



**JESUS GAVE HIS ALL FOR ME,
SO I WANT TO LIVE ALL IN FOR HIM**

All in

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Letter to the leaders

All through the Bible we find verses that say things like “with all your heart,” “above all else,” and “make this your highest aim.” These teach us that following Jesus isn’t a half-hearted thing but rather something we get to do with our whole lives.

In this series, we’ll look at different people in the Bible. Some trusted God when it was hard, some obeyed when it didn’t make sense, some prayed with everything in them, and some boldly shared the Good News. Their stories will help the children understand what it means to live all in for Jesus.

They will also learn how to be all in for God’s will and plans, all in with their love and all in for His church. Remembering that whatever we do, big or small, we can do it with hearts that belong fully to Him.

The best part is that Jesus was “all in” for us first. He loved us completely, served us humbly, forgave us fully, and gave His life for us on the cross. Because He went all in for us, we get to live all in for Him.

Lesson 1: What does it mean to be “all in” for Jesus?

Main focus for the lesson:

- The Bible teaches us to seek, trust, love, serve and live for Jesus with **all** of our heart.
- “All in” for Jesus means we surrender everything to Him and have a close relationship with Him.

1) Memory Verse

- Joshua 22:5

“Love the Lord your God, walk in all His ways, obey His commands, hold firmly to Him, and serve Him with all your heart and all your soul.”

Idea to teach the memory verse.

What you will need:

- A bucket filled with water
- Items that sink

Let the children each take a turn to drop an item into the water as they answer the questions below:

- Ask, “How must we love the Lord our God?”
Children answer, “With all your heart and all your soul” as they drop the item in the water.
- Ask, “How must we walk in His ways?”
Children answer, “With all your heart and all your soul” as they drop the item in the water.
- Ask, “How must we obey His commands?”
Children answer, “With all your heart and all your soul” as they drop the item in the water.
- Ask, “How must we hold firmly to Him?”
Children answer, “With all your heart and all your soul” as they drop the item in the water.
- Ask, “How must we serve Him?”
Children answer, “With all your heart and all your soul” as they drop the item in the water.

Keep repeating the verse until each child has had a turn to drop an item into the water.

2) Hands on

What you will need:

- A clear container filled with water
- A golf ball with a little face drawn on
- A ping-pong ball with a little face drawn on
- Ezekiel pictures of him getting deeper

(Ezekiel 47:1–7) God gave Ezekiel a vision of a man leading Ezekiel along and then into a flowing river. They go from ankle deep, to knees, to waist, and finally too deep to walk across.



What a lovely picture this is of how our relationship with Jesus should be: Him guiding us into more and more and us fully relying on Him.



Let's pretend both of these balls are Christians who love and follow Jesus.

Our first step into the river is choosing to believe Jesus died for our sins and came alive again and to follow Him. (*Drop in the ping-pong ball which floats.*)

But Jesus doesn't want us to just stay there. There is so much more He wants for us. He wants us to know, love and trust Him more. He wants us to serve, obey, tell and live for Him more. And He wants to bless us more than we could even imagine. He wants us to live our lives *all in* for Him. (*Drop in the golf ball which sinks.*)

Which ball do you think God wants us to be like? (*Yes, the ball that is all in!*)

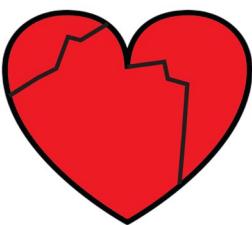
In this series we will look at what it means to live *all in* for Jesus.

3) Bible Story + Lesson

What you will need:

- 5 different “How much should we...?” posters for each verse
- 5 full red hearts cut out to be stuck over each poster
- 1 red heart cut up into pieces

How much of your heart should



How much of your heart should



LOVE GOD?

Use the pieces of the cut-out heart as you teach. Once you have read the verse, stick on the full red heart to show “with **all** of your heart.”

Where do we even start to be *all in* with Jesus? How do we get to this place of full surrender, totally relying on Jesus and being where He wants us to be?

It all starts with our hearts. Have you ever heard Christians say that we need to give our hearts to Jesus? Well, they don't mean that you actually have to take your heart out and give it to Him. They mean that you have to make Jesus the most important person in your life.

How much of your heart should



LOVE GOD?

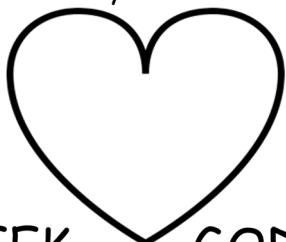
How much of our hearts should we give Jesus to show we love Him? Should I love Jesus just a little bit? I love Him when He gives me the things I want. (*Stick on a small piece*) I can love Him a little bit more when things go well in my life. (*Replace small piece with a bigger piece*)

Let's see what the Bible says in Matthew 22:37.

"Love the Lord your God with **all** of your heart, **all** of your soul and **all** of your mind."

That couldn't be clearer! Jesus wants us to love Him with all of our hearts. (*Stick on the full red heart*)

How much of your heart should



SEEK GOD?

How much of our hearts does Jesus want us to seek Him with? I can seek Him a little bit on a Sunday morning at church when we sit together and read the Word and listen to the preach. (*Stick on a small piece*) But is that enough?

I can seek Him a bit more when I come to prayer meetings on a Wednesday. (*Replace small piece with a medium piece*)

Or when I'm at home and I pray and ask Him to help me. (*Replace medium piece with a bigger piece*) But is that enough? Let's see what the Bible says in Jeremiah 29:13. "You will seek Me and find Me when you seek Me with **all** of your heart." It couldn't be clearer! Jesus wants us to seek Him with **all** of our hearts. (*Stick on the full red heart*)

How much of your heart should



TRUST GOD?

What about trusting Jesus? How much of our hearts should we trust Him with? It's easy for us to trust Jesus with the easy stuff, the stuff we know is going to happen like the sun coming up tomorrow morning. (*Stick on a small piece*) But is that enough? Well, I can trust Him a bit more when I look back on the things that He gave me when I prayed and asked Him. (*Replace small piece with a bigger piece*)

But is that enough? Let's see what the Bible says in Proverbs 3:5. "Trust in the Lord with **all** your heart, do not depend on your own understanding." It couldn't be clearer! Jesus wants us to trust Him with **all** of our hearts. (*Stick on the full red heart*)

How much of your heart should



What about obeying and serving Jesus? How much of our hearts should we give to obey and serve Him? It's easy for us to obey and serve Jesus by helping the poor on Mandela Day. (*Stick on a small piece*) But is that enough? Well, I can obey and serve Him a bit more when I give away the clothes and toys I'm not using anymore. (*Replace small piece with a bigger piece*) But is that enough? Let's see what the Bible says in Joshua 22:5. "Love the Lord your God, walk in all His ways, obey His commands, hold firmly to Him, and serve Him with **all** your heart and **all** your soul." It couldn't be clearer! Jesus wants us to obey and serve Him with **all** of our hearts. (*Stick on the full red heart*)

How much of your heart should



What about thanking Jesus and telling others about Him? How much of our hearts should we praise and tell others with? It's easy for us to praise Jesus and tell people about Him at Christmas time. (*Stick on a small piece*) But is that enough? Well, I can praise Him and tell others about Him a bit when I'm grateful for the things He has done in my life, and for my friends and family. (*Replace small piece with a bigger piece*) But is that enough? Let's see what the Bible says in Psalm 9:1. "I will praise you Lord with all my heart. I will tell of **all** the wonderful things you have done." It couldn't be clearer! Jesus doesn't just want us to praise Him for a few of the things He has blessed us with and only tell people about Him on special occasions but rather **all** the time about **everything** He has done! (*Stick on the full red heart*)

We have learnt today that to be *all in* for Jesus means loving, seeking, trusting, obeying, serving, praising and telling others about Him with **all** of our hearts, **all** the time!

4) Review Questions:

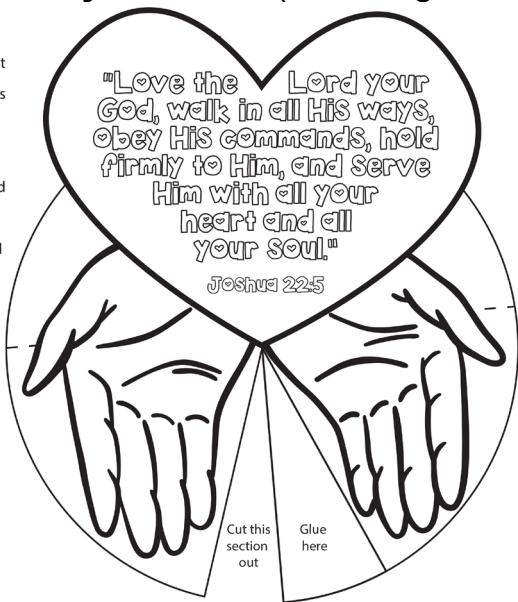
- How can we be *all in* for Jesus? (Loving, seeking, trusting, obeying, serving, praising and telling others about Jesus with **all** of our hearts, **all** the time!)
- Do you think other people will notice when you are *all in* for Jesus? Who do you notice in your life that you would say loves, serves, etc. with all their heart? (*Let the children give their own answers.*)
- How can we help others to be *all in* for Jesus? (*Let the children give their own answers.*)

5) Craft

Option 1: Give your heart (Standing heart)

- 1) Cut around the heart and circle and the wedge marked "Cut this section out"
- 2) Make a slight fold along the midline as indicated
- 3) Glue the wedge labelled "Glue here" and slide it under the opposite hand.
- 4) Once the glue is stuck your craft should now be able to stand on its own.

Lightly fold along the mid-line



Cut around the heart and circle and the wedge marked "Cut this section out"

- 1) Make a slight fold along the midline as indicated
- 2) Glue the wedge labelled "Glue here" and slide it under the opposite hand.
- 3) Once the glue is stuck your craft should now be able to stand on its own.

Option 2: All your heart worksheet

This worksheet can be completed as you teach the lesson.

GIVE ALL OF YOUR HEART TO JESUS

How much of your heart should **LOVE** God?

Colour in the amount of your heart that the Bible says should **LOVE** God.

Matthew 22:37 Jesus answered, "Love the Lord your God with your heart, all your soul, and all your mind."

Is there any space to love OTHER THINGS more? **NO**

How much of your heart should **SEEK** God?

Colour in the amount of your heart that the Bible says should **SEEK** God.

Jeremiah 29:13 You will seek Me and find Me when you seek Me with _____ of your heart.

Is there any space to make OTHER THINGS more important to search for? **NO**

How much of your heart should **TRUST** God?

Colour in the amount of your heart that the Bible says should **TRUST** God.

Proverbs 3:5 Trust in the LORD with _____ your heart; do not depend on your own understanding.

How much of your heart should **SERVE & OBEY** God?

Colour in the amount of your heart that the Bible says should **SERVE & OBEY** God.

Joshua 22:5 Love the Lord your God, walk in all His ways, obey His commands, hold firmly to Him, and serve Him with _____ your heart and all your soul.

How much of your heart should **TELL & PRAISE** God?

Colour in the amount of your heart that the Bible says should **TELL & PRAISE** God.

Psalm 9:1 I will praise you Lord with _____ my heart. I will tell of all the wonderful things you have done.

Lesson 2: Seek His will in all you do (Jehoshaphat)

Main focus for the lesson:

- When we look for God's intentional plan and purpose and the way He wants it done, He will show us how to do it.
- Not only should we know God's plan, but we should actually do it.

1) Memory Verse

- Proverbs 3:6

“Seek His will in all you do, and He will show you which path to take.”

Idea to teach the memory verse.

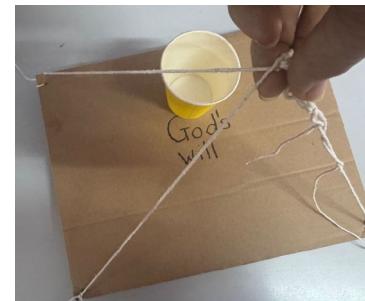
Show the children how to do a Mexican Wave, where they lift their arms and put them down again, one after the other.

The leader says one word of the verse at a time, starting with “Seek”
As the children do the wave, they repeat that same word together “Seek”
Continue through the verse, one word at a time “Seek” “His” “will” “in” “all” “you”
“do”, each time getting the children to repeat it with the wave.
Start over, getting faster each time.

2) Hands on

What you will need:

- A flat board with “God’s will” written in the centre.
Attach string so it can be swung around
- A cup of water



Use the link <https://youtu.be/z-axGc3-cmQ> to see how this is done.

God's will is His intentional plan and purpose and the way He wants it done. It is what God wants to happen.

The Bible tells us that God wants us to seek His will in all we do, so much so that He will even show us how to do so. “Seek His will in all you do, and He will show you which path to take.” Proverbs 3:6

Let's pretend the centre of this board represents God's will, and this cup represents you. When you're right in the centre of God's will, you're choosing to trust His plan and follow His ways. (Place the cup of water in the centre of the board)

(Slowly sway the board back and forth) Life feels good and things seem pretty easy right.



(Swing the board a bit harder back and forth.) But what about when things start to get a little tough and life starts to shake and wobble? Where is the best place to be? Yes, in the centre of God's will, seeking what God wants you to do and then obeying Him.

(Quickly swing the board round and round. If the cup of water is in the centre it will not move nor spill)

There are even times in our lives, and hopefully not often, where life gets crazy and you feel like your world is spinning out of control. None of us like these times, but as long as you stay in the centre of God's will, ultimately things are going to be okay. It doesn't mean everything will go your way. It doesn't mean that everything will turn out the way that you want it to turn out. But you can trust God. And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to His purpose for them. Romans 8:28



In God's will we can have peace, we know we have His protection and His help to accomplish things that would be otherwise impossible.

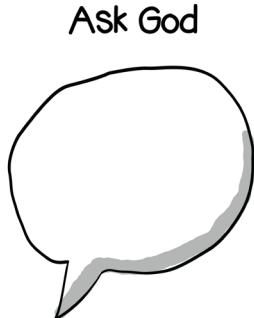
Now, what do you think would happen if we were not quite in God's will? What if we're over here? *(Move the cup of water to the side of the board)* Even if we are just doing a few things out of His will that we shouldn't be doing it can end up being terrible. *(Swing the board around, but this time the cup of water will fly off the board.)*

So remember, to stay in God's will you need to "Seek His will in all you do, and He will show you which path to take." Proverbs 3:6

3) Bible Story + Lesson

What you will need:

- Four multiple choice pictures.



Jehoshaphat was a king of Judah. His story is found in 2 Chronicles 17–20.

When Jehoshaphat became king, he really wanted to be in God's will and live like God said he should.

He obeyed God.

- He did not worship fake gods like others in the kingdom of Israel were.
- He removed idols and places people built to worship fake gods.
- He sent teachers and priests across the land with scrolls of God's law so people could learn what God says and how to live for Him.

The Bible tells us that because of His obedience to God:

- God was with him.
- God established him as a powerful king over Judah. The people gave him many gifts, and he became rich and well-respected.
- God protected him and his kingdom and so people were afraid to attack them.

King Ahab was the most evil king of Israel and so to keep the peace Jehoshaphat's son married Ahab's daughter. One day, Ahab asked Jehoshaphat to go to war with him against a common enemy.

What **should** Jehoshaphat do? (*Show the four pictures and let the children decide*)



Let's read what Jehoshaphat **did**.

Jehoshaphat replied, "Why, of course! You and I are as one, and my troops are your troops. We will certainly join you in battle." Then Jehoshaphat added, "**But first let's find out what the Lord says.**"

2 Chronicles 18:4

Well done Jehoshaphat! It is important for us to ask God what He wants us to do when we have decisions to make.

God warned them not to go to war and that Ahab would be killed in the battle if he did. But Ahab didn't listen. He said, "Let's go anyway!" And Jehoshaphat foolishly followed. If we are going to live our lives for Jesus, we can't just ask God, we have to listen and obey what God says too!

King Ahab was scared and so he didn't wear his royal robes to battle but Jehoshaphat did. The enemy chased Jehoshaphat thinking he was King Ahab. Jehoshaphat was in big trouble.

What do you think he **should** do?
(*Show the four pictures and let the children decide*)



Let's read what Jehoshaphat **did**.

So when the Aramean chariot commanders saw Jehoshaphat in his royal robes, they went after him. "There is the king of Israel!" they shouted. But **Jehoshaphat called out, and the Lord saved him.** God helped him by turning the attackers away from him. 2 Chronicles 18:31

Jehoshaphat asked God for help and God saved him, even though he had disobeyed Him. As we live our lives for Jesus there will be times when we mess up, disobey God or do something wrong. Thankfully God is faithful and forgiving and we can, and should, always call out to Him.

Later, something even scarier happened. Jehoshaphat heard that a massive army, made up of the Moabites, Ammonites, and Meunites, were coming to attack.

What do you think Jehoshaphat **should** do? (Show the four pictures and let the children decide)



These armies were strong, dangerous armies who had won many battles before and so it would have been understandable if Jehoshaphat chose to run and hide but let's read what he **did**.

Jehoshaphat was terrified by this news and begged the Lord for guidance. He also ordered everyone in Judah to begin fasting. So people from all the towns of Judah came to Jerusalem to seek the Lord's help. 2 Chronicles 20:3-4

Jehoshaphat called everyone to pray and fast together. In front of everyone he prayed how powerful and strong God is and he prayed how faithfully God had helped them before. And he prayed: O our God, won't you stop them? We are powerless against this mighty army that is about to attack us. We do not know what to do, but we are looking to You for help." 2 Chronicles 20:12

When we face things that seem impossible we should also pray. It is good for us to call others to come and pray with us and to remember we are praying to a faithful and powerful God. We can also fast. Fasting is when we choose to give up something, like food, so that we can humble ourselves, fully focus on God and ask for His direction.

And God answered their prayers through a prophet.

This is what the LORD says: Do not be afraid! Don't be discouraged by this mighty army, for the battle is not yours, but God's. 2 Chronicles 20:15

Now that Jehoshaphat knows that God has promised they will win the battle, what **should** he do?



Then King Jehoshaphat bowed low with his face to the ground. And all the people of Judah and Jerusalem did the same, **worshiping the Lord**. 2 Chronicles 20:18

God had not done anything yet but Jehoshaphat knew God's power and faithfulness and so he immediately worshipped God. As we live our lives for Jesus it is important our love and worship of God should not be conditional nor be held back until God does what we want. He always deserves to be thanked and praised. Notice how the people did the same as Jehoshaphat, they prayed and worshipped God too. When we rely on God, pray to Him and worship Him unconditionally, we are an example and encourage others to pray and worship Him too.

The enemy arrived and the war was about to start. What do you think Jehoshaphat **should** do next?



He could have asked God again to make sure he heard right, and he could have come up with the best war strategy just in case and he could have even run and hid until God had won. But this is what Jehoshaphat **did**.

Early the next morning the army of Judah went out into the wilderness of Tekoa. On the way Jehoshaphat stopped and said, "Listen to me, all you people of Judah and Jerusalem! Believe in the Lord your God, and you will be able to stand firm. Believe in His prophets, and you will succeed." After consulting the people, **the king appointed singers to walk ahead of the army, singing to the Lord and praising Him for His holy splendour**. This is what they sang: "Give thanks to the Lord; His faithful love endures forever!" 2 Chronicles 20:20-21

Jehoshaphat put the worship team at the front of the army. And guess what? At the very moment they began to sing and give praise to God, God made the enemy fight each other. Jehoshaphat and his army didn't even have to lift a sword! They gathered so much treasure, it took three days to carry it all. The people rejoiced and returned to Jerusalem singing and praising God.

Remember when you chose to live for Jesus and make His will the most important over everything, this is who you are praying to and this who you are worshipping. A God who gives you direction, a God who helps you even when you do not deserve it and a God who can win a battle without you lifting a hand.

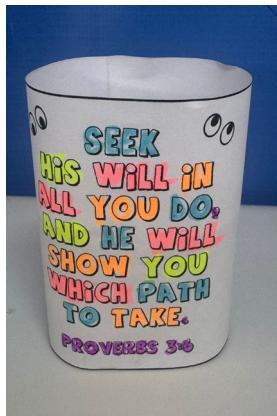
4) Review Questions:

- a) What does it mean to be in God's will? (We find out what He wants to happen or what His intentional plan and purpose is and then we do it His way with His help.)
- b) How do we know what God's will is? (Through reading the Bible, learning about Him at church and spending time with Him we can get to know His character and His plans and purposes for believers. We can ask Him what His specific will for our lives is.)
- c) Does God forgive you if you do things out of His will? (Problems may arise out of God's will but thankfully His love for us is unconditional and He will forgive you.)

5) Craft

Option 1: Seek His will (Binoculars)

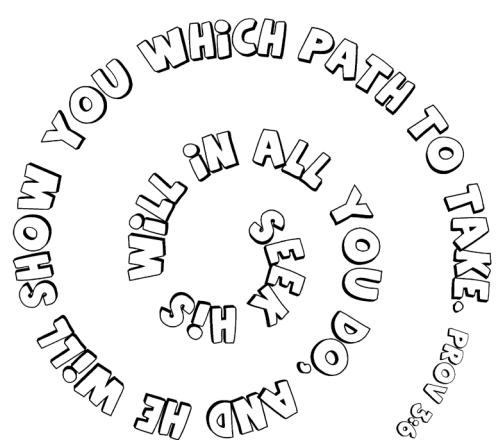
SEEK
HIS WILL IN
ALL YOU DO,
AND HE WILL
SHOW YOU
WHICH PATH
TO TAKE.
PROVERBS 3:6



Option 2: Spiral verse

Children cut out the eyes and attach them to a paperclip. Then, using a magnet behind the page, they will guide the eyes through the spiral verse.

Cut out the eyes and slide them onto a paper clip.
Place your magnet under the paper and the paper clip and eyes on top.
As you say the verse, move the magnet underneath the page to guide the eyes along the words.



Lesson 3: All in for God's plans (John)

Main focus for the lesson:

- God had a special plan for John long before he was born, and God has a plan for you too.
- John was *all in* to prepare the way for Jesus, just like God had planned.

1) Memory Verse

- Psalm 40:8

"I take joy in doing Your will, my God, for Your instructions are written on my heart."

Idea to teach the memory verse.

What you will need:

- Item to pass around (e.g. a ball)
- Music (or a drum)

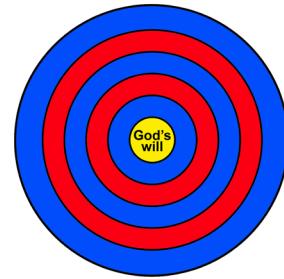
God's will is the plans He has and what He wants. In this psalm David wrote, he isn't following God's will just because he was told to; he really wants to do it. God's instructions are in his heart, and he's all in. How will you react to God's plans and will for your life?

Children sit in a circle and pass the ball around from person to person as the music plays. When the music stops, the person with the ball says the verse. For a bit of fun, give them a way they must say the verse (e.g. while standing on one foot, in a low voice, etc.).

2) Hands on

What you will need:

- A target with a bullseye
- A piece of string tied to the bullseye of the target
- A piece of a drinking straw
- A few balloons



To see how this is done use the link "God's will - (Object Lessons)" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Snx1PSCpJLU>

Imagine if there was no plan for anything. We didn't know what to do, where to go or what to work towards. Even worse, imagine if God didn't have a plan. (*Release the balloon and let it fly around the room.*)

We would feel like this balloon, just flying around with no purpose, no direction, and no idea where we're going. It would be chaos.

But thankfully, God does have a plan for you and for me and for the whole world! We won't completely know what His full plan is, and that is okay. Even if we can't

see the target or understand the ending yet, God asks us to take one step of faith at a time. Every time we obey, trust Him, and follow Him, it's like we're moving one step closer to His perfect plan. Knowing the full plan is not important, trusting the One who does is.

3) Bible Story + Lesson

What you will need:

- The three puzzles

Learners will respond by saying and doing the following actions each time they hear “Prepare the way for the Promised Saviour”:

- Turn from sin – turn head to the side
- Be baptised – gesture your arms as if going under the water and up again
- The Saviour – point upwards
- is coming – point to the ground

God had a special plan for John’s life. Today, as I tell the story, each time you hear “Prepare the way for the Promised Saviour” I want you to say “Turn from sin, be baptised, the Saviour is coming.” (*Demonstrate and then practice this a few times with the children.*)



God told the prophet Isaiah, that He would send someone who would help people turn back to God and **prepare the way for the Promised Saviour**. (Isaiah 40:3) (*Learners respond “Turn from sin, be baptised, the Saviour is coming.”*)

Everyone was waiting for this person to come as they knew it was part of God’s big plan to restore their relationship with Him. Sin had separated people from God and He would make it how it was before, us having a close relationship with Him. About 700 years later after this prophecy, while a priest named Zechariah was inside the Temple the angel Gabriel suddenly appeared to him and said “Don’t be afraid, Zechariah! God has heard your prayer. Your wife, Elizabeth, will have a baby boy. You must name him John.”

The angel said John would be very special. He would help people turn back to God and **prepare the way for the Promised Saviour**. (*Learners respond “Turn from sin, be baptised, the Saviour is coming.”*)

John was the person who would **prepare the way!** (*Learners respond “Turn from sin, be baptised, the Saviour is coming.”*)

Zechariah said, "How can this happen? My wife and I are too old!" The angel answered, "Because you didn't believe my message from God, you won't be able to speak until the baby is born. But what I said will definitely come true."

When Elizabeth's baby was born, everyone was happy and praised God. When Zechariah wrote "His name will be John" he could immediately speak again. Everyone knew God had a special plan for the child.

Zechariah praised God and prophesied. Let's read from the Bible what he said.

⁷⁶ "And you, my little son, will be called the prophet of the Most High, because you will prepare the way for the Lord. ⁷⁷ You will tell His people how to find salvation through forgiveness of their sins." Luke 1:76-77

700 years before, Isaiah had said John would help people turn back to God and **prepare the way for the Promised Saviour.** (*Learners respond "Turn from sin, be baptised, the Saviour is coming."*)

Before his birth, the angel said John would **prepare the way for the Promised Saviour.** (*Learners respond "Turn from sin, be baptised, the Saviour is coming."*)

At his birth, Zechariah said John would **prepare the way for the Promised Saviour.** (*Learners respond "Turn from sin, be baptised, the Saviour is coming."*)

But would John be *all in* for God's plan? Did he **prepare the way for the Promised Saviour?** (*Learners respond "Turn from sin, be baptised, the Saviour is coming."*)

When John grew up, he didn't live in a fancy house or wear fancy clothes. He lived out in the desert, wearing camel-hair clothes and eating honey and little crunchy locusts. But John didn't mind. He knew his job was important.

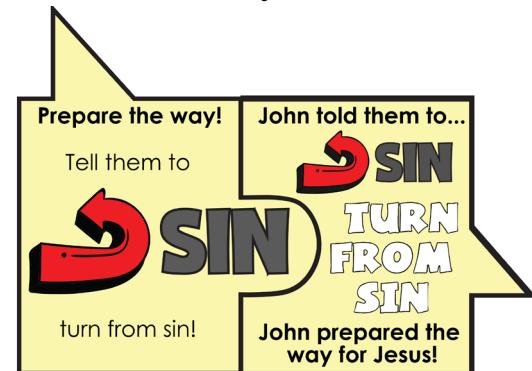
Let's look at what John did. (*Read the Bible verse and match what God had planned for John to do to what he was doing.*)

John told everyone to stop making wrong choices and to turn away from sin!

"Repent of your sins and turn to God, for the Kingdom of Heaven is near!" Matthew 3:2

John was doing what God had planned. (*Match the two puzzles.*)

John explained they must then be baptised to show on the outside that they had repented and turned to God on the inside.

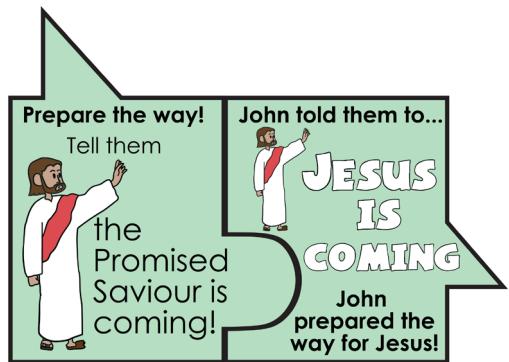


⁴John preached that people should be baptized to show that they had repented of their sins and turned to God to be forgiven. ⁵All of Judea, including all the people of Jerusalem, went out to see and hear John. And when they confessed their sins, he baptized them in the Jordan River. Mark 1:4-5

People were being baptised like John had told them to do. John was doing what God had planned. (*Match the two puzzles.*)

People came from all over to hear him. Some said, "Is John the Saviour God promised?" But John always shook his head and said, "No, no. I am only here to prepare the way for Him. Someone greater is coming!"

⁷John announced: "Someone is coming soon who is greater than I am - so much greater that I'm not even worthy to stoop down like a slave and untie the straps of his sandals. ⁸I baptize you with water, but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit!" Mark 1:7-8 John was telling them the Promised Saviour was coming. (*Match the two puzzles.*)



When John saw Jesus coming toward him he said:

²⁹ "Look! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! ³⁰He is the one I was talking about when I said, 'A man is coming after me who is far greater than I am, for He existed long before me.'"

John 1:29-30

The Promised Saviour had come, it was Jesus! John had done what God planned. He prepared the way for Jesus to begin His work.

John's life was *all in* to be who God made him to be, no matter what others thought, said, or did.

God also has a special plan for your life. Just like John, you can help others know Jesus and get ready for when He returns one day.

Will you be *all in*?

4) Review Questions:

- What did Isaiah, the Angel Gabriel and Zechariah all say was God's plan for John? (*To prepare the way for Jesus.*)
- What did John have to do to prepare the way for Jesus? (*Tell the people to turn from sin, be baptised and that the Saviour was coming.*)
- John was *all in* for God's plan for him. Will you be *all in* for the plans God has for you too? How? (*Let the children answer personally.*)

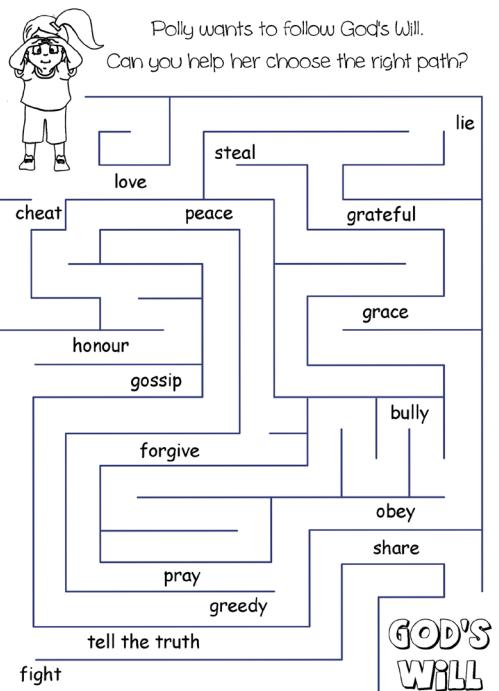
5) Craft

Option 1: God's plan for me (Puzzles)

Children colour, cut and rebuild the puzzles to find out what God's plan is for all of us.



Option 2: Finding God's will (Maze)



Lesson 4: Trust in the Lord with all your heart (Mary)

Main focus for the lesson:

- Mary trusted God more than she feared the future.
- Mary's song of praise showed that she knew God, making it easier for her to trust Him.
- Getting to know Jesus helps us trust Him in every situation.

1) Memory Verse

- Proverbs 3:5

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding.”

Idea to teach the memory verse.

Have a leader stand right behind the child, ready to catch them when they fall back. As they get ready to fall, everyone says the first half of Proverbs 3:5 together: “Trust in the Lord with all your heart.” The child crosses their arms and keeps their body straight and as they fall into the leader’s arms everyone finishes the verse together: “...and lean not on your own understanding.”

Conclude: Our understanding is don’t fall back as you could fall. But how wonderful was it to trust the leader and be caught by them. God is MUCH MORE trustworthy than any person. And He is a LOT wiser than any of us too. So we can definitely put our trust in Him!

2) Hands on

What you will need:

- Signs “YES”, “NO”, and “MAYBE” stuck on three different walls.

YES

Round One:

Ask the children “Did you...?” questions and allow them to run to the wall that matches their answer.

NO

Example questions:

MAYBE

Did you make your bed this morning?

Did you brush your teeth today?

Did you have a grumpy face this morning?

Did you read your Bible this week?

Did you wash your smelly armpits?

Did you help someone this week?

Did you eat something sweet today?

Did you pray this morning?

Did you say “thank you” to someone today?

Did you tell a lie this week?

Did you pick up your stinky socks?

Did you share with a friend this week?

Round Two:

Ask the children “Will you...?” questions and allow them to run to the wall that matches their answer. Encourage the children to really think about it and be honest before making their decision.

Example questions:

Will you help someone who is sad?
Will you make your bed every day?
Will you obey your parents?
Will you tell the truth even if it's hard?
Will you forgive someone who was mean to you?
Will you pray every day this week?
Will you share something you love with someone else?
Will you do what God asks, even if it's hard?

Conclude:

Some of those were easy to say “YES” to, like brushing your teeth or helping someone. But others made you stop and think. Some you could only say “MAYBE” to or even “NO.”

Today we are going to learn about Mary. She said “YES” to God right away, even though what He asked was confusing and hard. She trusted God more than she feared the future. That's the kind of trust and obedience we should have too!

Mary responded, ‘I am the Lord's servant. May everything you have said about me come true.’ Luke 1:38

3) Bible Story + Lesson

What you will need:

- Dress up items for the reporter and special guest being interviewed

Reporter	Welcome everyone. Today we have a very special guest with us to help us understand what happened in Nazareth, a village in Galilee.
Special guest	(<i>Special guest enters</i>) Good morning, so happy to be here.
Reporter	Well, what can you tell us about Mary?
Special guest	Mary was a young girl, who loved God with all her heart.
Reporter	She sounds like she was perfect!
Special guest	Oh no, she was not perfect. No one is. But she did have a relationship with God and knew the Old Testament writings which said that “God would send a Saviour.” She was engaged to a young carpenter named Joseph.
Reporter	Sounds wonderful.
Special guest	Well, it was, but just before they got married, Mary was visited by an angel...
Reporter	What? Did you say an angel?

Special guest	Yes, the Angel Gabriel came with a message from God.
Reporter	I would have been so scared! What was the message?
Special guest	The angel told her that she had been chosen by God to give birth to His son, Jesus. He would be the Saviour of the world!
Reporter	That is huge! I mean she was not married yet. People could say awful things about her. Maybe Joseph would even leave her. And you said she wasn't perfect, what if she messed it up. So go on...what did Mary say?
Special guest	(<i>Take out the Bible and read Luke 1:38</i>) Mary responded, "I am the Lord's servant. May everything you have said about me come true." And then the angel left her. Luke 1:38
Reporter	Just like that?
Special guest	Yup. Mary said "YES", full of faith she was <i>all in</i> for God.
Reporter	Wow, we can all learn from Mary. Even if you don't know how things will turn out and even if things could turn out really bad it is important to trust and obey God above everything else!
	To end our show here is a song of praise that Mary sung.
<i>Get the children to sit quietly as they listen to the song from Luke 1:46-55. Then discuss what Mary was singing.</i>	
Use the link to download the clip " <i>Mary's song (Luke 1:46 - 55) - Leader Resource</i> " youtube.com/watch?v=iOfUBxjqyFU&feature=youtu.be	

We can see from Mary's song that she knew God well. This is probably why she immediately accepted and trusted what God would do, no matter how hard it would have been to understand. On top of that she felt blessed and celebrated that she had been chosen. Let's look at the song, line by line, to see what Mary knew about God.

Mary's song (Luke 1:46-55)	What this shows us about God
Oh, how my soul praises the Lord. How my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour!	Every part of me, inside and out, praises God my Saviour .
For He took notice of His lowly servant girl, and from now on all generations will call me blessed.	God noticed me , even though I'm just an ordinary girl, He chose me to be part of His big plan! People will call me blessed forever.
For the Mighty One is holy , and He has done great things for me.	God is strong and powerful! He is holy, perfect and good. He has done wonderful things in my life. God is Mighty. God is Holy.
He shows mercy from generation to generation to all who fear Him.	God is kind and forgiving to people who love and honour Him. His love keeps going forever! God's mercy never runs out.

His mighty arm has done tremendous things! He has scattered the proud and haughty ones.	God is strong! He stops people who think they're better than everyone else. God is powerful, and He stands against pride and selfishness.
He has brought down princes from their thrones and exalted the humble.	God doesn't think some people are more important than others. He brings down the proud and lifts up the humble.
He has filled the hungry with good things and sent the rich away with empty hands.	God gives good things to people who need Him and are hungry for what's right. But those who think they already have everything miss out.
He has helped His servant Israel and remembered to be merciful . For He made this promise to our ancestors, to Abraham and His children forever.	God has always taken care of His people, just like He promised Abraham long ago. God keeps His promises.

If Mary had not known all these wonderful things about God, would she have been able to trust His plan as much as she did? Getting to know Jesus is important for us too as it helps us trust and praise Him in every situation.

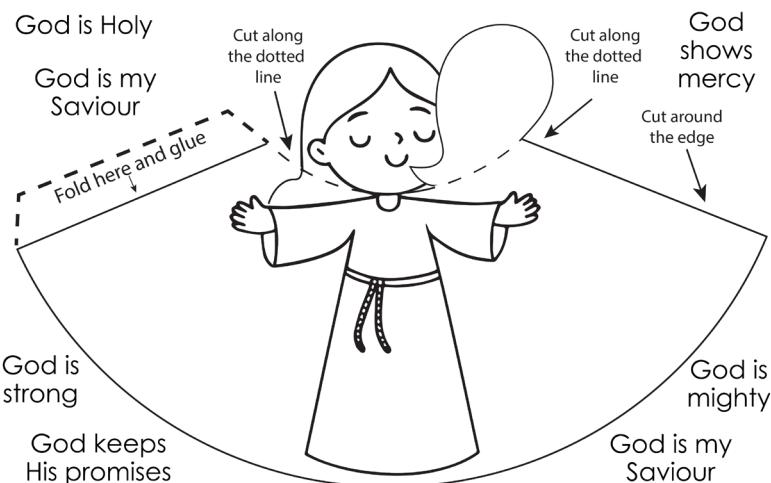
4) Review Questions:

- What did Mary know about God? (*Saviour, mighty, holy, strong, mercy etc.*)
- What do you know about Jesus that makes it easy to trust Him? (*Let the children answer.*)

5) Craft

Option 1: Mary's Song (Paper Doll)

Mary's song thanked God for noticing and choosing her as His servant.
Read Luke 1:46-55 to write what she loved about God all around her.



Option 2: Mary's Song Wordsearch

Children read Luke 1:46-55 and find the words in bold in the wordsearch.

Oh, how my soul **praises** the Lord.
How my spirit rejoices in God my
Saviour!

For He took **notice** of His lowly servant
girl, and from now on all generations will
call me blessed.

For the **Mighty** One is **holy**, and He
has done **great** things for me.

He shows **mercy** from generation to
generation to all who fear Him.

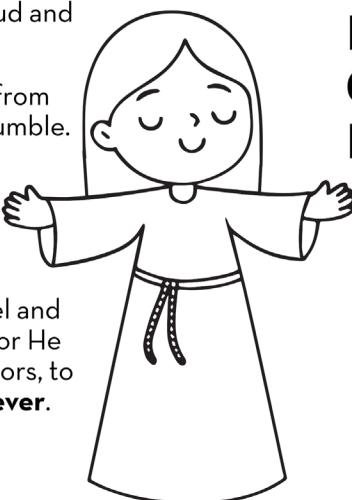
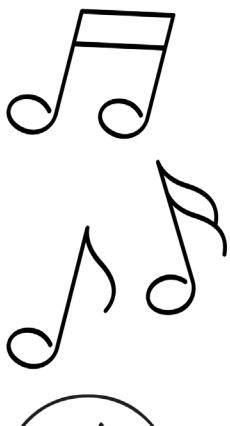
His mighty arm has done **tremendous**
things! He has scattered the proud and
haughty ones.

He has brought down princes from
their thrones and exalted the humble.

He has filled the hungry with
good things and sent the rich
away with empty hands.

He has **helped** His servant Israel and
remembered to be **merciful**. For He
made this **promise** to our ancestors, to
Abraham and His children **forever**.

Luke 1:46-55



Find the words in **BOLD** in the wordsearch

R E M E M B E R E D
T R E M E N D O U S
M F H P R A I S E S
N E M I G H T Y N P
F O R E V E R M O R
L H N C V N X E T O
N S A V I O U R I M
H O L Y U F M C C I
G R E A T Q U Y E S
H E L P E D V L L E

Write what you love about God.

Lesson 5: All in to trust and obey Jesus (Jeremiah)

Main focus for the lesson:

- Jeremiah trusted and obeyed God, but the Israelites did not.
- We can and should trust and obey Jesus all the time, even when it seems strange or difficult.

1) Memory Verse

- Joshua 22:5

Love the Lord your God, walk in all His ways, obey His commands, hold firmly to Him, and serve Him with all your heart and all your soul.

Idea to teach the memory verse.

Have a board with the following words written on it: *love the Lord; walk in His ways; obey His commands; hold firmly to Him; serve Him.*

Children take turns being blindfolded and spun around in front of the board. After spinning, they point to the board, remove the blindfold, and see which word they've chosen. They then read out the one they picked, followed by "with all your heart and soul."

Example:

If the child pointed at "Obey His commands," they follow with "with all your heart and soul."

If the child pointed at "Serve Him," they follow with "with all your heart and soul," and so on.

See a similar game in action at the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cMPR3CdLYos>

2) Hands on

We have all been given instructions, and we need to choose whether we obey and say, "Yes, I am all in," or we say, "No way, I am tapping out."

Read each "Would you obey if..." scenario out loud and get the children to decide:

- a) "I'm all in," as they do a thumbs-up
- b) "I'm tapping out," as they double-tap their knee

Conclude: Each one of these was an actual thing God asked people to do, and they obeyed. I am sure that many of them wanted to tap out at times, but they remained all in for God and did what He asked. (*The reference for where these scenarios are found has been provided in case the children ask.*)

Would you obey if...	These people did! (References if the children ask)
It meant you would get thrown into a muddy well.	Jeremiah 38:6 Jeremiah was thrown into a muddy well because the people were tired of hearing his warnings.
If you were told to break a clay jar in front of church leaders.	Jeremiah 19:1–13 He was told to do this as a sign that they would soon become a shattered nation.
If you were told to wear a heavy animal yoke around your neck.	Jeremiah 27:1–22 He was told to do this as a sign that Judah would live like slaves under Babylon's rule.
If you were told to buy a field in the middle of a war.	Jeremiah 32:6–15 He was told to do this as a sign of hope.
If you were told to lie still for 430 days.	Ezekiel 4:4–8 Jeremiah was told by God to do this to represent the years that Israel and Judah would spend in sin.
It meant you would get shipwrecked multiple times.	2 Corinthians 11:25 Paul was shipwrecked many times.
It meant you would get bitten by a snake.	Acts 28:1–6 Paul was bitten by a snake after surviving a shipwreck.
It meant you would be thrown in prison.	Many believers were thrown in prison for God: Paul and Silas, John the Baptist, Joseph... and even Jesus.
If you were told to shave all your hair and eyebrows and burn them over dung.	Ezekiel 5:1–12; 4:12 Ezekiel had to shave his head, beard, and eyebrows, divide the hair, burn some over dung, scatter some to the wind. To show that judgement was coming.
If you were told to live on a desert island.	Revelation 1:9 John was sent to live on the island of Patmos because he would not stop preaching the Good News.
If you were told to tell an evil person they were doing something wrong.	1 Kings 21:17–24 Elijah had to tell evil King Ahab that he was sinning.

If it meant your friends would turn against you and wouldn't hang out with you anymore.	Jeremiah 9:1 Jeremiah went through much grief and sorrow for everything he went through.
If you were told to go to another country without any money, food or clothes.	Matthew 10:9-10 Disciples were told to rely fully on the generosity of others while they were telling others about Jesus.

3) Bible Story + Lesson

What you will need:

- Pictures to explain what a yoke is

God had been warning the people of Judah and the surrounding nations for many years to stop sinning and come back to Him but the people refused to listen. They broke God's laws, worshipped false gods and were being really wicked. God had had enough so He chose Jeremiah as His prophet to speak His messages to His people.

One day, God told Jeremiah to make a wooden yoke, fasten it on his neck with leather straps and wear it as a message to Judah and the surrounding nations. (Jeremiah 27-28)

(Show the picture of the yoke)



A yoke is a wooden bar or frame that is put across the necks of two animals, like oxen, to keep them bound together as they work.



Do you think Jeremiah obeyed God? It may have seemed a crazy thing to do but Jeremiah was *all in* to publicly show the people what God was about to do. He wore the yoke and passed on God's message that He would allow a great and powerful Babylonian army to defeat them and they must then submit to Babylon's authority, like wearing a yoke with them.

The people were angry and did not like what Jeremiah was saying and they had him imprisoned.

While Jeremiah was in prison, God told him to buy a field for 17 pieces of silver. (Jeremiah 32:9-15) Now, in normal peaceful times, this is not an unusual thing to do, but the city was in chaos with a great and powerful enemy on their doorstep.

You don't want to buy something that your enemy is going to take from you shortly.

Do you think Jeremiah obeyed God? Jeremiah was used to God telling him to do strange things, so Jeremiah obeyed. God told him to put the deed of sale for the field into a clay jar to preserve it for a long time because there would come a time when His people would return to Jerusalem and Judah. They would buy land and live there doing the ordinary things of life again. This was a great message of hope from God.

Obeying God and being His messenger was not easy as the people did not like what Jeremiah had to say and they treated him very badly.

As you read through all the difficulties Jeremiah faced, get the children to decide if Jeremiah should stay all in or “tap out” like they did in the hands-on section. Write the words “all in” and “tap out” and children use their “Jeremiah finger puppet” from craft option 1 to choose which one he must go to.”

- Many people mocked and insulted him
- Some leaders wanted to kill him
- Once he was thrown into a cistern, which is a deep, muddy well and left there to die
- At various times, he was put in prison.

Jeremiah admitted to God that going through all of this was very hard. He wept over the sins of Judah and their coming judgment and is even known as “the weeping prophet” because of this. But despite everything, Jeremiah did not tap out. He remained *all in*. He loved God, walked in His ways, obeyed Him, held firmly to Him and served Him with all of his heart.

Even when it is hard, will you remain *all in* for God? Will you, “Love the Lord your God, walk in all His ways, obey His commands, hold firmly to Him, and serve Him with all your heart and all your soul.” Joshua 22:5

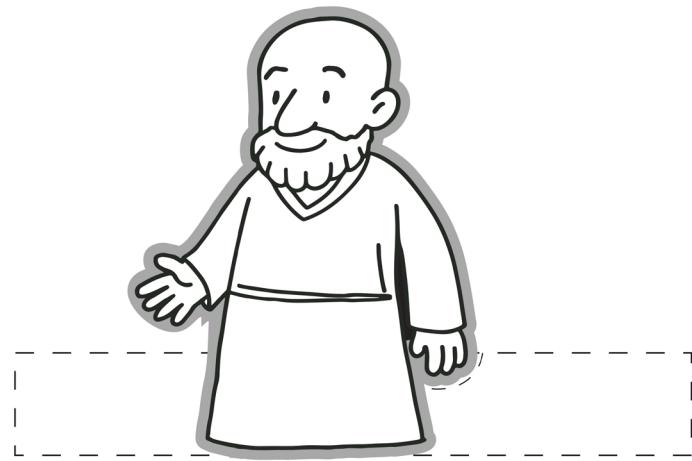
4) Review Questions:

- a) Was it easy for Jeremiah to give God’s messages to the people? Why? (No, *they did not like to hear what God was going to do.*)
- b) What are the ways our memory verse taught us we can be *all in* for God? (*Love the Lord your God, walk in all His ways, obey His commands, hold firmly to Him, and serve Him with all your heart and all your soul.*)

5) Craft

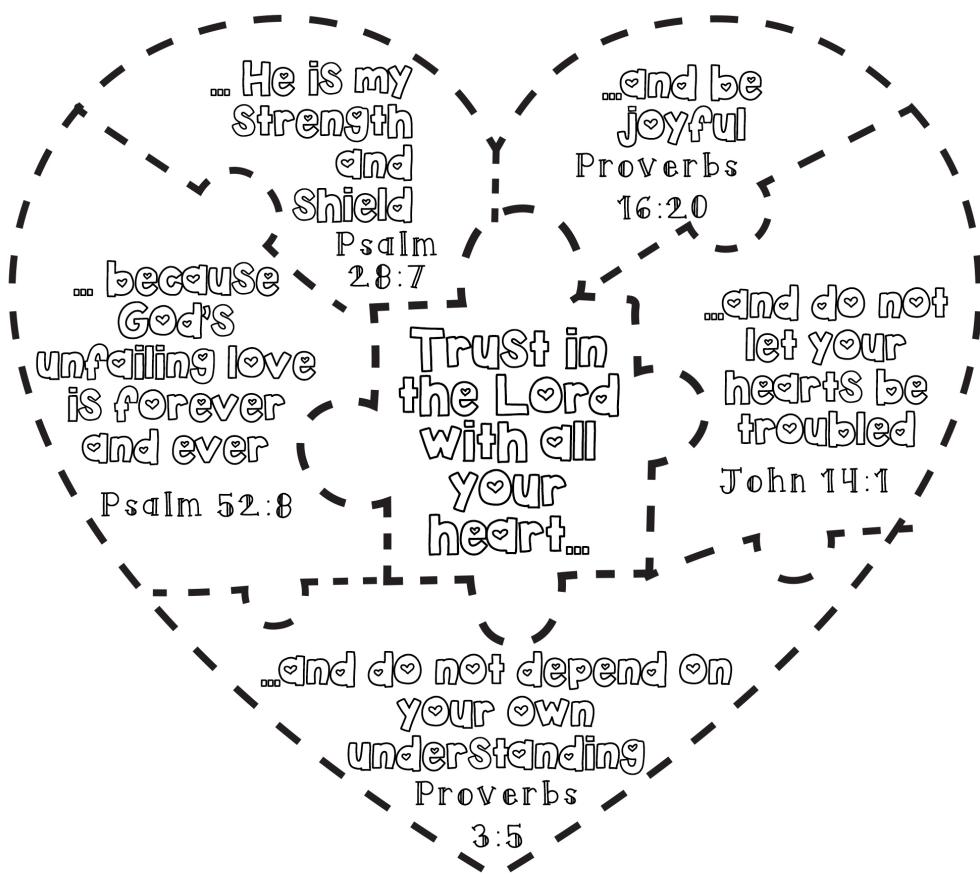
Option 1: Jeremiah Finger Puppet

Children use their finger to be the legs. They can walk their puppet to decide if Jeremiah was all in or if he was ready to tap out.



Option 2: Trust with ALL your heart puzzle

Children colour and then cut up the puzzle to try and rebuild it again.



Lesson 6: All in with your prayers (Hannah)

Main focus for the lesson:

- Prayer is spending time with Jesus, listening to what He says, and getting to know Him.
- We can bring everything to Jesus in prayer.

1) Memory Verse

- Colossians 4:2

"Devote yourselves to prayer with an alert mind and a thankful heart."

Idea to teach the memory verse.

What you will need:

- Items such as chairs, tables, hula hoops, etc. that you can use to set up an obstacle course.
- Scenario posters

When you have done something wrong...



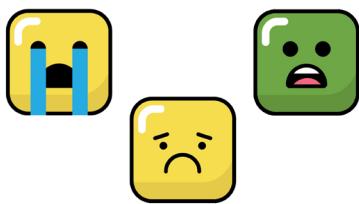
"Devote yourselves to prayer with an alert mind and a thankful heart." Colossians 4:2

When God answers your prayers...



"Devote yourselves to prayer with an alert mind and a thankful heart." Colossians 4:2

When you are sad, hurt or worried...



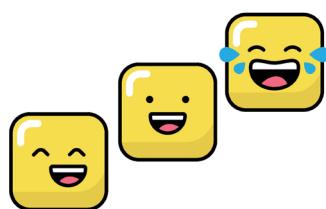
"Devote yourselves to prayer with an alert mind and a thankful heart." Colossians 4:2

When you have a choice to make...



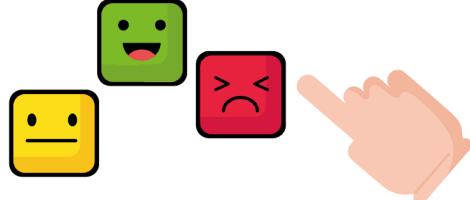
"Devote yourselves to prayer with an alert mind and a thankful heart." Colossians 4:2

When you are happy...



"Devote yourselves to prayer with an alert mind and a thankful heart." Colossians 4:2

When you are tempted to do the wrong thing...



"Devote yourselves to prayer with an alert mind and a thankful heart." Colossians 4:2

Begin with everyone saying the verse together, using the following actions to help them.

"Devote yourselves" - *hop forward*
 "to prayer" - *hands together*
 "with an alert mind" - *use your fingers to stretch your eyes wide open*
 "and a thankful heart" - *put your hands over your heart.*
 "Colossians 4:2" - *make hands into a book*

To be devoted to something means it is ongoing and you are dedicated to it. This is what speaking to God should be like. We keep on doing it no matter the situation. To pray with an alert mind means we don't just mumble some words but we consciously think about who we are speaking to, what we are saying, and we wait and listen for Him to speak too.

When we devote ourselves to prayer in this way, speaking to God becomes our natural reaction and our go-to in every situation.

Set up the obstacle course with the posters scattered between the obstacles. As the children take turns making their way through the course, the teacher asks the question on each poster and the children respond by saying the verse.

2) Hands on

Use the skit to demonstrate that prayer is talking with God and not just a one-way conversation.

Leader 1	Oh hey leader 2! How are you?
Leader 2	Hey I'm g...
Leader 1	Boy do I have a story for you! I have had the worst day, you wouldn't believe it!
Leader 2	That's s...
Leader 1	I was playing these games on my PlayStation, right? And then
Leader 2	What kind of...?
Leader 1	And then my little brother came in and he was carrying this HUGE bucket of water!
Leader 2	Which... never mind
Leader 1	And he came running in because he was being chased by my other little brother. And I mean obviously he wasn't looking where he was going and then he tripped! And he spilled everything on my PlayStation and it got all wet! And I have no idea what to do? How do I get it dry? Ugh I am so angry at my brother! How do I forgive something like this? Ugh this sucks! I wish I had someone who could help you know? How am I going to get a new one?
Leader 2	I actually have...
Leader 1	Anyway it was nice chatting to you! Ugh my day is ruined! (leaves)
Leader 2	I... I was going to say that I have one that I could give you! Ah they can't hear me.

Do you think that Leader 1 was listening? Do you think that they were having a conversation with me? No! Leader 1 just came in and told me all their problems and left.

Sometimes we can be like that with God. We can spend time praying by talking to Him but not with Him. Sometimes we can miss the opportunity to listen to God, to let Him answer our questions, to let Him comfort us in our problems and our trials. When we do this we are giving our all and are *all in* to devoting ourselves to prayer.

3) Bible Story + Lesson



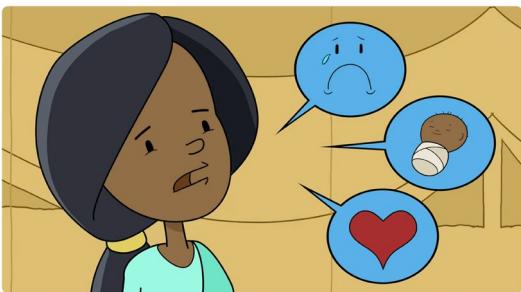
Hannah was very sad because she really wanted a child but she couldn't have one. To make matters worse, Peninnah, who had many children, teased (bullied) her for not having any.

Every year, they would travel to the temple to worship and make sacrifices to God and celebrate together with a meal.



When it came time to give each person their share of the celebration meal, Peninnah got a big portion because she had many children and Peninnah would make fun of Hannah's small portion because she had no children. This was the tradition of the time. It made Hannah very upset.

Year after year, it was the same, Peninnah would taunt Hannah and each time, Hannah would cry so much that she did not even eat.



One year, Hannah got up and went to pray. She didn't just say "Dear God, I want a child. Amen." Instead, she was honest about what she was struggling with and told God all about it. Let's look in the Bible to see how she prayed.

She didn't hide her pain from God; she even cried bitterly and gave it all to Him. "Hannah was in deep anguish, crying bitterly as she prayed to the Lord!" 1 Samuel 1:10
She promised to dedicate her child to God.

"O Lord of Heaven's Armies, if You will look upon my sorrow and answer my prayer and give me a son, then I will give him back to You. He will be

Yours for his entire lifetime, and as a sign that he has been dedicated to the Lord, his hair will never be cut." 1 Samuel 1:11



She was praying so passionately that Eli, the priest, thought she was drunk and so she explained: "I am very discouraged, and I was pouring out my heart to the Lord." 1 Samuel 1:15

Eli told Hannah, "Go in peace! May God give you what you asked for."

Hannah thanked him and went back to eat. She wasn't sad anymore, because she had shared her worries and prayers with God and felt peace in her heart.

"Oh, thank you, sir!" she exclaimed. Then she went back and began to eat again, and she was no longer sad. 1 Samuel 1:18



Hannah knew that God provides, that she could trust Him with all her heart and all her feelings and problems. She had peace that God would hear her prayers and help her. God was faithful to give her what she asked and later she gave birth to a son, Samuel.

And this is not the end of Hannah's story! She honoured her vow and gave Samuel to the temple where he grew up and became a very important prophet for Israel. Samuel anointed the first kings of Israel!

When you pray with a heart that is *all in*, tell Him how you feel and trust God no matter what. Devote yourselves to prayer with an alert mind and a thankful heart. Colossians 4:2

Note: You can watch a video of this story as a recap or while the children are doing their craft activity: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x2tezW85Z5I> God's People: Hannah by Crossroads Kids' Club.

4) Review Questions:

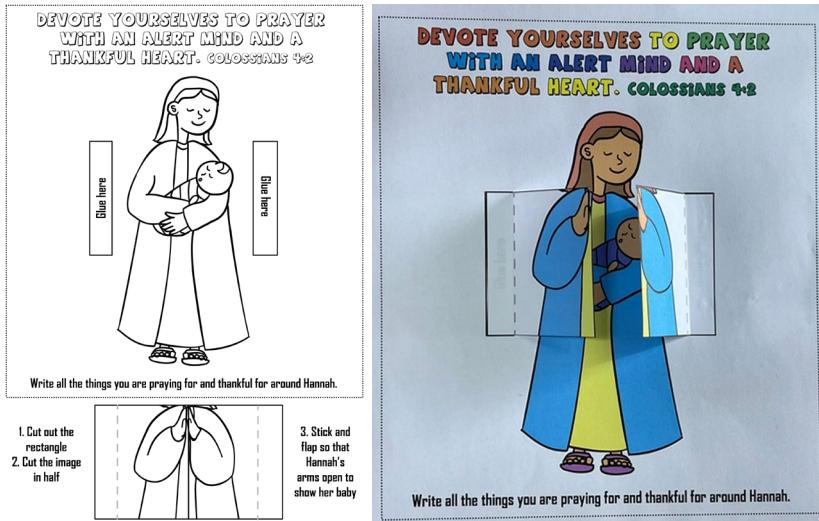
- What are some things in your life that make you feel sad, scared, or frustrated? Do you think you can talk to God about them like Hannah did?
- How did Hannah devote herself to pray? (*Hannah didn't hold back how she prayed, she was honest and poured her heart out to the Lord.*)

c) Did Hannah pray with an alert mind? (Yes, she knew what she wanted, she knew God could answer her prayers and she left in peace trusting God would be faithful.)

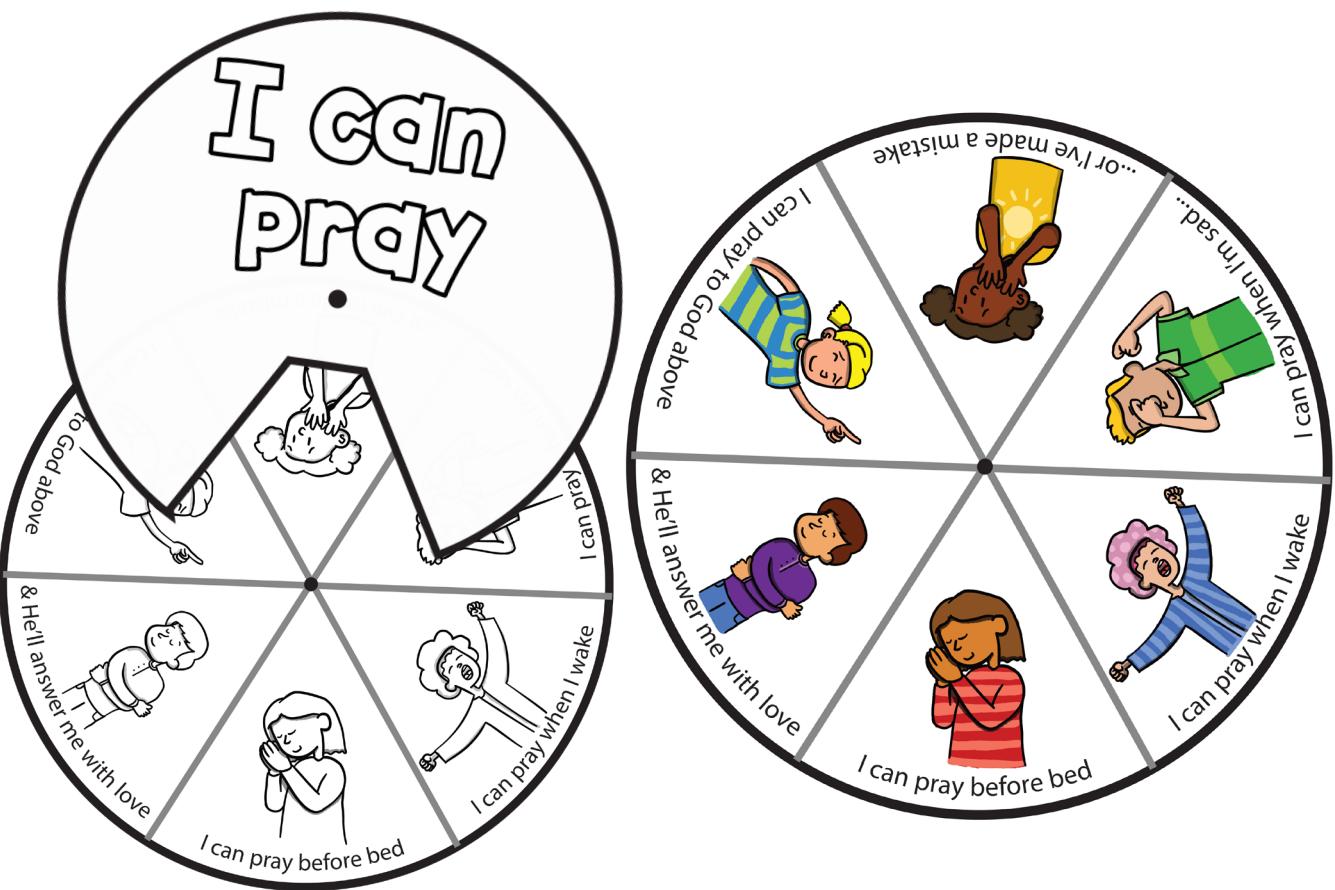
d) Did Hannah pray with a thankful heart? (Yes, she made a vow and she kept it, dedicating her son Samuel to the temple when he was old enough. She never cut his hair just as she had promised to do.)

5) Craft

Option 1: Praying Hannah



Option 2: I can pray (Spinner wheel)



Lesson 7: All in to share the Good News (Stephen & Paul)

Main focus for the lesson:

- We can confidently share the Good News about Jesus as it is God's power that saves.
- No one can stop the power of the Good News from spreading.

1) Memory Verse

- Romans 1:16

"For I am not ashamed of this Good News about Christ. It is the power of God at work, saving everyone who believes"

Idea to teach the memory verse.

What you will need:

- Relighting candle

After you have taught the story, let each child have a turn blowing the candle out and say the first part of the verse: "For I am not ashamed of the Good News about Christ." Once it relights everyone says the second part of the verse together: "For it is the power of God at work saving everyone who believes." Romans 1:16

2) Hands on

What you will need:

- A pencil or kebab stick stuck into a piece of Prestik and fastened to a plate
- Tinfoil cut into a spiral
- A tealight candle
- Matches/lighter

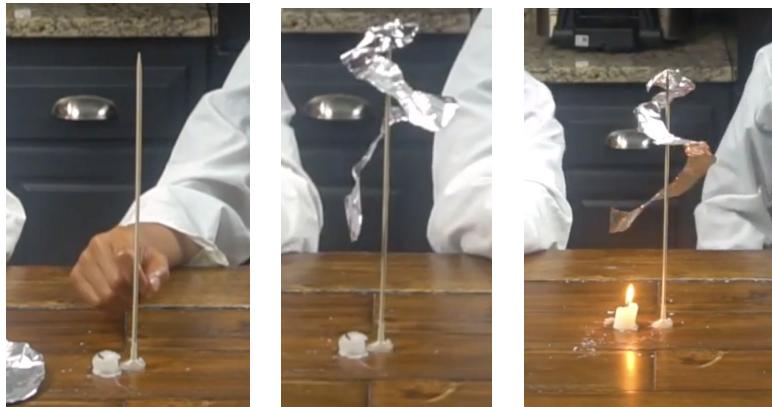
(Before you light the flame, refer to the spiral of foil balancing on the kebab.)
Here we have a spiral of foil. If I wanted to make it twirl around, I could force it and twist it myself, but there is a good chance that it would break or fall, and it wouldn't really work. But if I take this flame and place it under here, watch what happens.

(Place the flame under the spiral, which will heat the air and create a current which will turn the spiral) Just like this flame, the Gospel has power.

In Romans 1:16 Paul said he was not ashamed to share this Good News because he knew it was not him that convinced people to believe but rather that ***"It is the power of God at work, saving everyone who believes"***

We do not have to force people to believe, it does not even depend on how well we speak or the fancy words we use. What brings people to believe is the power of the One who saves us. Jesus! We can also confidently tell others how Jesus

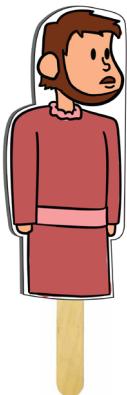
made it possible for our sins to be forgiven when He died and came alive again, knowing that ***“It is the power of God at work, saving everyone who believes”***



3) Bible Story + Lesson

What you will need:

- 2 relighting candles (which represents the Gospel)
- Matches
- Stephen stick puppet
- Paul stick puppet
- Maps of how the Gospel spread



(Show the Stephen stick puppet) Stephen was a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit. He was chosen to help care for people in the church, but that is not all he did. God used him to perform miracles and Stephen boldly preached the truth about Jesus wherever he went.

(Hold up one of the relighting candles, which represents the Gospel, beside the Stephen stick puppet) Stephen was not ashamed of the Gospel. He was confident about this Good News - that Jesus rescues us from sin. God wanted him to tell people the truth about Jesus, that Jesus saves us from our sins. So that is what Stephen did. He spoke the truth about who Jesus is and what He had done.

Some people accepted this Good News and started sharing it with others too.
(Light the other candle using the first one.)

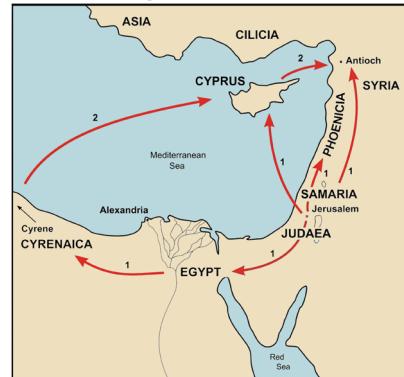
But others became angry and tried to stop Stephen and the other believers from doing so. *(Blow out the first candle and wait for it to relight)* But they were *all in* to share this Good News and would not stop no matter how much people tried to make them.

The leaders became filled with rage as they could not prove that what Stephen was saying was false. And so they threw stones at him and before he died Stephen prayed, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit,” and cried out, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them.” Acts 7: 59-60

Wow! Stephen lived his life *all in* for Jesus. Not only did Stephen talk about what Jesus taught, he lived it out and showed the love and forgiveness of Jesus to others, even his enemies.

We would have thought this was the end of the Good News being spread. (*Blow out the candle and wait for it to relight*) But remember the Gospel has power. As the people fled from those trying to harm them, they also took the Good News that Jesus saves with them. (*You could choose to light more candles here to show how the gospel went out*) (Acts 11:19)

(*Show the map of all the places they went to.*) More people got to hear and more people believed!

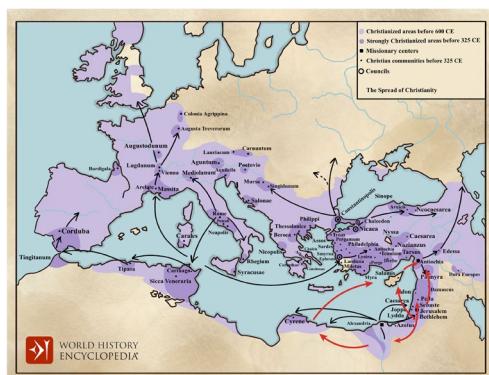


Let's look at another man named Paul. (*Hold up the Paul stick puppet*). He told the people to throw stones at Stephen and after that he started attacking Christians even more. He went to arrest Christians and bring them back to Jerusalem to be punished and stop them from sharing the Good News. (*Blow out the relighting candles and wait for them to relight*). But on his way Jesus met with him through a bright light. Jesus had chosen *him* to share the Good News. Now even more people would get to hear that Jesus is the One who rescues us from our sin.

Many people tried to stop Paul. He was beaten, whipped, stoned, shipwrecked, hungry, cold, tired and in danger many times, but he never gave up telling others the Good News of who Jesus is and what He had done to save them from sin. (2 Corinthians 11:24-28)

Instead of this persecution (or attacks) stopping the Good News from spreading, even more people got to hear it as the Christians fled from place to place.

(*Show the map of all the places Christianity now spread to.*) Can you see how powerful the Gospel is!



One time, when Paul was in prison, rather than complain, Paul wrote:

"I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel, so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard and to all the rest that my imprisonment is for Christ. And most of the brothers, having become confident in the Lord by my

imprisonment, are much more bold to speak the word without fear."

Philippians 1:12-14

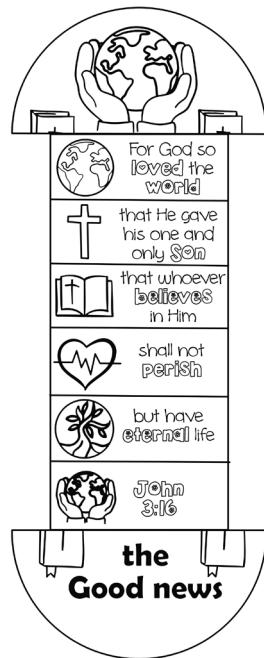
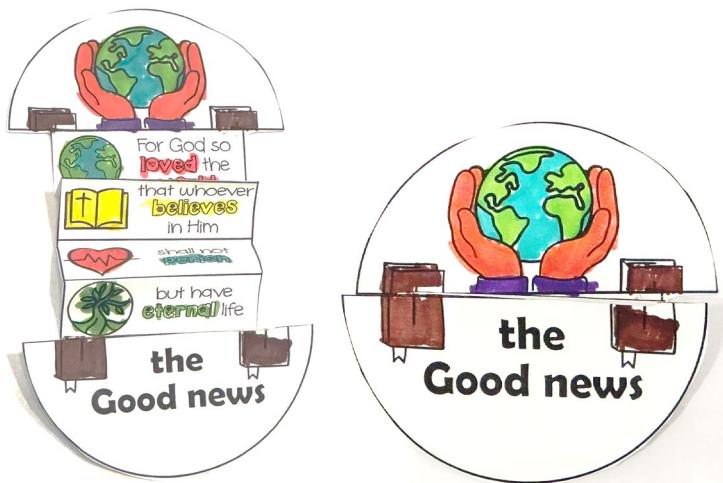
Paul and Stephen both gave everything, even their lives for the sake of the Gospel. They were unashamedly *all in*, and we can learn so much from the way they lived. And the best part is, just like them, we can be *all in* standing for truth, sharing our faith, and trusting God with everything we have.

4) Review Questions:

- What does it mean to share the Gospel? (*To tell people the Good News is to tell them who Jesus is and what He did to save us from sin. Jesus is God's Son who died on the cross and came alive so we can be forgiven.*)
- How do you feel about sharing the Good News with people? (*Let the children give their answer and help them overcome any worries they have.*)

5) Craft

Option 1: Good News (John 3:16)



Option 2: Spiral Verse (Romans 1:16)

Cut around the solid line to form a spiral.



Lesson 8: All in for Jesus and His church (Barnabas)

Main focus for the lesson:

- The believers in the early church shared everything they had so that the Good News could go out.
- Barnabas went *all in* for Jesus and His church, while Ananias only pretended to be *all in*.

1) Memory Verse

- 2 Corinthians 9:7

"You must each decide in your heart how much to give. And don't give reluctantly or in response to pressure. For God loves a person who gives cheerfully."

Idea to teach the memory verse.

What you will need:

- Half a paper plate with a big smile drawn on it.

Children sit in a circle. Pass the big paper plate smile from one child to the next, saying the verse as they hold it in front of their own mouths.

2) Hands on

What you will need:

- A bag of sweets

Have a volunteer come to the front. Tell them to hold out their hand for a surprise! Then place a sweet in their hand. Tell them they can choose to keep the sweet by making a fist or keep their hand open if they want to give it away.

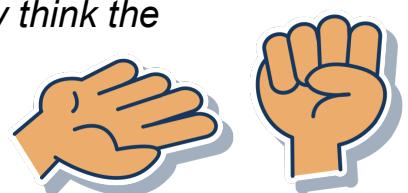
Once they have made a choice (and hopefully it is to make a fist) pour the whole bag of sweets over their fist.

Can you see that they couldn't get the rest of the sweets because they were holding so tightly to the first one. When our hands are closed tight, nothing can come in and nothing can go out. Now open your hands. When we live with open hands, we can both give and receive.

Jesus wants us to live our lives with open hands, ready to both give and receive all the blessings He has for us.

3) Bible Story + Lesson

Through the story the children will open their hands if they think the people were all in for Jesus and His church or make a tight fist if they were not.



Today I am going to tell you about the time in the Bible when the church was just beginning. The believers were united in heart and mind and wanted to tell everyone the Good News of Jesus and so they shared everything they had to do. Let's read Acts 4:32-35 to see if the believers were *all in* for Jesus and His church.

³² All the believers were united in heart and mind. And they felt that what they owned was not their own, so they shared everything they had. ³³ The apostles testified powerfully to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and God's great blessing was upon them all. ³⁴ There were no needy people among them, because those who owned land or houses would sell them ³⁵ and bring the money to the apostles to give to those in need.

Acts 4: 32-35

Were the believers *all in* for Jesus and His church? (*Children choose to open their hands out or make a fist.*) Yes, they shared everything and so there were no needy people among them!

A man named Barnabas was one of the early followers of Jesus and a leader in the first church. His real name was Joseph, but the apostles gave him the nickname Barnabas, which means "Son of Encouragement". (Acts 4:36)

Barnabas was always ready to build someone up or help make peace. He went on mission trips and helped teach new believers about Jesus. We can see why the apostles gave him that nickname!

When Barnabas saw that the church had a need for money, what do you think he did? (*Let the children come up with some ideas of what he could do to help the church have money.*)

Let's read from the Bible: He **sold a field** he owned and **brought the money** to the apostles. Acts 4:37

Does this show that Barnabas was *all in* for Jesus and His church? (*Children choose to open their hands out or make a fist.*)

Wow! Barnabas really was *all in* for Jesus and His church! He went and sold a field that he owned and gave the money to the church. Barnabas didn't stop giving after that. He continued going out on mission trips and continued encouraging the believers.

Let's look at another believer named Ananias who was married to Sapphira. Ananias and Sapphira sold a piece of land just like Barnabas did. Does this show that Barnabas was *all in* for Jesus and His church? (*Children choose to open their hands out or make a fist.*)

But wait, let's read what he did with the money.

¹ But there was a certain man named Ananias who, with his wife, Sapphira, sold some property. ² He brought **part of the money** to the apostles, **claiming it was the full amount**. With his wife's consent, **he kept the rest**. Acts 5:1-2

Now do you think Ananias was *all in* for Jesus and His church? (*Children choose to open their hands out or make a fist.*)

Ananias didn't give **all** the money to the church like he said he did.

³ Then Peter said, "Ananias, why have you let Satan fill your heart? You lied to the Holy Spirit, and you kept some of the money for yourself. ⁴ The property was yours to sell or not sell, as you wished. And after selling it, the money was also yours to give away. How could you do a thing like this? You weren't just lying to us but to God!" As soon as Ananias heard these words, he fell to the floor and died. Acts 5:3-5

Can you see that instead of giving all the money to the church, he kept some of the money for themselves. Now that wouldn't have been such a bad thing if he had not lied about giving all the money. He pretended to give the full amount so that others would think he was being very generous. He lied to the people in the church but more importantly to God! And he was severely punished.

They made a big mistake by pretending to be *all in* for God. Pretending to be generous doesn't fool God.

Just like the early church, churches today have needs too, like money, buildings, people's time. All these help share the Good News of Jesus and build His church. There are also many people in need, such as the poor, sick, elderly, widows, orphans etc. First, we need to rely on Jesus as He is the One who provides and helps us. Then, we need to be generous with what Jesus has blessed us with, like our talents, time, money and resources. When we do this, we are living *all in* for Jesus and His church.

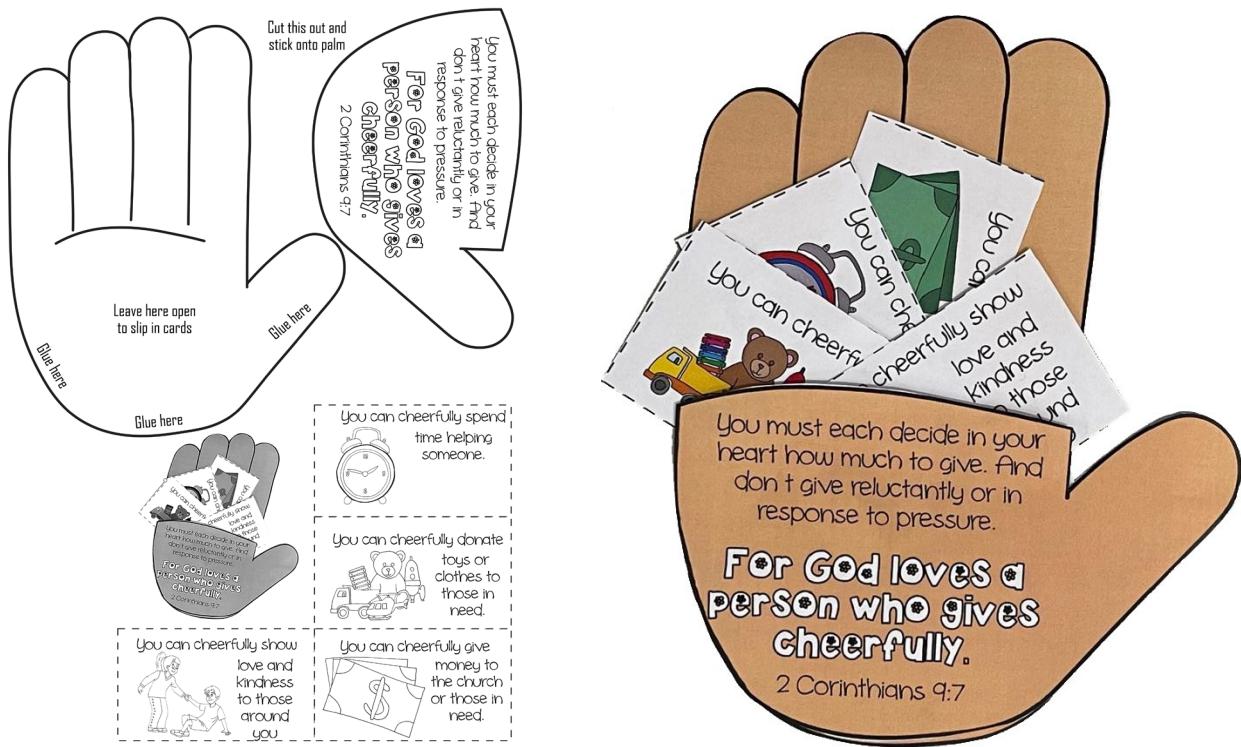
So now you decide: show with your hands what you will decide.

4) Review Questions:

- a) What does God care about more, our hearts or what we give? (*God severely punished Ananias not because he didn't give it all, but because he lied about it.*)
- b) How can you meet the needs of your church and community? (*Clothes that don't fit us anymore, an extra sandwich, prayer, our friendship.*)

5) Craft

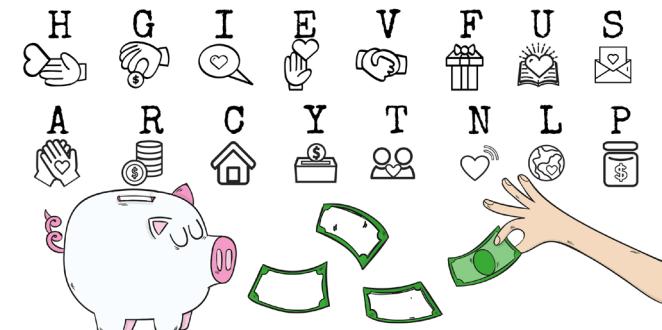
Option 1: Cheerful Giver Hand



Option 2: Decode the verse

Use the code to work out the verse **2 Corinthians 9:7**. Use your Bible to check if you were right.

For example: If **O** = then write an "o" when you see a pig in the verse below.



You must each decide in your



how much to



. And don't give



response to



For God



a person who

gives



Lesson 9: All in for Jesus, with whatever you do

Main focus for the lesson:

- Whatever you do, do it for Jesus.
- God asks us to bring whatever we have, even if it is a small talent, tithe, gift or act.

1) Memory Verse

- Colossians 3:17 (ESV)

“And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.”

Idea to teach the memory verse.

Get the children to act out the following while repeating the shortened version of the verse:

- Eating an ice cream: “Whatever you do, do it in the name of the Lord Jesus.”
- Brushing your teeth: “Whatever you do, do it in the name of the Lord Jesus.”
- Baking a cake: “Whatever you do, do it in the name of the Lord Jesus.”
- Driving in a car: “Whatever you do, do it in the name of the Lord Jesus.”
- Singing a song: “Whatever you do, do it in the name of the Lord Jesus.”
- Doing a school play: “Whatever you do, do it in the name of the Lord Jesus.”
- Playing a soccer game: “Whatever you do, do it in the name of the Lord Jesus.”
- Having a nap: “Whatever you do, do it in the name of the Lord Jesus.”
- Swimming in a gala: “Whatever you do, do it in the name of the Lord Jesus.”

Everything we do is at its best and has meaning when it's done for Jesus.

2) Hands On

What you will need:

- Deep bucket of water
- Small glass jar
- Coins

Place the small glass jar at the bottom of a deep bucket of water. Let the children take turns to try and drop the coin straight into the jar. (*The water will redirect the coin and so it will miss the target most of the time.*)

It is good to give God our time, money, skills and resources. When we leave giving to God **after** we have given to everything else, it can often get misdirected.

For example, we spend time playing games or buying stuff we don't really need, when we were meant to be giving that to God.

(Now take the jar out of the bucket, drop the coin inside the jar and put it back into the bucket. The coin is now safely inside, nothing can push it away or misdirect it.)

But when we give to God **first**, like we did when we pulled the jar out of the water and placed it directly in, then nothing can misdirect what we give.

3) Bible Story + Lesson

Sometimes we think we have to bring something huge or do something amazing for God but all God asks of us is to bring what we have. God is more interested in our hearts. It does not matter which good deed we are doing or how much we give. What matters is for whom we are doing it. Everything we do is at its best and has meaning when it's done for Jesus.

"And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him." Colossians 3:17

Throughout the Bible, there are many people we don't know much about, but in the little that is written about them, we see one clear thing: they each used what they had in their everyday lives to serve God and His people.

As you tell their stories, pause for the children to decide if the person's actions showed they were all in, by giving a thumbs up, or not, with a thumbs down.

Shunammite woman (2 Kings 4:8-10)

A wealthy woman in Shunem saw the prophet Elisha often and wanted to help him. She urged him to come to her home for a meal, and after that, whenever he passed that way, he would stop there to eat. She said to her husband, "Let's build a little room on the roof with a bed, a table, a chair, and a lamp so he has a place to stay." They did as she said, and whenever Elisha came by, he had a special place to rest.



Was she *all in* for Jesus? (Thumbs up)

The tent-makers (Acts 18:1-17)

When Paul arrived in Corinth, he met Aquila and Priscilla, who, like him, were tent-makers. They let Paul stay with them.

They helped him start the church in Corinth. Later, they stayed in Ephesus and used their home as a church. They helped teach others, like Apollos, about Jesus.

Were they *all in* for Jesus? (Thumbs up)



Widow with two coins (Mark 12:41-44)

One day, Jesus sat near the collection box in the Temple and watched as people gave their offerings. Many rich people put in large amounts of money.

Then a poor widow came and dropped in two small coins.

Jesus noticed what she did. He knew that the rich people gave only a small part of what they had, but this woman, though she was poor, gave everything she had to live on.

Who was *all in* for Jesus? (*Thumbs up for the widow*)



Peter's friends pray (Acts 12:1-17)

Peter was put in prison because he was telling people about Jesus. While he was there, Peter's friends who were also believers, prayed earnestly for him. God sent an angel who set him free and led him out of the prison. God had answered their prayers.

Were Peter's friends *all in* for Jesus? (*Thumbs up*)



Timothy's grandmother (2 Timothy 1:5; 3:14–15)

Timothy's grandmother, Lois, loved God and taught Timothy about Him from the time he was young. She showed him how to trust God and follow His ways.

Because of her strong faith and teaching, Timothy grew up to love and serve God too, helping spread the Gospel.

Was Timothy's grandmother *all in* for Jesus? (*Thumbs up*)



Each of these people served with a heart that was *all in* for Jesus:

The Shunammite woman was *all in* with her riches.

Aquila and Priscilla were *all in* with their skills and their home.

The widow was *all in* with her giving, trusting God completely with her last two coins.

Peter's friends were *all in* with their prayers.

And Timothy's grandmother was *all in* with her faith, and raised her family to be *all in* for Jesus too.

Each story reminds us that serving God doesn't always look the same. Sometimes it's giving money, other times it's opening our homes, using our talents, or praying faithfully when we feel helpless. Whatever form it takes, God honours a willing heart that's *all in* for Him.

In our own churches, we can follow their example by bringing what we have: our time, our gifts, our tithes and our prayers. When we do, God uses it to bless others and build His Kingdom.

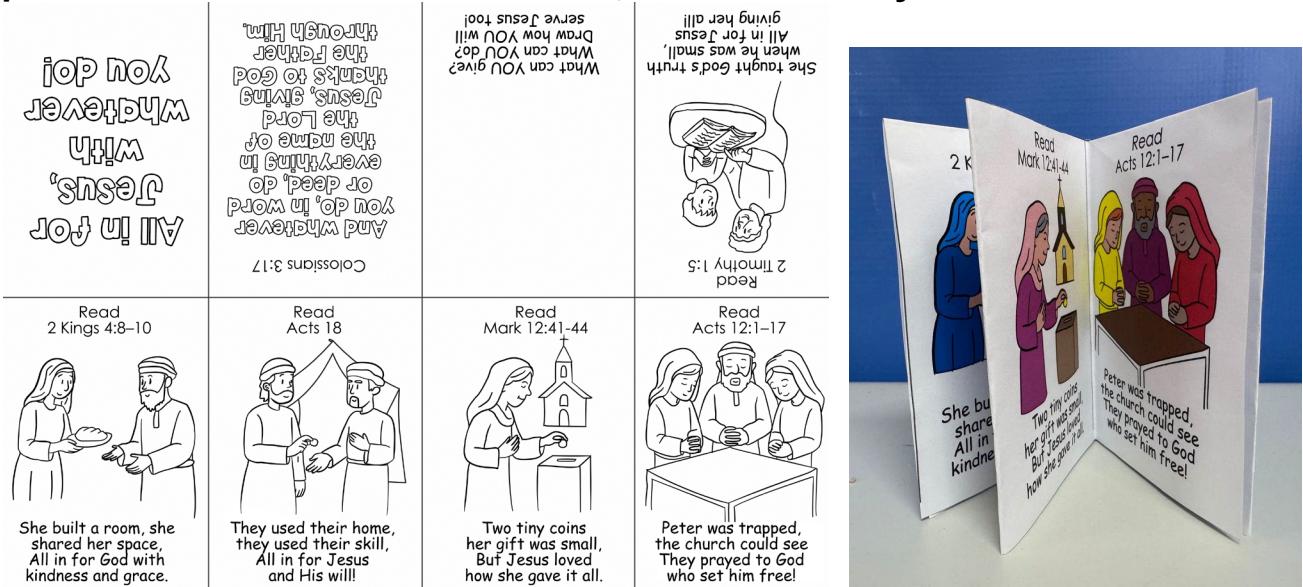
So let's be *all in* for God, ready to give, serve, and love others in whatever way He calls us to.

4) Review questions

- Which of these people made you think “Wow, they were *all in* for Jesus?”
- Were any of the things they did impossible for you to do?
- In what ways do you think you could give or serve that God can use? (Allow the children to answer)

5) Crafts

Option 1: Mini Book: All in for Jesus, with whatever you have



Option 2: Give whatever you have to Jesus

And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him. Colossians 3:17



And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him. Colossians 3:17



Lesson 10: Jesus is all in for us

Main focus for the lesson:

- Jesus was *all in* for you, when He died and came alive for your sins so you could be forgiven.
- Jesus did not only say He was *all in*, His action showed it.

1) Memory Verse

- 1 John 3:18

“Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.”

Idea to teach the memory verse.

Start by getting the children to say this verse with you without any actions. Then, demonstrate the following actions and have them repeat the verse with the actions too:

“Dear children” - *Point to as many people as you can*

“Let us not love” - *wag finger as if saying “no”*

“with words or speech” - *Cup your hands around your mouth*

“But with actions” - *March on the spot*

“And in truth” - *Do a fist pump in the air*

Hearing me say the verse helped you know what it said, but doing the actions with it helped you learn it more easily. In the same way, as followers of Jesus, we can't just say we love Him with our words. Our actions need to show it too. When people see us being generous, forgiving and kind they see our love for Jesus.

2) Hands on

What you will need:

- Lipton tea bag with tag
- Scissors and tape
- Lighter or matches

This is a fun object lesson to show the children that Jesus was *all in* for us when He died and came alive again so our sins could be taken away, the Holy Spirit given, and that we can be with Him forever.

What to say:	What to do:	
This tea bag is like you and me. It is filled with sin from the wrong things we do (name some sins).	Tape the tag to the table and hold it up by the tea bag, making sure the children can see all the “sin” inside the tea bag.	

God loves us and so He sent Jesus to take away our sin. Jesus laid His own life down for us so that all our sin would be taken away from us.	Cut the tea bag free from where it is attached to the tag and let the “sin” fall out.	
And instead He filled us with His Holy Spirit	Unfold the tea bag and stand it up straight on the surface you are working on.	
When we choose to believe in Jesus, ask for His forgiveness, and live a life that is on fire for God (name ways we can do that.)	Set the tea bag on fire at the top of the tea bag.	
We will one day get to live FOREVER AND EVER AND EVER with Him in Heaven.	The tea bag should lift up into the air on its own!	

Use the link to see this in action https://youtu.be/rNO_KpDGzmc

3) Bible Story + Lesson

What you will need:

- Laminated speech bubble
- White board marker
- Something to wipe off the laminated speech bubble

We all have people in our lives who cheer us on, have fun with us, and are there when things are going well.

But sometimes we mess up and find ourselves in trouble, make mistakes, or do things that hurt others and in those moments, we might hear them say things like:

Love others
forgive others
serve others

Write each of these on the laminated speech bubble as you mention them.

- “I won’t forgive them.”
- “I won’t be their friend anymore.”
- “They deserved it because they did something wrong.”
- “It’s not my problem.”
- “I won’t help them.”

We can see they’re not always *all in* for us and the truth is, sometimes we might even find ourselves saying these things to others too.

But Jesus is different. He doesn’t say things like this to us even when we deserve it. Jesus is *all in* for us all the time. Jesus teaches that when we say we love Him, then our actions will match this by how we live and how we treat others.

Jesus was the perfect example of this. He said to love, forgive, serve and help others. (*As you discuss each point below, write on the laminated speech bubble what Jesus said. e.g. Jesus said to love.*) Let’s look at how Jesus’ actions matched what He said.

Jesus said to love others; let’s see if His actions loved others:

When Jesus was on the cross, people mocked Him, really hurt Him and killed Him, even though He had never done anything wrong. Jesus chose to give His life for us, and that was the greatest act of love ever shown. He didn’t just talk about loving others - He showed it! He loved people even when it was really hard and even when it cost Him His life. “But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” Romans 5:8 And we can all receive this free gift of salvation.

Jesus said to forgive others; let’s see if His actions showed forgiveness:

There was a woman caught in sin, and a crowd wanted to stone her. They insisted she deserved punishment because that was what the law required. But Jesus told them, “Let the one who has never sinned throw the first stone.” Then He forgave the woman and told her, “Go and sin no more.” We see that Jesus showed forgiveness towards this woman. (John 8:1-11)

Jesus said He would serve others and save the lost. Let’s see if His actions showed this:

When Jesus visited Zacchaeus, who was a tax collector, the crowd wasn’t happy. They complained because tax collectors were known for cheating people, and they couldn’t believe Jesus would spend time with someone like that. But while everyone else judged Zacchaeus, Jesus chose to be with him. Jesus didn’t just talk about helping people who were lost and far from God. He showed it by going to Zacchaeus’ house and meeting him right where he was. Jesus came “to seek and save the lost,” just like He said He would. Later we know Jesus served all people when He died on the cross for our sins. Jesus really was *all in* for us.

“For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.” Matthew 20:28

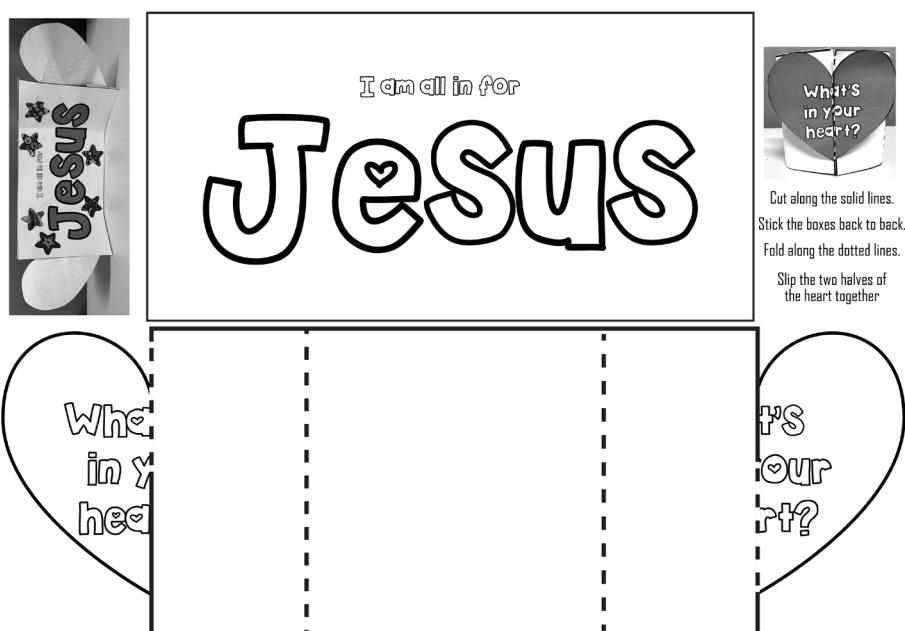
We can see that Jesus didn't have to do these things but He chose to. He didn't just speak these words; He acted on them showing that He truly loved, forgave and served others even when it wasn't easy. How wonderful is it to know that Jesus is always *all in* for us, no matter what!

4) Review Questions:

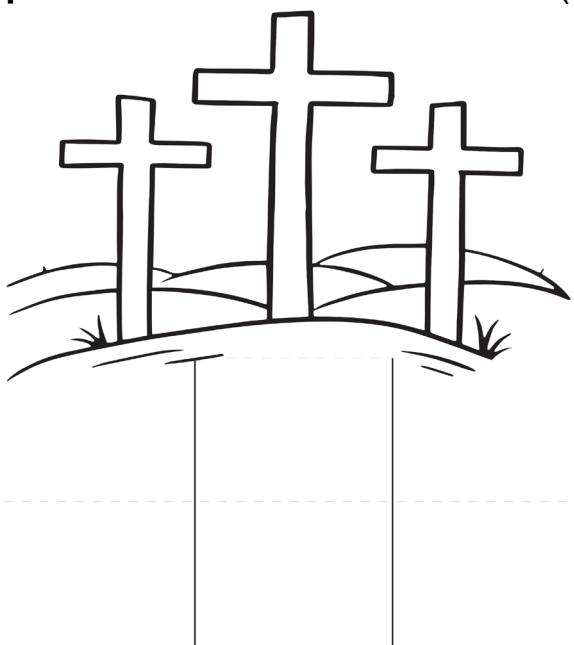
- Jesus said He would love, forgive and serve others. Can you think of some times when He did this? (*His whole life shows this* e.g. *Forgave the sinful woman, died on the cross, washed the disciple's feet etc.*)
- Jesus wants you to be all in for others too. How can you do this?
- How does knowing Jesus is all in for you make you feel?

5) Craft

Option 1: What is in your heart?



Option 2: Jesus was all in for us (Pop up cross and tomb)



Because Jesus was all in for us,
we get to live all in for Him.

