



Jesus Grows Up

Luke 2:39-52

Preschoolers understand that they have a special relationship with their parents, different from the relationships they have with friends or neighbors. And that special connection can be tied to Jesus' relationship with God. The initial family relationship connection is the starting point and will be more understandable to preschoolers when tangible examples are applied. Use this lesson to help children understand why Jesus is special and what makes him special.



► Bible Point

Jesus is special.

Key Verse

"Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God" (John 1:12).

Weaving Faith Into Life

Children will know why Jesus is special.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started <i>about 5 min.</i>	Welcome and Celebrate Welcome each other, and praise God through music.	signal, CD player Teacher Pack: CD	
2 Key Verse Activity <i>about 10 min.</i>	Knowing God's Special Son Sing about God's Son, Jesus.	Bible, CD player, picture of your parents Teacher Pack: CD	
3 Bible Exploration <i>about 15 min.</i>	Puppy Pointers Watch as Theo gets ready for a family photo.	CD player, Theo puppet, hairbrush or comb, string Teacher Pack: CD	Tie the hairbrush or comb to Theo's paw.
	Bible Time: Jesus in the Temple Use gestures as Mary and Joseph search for Jesus.	Bible, paper, tape Teacher Pack: "Jesus at the Temple" poster (from the Big Bible Poster Pack) 	Tape paper over the picture of Jesus, hiding him completely.

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
<p style="text-align: center;">4 Weaving Faith Into Life <i>about 20 min.</i> (Choose 2 centers.)</p>	<p>Center 1: Mirror Magic Use a hand mirror to view reflections.</p>	My Bible Hugs, mirror, pen	Remove the Lesson 5 pages from each My Bible Hugs student book, and write children's names on them.
	<p>Center 2: Special Snacks Decorate cookies to make them special.</p>	plain wafer cookies, spoons, frosting, sprinkles, paper plates, antibacterial gel (optional)	
	<p>Center 3: Looking for Jesus Act out Mary and Joseph's search for Jesus.</p>		
	<p>Center 4: Jesus in the Temple Make a lift-the-flap picture of Jesus in the Temple.</p>	construction paper, markers, scissors	Fold a sheet of construction paper in half to make a simple tent shape. On 1 side of the folded paper, make double doors by cutting a T shape from the bottom edge and then folding the doors back. Make 1 per child.
<p style="text-align: center;">5 Lasting Impressions <i>about 10 min.</i></p>	<p>Daily Challenges Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.</p>	My Bible Hugs, pens	
	<p>Action Prayer Reflect same actions as partners in prayer.</p>		
	<p>Weaving Faith at Home Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.</p>		

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



Welcome and Celebrate Supplies

signal

CD player

Teacher Pack

CD: “Glad You’re Here Today” (track 7), “Are You Going to Praise the Lord?” (track 10)

1 GETTING STARTED

Welcome and Celebrate

Tip Consistently use the same signal to announce a transition to the next activity. You could flip the lights off and on, use a train whistle, have a puppet rustling inside a bag, or sing cleanup songs. Keep it simple, consistent, and fun.

What You’ll Do ■■■■■■

As the children arrive, greet each one with a smile. When it’s time to begin, use your signal to gather the children together in a circle on the floor.

Lead children in singing “Glad You’re Here Today” (track 7 on the CD) to the tune of “Ten Little Indians.” Encourage children to follow the motions in parentheses.

♪ Come sing and play and hear the Bible. (*cup hands over mouth*)
Sing and play and hear the Bible. (*turn in a circle*)
Sing and play and hear the Bible. (*put hand to ear*)
We’re so glad you’re here! (*both thumbs up*)
We’re so glad you’re here today! (*hands on hips and shake head*)
We’re so glad you’re here today! (*hands on hips and shake head*)
We’re so glad you’re here today! (*hands on hips and shake head*)
Come sing and play with us. (*make “come here” motion*)
(Repeat.)

Say: I’m glad you’re here today. We get to learn about someone very special today—Jesus! Today we’ll hear why ► **JESUS IS SPECIAL.** Let’s sing one more song before we begin.

Lead children in singing “Are You Going to Praise the Lord?” (track 10 on the CD). Encourage children to follow the motions in parentheses.

♪ Are you going to praise the Lord? (*put hands on hips*)
I will praise him all the time. (*wave hands in air*)
Remember all the things he has done. (*point to head*)
Jesus is a true friend of mine. (*hand on heart*)

Praise, praise, praise the Lord. (*wave hands in air*)
Come on, come on, let’s praise the Lord. (*make “come over” motion*)
(Repeat.)

Praise him for his goodness to me. (*show thumbs up*)
He is always loving and kind. (*hug self*)





He died for me and forgave all my sins. (*nod head*)
Jesus is a true friend of mine. (*hand on heart*)

Praise, praise, praise the Lord. (*wave hands in air*)
Come on, come on, let's praise the Lord. (*make "come over" motion*)
(Repeat 3x.)

Come on, come on, let's praise the Lord. (*make "come over" motion*)
Come on, come on, let's praise the Lord. (*make "come over" motion*)

Say: It's great to know that Jesus is our true friend. He loves us, and he died for us.
▶ **JESUS IS SPECIAL.** Let's learn more.

2 KEY VERSE
ACTIVITY

Knowing God's Special Son

What You'll Do

Have children form a circle and sit down. Open your Bible to John 1:12, and show children the words. Tell kids the Bible is God's special book.

Show children the picture of your parents. Say: **These are my parents**, [parents' names]. **I'm their child, even though I'm grown up. I will always be a child of** [parents' names]. Invite children to share about their parents.

Say: ▶ **JESUS IS SPECIAL** because he's God's son. Our Key Verse helps us understand why that's so great. Listen while I read it: "Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God" (John 1:12). This means that if we believe in Jesus, we can be part of God's family. Let's say our Key Verse together. Lead children in saying the simplified Key Verse with you: **Those who believe in Jesus can become children of God (John 1:12).**

Show your picture again. Say: **When you become part of God's family, you're still part of your family here on earth. Your parents are still your parents. But you're also part of God's great, big family. Let's sing about God's special Son, Jesus, who helps us be part of God's family.**

Lead children in singing "Do You Know God's Special Son?" (track 11 on the CD) to the tune of "The Muffin Man."

 **Do you know God's special Son?** (*point to friend*)
He and God are really one. (*bring palms together*)
Do you know God's special Son? (*point to friend*)
It's Jesus Christ the Lord. (*point up to heaven*)



Knowing God's Special Son Supplies

- Bible
- CD player
- picture of your parents
- Teacher Pack**
- CD: "Do You Know God's Special Son?" (track 11)





Yes, I know God's special Son. (*point to self*)
He and God are really one. (*bring palms together*)
Yes, I know God's special Son. (*point to self*)
It's Jesus Christ the Lord. (*point to heaven*)
(Repeat.)

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- **Why do you like to sing about Jesus?**
- **What makes Jesus special to you?**
- **Why do you want to be part of Jesus' special family?**

Say: **Jesus is God's Son. He can do anything—so it's pretty special that he wants us to be part of his family. I'm glad that ► JESUS IS SPECIAL, because if we believe in him we can be God's children.** Repeat the Key Verse with children again: **Those who believe in Jesus can become children of God (John 1:12).**

3 BIBLE EXPLORATION

Puppy Pointers

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **Listen, everyone, Theo's coming! He has something to show us. Let's find out what it is.** Play "Here, Theo" (track 2 on the CD), and bring out Theophilus the FaithRetriever.

Theo: Hi, everybody!

Teacher: Hi, Theo! Looks like you're brushing up for something special.

Theo: Yessiree! I'm getting ready for our family picture. We're getting all dressed up and having a picture taken with our whole family!

Teacher: That sounds fun. Here, I'll brush your fur so you'll look as handsome as can be. You're a special part of your family, and you want to look sharp!

Theo: I thought I heard my friends here talking about families, too.

Teacher: You must have heard our Key Verse. Friends, let's say our Key Verse for Theo. (*Lead children in saying the Key Verse for Theo.*) **Those who believe in Jesus can become children of God (John 1:12).**

Theo: Wow! I wonder what a picture of God's family would look like. That'd be huge!

Teacher: You're right, Theo! It's extra special to belong to God's family and be God's child. That's why I want all my friends here to believe in Jesus.

Theo: Thanks for brushing my fur. I'd better go so I can be in the picture.

Teacher: Boys and girls, let's all say goodbye to Theo.

Puppy Pointers Supplies

CD player
 Theo puppet
 hairbrush or comb
 string

Teacher Pack

CD: "Here, Theo" (track 2)

Puppy Pointers Easy Prep

Tie the hairbrush or
 comb to Theo's paw.



Encourage the children to wave or say goodbye to Theo. Then put Theo away in a safe place for next week's use.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- Tell about a time you got ready for something special.
- What do you do to get ready for church and for learning about Jesus?
- What's something special that you know about Jesus?

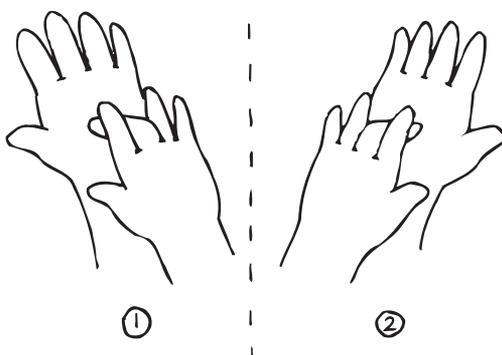
Say: Theo knew his family picture was special; that's why he was doing some extra things to look his best. Each of you are part of special families, too, and when you believe in Jesus, you're part of God's very special family. ► **JESUS IS SPECIAL!** Let's learn more about how special Jesus was when he was a child.

Bible Time: Jesus in the Temple

What You'll Do ■■■■

Open your Bible to Luke 2:39-52, and show children the words. Tell children that the Bible is God's special book.

Say: Today we'll hear why ► **JESUS IS SPECIAL**. Let's find out what happened when Jesus was a boy. When you hear the name "Jesus," make this sign. Show children how they can touch a middle finger to the palm of the opposite hand. When people can't hear, they use signs. Show the "Jesus" sign again. This is the sign that means "Jesus." Have children practice several times.



Say: When you hear the name "Mary," open your mouth wide and hold your hands up to your mouth like this. See illustration on the following page. Show the gesture, and have children practice it. Then alternate between the "Jesus" sign and the "Mary" gesture to help kids practice them.



Bible Time: Jesus in the Temple Supplies

Bible
paper
tape

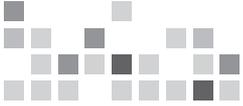
Teacher Pack

"Jesus at the Temple" poster (from the Big Bible Poster Pack)

Bible Time: Jesus in the Temple Easy Prep

Tape paper over the picture of Jesus, hiding him completely.





Say: **Today we'll hear about a party, or celebration.** Invite children to talk about parties they've attended.

Say: **The Bible tells us about a time Jesus' (show sign for Jesus) family had a big party. Let's listen carefully for the words *Mary* (show sign for Mary) and *Jesus* (show sign for Jesus). Great! Let's begin.**

When Jesus (show sign for Jesus) was 12 years old, he went with Mary (show sign for Mary) and Joseph to Jerusalem. Lots of his aunts, uncles, and cousins went, too. So did Jesus' neighbors. They went there to celebrate a special holiday, and Jerusalem was full of people. Have the children cheer and shake their hands above their heads to show celebrating.

When it was time to go home, Mary (show sign for Mary) and Joseph couldn't find Jesus (show sign for Jesus). They decided he must have gone on ahead with one of his relatives. It wasn't until the next day that they realized Jesus (show sign for Jesus) was not with anyone in the family. Mary (show sign for Mary) and Joseph turned around and walked back to Jerusalem to find Jesus (show sign for Jesus). The town was still very crowded, and they couldn't see Jesus (show sign for Jesus) anywhere.

Mary (show sign for Mary) and Joseph asked everyone they saw, "Have you seen Jesus (show sign for Jesus)?" The people shook their heads sadly and said, "No, we're sorry, we haven't."

Mary (show sign for Mary) and Joseph searched for Jesus (show sign for Jesus) for three whole days, but they couldn't find him. Finally, Mary (show sign for Mary) and Joseph looked in the Temple. Hold up the "Jesus at the Temple" poster so all the children can see it. In the Temple they saw a group of priests and teachers. All of them were listening to a young boy.

Let's see who that boy was. Let children take turns coming forward and peeking under the paper. (Encourage children to keep the "mystery" a surprise for their friends.) When everyone has had a turn to peek, pull off the paper. **The boy was Jesus (show sign for Jesus)!**





Mary (show sign for Mary) **and Joseph** were excited, but upset, too. They walked up to **Jesus** (show sign for Jesus). “Why didn’t you come back with us?” they asked. “We were so worried.”

Jesus (show sign for Jesus) seemed surprised. “Didn’t you know I’d be in my **Father’s house?”** **Mary** (show sign for Mary) understood that when **Jesus** (show sign for Jesus) said “my Father,” he meant **God, his heavenly Father**. She understood that her son was very special, that he and the Father were one.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- What did you think when Mary and Joseph couldn’t find Jesus?
- Why is it normally important for all kids to stay with their parents?
- Why do you think it’s okay that Jesus wasn’t with his parents?

Say: ► **JESUS IS SPECIAL**. Even though kids should stay with their parents, Jesus was different than any of us. He’s God’s Son.

4 WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

Choose at least two of the learning centers to help reinforce today’s Bible lesson. Gather the needed materials, and put the supplies in an out-of-sight area until you’re ready for them. Allow the children to choose which center they’d like to explore first. Then circulate among the children as they create and explore. Encourage them to make connections between their activities and the Bible by asking them the questions included with each center’s description.

■ CENTER 1:

Mirror Magic

What You’ll Do ■■■■

Give each child a Lesson 5 page from My Bible Hugs. Say: ► **JESUS IS SPECIAL! Even when he was a child, he knew he was God’s very special Son. Let’s do something with our My Bible Hugs pages to help us think about that.**

Have children take turns holding their My Bible Hugs pages in front of the mirror so they can see the reflection. Help kids talk about how what they see in the mirror looks the same as what’s on their papers.

Say: **When we learn about Jesus, we learn about God, too. When you look at Jesus, you’re seeing a reflection of God.**



Center 1: Mirror Magic Supplies

My Bible Hugs
mirror
pen

Center 1: Mirror Magic Easy Prep

Remove the Lesson 5 pages from each My Bible Hugs student book, and write children’s names on them.





Center 2: Special Snacks Supplies

plain wafer cookies
spoons
frosting
sprinkles
paper plates
antibacterial gel
(optional)

! ALLERGY ALERT

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- What was neat about seeing your page in the mirror?
- What do you think about Jesus and God being like that?

Say: **When we look at ourselves in a mirror, we look just the same. That's our reflection. Jesus is a reflection of God. Our mirror reflected the balloon picture, too. We could see the shape, the color, and the size of the balloon just looking at the mirror's reflection. When we learn about Jesus, we learn he is a "reflection" of God.**

► **JESUS IS SPECIAL.**

■ CENTER 2:

Special Snacks

What You'll Do ■■■■

Have children clean their hands and then sit down for the snack. Say: **Jesus wasn't like everyone else. ► JESUS IS SPECIAL. Let's make snacks to help us think about that.**

Give each child a few plain wafer cookies on a paper plate and a spoon. Set the remaining materials nearby. Encourage your children to create very special cookies using the frosting and the sprinkles.

After children finish decorating, let them show their cookies to each other.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- What makes your cookies special and different from the others?
- What things do you know about Jesus that make him different and special?

Say: **You started with cookies that were just like everyone else's cookies, but now you have very special cookies. ► JESUS IS SPECIAL, too. Before we eat our cookies, let's remember to thank God for sending his special Son, Jesus, to us. Pray, and then let children enjoy their snacks.**





CENTER 3:

Looking for Jesus

What You'll Do

Say: Today we learned that Jesus was at a celebration with his parents, but when they left to go home, he didn't go with them. He stayed in God's house, or the church. His parents knew he was special, but that's when they learned even more about just how special he was.

Have kids take turns pretending to be Jesus, his parents, and the priests in acting out what happened. "Parents" could call out "Jesus, where are you?" a few times. Encourage the children to look for the missing boy. Then have "Jesus" pop out and say "Here I am." Continue until several have had a chance to play "Jesus."

Talk With Kids

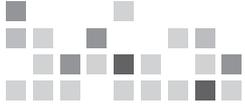
Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- Have your parents ever thought you were lost when you knew just where they were? What happened?
- What should you do if you're lost?
- How do you know that Jesus wasn't actually lost?

Say: The Bible says that Jesus was safe in his heavenly Father's house. God knew where Jesus was and provided people to take care of him because ► **JESUS IS SPECIAL.**





Center 4: Jesus in the Temple Supplies

construction paper
markers
scissors

Center 4: Jesus in the Temple Easy Prep

Fold a sheet of construction paper in half to make a simple tent shape. On 1 side of the folded paper, make double doors by cutting a T shape from the bottom edge and then folding the doors back. Make 1 per child.

Daily Challenges Supplies

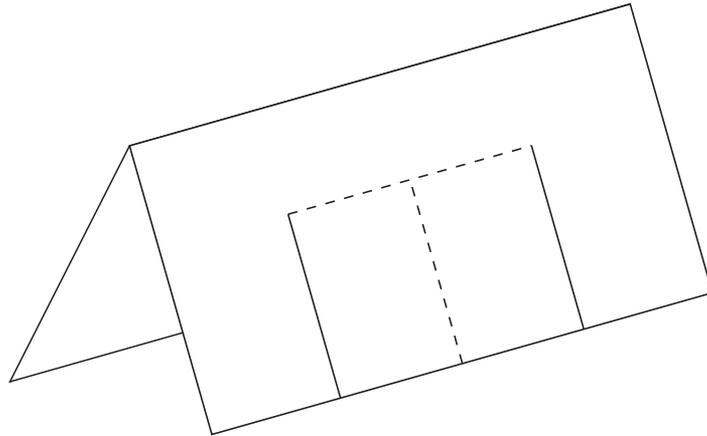
My Bible Hugs
pens

CENTER 4:

Jesus in the Temple

What You'll Do

Say: Let's make a craft to help us think about how ► **JESUS IS SPECIAL** and what happened when he was a boy.



Give each child one of the simple tent shapes. Help the children draw pictures on the outside of the temple of Joseph and Mary looking for Jesus. Have children draw a picture of Jesus and the teachers on the inside of the temple. When the children fold the doors open, they'll find Jesus in the temple, just as Joseph and Mary did.

Say: **Mary and Joseph learned that ► JESUS IS SPECIAL when they found him in the Temple. He helped them understand that he was God's special son.**

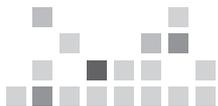
5 LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

What You'll Do

After the children have cleaned up their centers, bring everyone back to a circle area on the floor. Review the lesson activities and the Bible Point, and then encourage the children to share what they remember about what they learned from the Bible today.

Also use this time to challenge kids in their faith. Encourage them to choose a Daily Challenge for applying today's lesson to their lives this week. Use this challenge for encouraging your children's growing relationships with Jesus.



Talk With Kids

Say: Today we learned that ► **JESUS IS SPECIAL**. I would like each of you to choose a way to remember that Jesus is special this week.

Give kids these two challenges to choose from:

- **Every time you hear someone talk about Christmas, remind him or her that Jesus is God's Son and a special gift to us.**
- **Draw a picture of God and Jesus together. Give it to a friend and tell him or her why Jesus is special.**

Say: **If you want to talk about Christmas, circle the choice with one dot. If you want to draw a picture, circle the choice with two dots.** Check that each child circled a choice on his or her My Bible Hugs page. Make sure you tell kids the challenge you choose. Your commitment will inspire children and will give them an opportunity to see God at work in your life as well as in theirs!

Action Prayer

What You'll Do

Form a circle, and have the children sit down. Put them in pairs, and have children in pairs face each other.

Say: Today we learned that ► **JESUS IS SPECIAL**. In fact, our Key Verse says that those who believe in Jesus can become children of God (John 1:12). Invite the children to repeat the Key Verse to their partners.

Say: **Let's pray, using this rhyme.** Have each child stand facing the other child in his or her pair and repeat the following words and motions with you:

Thank you, God, for legs to run. (*run in place*)

Thank you, God, for your special Son. (*rock arms as if holding a baby*)

Jesus showed us how much you care, (*sign the name of Jesus*)

Wherever I am, you're always there. (*point to self and then to God*)

Thank you, God, for your love each day, (*cross arms over chest*)

In Jesus' name, amen!

Weaving Faith at Home

Have children take home their My Bible Hugs pages whether they worked on them or not. Have the children tell their parents the challenge they committed to in the "Daily Challenges" activity. Encourage the parents to help their kids fulfill this commitment during the week. By working together and focusing on the same goals, you and parents can help children weave faith into their lives!

Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church's families. Available at group.com/digital.



