when you are scared? 	Is God with you when you are sick? 	Is God with you when you have done something good ... and something wrong? 

Will God always be with you?

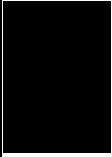
“Yes, God is always here.”

Conclusion: Is there ever a time when God is not here? NO! God is always here.

3) Bible Story + Lesson

Prepare three boxes. Each side of the box has a different picture to remind us of a time when God was there. Turn the box as you go and explain the following.

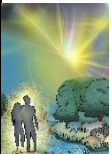
BOX 1



In the beginning when there was nothing, when not even one thing was created, God was there.



When God created everything, He was there to watch the first bird flap its wings, see the first fish swim, see the first sunrise and be right there as the first person took a breath.



God was there with Adam and Eve in this beautiful garden He had made for them. God loved to be with them, and this is the close relationship that God wants with us too.



When Adam and Eve disobeyed God and ate from the forbidden tree they hid from God. But was God there? Yes, God called to them and found them. Their actions meant they could not live in the garden with God anymore. Sin had entered the world and it looked like that was the end for God to be with people. But immediately God made a plan! Jesus would come. He would make it so that we could be with God again, the way it was before. Until the time when Jesus would come did God leave? No. God was always there.

BOX 2



God was there to free His people from slavery. He spoke to Moses from the burning bush. He sent plagues so everyone would know He was God. He parted the sea and sent food from Heaven. He went before them as a cloud in the day and a fire at night, to guide them on their way.



God was there speaking with Moses, again giving us rules to follow: Not just any rules but rules that helped them be close to God again. Included in these rules was how to set up a tent, where to place each piece of furniture and where to hang a curtain to make a special place called the Holy of holies. This is where God would come and meet with only the priest so that the people's sins could be forgiven, and they could be close with God once more.



When people stopped loving and following God, did He leave then? No. He sent messages to prophets to warn them and plead with His people to stop what they were doing and return to Him. Isaiah 65:1 The Lord says, "I was ready to respond, but no one asked for help. I was ready to be found, but no one was looking for Me. I said, 'Here I am, here I am!' to a nation that did not call on My name."



When enemies fought against His people, God was there. When Joshua was scared, God told him "Don't worry I am with you". When Gideon thought he couldn't win, God said, "I will go with you". He made the sun not set so His people could win, He made the enemy's walls fall down at the sound of a trumpet, He even made the enemy so

confused that they destroyed each other. God was there through every tough time and gave His people victory.

BOX 3



Many years later, when the timing was just right, God sent His son Jesus. Jesus was the one promised to save us. Did you know that Jesus is known as Immanuel, which means “God with us”? How amazing is that? God made Himself fully known to us through Jesus. Jesus even explained to His disciple Philip that when you see Him, you see God the Father.



Even on the day when Jesus was killed on the cross for our sins, God was there. He tore, from top to bottom, the very curtain He had told the people to put up. Jesus’ sacrifice had atoned (made up for) all of our sin. Now there was no more separation and everyone could come into God’s presence again.



What about us? Is God with us? Yes, He is! God is the one that gives life and at the very moment you were made in your mother’s womb, God was there putting every little part of you together. (Psalm 139:13-16)



And every day since your birth God has been there. In fact, He is right here right now. And He has promised that He will never ever leave you because when you believe in Jesus your sins are forgiven and the Holy Spirit comes to live in you. By believing in Jesus you will be with God forever and ever, close to Him like it once was with Adam and Eve.

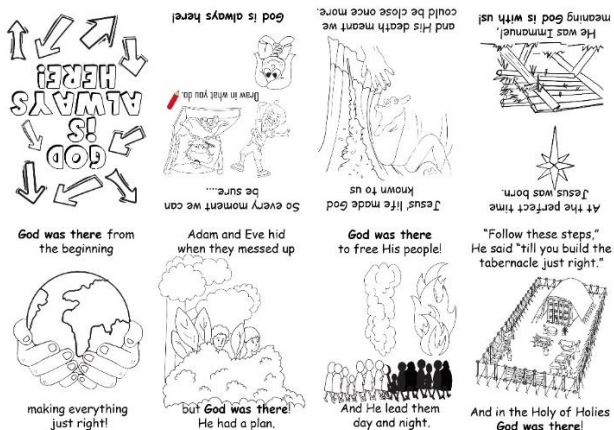
4) Review Questions:

- How does it make you feel knowing that God is always with you? (**Happy, not afraid, loved, protected, confident, wanting to please Him**)
- Find someone and ask them “where were you ... yesterday or this morning or last week?” Then tell them “Isn’t it amazing that God was there with you too!”
- Do you know that God is so great that He can be everywhere at the same time? He is the only one that can do that. That is why He is able to be with us all the time!

5) Craft

Option 1: Mini Book

Instructions how to fold a mini book can be found at <https://youtu.be/G2tugEOAKTQ>



Option 2: Bracelet

Make a bracelet or something to hang on your bag to remind you that no matter where you are, God is with you.



Lesson 2: Look for God and know Him. (Abraham's story)

Main focus for the lesson:

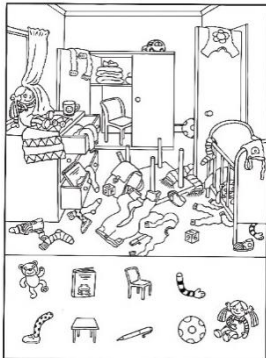
- You will find God if you look for Him.
- God wants a close relationship with you.
- What are the things keeping us from having a close relationship with God?

1) Memory Verse

- Jeremiah 29:13

“If you look for Me wholeheartedly, you will find Me.”

Idea to teach the memory verse.



During arrival time have some “hidden object” activity pages out for the children to do.

Who has lost something in their room, or at home or school and you have struggled to find it? Isn't it a wonderful feeling when you do find it? You feel so pleased you didn't give up looking!

When you do one of these “hidden object” pages we can be certain that the object is there – we have to just keep on looking to find it.

It is the same when it comes to seeking and looking for God. We can be absolutely certain that He is there and that we will find Him when we look for Him with all our heart.

Let the children look for one item e.g. the teddy bear. When they find it, the leader says, “We knew the teddy bear was there and we know ...”

The children then reply, ***“When we look for God with all our hearts, we will find Him.”***

2) Hands on

Have one leader wearing their glasses on top of their head and another leader holding their phone in their hand. Both leaders enter frantically looking for these items which are obviously right there with them from the start. Let the children point out where they are.

Conclude: God says if we look for Him, we will find Him. That is because He is right here with us! God pursues you. That means He comes looking for you, way before you even knew Him. It is so obvious who He is and it is so easy to find Him, you only have to look right in front of you!

3) Bible Story + Lesson

Before the lesson begins have the picture of Jesus covered with the “paper cut-outs” with the following distractions written on them. As you discuss each one remove it.

Making other things more important	Relying on someone else to tell us about Him.	Thinking we already know everything about God.
Thinking we are fine without knowing Him more.	Being too busy.	Thinking we can do it without God.
Thinking God can't be found.	Only looking for God's when things go badly.	Looking for God with our minds and not our hearts.



We are going to watch a Bible story about Abraham and his son Isaac. (Genesis 22) I want you to decide if you think that Abraham knew God. Not just knew about God but knew Him

personally. Listen carefully and see if Abraham knew what promises God had made him and if Abraham knew God well enough to trust God no matter what?

Watch the clip: Abraham Tested | Bible Story | LifeKids <https://youtu.be/ktR1IYSkTII>

Yes. Abraham knew God personally and so could trust Him no matter what. Abraham knew that God promised that he would have a huge family, as many as the number of stars in the sky and they would be born through Isaac.

Hebrews 11:19 tells us that ¹⁹ Abraham reasoned that if Isaac died, God was able to bring him back to life again. By knowing God so well and so personally, Abraham was able to trust God even with this difficult request.

God doesn't want us to only know *about* Him, He wants us to know Him personally too. And He promises that **if you look for Him with all your heart you WILL find Him.**

So what is stopping us from looking for Him? What is stopping us from having this close personal relationship that God wants with us?

Let's go through some of the things that might be getting in the way from us knowing God better. *As you discuss each thing remove the "paper cutout" until the picture of Jesus is eventually revealed.*

Making other things more important

There are many things that we love doing like watching T.V. gaming, spending time with family and friends. There is nothing wrong with doing these things. We just need to take care that we are not making these things more important than God. We need to be like Abraham and realise that God is much more important than even the things we love very much.

Relying on someone else to tell us about Him

The friendship that God wants with you is personal. We can be so grateful that friends, teachers, church leaders and parents help us know more about God but we can't only know God through someone else. When we pray, read the Bible and sit and listen to what God is saying to us – then we will find Him.

Thinking we already know everything about God

Sometimes we think because we know a lot about God that we know everything about Him. But God is so great that we could never know *everything* about Him. The more we know about God the easier it is to trust Him and we will want to praise Him more. Abraham knew God had the power to raise Isaac from the dead (Hebrews 11:19) and so obeyed Him without even knowing what the outcome would be. God is inviting us to come and know Him more personally.

Thinking we are fine without knowing Him more

Everything may be going fine just the way things are. I love God and God loves me. What more is there to know? The exciting thing is that there is **so** much more to know about God. He has good plans for His church and good plans for us. And without knowing Him more, how are we able to live out these good plans? Or how are we to worship and love Him as He deserves?

Being too busy

Things can get very busy with a lot of homework, studying, sport, dance lessons, art class and so on. But even in those things we can find God. He has given you your talents. When you make time to ask God how you can use these talents for Him, He will answer.

Thinking we can do it without God

We need God. We need Jesus. We cannot do things without Him. The Bible explains that God is the vine and we are the branches. If we are not close to Jesus, we will achieve nothing. Proverbs 3:6 says, "Seek His will in all you do, and He will show you which path to take". We need to depend on God for everything! We can only do this by knowing Him more so that He can lead us and guide us.

Thinking God can't be found

Sometimes we may feel like God is so big and so far away so we don't even try and find Him and we don't even try to have a relationship with Him. We need to remember that God calls us His children. He looks for us and makes Himself known first. We need to remember that He says we **will** find Him.

Only looking for God's help when things go badly

God is so good to always help us when we need Him but we should look for Him all the time not only when things go wrong.

Looking for God with our minds not our hearts

Psalms 27:8 My heart has heard you say, "Come and talk with Me." And my heart responds, "LORD, I am coming." To know God personally is more than just knowing facts about Him. Our hearts need to hear Him and our hearts need to respond to Him.

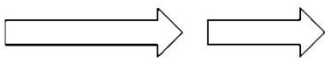
*Refer to the cut-out reasons that you have now removed. Do you see when we remove the things stopping us from looking for Him and we try and know Him personally **we will find Him.***

4) Review Questions:

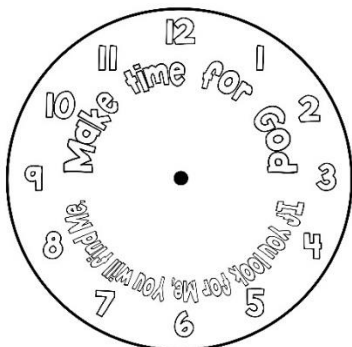
- Which of the things we discussed today are stopping you from looking for God? Realising what they are can help you try to make them not get in the way.
- What will you do this week to look for God? Come and tell the class next week how it went.

5) Craft

Option 1: Make a paper plate clock to remind you that we need to put God first above everything else.

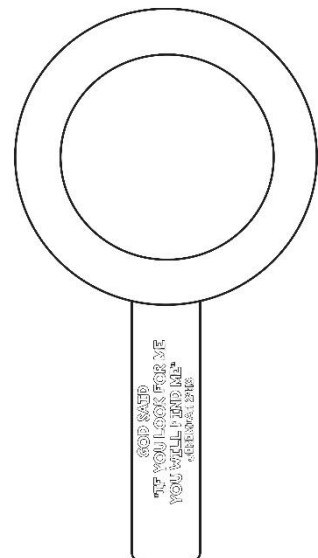


Hang your decorated clock somewhere to remind you **make time for God!**



Option 2:

Make a magnifying glass to put in their Bible. Instead of cutting out the middle children can fill it with things they discover about God or what He says to them.



Lesson 3: God shows He is always with us. (Jacob's story)

Main focus for the lesson:

- God said He would be with Jacob, protect him and bring him home and God did exactly that.
- God reveals that He is with us in many ways, through others, personally, through the way He blesses us and even in the impossible.

1) Memory Verse

- Genesis 28:15

God said: "I am with you. And I will protect you wherever you go." (NLT)

Idea to teach the memory verse.

Get the children to stand in a row. As they say their one word from the verse they link arms with the child next to them. It is now their turn to say the next word. Continue until all arms have been linked, even if you need to repeat the verse.

2) Hands on

Watch this in action Protected by... - Quick Truth https://youtu.be/OM_oRtbrmRs

What you will need:

- A cup/glass
- Piece of paper
- Container that's taller than the cup, filled with water



(Hold up the empty cup showing the children that the cup is empty)

Is there anything in the cup? *(Most kids will say no, but you might have someone say there is air in the cup which is correct.)*

I am going to put a piece of paper into the cup and put the cup into the water. Now if we put the cup right side up, obviously the paper will stay dry but what will happen if we put the cup in the water upside-down? *(Crumple up the paper and stuff it into the bottom of the cup. Make sure it will stay inside the cup when you hold the cup upside down)*

(Place the upside-down cup into the water. Hold the cup up STRAIGHT to ensure the air bubble protects the paper. Hold it there while you say the next bit.)

Sometimes we go through hard times like Jacob did. He fought with his brother and his father-in-law, he went on long journeys through dangerous places and sometimes he felt very scared. *(Pull the cup out)*

Let's look and see what happened to the paper. It's dry!! Do you know what protected the paper from getting soaked? Air! Even though the cup seemed to be empty because we couldn't see anything, it actually wasn't. There was air in it the whole time.

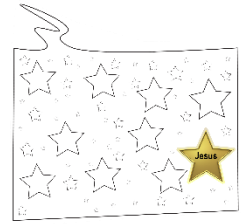
Just like the air in the cup was there the whole time, God is everywhere, all the time too. God had promised Jacob that He would be with him, protect him and bring him back home. And just like the air was there the whole time, God was there the whole time too. We can feel brave and encouraged to know that God is with us all the time too!

3) Bible Story + Lesson

Complete one large craft or have the children do their own as you tell the story of Jacob's life.



God spoke to Abraham and gave him a promise. He would be the father to a great nation and he would have as many family members as there are stars in the sky. Wow, that's a lot. God's promise was also that Jesus would be born from their family and so they would be a blessing to the whole world. *(Show children the star labelled Jesus)* Abraham had a son, Isaac and Isaac then had twin boys, Esau and Jacob. Let's add stars for Isaac and his two sons. *(Stick three stars in the space provided)* Do you think Isaac would have heard about God and how He had met with their grandfather, Abraham.

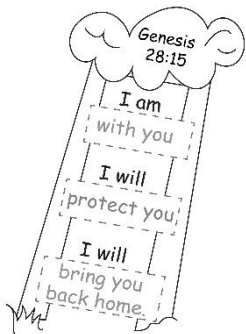


When Isaac was old and could hardly see anymore, he called for Esau. He wanted to give him his blessing. But Jacob's mom had a different plan. She told Jacob to cover his arms with animal fur so his arms would be hairy like Esau's and his dad would be tricked to give Jacob the blessing instead. *(Stick cotton wool to Jacob's arm.)*



Esau was furious with Jacob. He wanted to kill him and so Jacob ran away to his uncle, Laban's land.

On the way he stopped to rest, laid his head on a rock and went to sleep. He had a dream in which he saw a ladder coming down from Heaven and God's angels were going up and down. God spoke to him in that dream and gave him the same promises that He gave Abraham many years before. *(Point to the speech bubble with stars in them)* Let's read what else God said in Genesis 28:15



15 "What's more, I am with you, and I will protect you wherever you go. One day I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have finished giving you everything I have promised you."

What was God going to do? *(Trace over the words to complete the verse)* God would be with him wherever he went! He would protect him and He would bring him back home. Oh, but that is where his angry brother is. But we are getting ahead of ourselves.

Jacob was welcomed by Laban as soon as he arrived and started to work for him by taking care of his sheep and goats. Jacob married both of Laban's daughters, which was part of the custom of that time, and God blessed them with many children just like He had promised! *(Point to the stars in the speech bubble.)*

Everyone could see that God was with Jacob. Laban and his sons noticed that under Jacob's care, their goats and sheep multiplied and because of God they became very wealthy. *(Turn the ovals into sheep and goats.)*

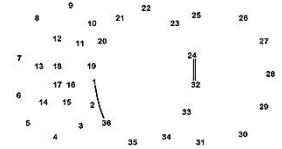


When God told Jacob to go back to his father and brother, Jacob was afraid. Do you think God will go with him? Yes, God had told him before and told him again. "I will be with you." (Genesis 31:3) So Jacob prepared his wives and children, and all his animals and they began the long journey back home. But along the journey, Jacob started to worry about his brother's anger. He worried that his brother would kill him as soon as he saw him. Do you think Jacob should be worried? Most of us would be because his brother wanted to kill him after all but remember

God had said He would be with him, protect him and bring him back home. (Refer to the verse on the ladder)

Because Jacob was so fearful he sent his wives and children away from him, back over the river. That night God came to Jacob as a man. They started to wrestle. They wrestled for the whole night until the sun started to rise. Jacob was exhausted but would not let go, even though he was injured. He wanted God to bless him.

It may seem strange to us that God would wrestle with Jacob. We all know God could easily win. But God was not fighting with Jacob. Instead He was being loving and close and intimate. He had already said He would be with him. He had already said He would protect Him and bring him back home. He had already promised to bless him. But God let Jacob wrestle away and not give up until he knew he had it. Who did Jacob want to bless him? (Complete the dot-to-dot)



Jacob continued on his journey knowing that everything would be okay because God had blessed him.

When Jacob finally met up with his brother Esau, they hugged. Wow, there was no more anger between them. Just like God had said ... **God was with him, God had protected him and God had brought him home.** And if you keep reading you will see that Jacob's family became a great nation that blessed the whole world!

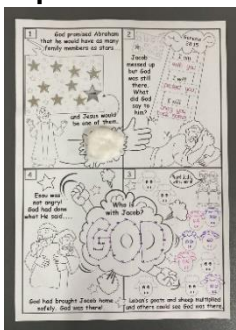
Do you know that God says these things to you too? He is with you, He will protect you and He will bring you home to be with Him in Heaven forever.

4) Review Questions:

- Guess how many times in the Bible God said directly to Jacob "I am with you?" (**Five times. He really wanted to make sure that he knew that HE WAS WITH HIM!**)
- Look at each part of the story and ask was God there? (**Yes, God was there speaking to Abraham, God was there in a dream to Jacob, God was there blessing him with children, God was there blessing Laban's land, God was up close and personal when Jacob needed to make sure he was being blessed and God was there when Esau forgave.**)
- At each part in the story who would have been able to testify (tell others) that God was there? (**Abraham and his family, Jacob himself, everyone that saw how well Laban's flocks grew, Jacob again saw him face to face, everyone that saw these two brothers re-unite when no one thought it was possible**)
- What has happened in your life where you can say for sure that God was there with you? Share it with someone else so they can be encouraged.

5) Craft

Option 1: Jacob's life: Activity Page.



Children can build this craft as you tell the story or complete it as a recap afterwards. It will be the same as the one you have used to teach the story. They will need some star stickers, a little bit of cotton wool and some glue.

Option 2: Arrow Craft "God is here".

Children stick the arrows back to back and decorate them. They can be encouraged and help others remember too that God is always here!!!



Lesson 4: Come close and listen. (Elijah's story)

Main focus for the lesson:

- One of the many ways God speaks to us, is in a whisper.
- God wants a close and intimate relationship with us.
- Make time to sit quietly and spend time with God. He will give you strength.

1) Memory Verse

- 1 Chronicles 16:11

Search for the Lord and for His strength; continually seek Him.

Idea to teach the memory verse.

Today we are going to learn about a man who really needed strength from God but he was looking in all the wrong places. Finally, when he looked closer he found God in a whisper.

So to learn our verse today we are going to say it in a whisper. Let's all whisper it together. Now find a friend and take turns to whisper it in their ear.

Let's all whisper it again together. Now find someone else and whisper the verse to them too.

Are you ready for the whisper challenge? When you leave today see how many people you can whisper this verse to before you go to bed!

2) Hands on

You will need:

- Items that make a quiet sound. Here are examples but you can use whatever you have.

Bubble wrap	A plastic bag	Spoons
Paper to tear	Clicking your finger	Chip packet
Click a pen	Beans in a tub	Sticks to tap
A squeaky toy	A bell	Any instrument

- A barrier to hide the items so the children cannot see them.

Divide into smaller groups.

Throughout the activity try to keep your voice quiet and even whisper the whole time. Tell the children that they will need to sit still and keep very quiet so that they can hear and guess what is making the sound. They may only answer in a whisper!

Make sure the children cannot see the items by putting up the shield, playing it behind them and even getting them to close their eyes.

Repeat the activity but this time with LOUD music or a distracting sound in the background. Discuss how difficult it was to hear anything in the noise but how much easier it was when they sat quietly and listened without any distractions.

Sometimes we need to sit, close our eyes in a quiet place, pray and then be still in order for us to hear God's voice. Even if we feel like our lives are busy and stressful, it's important to do nothing but listen to what God is saying to us.

3) Bible Story + Lesson

Please prepare beforehand by reading 1 Kings 19:1-8

What you will need:

- Elijah - dress up with whatever you have. You will also need a table or box that you can use as a cave.

- An Angel – who will need some bread and a cup of water to give to Elijah.
- God's voice - Make sure that this leader is hidden from the children.

Divide the children into three groups and practice the sound effect each will make and just as importantly when they will stop.

Wind – Children sway from side to side and make the sound of a howling wind or whistle.

Earthquake – Children stomp their feet or bang on their desks.

Fire – Children wave their hands, rub them together and make a crackling sound.

Elijah	<i>(Enter the room, tired, out of breath)</i> Queen Jezebel is trying to kill me. I'm so afraid! God has just shown Himself by sending fire from Heaven to light the altar and still they do not believe in Him. And now she wants to kill me! I've been running for a whole day to get away from her. But even here in the wilderness I still feel scared. <i>(Sit down and close your eyes to plead to God in prayer)</i> I have had enough, Lord. Take my life. Phew I am so tired. <i>(Lie down and pretend to fall asleep)</i>
Angel	<i>(Put down some bread and a jug of water next to Elijah, touch Elijah gently to wake him)</i> Get up and eat.
Elijah	<i>(Get up, look around confused)</i> Oh look, there's some freshly baked bread and a cool jar of water. <i>(Eat some of the bread and have a sip of water and lie down again to sleep)</i>
Angel	<i>(Return again and gently touch Elijah)</i> Get up and eat. You have a big journey ahead.
Elijah	<i>(Finish eating and drinking then get up)</i> That meal filled me and gave me strength to carry on. <i>(Set off walking. You can exit and enter the room again.)</i> Wow I have been walking for forty days and forty nights. <i>(Point)</i> Hey, I know that mountain. That is the Mountain of God. And look, there is a cave that I can rest and be safe in. <i>(Crawl into the cave)</i>
God's voice	What are you doing here, Elijah?
Elijah	Oh Almighty God, I have been so passionate for You. The Israelites don't believe in your promises anymore. They are breaking down places of worship and are killing all Your prophets. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me too.
God's voice	Go outside and stand on the mountain in My presence.
Leader 1	<i>Cue children to make the wind sound effects and actions.</i>
Elijah	<i>(Come out of the cave and act as if been blown by the wind)</i> This wind is so powerful, even the rocks are shattering. Do you think God can show Himself in the wind? Of course He can, but hmmm He has chosen not to.
Leader 1	<i>Cue children to make the earthquake sound effects and actions.</i>
Elijah	<i>(Hold your hands over your ears and be shaken around)</i> Do you think God can show Himself in an earthquake? Of course He can, but hmmm He has chosen not to show Himself in an earthquake either.
Leader 1	<i>Cue children to make the fire sound effects and actions.</i>
Elijah	<i>(Looking confused and scared)</i> Do you think God can show Himself in the fire? Of course He can, He did to Moses in the burning bush. But no, God has not chosen to show Himself in the fire either.
God's voice	<i>(In a gentle whisper)</i> Elijah?
Elijah	<i>(Cup your hand over your ear and wait a moment)</i> Shh, did you hear that whisper?

God's voice	Elijah. What are you doing here, Elijah?
Elijah	Oh Almighty God, I have been so passionate for You. The Israelites don't believe in your promises anymore. They are breaking down places of worship and are killing all Your prophets. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me too.
God's voice	<i>(In a whisper if they are able to hear)</i> Go back the way you came. When you get there you will see there are 7000 people who also love Me. I have chosen two kings for you to anoint. They will rule as kings that love me. You will also find, Elisha. He will take over from you as My prophet.
Elijah	<i>(Look amazed, put your hands up to worship God)</i> God, thank you for never leaving me! Thank you for being so personal and being so close to me that I can hear you in a whisper. I will go and do what you have said. <i>(Leave the room)</i>

Elijah was afraid and felt so desperate that he ran away and pleaded with God to put an end to everything. Elijah knew that God had great power, in fact He had just seen God send fire from Heaven to burn up the altar. Yet, he was still afraid and all he could speak of were the things that were going wrong. *(The people were not believing in God's promises, breaking down places of worship and even killing God's messengers)*

No matter how afraid and desperate Elijah felt and no matter how far he ran, God was still with him. God took care of him and spoke to him.

If God had to show Himself to you, how would you like Him to speak to you? In the wind, or in an earthquake or maybe through a big lightning bolt or even a blazing fire?

We know God can and has shown Himself in these ways but in this moment He chose not to. God chose to speak to Elijah in a whisper.

If I speak to you in a whisper what do you have to do? *(demonstrate)* You have to stop what you are doing, ignore everything else and focus on me and what I am saying. This is what Elijah needed to do. He had to stop worrying about Queen Jezebel and the people rebelling against God but rather listen to what God was saying. And God very clearly reminded Elijah "I've got this! There are kings I have chosen to rule, there is someone ready to take over from you and there are 7000 people that still love Me."

If I spoke to you in a whisper when we were far away from each other, would you be able to hear me? No, we would need to be close. How wonderful is it to think that when Elijah was so afraid and desperate God chose to speak to him in such a personal and gentle way?

We may expect God to speak to us in a loud voice or through a big sign like a burning bush but how close is God that He would gently whisper to us, that He would put a thought in our mind, help us understand a Bible verse, give a little tug in our hearts and reveal Himself to us so personally.

4) Review Questions:

- Have you ever felt afraid or even desperate like Elijah did? Do you think God is with you when you feel like that? **(Yes! God is always with you)** Pray with the children who may be feeling like that at the moment.
- Can you think of a situation where you know God was with you and helped you? **(Encourage children to share their testimonies so that everyone can be encouraged.)**
- What can we learn from Elijah's story to help us hear God's voice better? **(Stop focusing on the problems like Elijah did but put those things aside and listen to what God is saying. God chose not to show Himself to Elijah in the rumbling wind, earthquake or**

fire. He whispered personally to him. We too need to listen to what God is saying to us right now, rather than waiting for a big audible voice to come from the sky. God is speaking. His message to you can be found in the Bible, through other Christians, in your thoughts or even a feeling you have and through the guidance of the Holy Spirit who lives in us. While yes, God can and has spoken through a burning bush and a donkey, please do not miss what He is saying to you because you are only waiting for these things.)

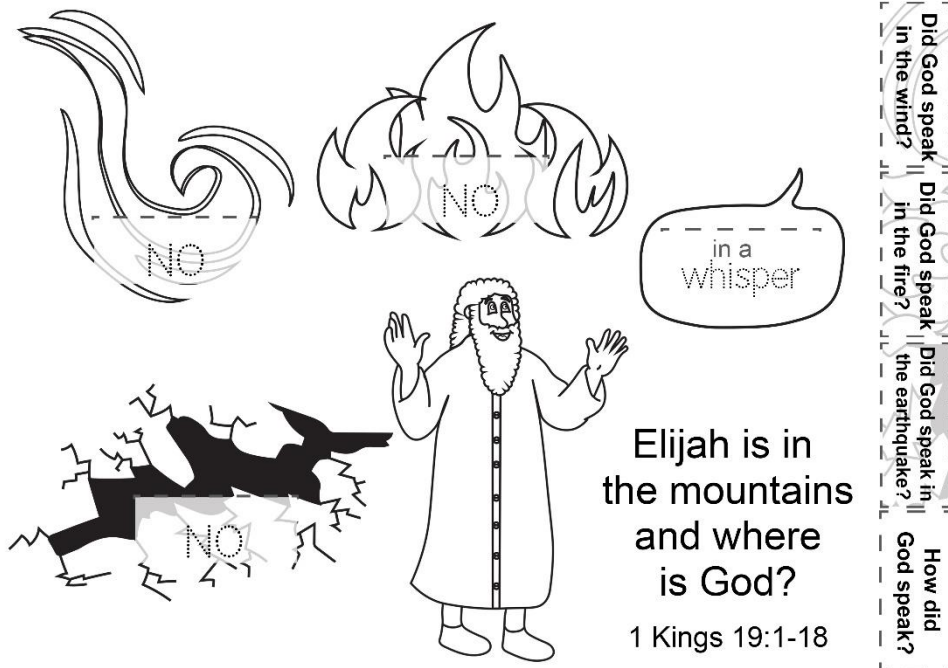
d) Hebrews 1:1-2 ¹Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, ²but in these last days He has spoken to us by His Son, whom He appointed the heir of all things, through whom also He created the world. Reading what Jesus said in the Bible and seeing how He lived, is the best place to start to hear what God is saying to you.

Note: Remind the children to always pray about messages people may say are from God. He will always show them if they are true and He will never go against what He has already said in the Bible.

5) Craft

Option 1: Where is God?

Cut out the questions and use them to make flaps over the answers. Encourage students to use this craft to retell the Bible story to their parents or friends.



Option 2: Guess that sound

Children decorate a paper bag with the memory verse or things that they have learnt from today's lesson. Get them to fill it with items that make a noise. This can be something they can find in the garden like a crunchy leaf or something they have at home. Encourage them to use their bags to teach the "Hands on" lesson.

Lesson 5: God never changes. (Job's story)

Main focus for the lesson:

- I can trust God to always be there, no matter how good or bad things may seem.
- God does not change, He is always perfect.

1) Memory Verse

- Malachi 3:6

"I, the Lord, do not change."

Idea to teach the memory verse.



Can you imagine if God was like a chameleon and changed all the time? Would that be easy to get to know Him? Would we be able to trust and love Him if He kept changing? Our verse today reminds us that God does not change! He said it Himself "I, the Lord do not change." If the situation changes – God does not change. If our actions change – God does not change!

Have scenarios laid out on different coloured pieces of paper. Children will move from one to another, read the scenario and say, **"God does not change"**.

- E.g. When I mess up – God does not change.
- When I do good things – God does not change.
- When people get sick – God does not change.
- When it is a really good day – God does not change.
- When I get chosen for a team – God does not change.
- When my friend fights with me – God does not change.
- No matter what my actions are – God does not change.
- No matter what the situation is – God does not change.

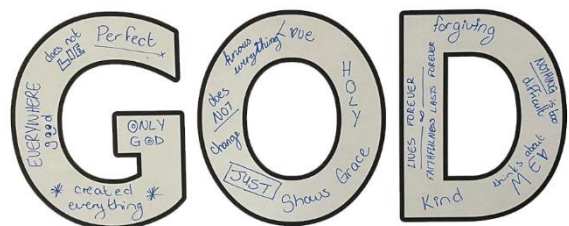
The leader keeps saying "and we know this because God said 'I, the Lord, do not change.'"

God is perfect. If He had to change it would mean that He either was once not perfect or now is not perfect and we all know that is not true. Thank you God for never changing and for always being perfect!

2) Hands on

It is important for us to know God, not just know about Him but to know Him personally. When we know God and we know that He does not change it helps us love Him and praise Him like He deserves.

Let's see if we can fill this word GOD with everything we know about Him. *Together with the children fill in as much as you can about who God is.*



Here are some things that the Bible tells us.

God is love (1 John 4:16)

God shows grace (Ephesians 1:6)

God is kind (Ephesians 1:8)	God is the only God (1 Timothy 1:17)
God is perfect (Matthew 5:48)	God is forgiving (Ephesians 1:7)
God lives forever (1 Timothy 1:17)	God is just (Deuteronomy 32:3-4)
God is everywhere (Psalm 139:7-12)	God does not change (Malachi 3:6)
Nothing is too difficult for God (Jeremiah 32:17)	God created everything (Genesis 1:1)
God thinks about me (Psalm 139:17)	God is Holy and perfect (Leviticus 19:12)
God's faithfulness lasts forever (Psalm 117:2)	God does not lie (Hebrews 6:18)
God knows everything about me (Psalm 139:1-6)	God is good (Psalm 107:1)

Do you think we can know everything about God? Do you think we can always understand why He does what He does? *(No, God is much too great for us to fully understand.)*

Look at my little person that I have made *(can be out of playdough or Lego)*. Do you think he will ever understand everything about me? That seems ridiculous. I am much greater than this little person. And so when we are trying to understand *everything* about God we need to realise that He is way too great for us to ever understand fully. **BUT** God does reveal Himself to us. That is why we can already fill this page with so many things about Him. And when we spend time with Him we will get to know Him more and more.

3) Bible Story + Lesson

As you tell the story add and take away the images. Throughout the story the "GOD" page from the hands on must stay at the top. This is to show that no matter what happened God was always there and never changed.)



Meet Job. Job was a blameless man (that means someone that has done nothing wrong). Job knew God. *(Refer to "GOD" page you made in the hands on section)*. He loved and respected God and he refused to do anything evil. We can say that Job was a super good guy! *(add "Super Good Guy" badge)*



Job also had many things. *(Add these items as you mention them)* He had 7000 sheep, 3000 camels, 500 oxen, 500 donkeys and many servants that worked for him. He also had 7 sons and 3 daughters and Job would pray for his children every day. Does Job sound like a super good guy? Yes! The Bible even says that Job was the greatest man among all people of the East.



God was pleased with Job. He could see that Job loved and trusted Him and He knew that Job would always do the right thing. When the time came for God to meet with all His angels, satan came there too. Satan said he had been watching everything that was happening on earth.

God asked him "Have you noticed My servant, Job? He is a blameless man that loves and respects Me, he refuses to do anything evil."

But satan accused God and said, "Job is only a good guy because You have protected him and made everything easy for him."

Do you think what Satan said was true? Was Job only loving and doing what God wanted because God was protecting him and giving him all these nice things? No! Job knew God and loved and respected Him. (Refer to "GOD" page)

Satan wanted Job to suffer to see if he would still love and praise God. And so God allowed Satan to take things away from Job, but not kill him.

(Remove each of the pictures as you mention them)

First his donkeys and oxen were stolen.

Next, a bolt of lightning killed all of his sheep.

Then an army attacked and took all of his camels.

But worst of all a big wind blew down the house his children were in and they all died.

How do you think Job reacted?

Do you think Job still loved and respected God? Read Job 1:20-22

²⁰ Job stood up and tore his robe in grief. Then he shaved his head and fell to the ground to worship. ²¹ He said,

"I came naked from my mother's womb, and I will be naked when I leave.

The LORD gave me what I had, and the LORD has taken it away.

Praise the name of the LORD!"

²² In all of this, Job did not sin by blaming God.

Yes, Job still loved and showed respect to God.

Satan wanted to see Job suffer more. He was sure Job would stop loving and respecting God if he became very ill. So he covered Job's body with boils and sores from head to toe. It was so itchy and sore that Job tried to scrape the sores with a piece of broken pottery. **But Job still loved and showed respect to God.**



The people around Job gave him some really bad advice.

His wife said, "disrespect God and rather die, then you won't have to put up with this anymore."

But Job still loved and respected God. He replied, "Should we accept only good things from God and never anything bad?" Job knew God and he would love Him no matter how bad the situation was.

His friends told him "You must have done something to deserve this punishment!" They even made up lists of things he could have done wrong. They told him God was punishing him and that could be the only reason. Job knew he had done nothing to deserve this pain and suffering. He would not listen to the nonsense his friends were saying about God. He knew God and he **still loved and showed respect to God.**

Job prayed again and again to God, asking Him questions and pleading with Him to explain why this was happening to him - but Job never disrespected God.

(Job 38:1) Eventually God answered Job out of a stormy wind. He asked Job, "Were you around when I made the world and put the stars where each one was? Have you ever commanded the sun to rise or controlled the weather? Do you know how each animal lives and did you make them like they are? Did you give a horse its strength?" God went on and on with many questions. And with each one Job realised how great and big God is and how He ruled over everything perfectly. And how ridiculous he was to even think of questioning God.

(Compare Job's questions being as ridiculous as a little playdough or Lego person trying to understand something)



Job then replied to God "I take back everything I said, and I sit in dust and ashes to show my repentance." (Job 42:6)

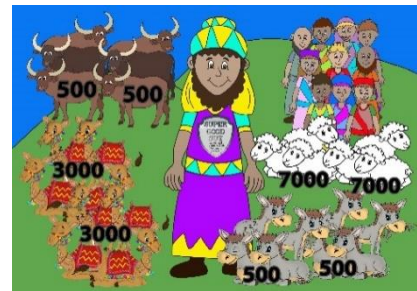
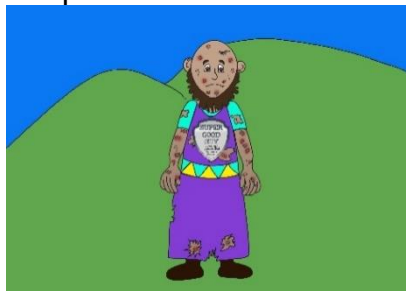
God had been right. Job had loved and respected Him for who He is and not because God had protected and given him stuff. Even when Job had lost everything and was in so much pain, he still loved God very much.

God never answered Job why He had allowed this to happen because He just wanted Job to trust Him, and Job did!

God then blessed Job even more than He had before. (Add each of the pictures as you mention them) He gave him 14 000 sheep, 6000 camels, 1000 oxen, 1000 donkeys. He gave Him seven more sons and three more daughters. And Job loved and respected God just as he always had.

4) Review Questions:

Use the 3 pictures to ask the review questions.



- Did the situation change? (**Yes, things were good, then very bad and then even better.**)
- Did God change? (**No, God never changes! He is always perfect**)
- Was God always there? (**God was with Job in the good and the bad times and He is with you always too.**)
- Did Job love and respect God in each situation? Why? (**Yes, Job loved God no matter what. He loved Him when things were good, very bad and even better than before. Because He knew and trusted God.**)
- Apply each of these questions to your life. Do your situations change? Is God always with you? Will you love and respect God in every situation?

5) Craft

Option 1:

Children look up the verses and fill the word "God" with the things that are true and which God has revealed about Himself.



Option 2: Badge

Children decorate the badge and write all the things they love and respect God for, no matter the situation!

Lesson 6: God is always working. (Esther's story)

Main focus for the lesson:

- God is always with us, even when we don't notice.
- God has a plan and is always at work.

1) Memory Verse

- John 5:17

“Jesus replied, “My Father is always working, and so am I.”

Idea to teach the memory verse.

As the children arrive have three cards set up (*two cards with part of the verse on them, one with the whole verse on it*).

Shuffle the cards face down and have the children try and find the full verse. If they do, they read out the full verse. If they don't, they need to say the verse filling in the blank words.

JOHN 5:17 Jesus replied, “My Father is always working, and so am I.”	JOHN 5:17 replied, “My is always, and so am I.” 5:17 replied, “My is and so am”
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As a group:

Have three cards (*two blue cards saying, “It's the red one”, one red card with the full verse*)

Shuffle the cards face down and have the children find the card with the full verse and say the verse all together. When they choose the red one say “what a coincidence that you chose the right one. How did you know?”.



Context of the verse: Jesus said this just after he had healed a man and the Pharisees were complaining that it was supposed to be a day to rest! The Pharisees thought they knew better, meanwhile God had been working all the time and they didn't even notice. Sometimes we think it is just a coincidence when things work out so well but we need to remember that God and Jesus are always at work! Just like it was no coincidence which card had the verse on it, it is also no coincidence that God and Jesus are always at work. Sometimes it is so obvious to see, but we just don't pay attention.

2) Hands On

In this skit Leader 1 has a backpack filled with all the items needed for a walk in the forest and have a picnic. Leader 2 never notices the backpack or the fact that Leader 1 is putting all the items down.

Each time Leader 2 notices an item and thinks it's just a coincidence, Leader 1 acts out as if they are saying “but it was me” or “how can they not know it was me?” by pointing to themselves or gesturing that they did it, but they do not let Leader 2 see them and never say it out loud.

Leader 1	Hey leader 2. Let's go for a walk and have a picnic.
Leader 2	That's a great idea. (Two leaders walk around pretending to go to the picnic spot.) Oh look, a bird. Ah, but he's so far away.
Leader 1	(Take out binoculars and put them next to leader 2)
Leader 2	Oh wow what a coincidence there's binoculars lying here. It's like someone left them here on purpose.
Leader 1	(Act as if saying “but I did it” but do not let them see you or hear you.)
Leader 2	Wow this walk is getting really long and I'm quite thirsty now.
Leader 1	(Take out 2 water bottles and put 1 down next to leader 2)

Leader 2	Oh wow, what a coincidence! There are water bottles lying around. It's like someone knew we would need them.
Leader 1	<i>(Look confused, and gesture again etc)</i>
Leader 2	Oh no! I've been stung by a bee! It really hurts!
Leader 1	<i>(Take out tweezers and band aids and put them down)</i>
Leader 2	Oh wow, what a coincidence! There are tweezers and band aids here.
Leader 1	<i>(Act out as if you are saying "but how can they not know it is me?" Still say nothing.)</i>
Leader 2	This looks like a good spot for a picnic.
Leader 1	<i>(Take out a blanket and spread it over the floor)</i>
Leader 2	Oh wow, what a coincidence. There is a picnic blanket here on the floor.
Leader 1	<i>(Gesture again)</i>
Leader 2	Wow what a great day this has been full of coincidences. Oh no it looks like a storm is coming.
Leader 1	<i>(Take out an umbrella)</i>
Leader 2	Oh wow, what a coincidence. There is an umbrella! <i>(Two leaders walk off together under the umbrella)</i>
Leader 3	<i>(Ask the children)</i> Was it really just a coincidence that all of those items were there when Leader 2 needed them? No, Leader 1 had all the items packed in their backpack. Leader 1 had a plan all along and was always working. The Bible tells us in John 5:17 that God is always working. Sometimes we don't notice the things God is doing and we might be a bit like Leader 2 and think it's just a coincidence. We need to remember that God is always working and He is always there. Nothing catches Him by surprise and nothing is out of His control. Thank you God for always working, no matter the situation.

3) Bible Story + Lesson

One leader reads the story while the other helps some volunteers from the class act out the scenes. The rest of the children will reply when prompted.

Does anyone know what a coincidence is? A coincidence is when something happens that was not planned or arranged by anyone, but it seems like it was planned.

We have been learning in the past weeks that God is always there. In the story I want to tell you today, there seems to be a lot of coincidences. A lot of things happened that no one planned for, but God was there, and God had a plan. So, I need your help. Whenever I say, "Wow, what a coincidence". I want you all to shout out, **"No! God is always working."**

If I say, "Oh no, now what?" I want you to all shout out, **"Don't worry! God is always working."**

Today's story takes place in Persia. The Persian people don't believe in God. One hundred years before, they captured many Jews and forced them to live there too. So clearly the Jews and the Persians are not friends.

Xerxes is the king and he wants a new queen. So he sends out an order for the most beautiful girls to be brought to the palace so that he could pick a new wife.

Mordecai's cousin is a beautiful Jewish girl and she is chosen to go to the king's palace. Mordecai tells her to change her name to Esther. Now no one will know that she is Jewish.

Of all the hundreds of girls in the kingdom, King Xerxes picks Esther and she becomes queen. Wow, what a coincidence. **(No! God is always working.)**

Soon after Mordecai overhears two people plotting to kill the king. He tells Esther about it and the king's life is saved. Of all the people that could have overheard that conversation. Wow, what a coincidence. **(No! God is always working.)**

King Xerxes has an official named Haman. Haman has such a high position that it was a rule that when he walks down the street everyone must bow down to him. But Mordecai refuses. He knows that God is the only one worthy to be bowed to. Haman becomes so angry that instead of just wanting Mordecai to die, he plots to kill all of the Jewish people. Oh no, now what? **(Don't worry! God is always working.)**

In his anger Haman goes and speaks to King Xerxes and he convinces him to issue a decree. A decree is a law that not even the king is allowed to break. This law is awful! In eleven months all the Jewish people will be killed. Oh no, now what? **(Don't worry! God is always working.)**

Mordecai tells Esther to go to the king and beg for mercy for her people. Esther is so scared. What if Xerxes finds out she is a Jew? She knows she can't just go speak to the king without being invited, you would get killed if you did that! Oh no, now what? **(Don't worry! God is always working.)**

Mordecai sends a reply telling her perhaps she has become queen for exactly this reason, to save her people. Wow, what a coincidence. **(No! God is always working.)**

After getting all the Jews to pray and fast for three days, Esther goes to the king, uninvited. Oh no, now what? **(Don't worry! God is always working.)**

The king is happy to see her, and she is safe. He offers to give her whatever she wants. Esther chooses to have dinner with the king and Haman. After dinner he again offers to give her whatever she wants and she invites them to have dinner with her again tomorrow. Next time she will ask him to save the Jews.

Smiling on his way home, Haman walks past Mordecai. He still will not bow to him. Haman decides that tomorrow he will ask the king to get rid of Mordecai. Oh no, now what? **(Don't worry! God is always working.)**

That same night King Xerxes can't sleep so he asks that chronicles be read to him. That's like the king's diary so that everyone in the future will know and remember what the kings before had done. It just so happens that they read to the king about the time when Mordecai overheard the plot to kill the king and saved his life. Wow, what a coincidence. **(No! God is always working.)**

As soon as Haman arrives at the palace, the king asks him, "What should be done to someone I want to honour?" Xerxes is talking about honouring Mordecai but Haman thinks the king is talking about him. So Haman tells him to let him be led through the city on the king's horse wearing the king's robes with everyone shouting how great he is.

"Go at once", the king says. "Fetch the robe and the horse and give it Mordecai". What? The very man Haman wants to kill this morning is the man he is leading through the city and honouring. Wow, what a coincidence. **(No! God is always working.)**

That evening at the next dinner, Esther bravely asks the king to spare her life and her people. She tells the king about Haman's plan. Xerxes is so angry that he orders Haman be to be put to death. God has saved the Jewish people.

Through all the different parts of the story it is clear to see, Wow, what a coincidence. (**No! God is always working.**)

That's right God is always working and is always there no matter what. Nothing catches God by surprise. Nothing is out of His control.

4) Review Questions

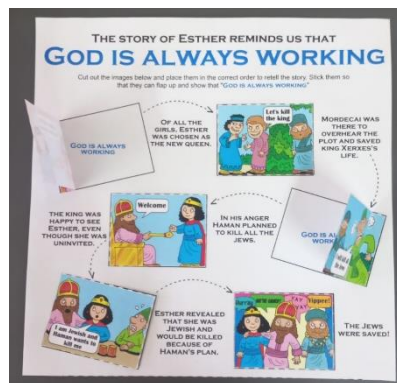
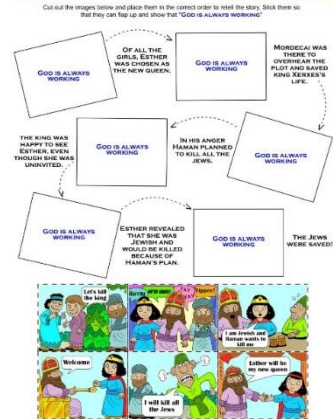
- How does it make you feel that God is always working? Even when you don't notice, even when things look bad, even when you are busy playing. God is at work making everything work out for a plan way too great for us to even understand.
- Who goes to sleep? Yes, we all do. But do you know that God never sleeps! Encourage the children to spend some time reading Psalm 121 in their own time.

5) Crafts

Option 1:

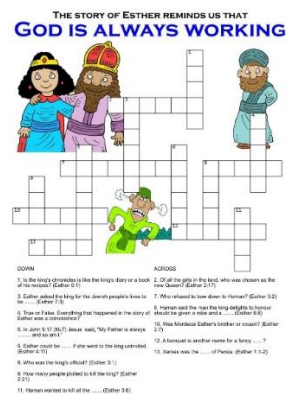
Children cut out the images and place them in the correct order to retell the story. Stick them so that they can flap up and show that God is always working.

THE STORY OF ESTHER REMINDS US THAT GOD IS ALWAYS WORKING



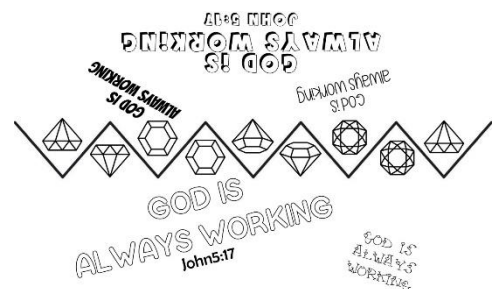
Option 2: Crossword

Children use their Bibles and what they have learnt from the story to complete the crossword.



Option 3: Crown

The crown reminds us of the king and queens story and how God was working all the time. Children can make their own crowns to remind them that as children of the King of all kings, God is always at work in their lives too.



Lesson 7: Jesus is the only way to God. (Our story)

Main focus for the lesson:

- Sin separates people from God's presence but God always made a way to be with us.
- God sent His son, Jesus, to make a way for us to be close to Him again.
- Jesus takes away our sin so we can be filled with the Holy Spirit, God's very presence.

1) Memory Verse

- John 14:6

“Jesus told him, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me.’”

Idea to teach the memory verse.

Here are two songs that can be used to teach the verse.

<https://youtu.be/ueMQV2Ax-MM> VBS I Am the way.

<https://youtu.be/qWmTNaOhmZI> I Am the Way

2) Hands on

This will be demonstrated and taught as part of the lesson.

What you will need:

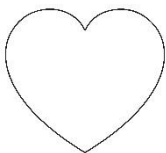
- Three cut-out hearts:



- A green heart to remind them of being created to walk with God. You will make this heart dirty using soil, a marker or charcoal etc. It is best if this heart is slightly smaller than the other hearts so that when you stick them together it will not be shown.



- A red heart with a with cross in the middle. This will be stuck over the dirty green heart to show that our sins were covered by the blood of Jesus. The cross is empty to remind us that Jesus did not stay dead and so because of Jesus, another sacrifice for our sins never has to be made again!

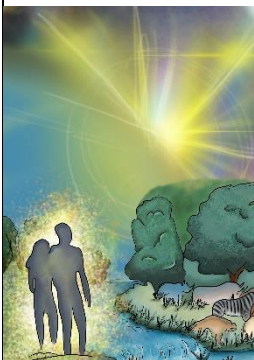


- A white heart to cover the back of the green heart to show that we are now made new. We are completely forgiven and without sin. Now that our hearts look like this we are able to be in the presence of God again.

Just like God promised, He has made a way for us to be close to Him again. Believing in His son, Jesus, is the **only** way.

3) Bible Story + Lesson

GARDEN



In the beginning when God created the world and God created Adam and Eve, He was with them in the garden and spoke with them. It could have looked something like this.

“Hello Adam”

“Hello God, what a lovely bird you have created.”

“Thank you, Adam, I made it just for you.”

Would you like to have been there with God in the garden? Talking to Him any time you wanted?

But Adam and Eve chose to disobey God. They ate from the tree that God had told them not to. They had sinned. Their sin meant they couldn't stay in the garden. They couldn't keep talking to God like they did before.

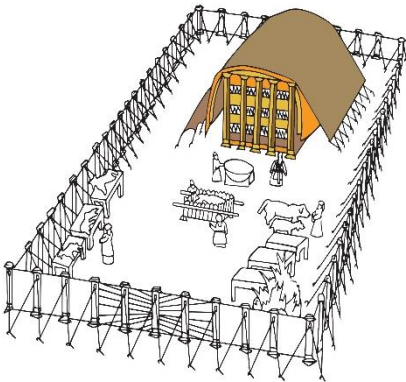
The price for sin is life without God. So was that the end? Were we never going to be able to be close with God again, because we all have sin? No, because God is always here and He loves us. God immediately promised that He would make a way.

TENT



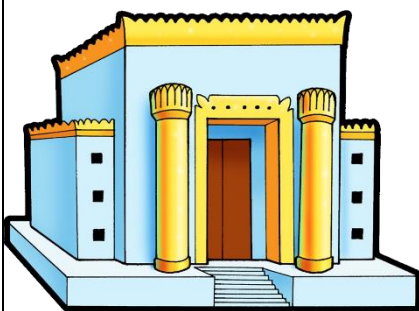
Even when the people of Israel had sinned by worshipping a golden calf, God made a way to be close to them. Moses would put up a temporary tent away from the campsite of the people and in a pillar of smoke God would come to that place. But still it was not like it was before. Because of their sin, not everyone could just come into God's presence and be close to Him.

TABERNACLE



God then gave His people a list of instructions of how to make a tabernacle. God chose men, called priests and they were the only ones that could enter the outer courts and offer sacrifices for the people. In the tabernacle itself, behind a very thick curtain, was the Holy of Holies. This is where God would come. Only the high priest could go in there and only once a year. Was it now like it had been before? No, it was still not the same. Because of sin, people could not be close to God but God would make a way.

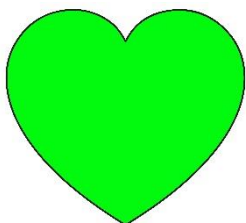
TEMPLE



Many years later King Solomon followed the very clear instructions from God on how to build a temple. It would be filled with beautiful gems and gold. This would be a permanent building in Israel where God would come and live. But still not everyone could come here and be close to God. Can you imagine how that must have felt? You knew God was right there behind the curtain but you could not go in and talk with Him. But God would make a way for us to be close to Him again.

(JESUS)

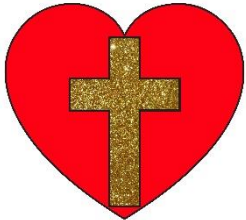
Use the three hearts to teach the next part of the lesson.



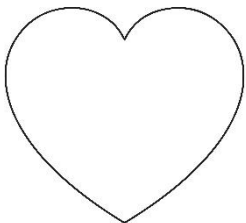
(Green heart) So let us recap what has happened. This green heart reminds us that God has created Adam and Eve to be with Him. (Colossians 1:16). God loves them and wants a close and personal relationship with them, like walking in the garden. But Adam and Eve messed up. They sinned. *(Make the green heart dirty)* And now they look like this, full of sin. And because of their sin they can't have life with God.

And Adam and Eve are not the only ones who have sinned. Every one of us have done things that are against God too. We all looked like this dirty green heart: Created to be close to God but separated from life with Him by our sin. (Romans 3:23)

If we had lived back then, we wouldn't have been allowed to go into the tent to meet with God, or the tabernacle or the temple. We wouldn't have been allowed to go behind that thick curtain to where God was. But thankfully, God immediately had a plan. (Genesis 3:15)



When the timing was just right, God sent His son, Jesus. *(Stick red heart with a cross over the green heart)* Jesus took our sin and took our punishment and died on the cross. Immediately at the time of His death, God tore the curtain that kept the people from coming close to Him. (Matthew 27:51) God had promised a way for us to be close to Him again and Jesus is that way. The **only way**. (John 14:6)



On the third day Jesus came alive again and is still alive in Heaven. Because He is still alive it means no one ever has to die for sin again. (Hebrews 10:10) When we believe in Jesus we are forgiven. (1 John 1:9) We become like a new person. Free from sin. *(Stick the white heart on the other side of the green heart.)* And with hearts that now are completely changed by Jesus, we can be in God's presence wherever we are.

If the story stopped there it would be wonderful. Because of Jesus we have a way to be with God. But the story gets even better. You see God doesn't want to be with you sometimes, in some places. He wants to be with you always, close and personally with you. And so He sent the Holy Spirit, who is God Himself, to live in you. How amazing is that? We never have to wonder "where is God?". We can be absolutely sure that because of Jesus, God is always with us!
1 Corinthians 3:16

"Don't you realize that all of you together are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God lives in you?"

It may sound strange that we are a temple. We don't have a roof and a fancy door. This verse is telling us that the very place that God comes to live, is **in us!** Jesus' death means our sin has been removed and we are now a holy place for God to be present in. Because of Jesus, no matter where we go, God is always with us!

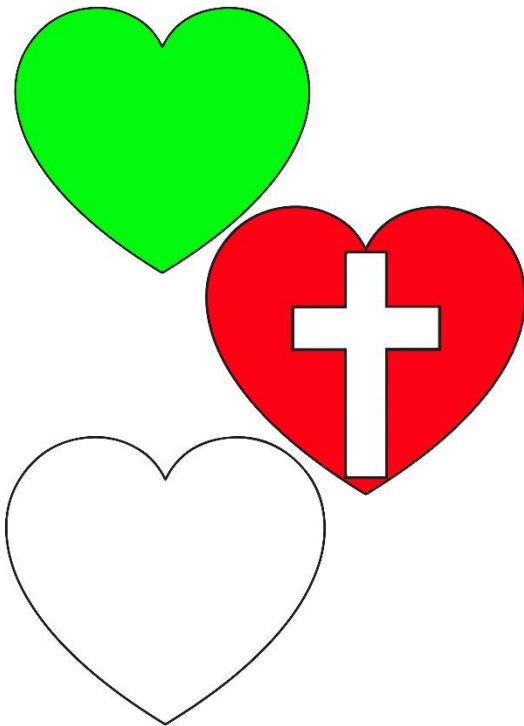
4) Review Questions:

- a) Was God in the tent, the tabernacle and the temple? ***(Yes, God has always made a way to be with us.)***
- b) Could everyone come close to God in the tent, tabernacle and temple? ***(No, there was a curtain that separated us from God's presence. We could not enter because of our sin)***
- c) Can we be close with God now? ***(Yes, because of Jesus we can be close and talk with God all the time.)***
- d) How close can we be with God? ***(Very close. So close that He even lives inside of us and goes with us wherever we go.)***

5) Craft

Option 1: Hearts

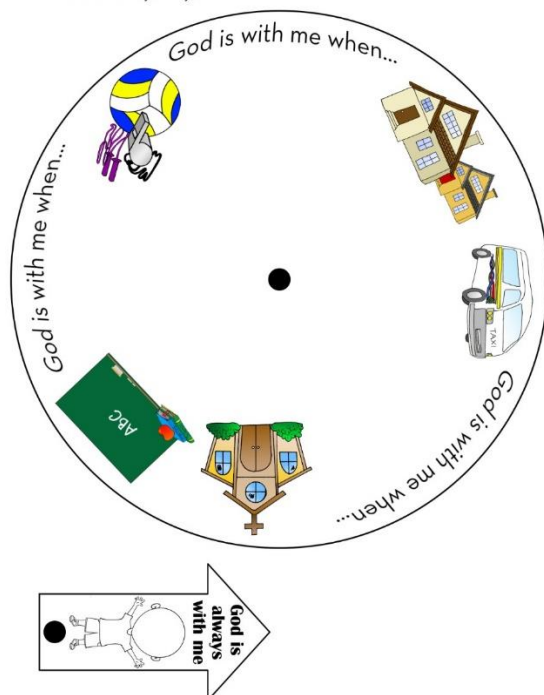
Children cut out and use the hearts to re-teach the lesson on how Jesus saves us. They can add glitter to the cross.



Option 2: Spinner wheel

Children draw themselves in the arrow and use a split pin to add it to the spinner. They can add in more places that they will go to. Remind them that no matter where they go God is always with them!

Draw yourself in the arrow and use a split pin to add it to the spinner. Draw in more places to remember God is always with you.



Lesson 8: Tell others God is with them. (Ananias' story)

Main focus for the lesson:

- God wants to use you to tell others about Jesus.
- God has given you the Holy Spirit to help you.

1) Memory Verse


God asked Jeremiah to pass on His messages to the people of Judah. This would not be easy as the people were not good people. Jeremiah said he was too young. Let's read God's reply.

- Jeremiah 1:7-8

“The LORD replied, “Don’t say, ‘I’m too young,’ for you must go wherever I send you and say whatever I tell you. And don’t be afraid of the people, for I will be with you and will protect you. I, the LORD, have spoken!””

We may feel too young or scared to tell others about Jesus but remember God says that He will be with you, protect you and give you His message to tell others.

Idea to teach the memory verse.



Use a tape measure or a strip of paper to make a measuring graph. Each child takes a turn to be measured and be asked “are you too young to tell others?”

They then reply “No, **I will say whatever God tells me and God will be with me and protect me.**”

2) Hands on

Use the link to watch it in action: Tell Others – Quick Truth <https://youtu.be/OniUlf87QYM>

You will need: Set of dominoes or Jenga blocks. Line up the blocks one behind the other, close enough that if the first one falls over, it will knock the next and so on.

I want to ask you two very important questions.

- a. Who is Jesus?
- b. How do we have eternal life with God?

There are many people who do not know the answers to these questions. They do not know that Jesus is God's son and they do not know that the only way to have eternal life with God is through believing in Jesus.

Part of God's plan is that you, and I, help other people know these answers and know even more about who He is and what He has done so that they can believe and praise Him just like we do.

(Refer to the row of blocks in front of you) Let's say that every block represents a person around the world.

(Hold up the first block) Do you see this person? He is very happy as he has heard the good news about Jesus and he wants everyone to love Jesus like he does too. He is going to tell and show everyone who Jesus is.

(Point to the last block) But it would be impossible to tell and show the whole world with just one person! How would he get all the way to America, Ireland and France and back again?

(Point to all the blocks in the line) If, however, he told one person, and they then told one person, and they told somebody else and that person told someone else...

(Point to the last block) We could then create a chain reaction and soon many people would know about Jesus and eventually everyone would have heard the good news about how Jesus has saved us from our sin.

(Remove one, two and then three blocks from the line) Sometimes we feel too scared to tell someone about Jesus and we are worried they will laugh at us. Or we don't feel like we can show God's love through our actions. Or maybe we even feel like we are too young to be part of God's plans. But we need to try and put those feelings and worries aside so that there are no gaps in the chain.

(Add them all back to the line) God is so good as He will give you the message He wants you to pass on. He will give you the courage, strength and everything you need to tell others and even more encouraging than that is that He will be with you all the time. And eventually *(knock over the first block so that the whole line tumbles over)* the whole world will know the good news about Jesus.

3) Bible Story + Lesson

Use a towel over your head or some simple items to get into character.

Note: This is not the Ananias that lied about the money and was killed by God. (Acts 5:1-11)

It is also not Ananias the high priest from Paul's trial. (Acts 23)

The Ananias we are talking about can be found in Acts 9:10-17 and Acts 22:10-19.

Good morning everyone.

My name is Ananias.

I want to tell you about something that happened to me, it was one of the scariest things I have ever had to do.

There was this really mean man named Saul. He used to hurt people that believe in Jesus, throw them in prison and sometimes allow them to be put to death. He was not someone you wanted to meet in a dark alley! And when we heard that he was in Damascus, all of us Christians were very scared. You see we love Jesus and we love telling others about how Jesus died on the cross for our sins and is now alive again. But if Saul caught us saying these things, oh dear we would be in big trouble!

One day I was at home and God spoke to me in a vision. He said, "Ananias!"

Can you believe it? God was speaking to me, just an ordinary guy! I quickly replied, "Yes Lord".

God then said to me, "Go over to Straight Street".

I thought "Okay yes, I think I know where Straight Street is."

And He continued, "Go to the house of Judas."

I thought again "Yes, I know Judas".

And then you won't believe what God told me to do next. He said, "When you get there, ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul."

S A U L! Can you believe it! Saul! The same man I was telling you about who hates us Christians! God was telling me to go to him!

And so I said to God, "I have heard many reports about this man and all the harm he has done to your holy people in Jerusalem. And he has come here with authority from the chief priests to arrest all who call on Your name."

But God said, "Go, for Saul is my chosen instrument to take my message to the Gentiles and to Kings, as well as to the people of Israel. And I will show him how much he must suffer for my name's sake."

God had told me to go and even what to say, so do you know what I did next? I went and hid under my bed. No, although I wanted to hide away, I went and found Saul. I was really scared and my heart was racing. But I love God so much, I know that God is real and I knew that God would be with me. So I was ready to say whatever God told me.

When I got there, to my surprise, Saul wasn't angry at all. In fact, Jesus had already spoken to him through a bright light on his journey there and had made him blind. And you won't believe it, Saul was even expecting me. Jesus had even told him my name!

As I knelt down next to Saul I passed on God's message to him. It was such an important message that I decided to write it down. Here, let me read the message God wanted me to say (take out a paper "scroll") "The God of our ancestors has chosen you to know His will and to see the Righteous One and hear Him speak. ¹⁵For you are to be His witness, telling everyone what you have seen and heard. ¹⁶What are you waiting for? Get up and be baptized. Have your sins washed away by calling on the name of the Lord." (Acts 22:14-16)

Then something amazing happened, this stuff fell off his eyes, it looked like fish scales and Saul could see again! Then he got up and asked me to baptize him. Then he ate some food and got his strength back.

And if you have read the Bible you will see that Saul, or the other name he often goes by, Paul, told many people about Jesus! It was just like God had said. I feel so special that God trusted me to pass on His message and boy am I pleased that He is with me, just like He promises.

You too can trust God! He is with you too and He will help you know what to say. No matter how tough it may be, help others know that God is always with them too.

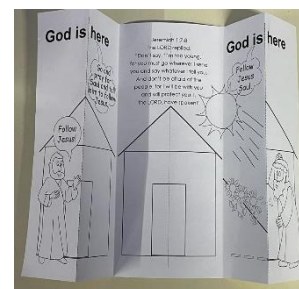
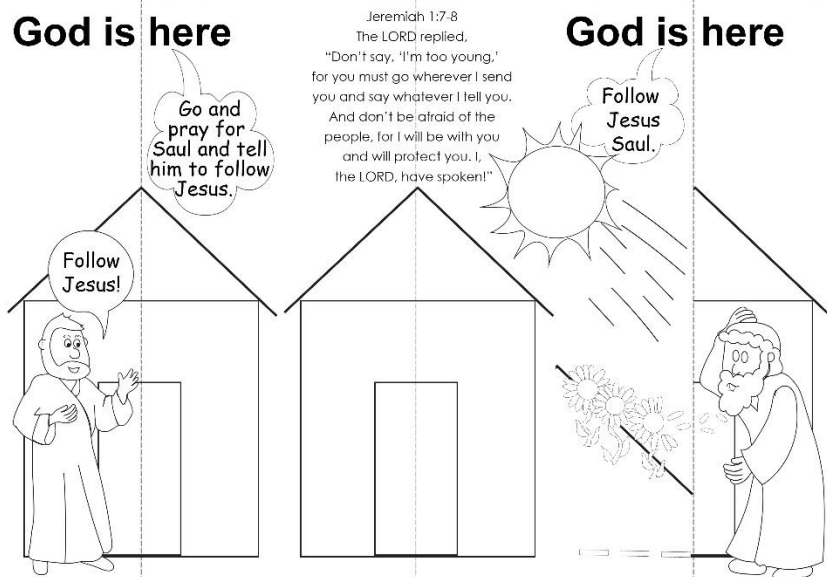
4) Review Questions:

- a) Do you know God wants you to tell others about Jesus? (**Matthew 28:16:20**)
- b) Ananias was afraid to go to tell Saul but he went anyway and what a great outcome it had. We may be afraid but do you know who goes with you to help you and give you courage? (**The Holy Spirit**)
- c) Leaders can share a testimony of a time they told someone about Jesus and encourage children to share too.

5) Craft

Option 1:

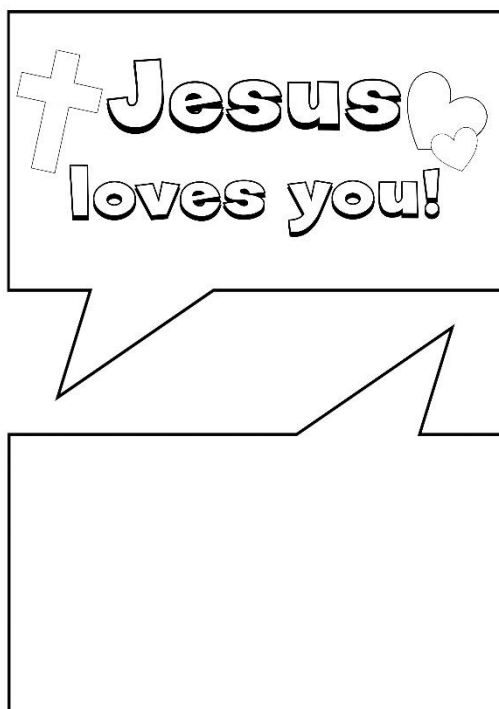
Children fold along the outer dotted lines so that they meet with the middle dotted line, bringing Ananias and Saul to meet in the middle. Explain that this is what God does. He is with us when He tells us to go. But He is also with those whom He sends us to tell. It is not about how well we tell the message but more that we do what God has asked and planned for us to do.



Option 2: Speech Bubbles

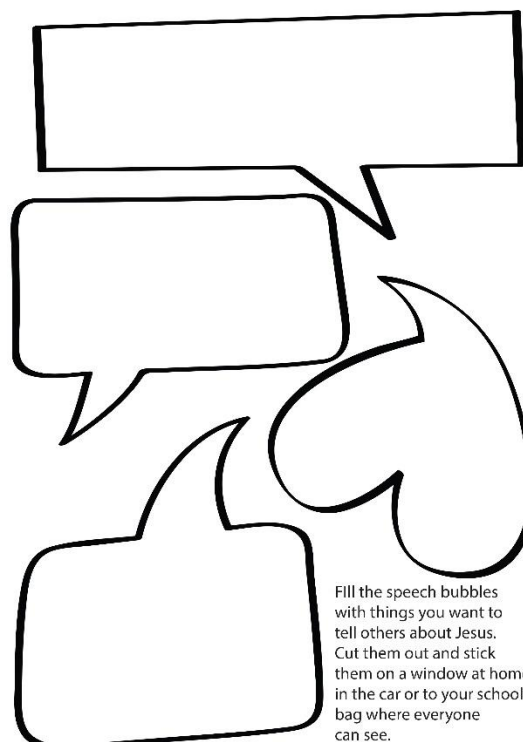
Big Speech Bubble:

Children cut and stick the speech bubbles back to back on a stick



Small Speech bubbles:

Children write their own messages they want to tell others.



Fill the speech bubbles with things you want to tell others about Jesus. Cut them out and stick them on a window at home, in the car or to your school bag where everyone can see.