



TOY BOX | WEEK 4 | SEPTEMBER 26, 2021

4s-5s Lesson

Esther

Bible Story: *God is with me so I can be strong.* Esther • Esther 2:2–8:17

Memory Verse: “We have the Lord our God to help us.” 2 Chronicles 32:8, NLT

Key Question: Who is always with you?

Bottom Line: God is always with me.

Basic Truth: I am made for a purpose so the Holy Spirit will help me do big things now.

**KID CONNECT:
30 MINUTES**

**LARGE GROUP:
15 MINUTES**

**SMALL GROUP:
15 MINUTES**

LEADER BIBLE STUDY

*Many of us remember a special toy or plush friend from our Toy Box that gave us comfort and companionship when we needed it. It's part of growing up. We were made to want someone with us. And that Someone is Who we will be talking about this month. He is the only One who can truly always be with us. We will say countless times this month, “**God is always with me.**”*

We want our preschoolers to believe it with all of their hearts. With this truth as a foundation, they can be brave and wise. They can have courage and strength. Then, when the times come that their favorite toy, blanket, or pillow cannot be with them, they will know that there is Someone who loves them and will always be with them. No matter where they go or what they do God is always with them ... and you.

Story Focus: **God is with me so I can be strong.** We will find ourselves in a royal court during week four as we hear about the strong actions of a queen named Esther. She risked her life to gain an audience with the king and plead for the lives of her people.

KID CONNECT

WELCOME TIME

(VIDEO: ARRIVAL MUSIC)

Play intro music in the background as you greet preschoolers and follow the KidCity check-in procedures. Set out a few favorite theme-related toys, such as puzzles and blocks.

OPENING ACTIVITY

(No Supplies)

All this month, our Kid Connect time will be spent building relationships with the kids. Gather your small group together for some intentional connecting time before Large Group. You can do small activities while you chat together (like coloring or building with blocks) or just sit and listen to each other. Ask your kids relationship-building questions like:

- How old are you?
- Do you have a favorite stuffed animal?
- Do you have a brother, sister, or pet? What are their names?
- What do you like to play at home?
- What's your favorite food/color/animal/ice cream flavor?

Transition to Large Group...

LARGE GROUP

COUNTDOWN

(VIDEO: COUNTDOWN)

Show the countdown video as the children clean up and transition to Large Group.

SETTING UP FOR SUCCESS

(CG: EXPECTATION SLIDE; BASIC TRUTHS SLIDE; BIBLE)

LGL: Hello my friends! How are you today? Come sit with me. I am so glad to see you here. I love being here with you!

Here in KidCity we have three rules. How many rules do we have? (*Kids respond*) That's right! Three rules. Let's go over our rules now. (*List rules while counting on fingers*)

1. **Be kind.** We can be kind by using our indoor speaking voices, by staying on our blankets (or whatever space you have), and by obeying our leaders.
2. **Be safe.** We can be safe by walking around the classroom and keeping our hands to ourselves.
3. **Have fun!** We are going to have SO much fun, and that's because you are here!

Can everybody follow those rules today? (*Kids respond*) Great! KidCity is a place where we learn about God and Jesus! And there are three big truths that we want you to know. Let's say them all together! Are you ready?

1. **I am made by God.** What is it? (*Kids repeat*)

2. **I am loved by God no matter what.** What is it? (*Kids repeat*)
3. **I am made for a purpose!** What is it? (*Kids repeat*)

LGL holds up Bible in front of him/her.

LGL: Do you know what this is? It's a Bible! (*Hugging the Bible*) Oh, I love the Bible! It's so special. The Bible is God's Big Story, and it tells us all about God! We are going to hear a true story from the Bible today.

WORSHIP

(VIDEO: VERY BIG THINGS, WHEREVER, WHATEVER)

Sing the worship songs together.

INTRO SKETCH

(Light Dumbbells [or similar])

"Friends, all of this month we've learned that because God is always with us, we can be brave, wise, and courageous. Today, we are going to learn that because God is always with us, He can also make us STRONG (*flex muscles*). Can you guys show me your muscles? (*Pause*) Wow! Those are some big muscles.

Look at what I have here. (*Pull out the weights*) If you curl these weights a bunch of times they will make you stronger. Watch!

Start dramatically curling the weights and counting how many you do. After about 10, pretend like it's getting really heavy until you stop.

Whew, those are *really* heavy! They will definitely make me stronger if I curled them every day.

Did you know that there are different kinds of "strong"? God doesn't give us muscles to make us strong on the outside, He gives us wisdom and courage to be strong on the INSIDE. Being strong on the inside means that you can do BIG things to love God, love others, and love the life that He has given you.

We are going to be learning about a woman today who was STRONG (*flex*) on the inside. Our story today is about a woman named Queen Esther. Can you say that with me? '*Queen Esther*' Good job! Queen Esther had to be brave and make the wise choice, even when it was dangerous. Let's see how she was strong. Watch the Bible story...

WATCH THE BIBLE STORY

(VIDEO: FULL BIBLE STORY, BOTTOM LINE)

"What an awesome story! Esther knew that God was always with her, and He made her strong! Because she knew that God was always with her and would help her be strong, she saved her friends and family! And God can make YOU strong too because He is always with you.

When I ask, '**Who is always with you?**', I want you to say, [*Bottom Line*] '**God is always with me!**' Ready? **Who is always with you?**' (*God is always with me.*)

WRAP UP AND BASIC TRUTH

(CG: BASIC TRUTH SLIDE, BOTTOM LINE)

“It’s a BIG thing to be strong and do the right thing...even when it’s hard...or if we don’t want to do the right thing. But God will always give us wisdom and courage if we ask Him, and He will make us strong on the inside! Our Basic Truth, ‘**I am made for a purpose so the Holy Spirit (who is God) will help me do big things now.**’ God promises to help us do all kinds of big things – including being strong on the inside!”

PRACTICE THE MEMORY VERSE

(CG: MEMORY VERSE)

Let’s say our memory verse together. I will say it first and then you will say it with me.

“We have *(bend wrists and tap fingertips to chest)*
the Lord our God *(point up)*
to help us,” *(right thumbs-up on top of left palm)*
2 Chronicles 32:8. *(Open hands like a book.)*

Say it once while doing the motions and then invite the kids to do it with you.

PRAY

Let’s pray together. *(Have kids “put both hands up in the air, clap them together once [keep hands clasped], and then lower them down to their lap”)*

“God, You are SO strong! You are the strongest. Help us remember that we can be strong too, just like Esther, when we remember that You are with us. Thanks for being awesome, God. We love You. In Jesus’ name we pray, amen”

TRANSITION TO SMALL GROUP

SMALL GROUP

Bible Story: *God is with me so I can be strong.* Esther • Esther 2:2–8:17

Memory Verse: “We have the Lord our God to help us.” 2 Chronicles 32:8, NLT

Key Question: Who is always with you?

Bottom Line: God is always with me.

Basic Truth: I am made for a purpose so the Holy Spirit will help me do big things now.

STICK TO THE STORY

(“Story Circles” and “Story Page” Activity Pages; Avery® #5294 labels or equivalent; scissors)

What You Do:

Before the Activity: Copy “Story Circles” on label paper, one row per child. Copy “Story Page”, one per child.

During the Activity: Give each child a row of “Story Circles” and a “Story Page.” Assist them in putting the story circle stickers in the four empty circles on their page in the following order as you review the Bible story: The King, Haman, Esther, and God’s People.

What You Say:

Before the Activity: “I’m so happy you’re here today! Let’s make our very own story page to take home with these stickers!” (*Hold up a row of story circle stickers.*)

During the Activity: “Our first sticker is the king. (*Give each child a king sticker.*) The king was married to a woman named Esther. Put the king in your first circle. (*Assist when needed.*)

“Our next sticker is a man named Haman. (*Give each child a Haman sticker.*) Haman worked for the king and wanted to hurt Esther’s family, God’s people. Put Haman in the next circle beside the king. (*Assist when needed.*)

“This sticker is Queen Esther. (*Give each child an Esther sticker.*) Esther trusted that God was with her and risked her life to ask the king to save her family. Put Esther in the next circle beside Haman. (*Assist when needed.*)

“Our last sticker is Esther’s family. (*Give each child a God’s People sticker.*) The king listened to Esther and saved all of her family! Put the people in the last circle beside Esther.” (*Assist when needed.*)

“Yay! We did it! Now you can take this home and tell your family all about what Esther did!”

After the Activity: “God was with Esther, and God is always with you! Who is always with you? **[Bottom line] God is always with me!**”

I AM STRONG OBSTACLE COURSE

(Items from the classroom to use as obstacles: play tunnel, table, chair, trash can, blocks, masking tape, hula hoop, etc.)

What You Do:

Before the Activity: Set up four or five different obstacles in a row for the children to run through using items in your classroom. Ideas are below.

- Crawl through the tunnel.
- Crawl under the table.
- Run between two chairs or around one chair.
- Run around the trash can, or if it's a small can, empty the can, place it on its side and have the children step over it.
- Stack a few blocks in a pyramid and have the children hop over them.
- Tape four X's in a zig zag pattern on the floor. Children will hop from X to X.
- Lay the hula hoop on the floor for the children to jump in and out of.

During the Activity: Encourage the children to show their strength by running through the obstacle course, one friend at a time. Run through the course first to show the children what to do at each obstacle. Line them up in front of the first obstacle and encourage the first child in line to complete all obstacles, then run back to tag the next friend in line. Repeat until every child has a turn.

After the Activity: Encourage the children to help you move all the obstacle items back to their original spots in the classroom for clean-up.

What You Say:

Before the Activity: "Friends, let's see how STRONG you are! I have an obstacle course for us to run through, one at a time."

During the Activity: "Let me show you what to do! (*Demonstrate by running through each obstacle.*) Are you ready? Great! Let's line up, and we'll take turns." (*Do activity.*)

After the Activity: "You are so STRONG, friends! Way to go! Esther was strong because God was with her. When God is with me, I can be strong, and you can, too. I'm so glad to know that **[Bottom Line] God is always with me.** Who is always with you? **[Bottom Line] God is always with me.**"

MEMORY VERSE WITH MOTIONS

(Memory Verse Motions Poster – 1 per group)

Say the memory verse using motions from the Memory Verse Motions poster. Repeat several times and encourage children for trying.

“We have *(bend wrists and tap fingertips to chest)*
the Lord our God *(point up)*
to help us,” *(right thumbs-up on top of left palm)*
2 Chronicles 32:8. *(Open hands like a book.)*

PRAYER

Let’s pray together. *(Have kids “put both hands up in the air, clap them together once [keep hands clasped], and then lower them down to their lap”)*

“Dear God, there is no one else like You. Only You can always be with us wherever we go. We can go anywhere in the world, and You will still be with us. You being with us makes us strong and brave, wise, and courageous! You are amazing, and we love You very much. In Jesus’ name, amen.”

CONNECT WITH PARENTS/INFLUENCERS

(First Look Placemats - 1 per child)

Hand out placemats to parents as they arrive. Encourage parents/influencers to review the Preschool lesson with their child this week.