

Parable of the lost son

Luke 15:11-24

Faith formation for twos

One holiday my young nephews and I spent much time playing a game they called “Lost and found.” One boy would run away and become “lost,” while the rest of us searched for the lost child. The boys loved it when I acted hysterically sad about the lost child, and they loved my exaggerated expression of utter joy when he was found. They never tired of the game, reveling in the celebration of “reuniting” with loved ones.

Preparation

- Place the father and son from the activity card in your Bible to mark Luke 15.
- Copy the father and son figures from page 264 to use in telling the Bible story. Draw a sad face on the back of the father’s head. Color the figures, if desired.
- Practice telling the Bible story.
- Prepare a healthy snack.
- Prepare the activity card:
 1. Cut piece of colored paper to fit over picture of son.
 2. Tape paper at top to make a “peek-a-boo” flap.
- Gather materials for Responsive play.

Environment for twos

In the Create activity of Responsive play, children can experiment with making happy and sad faces out of recycled and found items. Provide paper face shapes with simple facial features marked. Invite the children to choose “found items” to place on top of the marks. The purpose is not to glue down items to take home, but to enjoy looking at the different effects and experimenting with changes. If children want a face to take home, you can help them glue down their final choices after they have had time to experiment.

FAITH FOCUS

We delight in Jesus’ stories.

AT A GLANCE

Gather

- Welcome
- Snack or “Found items” activity
- Song with seed shakers

Share the Bible story

- Song (“Jesus loves me”)
- “Listen” chant with father and son from activity card
- Story (Luke 15:11-24)
- “God is so good” prayer
- “Lost and found” game
- Activity card: “The lost son”

Responsive play

Sending

SUPPLIES

- *Wee Wonder* CD
- CD player
- Bible
- Snack
- For “Found items” Gather option: recycled or found items for faces (plastic milk lids/rings, rings cut from cardboard tube, empty spools, yarn/ribbon scraps, pinecones, leaves, shells, etc.)
- Seed shakers
- Father and son from activity card for Bible bookmark
- Story figures: Jesus, father and son figures (copy from p. 264)
- Storytelling background
- Prepared activity cards
- Responsive play materials (see p. 196)

Gather

1. Welcome children by name. Invite them to join your gathering activity.
2. Choose one of the following options for children to do as they enter the room:
 - Option 1: Snack**—If you do not offer snack right now, plan to serve it just *before* Responsive play.
 - Option 2: “Found items” activity**—Explore the recycled and found items with the children, talking about colors, shapes, and textures. Tell children to “point to something that looks like an eye, point to something that looks like a nose,” etc. (*These items will also be used in the Create area of Responsive play.*)
3. When you are ready to tell the story, shake the seed shakers as you sing one of the children’s favorite songs.

Share the Bible story

1. Sing “Jesus loves me” along with the *Wee Wonder* CD, shaking the seed shakers. (*See words on p. 271.*) Collect the shakers when finished.
2. Lead into the story with the “Listen” chant, following the motions below:

Come! (*motion with hand*)

Listen! (*make ASL sign—cupping hand around ear*)

Jesus has a story for us! (*hold out hands*)

Look! (*point to eyes*)

Listen! (*make ASL sign*)

Say:

“This story is about a family!”

Open the Bible to show the father and son from the activity card. Carefully set the open Bible to the side.

3. Share the Bible story.

Story figures: Jesus, father and son figures (*copy from p. 264*)

Set the scene: Place Jesus figure on one side of storytelling area.

Tell the story.

4. After the story, carefully place the Jesus figure and props in the Tell-It-Again box. Sing “God is so good” as a prayer, using the *Wee Wonder* CD. Make the American Sign Language (ASL) signs for “God,” “good,” and “love” (*see p. 273*) as you sing.
5. “Lost and found” game. Invite the children to hide in the room. As you look for each child, say:

“Where is (name)? I am so sad.

(Name) is not here.

Oh! Here is (name)! I am so happy!

(Name) is here!”

Exaggerate the emotion in your voice.



track 1



Figure 28

MODULE 9 THEME SONG

God is so good

God is so good.

God is so good.

God is so good.

God’s so good to me.

God loves me so.

God loves you so.

God loves us so.

God’s so good to me.



track 9

Jesus told this story (*touch Jesus figure*):

(Hold up father and son figures.)

A father's son ran away from home. *(Hide son figure behind your back.)*

The father cried, "I am so sad! My son is gone." *(Turn father figure to show sad face.)*

One day the son came home again. *(Bring out son figure again; turn father to happy face.)*

The father ran to hug him and kiss him. *(Move father to son; fold arms around son.)*

The father said, "I am so happy! My son is home again!

Let's have a special party to celebrate!"

- 6.** Activity card: "The lost son." Show just one activity card to the children at first. Look at the picture of the father. Talk about how he watched and waited for his lost son to come home. Then lift the colored paper flap and say, "Then the son came home! The father was so happy to see him again. He hugged and kissed him." Give each child an activity card and let them lift the flap to find the lost son. Sing "If you're happy and you know it, give a hug."



Offer snack now, if you did not at the beginning of the session.

Responsive play *(See p. 196.)*

Using the suggestions, set up areas for "free play" around the room. After Share the Bible story provide ample time for children to play alone or with others in the areas they choose.

Sending

As each child leaves, kneel down and look the child in the eye. Say:

"God is good, and God loves you, (name)."

Option: Sing "Holding hands together" from the *Wee Wonder* CD, while holding hands.



track 13

Responsive play

CONNECT

Set out items related to the story.

Faith Link: "The father gave a special party for his son."

Supplies: tablecloth, dishes, play food, child-sized cleaning tools

Tip: Prepare by "cooking" and "cleaning," and then enjoy a "party" together.

BUILD

Provide cut sticks and branches with people figures.

Faith Link: "The son came back home."

Supplies: sticks and branches cut into 3-4 in. / 8-10 cm lengths, wooden or plastic people figures (or ones cut from magazines)

Tip: Ask, "How could you make a home for the son and the father?"

TELL-IT-AGAIN

Set out the day's story items for children to retell the story in their own way.

Story figures needed: Jesus, father and son from page 264

EXPLORE

Hide some people figures in the growing grass for the children to find.

Faith Link: "The lost son was found!"

Supplies: tub of soil planted in session 1 with grass and bean seeds, magnifying glasses, wooden or plastic people figures

Tip: Remind the children to be gentle with the growing plants. If the seeds have not grown enough for hiding figures, just observe the seeds and seedlings again.

CREATE

Make happy/sad faces out of recycled or found items.

Faith Link: "The father was happy to see his son again."

Supplies: Construction paper circles, found items (*watch out for choking hazards*) such as plastic milk lids and rings, rings cut from a cardboard tube, empty spools, yarn and ribbon scraps, pinecones, leaves, shells

Tip: Cut large circles from construction paper (1 per child). Draw a simple face (happy or sad) with a marker. Invite children to place found items on top of facial marks. Then have them try other items to create a new face. You could use paper shapes (circles, triangles, squares, etc.) instead of found items.

READ

Read Jesus' stories.

Lion Storyteller Bible by Bob Hartman and Krisztina Kállai Nagy

Stories Jesus Told by Mark Littleton

The Story of Jesus by Patricia Pingry