

**Focus:** God's love is most important

**Materials:**

Prayer Altar: Cross, Candle, Chasuble on stand (priest's vestment) and Altar Cloth  
CD-America's 25 Favorite  
Bible: In lesson  
Book: 100 Bible Stories, 100 Bible Songs  
Book: Casey the Greedy Young Cowboy

**Gathering** (children find/sit on a carpet square)

Say: *Good Morning everyone, my name is \_\_\_\_\_. Last week we talked about welcoming Jesus into our house and our lives. This week Jesus tells us that we will always be children of God.*

**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.*

*O God, you want us to be happy. Help us make choices that lead to happiness with you.  
In the name of Jesus Christ we pray.  
Amen.*

**Song/Movement**

*This Little Light of Mine*, track: 15, from America's 25 Favorite

Play music, encourage children to stretch or move to the music (clapping, stamp feet march in place to the beat), turn to each other and shake hands, saying hello, etc. Have children sit on their carpet squares when finished.

1.This little light of mine,  
I'm gonna let it shine.  
This little light of mine,  
I'm gonna let it shine, let it shine,  
let it shine, let it shine.

2.Hide it under a bushel - NO!  
I'm gonna let it shine.  
Hide it under a bushel - NO!  
I'm gonna let it shine, Let it shine,  
let it shine, let it shine.

3.Don't let Satan blow it out.  
I'm gonna let it shine.  
Don't let Satan blow it out.  
I'm gonna let it shine, let it shine,  
let it shine, let it shine.

4.Let it shine til Jesus comes.  
I'm gonna let it shine.  
Let it shine til Jesus comes.  
I'm gonna let it shine, let it shine,  
let it shine, let it shine.

**Memory Verse**

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

*We are forever God's children.*

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

Say: *We believe that our loved ones who have died and gone from this world are living with God. Many of the things that seem important in this world aren't important in heaven. God's love is important, both now and forever. We pray for those who have died because we know they continue to live and listen to our prayers.*

*[Invite the children to tell you what they believe about God, heaven, angels, saints and loved ones who have died. Listen and learn from them. Answer their questions honestly and don't be afraid to say that there are things we just don't know.]*

## Gospel Story

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

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."*

Read: None, pp. N/A,

Jesus said,

[Chatty hand, thumb against fingers]

That everlasting life

[Point heavenward]

Is different from this life.

[Shake head gently]

People in this life get married.

[Pretend to put a ring on your left ring finger]

They buy things.

[Pretend to hand money to someone and take package back]

They die.

[Trace frown with fingers]

In the next life,

[Point heavenward]

None of these things is important.

[Shake head gently]

People in the next life are like angels.

[Gracefully raise hands heavenward]

They never die.

[Trace smile with fingers]

They are forever God's children.

[Give yourself a hug]

Our Lord is not the God of the dead.

[Shake head gently]

Our Lord is God of the living.

[Open arms wide to indicate all]

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

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

**Discussion Starters:**

- *What does Jesus say about this life?*
- *What is important to us in this life?*
- *What will be important to us in the next life with God in heaven?*

**Reflection on Reading:**

*In the Gospel today Jesus answers a question about life after death. The people who asked the question wanted to embarrass Jesus in front of the people.*  
*Jesus tells them that life in heaven is different from life on earth. Children of God do not die, after death they live in happiness with God forever.*  
*What is important in this life is God's love. How can we live today to show others we love life like Jesus did?*

**Gospel Activity**

Activity 1:

Read **God's Great Big Love!** On page 196 in 100 Bible Stories and 100 Bible Songs  
 Play the song. (Deep and Wide) Have the kids clap and/or hum as the words are removed from the song.  
 Remind them that God's love is always with us and there is nothing stronger than God's love.

Deep and wide	Hmmm and hmmm
Deep and wide	Hmmm and hmmm
There's a fountain flowing deep and wide	There's a fountain flowing hmmm and hmmm
Deep and wide	Hmmm and hmmm
Deep and wide	Hmmm and hmmm
There's a fountain flowing deep and wide	There's a fountain flowing hmmm and hmmm
Hmmm and wide	Hmmm and hmmm
Hmmm and wide	Hmmm and hmmm
There's a fountain flowing hmmm and wide	There's a hmmm flowing hmmm and hmmm
Hmmm and wide	Deep and wide
Hmmm and wide	Deep and wide
There's a fountain flowing hmmm and wide	There's a fountain flowing deep and wide

\*Hmmm is [Boing] on the cd.

Activity 2:

**Being Thankful**

Read the book *Casey the Greedy Young Cowboy*.

Ask the children to explain what Casey learned about having more stuff. Did it make him happy in the end? What did make him happy?

Ask the children to think of the important people in their life and hold them in their hearts.

Dear Lord, please bless all those who are so important to me; more important than video games and toys. Help me to remember that God's love is most important of all and to be thankful for all the gifts he has given me.

Amen.

Complete the weekly bulletin as a group-let the children color them if there is extra time

### **Closing Prayer**

(Children respond: "I Believe!")

Ask: *Do you believe in God, who promises us eternal life?*

*Do you believe in Jesus, who suffered, died and was raised from the dead?*

*Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, who fills us with life forever and ever?*

### **Sending Forth**

*Say: There are many ways we can show God our thankfulness for his promise of life everlasting. We can take care of the earth by recycling and not littering. We can be kind to others. We can pray for those who have died. Remember to show God your gratitude this week and always.*

### **Lining Up/Closing Song**

Play "Amazing Grace" track 24 from America's 25 Favorite while children put away any materials and lineup. 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.