

Focus: Jesus helps and protects us.

Gathering (children find/sit on a carpet square)

Say: *Good Morning everyone, my name is _____. Last week we talked about how Jesus is the bread for us to live on. This week we will talk about how Jesus wants us to be happy.*

Opening Prayer

Together we make the Sign of the Cross (do in reverse so children can mirror).

Say: *Now let's put our hands together and bow our heads.*

Lord, we are filled with your wonder—at all you have told us about yourself through Jesus, your Son. Help us to listen to what he has to teach us and place our trust in him.

Amen.

Song/Movement (can hand out attendance stickers at this time)

“Standin’ In the Need of Prayer” track 8 from [Bible Songs for Kids-Vol 2](#)

Have fun. Play music, encourage children to stretch or dance to the music (clapping, stamp feet march in place to the beat), turn to each other and shake hands, say hello, (example: form a circle and march 4 beats in, clap, march 4 beats out) etc.

It's me, it's me, it's me, O Lord,
Standing in the need of prayer.
It's me, it's me, it's me, O Lord,
Standing in the need of prayer.

Not my father, not my mother, but it's me, O Lord,
Standing in the need of prayer.
Not my sister, not my brother, but it's me, O Lord,
Standing in the need of prayer

Repeat both verses 2 more times

Last time repeat last line: “Standing in the need of prayer.”

Memory Verse

Say: *Now let's take a moment together to learn a verse from the bible.*

“Come to me and I will give you rest.”

Have the children repeat the verse after you a couple of times.

Say: *What do you think God means? Have you ever tried to do something that is too hard for you to do? You probably ask your mother or father for help right? What happens after they help you to finish what they've helped you with? You take a rest from worrying about how to get it done!! When we pray for help, God will answer us and we can take a break from worrying about the problem!*

Gospel Story

Say: *Today we are reading from the Gospel of Matthew.*

Have children make sign of the cross on their forehead, mouth and heart saying. *“Lord, open my mind, my lips and my heart so that I may learn it, speak it and love it.”*

After Jesus finished teaching he prayed, "I thank you, God of heaven and earth. I thank you because you show your ways to people who are like little children. They understand your ways better than people who think they are clever and wise."

*Then Jesus spoke to his disciples,
 "God has given me everything. No one really knows God except God's Son. And the Son can show God to anyone he chooses.
 Come to me all of you who are tired or worried, and I will give you rest. Learn from me, for I am gentle and my heart is humble. And when you are with me your heart will be at peace because the things I ask you to do are not too hard, and I help you to do them."*

After the reading say: *The Gospel of the Lord*

Children respond: *Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ*

Discussion Starters:

- *Who is Jesus praying to?*
- *Why is Jesus praying?*
- *Who are like little children?* Those who want to help little children. The other teachers are jealous that Jesus has many more followers than they do. The other teachers do not believe what Jesus is saying. So Jesus is thanking God for his followers, because God has given everyone the gift to be believers, but only those whose hearts are open to learning from Jesus, the children, students (of any age) are able to learn from Jesus.
- *Who does Jesus call to him?* When you are tired or have something hard to do or you are sad. Jesus wants us to trust him to help us feel rested and peaceful. Sometimes it feels like a weight you have to carry
- *Jesus says he is gentle and humble, what do you think that means? Gentle? ...allow for answers. Humble? ---* When we boast or brag about what we have, or look down on someone who isn't the same as we are, we are telling God that He is not important, and that we think we can do things on our own. We are not being humble. All good things come from God, by ourselves we have nothing. Therefore, we must live a humble life before God, by saying that we need him with us always. We thank Him for all He has given us.
- *What will we get if we trust Jesus? Happiness in our hearts*

Reflection on the Reading

How strong are you? Do you think you are pretty strong? How many of you think you could pick up a brick? How about one of these chairs? Well, you must be pretty strong then. How many of you think you could pick up a car? Oh, you don't think you could pick up a car? Well, I think you could if you had some help. Here is something that would help you. It is an automobile jack (see picture last page). If you put this jack underneath the car and pump the handle, you can easily lift a car that weighs over 3,000 pounds! Yes, with the help of a jack, you can lift a car, but you couldn't do it alone, could you?

Does that mean that if we will ask him, Jesus will take all of our troubles away? No. In fact, we may need some of those struggles to help us to grow and become stronger. We may need those burdens to help us to learn to

trust in Jesus. But when the load is too heavy, he will help us to carry it. And there is no burden that is too heavy for Jesus.

Dear Father, we are thankful that when we struggle under the load of life's burdens, you are there to help us carry the load. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Gospel Activity

God Helps us Be Strong: God loves us and protects us. Jesus has taught us about God and what he is like. Soldiers are strong and they wear protective gear to help them be safe. God gives us special gifts so we can feel safe too. Many years ago, soldiers carried shields to protect them from harm. We can think of God's protection like a shield.

Discuss the different qualities and help the children understand why they can trust Jesus to help them in the following situations: (*the words in italics are from the poster-they may have other answers, acknowledge all appropriate answers*)

- It is the first day of preschool, kindergarten, 1st grade, etc. and you do not know anyone. You would rather stay home with mom. (*caring, kind, loving*)
- Your mom and dad are going out to a movie and you are staying with a babysitter you do not know. (*caring, kind, loving*)
- There is a thunderstorm outside. It is raining really hard and thundering really loud. (*caring, kind, loving, strong, powerful*)
- There is a kid in your neighborhood who is always picking on you. (*caring, strong, good*)
- Your dad got a new job and you are moving to a new town. (*caring, kind, loving*)
- You have to draw a picture and don't think you can do a good job. (*caring, kind, loving*)
- A teacher asks about a broken toy, you must tell the truth, but you will get in trouble. (*caring, kind, loving, truthful*)

The children should understand that God might not change their situation. But He will give them whatever they need to make it through the situation.

Complete the weekly bulletin as a group-

Closing Prayer

(Children respond: "We Believe!")

Ask: *Do we believe in God, who protects us?*

Do we believe in Jesus, who helps us and teaches us?

Do we believe in the Holy Spirit, who gives us the courage and strength to follow Jesus?

Sending Forth

Say: *This week remember Jesus wants us to ask him for help. If we ask God for help*

Lining Up/Closing Song

Play "This Little Light of Mine" track 10 from 25 Sunday School Songs while children put away any materials and line up. Hand out weekly bulletins. Remind them it is important that they return to their family quietly so that we may all listen and pray together in church.

