



RAIN OR SHINE | WEEK 4 | JANUARY 26, 2025

# Preschool Lesson Zacchaeus

**Bible Story:** *Zacchaeus* • Jesus is a good friend when I am happy • *Luke 19:1-10*

**Memory Verse:** “A friend loves you all the time.” Proverbs 17:17, NCV

**Key Question:** Who is always a good friend?

**Bottom Line:** Jesus is always a good friend.

**Basic Truth:** I am loved by God no matter what so I can be confident that God knows who I am.

## LEADER BIBLE STUDY

Have you ever seen a bunch of preschoolers jumping in rain puddles? So many giggles! So much excitement! And do you know that feeling you get when you step outside and feel the sunshine on your face for the first time in a week? Pure happiness! Our preschoolers experience a wide range of emotions every day. They feel sad, happy, afraid, nervous, excited—sometimes all in the same hour!

Our preschoolers will grow up and experience a lot of different situations and emotions. We want children to know that Jesus is a friend that loves them at ALL times. A friend that will never leave them. That’s why, this month, we are talking about THE best friend—the One who is ALWAYS a good friend. Rain or shine, Jesus is always a good friend of mine!

**Story Focus:** Jesus is a good friend when I am happy. Zacchaeus is a tax collector which means his job is to take money from people. One day, Zacchaeus hears that Jesus is coming to the town where he lives. Zacchaeus wants to see Jesus so badly that he climbs a tree to get a better view. When Jesus sees Zacchaeus, Jesus tells him to come down and that He is going to Zacchaeus’ house. Wow! Zacchaeus is so happy that Jesus is his friend that Zacchaeus wants to love people the way Jesus loves him. So, Zacchaeus gives back all the money he had taken from the people! Jesus is a good friend to Zacchaeus when he was a tax collector and when he was a happy friend of Jesus, because Jesus is always a good friend.

### Pre-Service Check List

- HUDDLE AS TEAM → You're in this together! Pray together and talk about the activities for the day.
- PLAY MUSIC
- PUT OUT TOYS → A welcoming environment is important! We want it to be obvious from the moment kids walk in that they belong HERE!
- PUT ASIDE DISTRACTIONS
- ENGAGE WITH KIDS

### Morning Flow



## 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)

Kid Connect time is 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, MEMORY VERSE VIDEO; BIBLE)

LGL: "Hello my friends! How are you today? Come and sit with me. I am so glad you are here! My name is [your name]. I'm excited to spend time with you today! We are getting ready to sing and dance and hear a true story from the Bible. Before we do let's go over our rules and truths.

"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.)*

“It’s time for our memory verse. Let’s watch our memory verse motions and do it along with them!”

*Show memory verse motion video and then practice without it.*

‘A friend *(hook index fingers twice)*  
loves you *(cross arms over chest)*  
all the time,’ *(tap wrist)*  
Proverbs 17:17.” *(Open hands like a book.)*

“Ok, now let’s sing and worship God!”

## WORSHIP

**(VIDEO: MY FRIEND FOREVER (2025), MY FOREVER FRIEND)**

Sing the worship songs together.

## INTRO SKETCH

**(Stuffed Ollie, Feeling Emoji Picture for Current Week (W1 Afraid, W2 Excited, W3 Sad, W4 Happy), Beginner’s Bible and Story Box)**

*LGL brings the story box with the prop and Bible to the center of the room.  
You should have a feeling emoji picture for the current week’s story.*

“I have my story box ready. I’m SO excited to see what we are learning about God today. Let’s see what I have in here…”

*Pull out the Bible*

What is this? *(Pause for responses.)* Yes, it’s the Bible! The Bible is God’s word and God’s word is always true. The Bible has many stories that make one BIG story, and we (you and me) are part of that story. Let’s see what else is in our story box today.

*Pull out Stuffed Ollie and the feeling emoji picture for the current week.*

What does Ollie have today? *(Pause for responses.)* YES, it’s a face/emoji picture. How is the emoji feeling? *(Pause for responses.)* YES, it looks happy. Can you make a happy face? *(Pause for responses.)* Wow, you have some really happy faces! In our story today we are going to hear about someone who is always with us and is a good friend when we are happy.

Let's click on our listening ears (tug on each ear, one at a time, as you make a click, click sound), let's put on our looking eyes (bring your hands, one at a time, to your eyes like binoculars as you say shook, shook) and let's put our hands that have been move and praising Jesus quietly in our laps.

Now we are ready. Let's watch today's true Bible story."

## WATCH THE BIBLE STORY

### (VIDEO: BIBLE STORY, BOTTOM LINE)

"Wow! That was an amazing story! Who is with us and a good friend when we are happy? *(Pause for responses.)* YES, Jesus! Jesus was a good friend to Zacchaeus. It made Zacchaeus so happy that he wanted to love people the way Jesus loves him. Jesus is a good friend to you and me when we are happy because *[Bottom Line]* Jesus is always a good friend."

When I ask, 'Who is always a good friend?' I want you to say, *[Bottom Line]* 'Jesus is always a good friend' Are you ready? *(Pause for responses)*. 'Who is always a good friend?' *[Bottom Line]* 'Jesus is always a good friend!' YES! *[Bottom Line]* God's got it!"

## SAY THE BASIC TRUTH

### (CG: BASIC TRUTH SLIDE)

Let's look at our Basic Truth for today. It says, 'I am loved by God no matter what so I can be confident that God knows who I am.' God knows when we are happy, and we can be happy knowing He is a good friend who is with us always.

## PRAY

"Let's get our hands ready to pray. *Open them close them, open them close them, give a little clap. Open them, close them, open them, close them, fold them in your lap.*

God, we love You. Thank You for Jesus, our friend forever! We know that Jesus loves us and is our friend always! He was a friend to Zacchaeus, and He is a friend to us too. Help us to remember this big truth—that *[Bottom Line]* Jesus is ALWAYS a good friend. In Jesus' name. Amen."

## TRANSITION TO SMALL GROUP

## SMALL GROUP

**Bible Story:** *Zacchaeus* • Jesus is a good friend when I am happy • *Luke 19:1-10*

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## MY FRIEND JESUS

(“My Friend Jesus Book” Activity Page – 1 per child, Crayons, (4) Small Heart Stickers per child)

**What You Do:**

*Before the Activity:* Copy “My Friend Jesus Book” activity page and fold on dotted lines, one per child. Ensure page one is Jesus and Zacchaeus (Jesus is a good friend when I am happy).

*During the Activity:* Give each child a copy of “My Friend Jesus Book.” Talk about the pictures in their books as you review each story together. Encourage children to color and add heart stickers to each page.

*After the Activity:* Review the Bottom Line.

**What You Say:**

*Before the Activity:* “Come sit with me. We’re going to make something special for you to take home!”

*During the Activity:* “You are going to make a book about your good friend, Jesus! Color and add stickers while I talk about each picture. The first picture in your book is Jesus and the man from our Bible Story today. The man’s name was Zacchaeus. Color Jesus and Zacchaeus. Jesus was a good friend to Zacchaeus even though Zacchaeus made bad choices. And Jesus was a good friend to Zacchaeus when Zacchaeus was happy and made good choices. **[Bottom Line] Jesus is always a good friend.** I have a heart sticker for you to place on this story page (give each child a heart sticker and pause while they place the sticker on the page with Jesus and Zacchaeus).

The next picture in your book is Jesus and His friend, Peter. Color Jesus and Peter. Jesus was a good friend to Peter when Peter was brave and wanted to walk on water to Jesus. And Jesus was a good friend to Peter when Peter was afraid and began to sink in the water. **[Bottom Line] Jesus is always a good friend.** Here is another heart sticker to put on your story page with Jesus and Peter (give each child a heart sticker and pause while they place the sticker on the story page).

Look at the next picture in your book. That is Jesus and one of the men Jesus made all better. Color Jesus and the man. The man was so excited about Jesus making his boo-boos go away, he ran back to tell Jesus: ‘Thank You!’ Jesus was a good friend to the man when he was sick and had boo-boos, and Jesus was a good friend to the man when he was excited and all better! **[Bottom**



*Line]* Jesus is always a good friend. Place a heart sticker on this story page with Jesus and the man he made all better (give each child a heart sticker and pause while they place it on their story page).

Now let's look at the last picture in your book. This picture has Jesus and His good friends, Mary and Martha. Color Jesus, Mary and Martha. Jesus went to see Mary and Martha because they were sad. Jesus was a good friend and was sad with Mary and Martha. *[Bottom Line]* Jesus is always a good friend. I have one more heart sticker for you to put on this last page with Jesus, Mary and Martha (give each child a heart sticker and pause while they place it on the last story page)."

*After the Activity:* "Everyone, hold up your book. (*Pause.*) Wow! Your books look great! You can take your book home to help you remember that *[Bottom Line]* Jesus is always a good friend! Who is always a good friend? *[Bottom Line]* Jesus is always a good friend!"

## MEMORY VERSE WITH MOTIONS (EXTENSION)

**(Memory Verse Motions Poster - 1 per group, "Memory Verse Stickers" - 1 per child)**

Say the memory verse using motions from the Memory Verse Motions poster. Repeat several times and encourage children for their efforts. Encourage kids to say the verse on their own. As they do, give them a memory verse sticker.

'A friend (*hook index fingers twice*)  
loves you (*cross arms over chest*)  
all the time,' (*tap wrist*)  
Proverbs 17:17." (*Open hands like a book.*)

## HAPPY AND YOU KNOW IT

**(No Supplies Just Your Imagination)**

**What You Do:**

*Before the Activity:* Gather the children together in an open area of your room.

*During the Activity:* Sing the following words to the tune of "If You're Happy and You Know It" and do the movements.

*After the Activity:* Review the Bottom Line.

**What You Say:**

*Before the Activity:* "Friends, come over here and spread out in a circle. We are going to sing and dance and have so much fun."

*During the Activity:* "We're going to sing 'If You're Happy and You Know It' together, but today we're going to do new moves with the song! Is everyone ready? (*Pause.*) Okay, so listen carefully to the words. Here we go:

"If you're happy and you know it, climb a tree. (*Climb.*)

"If you're happy and you know it, climb a tree. (*Climb.*)

“If you’re happy and you know it and you really want to show it, *(big smile)*  
“If you’re happy and you know it, climb a tree! *(Climb.)*  
“Okay, let’s change the motion!  
“If you’re happy and you know it, walk with me. *(Walk in a circle in your group/walk in place.)*  
“If you’re happy and you know it, walk with me. *(Walk in a circle in your group/walk in place.)*  
“If you’re happy and you know it and you really want to show it, *(big smile)*  
“If you’re happy and you know it, walk with me. *(Walk in a circle in your group/walk in place.)*  
“Let’s change the motion one more time!  
“If you’re happy and you know it, be a friend. *(Pretend to give a hug or a high five.)*  
“If you’re happy and you know it, be a friend. *(Pretend to give a hug or a high five.)*  
“If you’re happy and you know it and you really want to show it, *(big smile)*  
“If you’re happy and you know it, be a friend. *(Pretend to give a hug or a high five.)*  
“Wow, that was great friends! Let’s do it again!” *(Repeat as desired.)*

*After the Activity:* “Zacchaeus climbed a tree to see Jesus and then walked with Jesus to Zacchaeus’ home. Zacchaeus was happy that Jesus was such a good friend to him that Zacchaeus wanted to be a good friend to others. I’m so happy that **[Bottom Line]** Jesus is always a good friend! Who is always a good friend? **[Bottom Line]** Jesus is always a good friend!”

## 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.”)*

Dear God, thank You for the story of Zacchaeus and how Jesus chose to be his friend. Jesus is our good, good friend! Help us to be good friends to others. We love You, God. In Jesus’ name. Amen.”

## CONNECT WITH PARENTS/INFLUENCERS

**(First Look Placemats - 1 per child)**

Hand out placemats and encourage parents/influencers to review the Preschool lesson with their child this week.