

## Jesus and the children



**Bible verses:**

Matthew 18:1-5; 19:13-14  
Jesus welcomes children



**Aim:**

To see how Jesus used children as an example



**Today's fruit:**

Love



In our session today we are reminded just how much Jesus loves the children of this world.

As the disciples argued about who was the greatest, Jesus focused his attention on the children who were ready to listen and learn from him. He reminded his followers that humility was the key to entering the Kingdom of Heaven.

To love children is to love humility.

### Each child will need:

- Pens/pencils, scissors and paper
- Resources to paint or draw a portrait – see Action it
- *Explore It ideas* handout

### You will need:

- Today's fruit sign: *Love*
- *Memory verse poster* from Session One
- *Prayer poster*



## Start it

Ask the children to choose which is the greater out of two options. They can do this by moving to one side of the room or the other depending on their choice. As you read out the options, point to the corresponding location the children need to go to if they think it's the greatest!

Suggestions are made below to get you started, but feel free to think of your own options that specifically relate to the interests of your group.

- Winter or summer
- Pizza or burgers
- Reading a book or watching a film
- Lego or board games
- Hot chocolate or strawberry milkshake
- Dogs or cats
- Animation or live action
- Jude Bellingham or Taylor Swift



## **Say:**

In our story today the disciples have an argument about who they think is the greatest. They ask Jesus to make a choice, but his answer is not as straightforward as they would like.



## **Sing it**

Display the *Love* sign.

## **Say:**

In our Bible story today we see Jesus showing love to a group of children who wanted to listen to him teach. The adults tried to exclude the children, but Jesus showed them love. We can follow Jesus' example and show that same love to others who feel excluded. Let's sing a song together that talks about Jesus' love.

## **Song**

'L-O-V-E' Kids Worship by Compass Bible Church (2:24)



## **Tell it**

## **Say:**

Jesus often talked with his disciples about the Kingdom of Heaven, but it is not clear whether they ever understood what he meant. Jesus had told the disciples that they would see the Kingdom of Heaven here on earth, but they were imagining a king on his throne.

## **Say:**

As Jesus' followers, the disciples wanted to know who would get to sit next to 'King Jesus' and be the greatest in the kingdom. They had misunderstood what Jesus meant when he talked about the Kingdom of Heaven.

**Read:**

**‘At that time the followers came to Jesus and asked, “Who is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?”’**

(Matthew 18:1 *ICB*)

**Ask:**

- Which of Jesus’ followers do you think he would choose to be the greatest?
- What would they be like?

**Say:**

Let’s watch the clip to find out how Jesus answered their question.

## Video

***Jesus and the Children Matthew 18:1-6 Kids Animated Bible*** by Kids Church Library (2:00)

**Watch: 0:00-0:55** ‘Well, Jesus, as always, told them the truth.’

**Ask:**

- In what ways do you worry about who is being treated the best?
- Where does this usually happen?
- Why do you think the disciples were so bothered about who was the greatest?
- Before we watch the next part of the clip, what do you think Jesus said to the disciples?

**Watch: 0:55-end.**

**Ask:**

- Does Jesus’ words surprise you? If so, how?

**Say:**

Jesus invited a child to come and stand with him.

**Read:**

**‘Then he said, “I tell you the truth. You must change and become like little children. If you don’t do this, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. The greatest person in the kingdom of heaven is the one who makes himself humble like this child.**

**“Whoever accepts a little child in my name accepts me.”’**

(Matthew 18:3-5 *ICB*)

**Say:**

The disciples had been arguing like children in the playground. But that’s not what Jesus meant when he said they should become like children. Jesus wanted the disciples to be humble and ready to learn from him.

## Ask:

- How does it make you feel to know how much Jesus loves and cares for children just like you?
- In what ways are children less powerful than adults? How do you feel about that?

## Say:

Jesus knows that sometimes adults don't listen to children as carefully as they could do. When some children wanted to listen to Jesus' stories, he showed the disciples exactly how he expected the children to be treated.

## Read:

**'Then the people brought their little children to Jesus so that he could put his hands on them and pray for them. When his followers saw this, they told the people to stop bringing their children to Jesus. But Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me. Don't stop them, because the kingdom of heaven belongs to people who are like these children."'**

(Matthew 19:13-14 *ICB*)

## Action it

There is flexibility in the way you approach today's Action It activity. The overall aim is for each child to go home with a picture of themselves that says, '[insert name] is loved by Jesus'.

This can be done in a number of ways, depending on your group and the resources available. The children could paint or draw a self-portrait, or work in pairs to create a picture of another child. A clip is provided below to demonstrate to the children how to draw a portrait. If you have the resources, and the necessary permissions, you could use photography as an alternative and add the caption to the image.

## Video

***Learn how to draw portraits - How to draw a face step-by-step - Easy tutorial for kids***  
by Smile and Learn - English (2:41)

The children will need their portrait for their *Explore It ideas* activity at home.

## Pray it

## Say:

During our prayer times this month, we are thinking about what it means to accept others as Jesus loves and accepts us.

Display the *Memory verse poster* and share it together.

## Memory verse

**'Christ accepted you, so you should accept each other. This will bring glory to God.'**

(Romans 15:7 ICB)

### Say:

We're going to share our memory verse song for this month.

## Song

**'Bible Memory Verse Romans 15:7' Kids Sing-along** by Kingdomcity Kids (1:11)

### Say:

In today's story the disciples tried to stop the children from coming to Jesus. They didn't think the children were worth Jesus' time and effort.

### Ask:

How did Jesus respond to the children?

### Say:

Jesus believed the children were important and he loved and respected them. We need to love and respect people, just like Jesus did.

Display the following prayer, on the *Prayer poster*, for the group to read together.

Dear Jesus,

**Help me to love and respect people the way you do.**

**Help me to see everyone I meet the same way that you see them.**

**I want to be a loving Christian who accepts people just as they are.**

**Amen.**

## Explore it

Remember to send home the *Explore It ideas* for children and families.



## Jesus and the children

Here are some ideas for you to explore at home.



### Bible verses:

Matthew 18:1-5; 19:13-14



### Aim:

To see how Jesus used children as an example



### Today's fruit:

Love



### Reflect

As part of this week's session, you should have come home with a portrait of yourself. This portrait is a reminder that Jesus loves you very much.

Put the portrait up somewhere at home and, each day, take a moment to read the words on the picture. Jesus loves children and that includes you.



### Bake

This week we learned about Jesus' love for children. Ask someone at home to help you make some love heart biscuits. As you bake, tell them all about the story of Jesus welcoming the little children.

**Easy Love Heart Biscuits** by justingredients.co.uk

<https://justingredients.co.uk/blogs/recipes/easy-love-heart-biscuits>



### Song for the week

'L-O-V-E' Kids Worship by Compass Bible Church



### Memory verse

'Christ accepted you, so you should accept each other. This will bring glory to God.'

(Romans 15:7 ICB)

*Kids Alive!* Online – [salvationarmy.org.uk/kidsalive](http://salvationarmy.org.uk/kidsalive)

*Kids Alive!* The UK's only weekly Christian comic – is filled with jokes, competitions, Bible-based cartoons and much more... and is now available to read online!

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## Memory verse

**'Christ accepted you, so you should accept each other. This will bring glory to God.'**

(Romans 15:7 *ICB*)

- Who did Jesus show love to in the story?
- What does it feel like to know that Jesus loves you and thinks you're special?
- How can we love other children like Jesus did?



## Start it

Today we are reminded how much Jesus loves the children in this world.



## Sing It

**'Great big God!'** Vineyard Kids, Vineyard Worship UK and Ireland (2:51)

**'Jesus song'** by Saddleback Kids (2:45) This song tells us about the amazing thing Jesus did.



## Tell it

Share a child-friendly version of Matthew 18:1-5; 19:13-14.

You may like to use the following clip to tell the story.

**Jesus and the Children Matthew 18:1-6**  
**Kids Animated Bible** by Kids Church Library  
(2:00)

Sit in a circle and ask the group to share together:

- Which is the greatest? Give the children some options to choose between, for example: Bluey or Paddington
- What did Jesus do when the disciples asked him to choose who was the greatest?



## Action it

Games and activities to reinforce the Bible passage:

- Draw a portrait of your friend and write 'Jesus loves you' on the picture.
- Use your body to make a big heart shape.
- Act out the scene from the story where Jesus stops the disciples from arguing.
- Shout in your loudest voice: 'Jesus loves me lots and lots!'