



SESSION ONE

God Gives Us Jesus

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 1:18-25; 3:1-17; 4:23-25; Luke 1:11-60; 2:1-20

BIBLE MEMORY VERSE

God loved us: He sent His Son. (See 1 John 4:9.)

LESSON FOCUS

God sent Jesus to show how much He loves us.

BIBLE AIMS

During this session, each child may

1. TELL that God sent Jesus;
2. NAME good things God has given him or her;
3. THANK God for His love and for sending His Son, Jesus.

TEACHER'S DEVOTIONAL

"Nothin' says lovin' like somethin' from the oven!" Or at least that's what an old advertising jingle would have you believe. But the advertiser was selling a prepared product and implying that your family would never notice the difference between it and something made from scratch. A baked expression of love could be easy and convenient or it could be difficult and inconvenient, involving time and fresh ingredients! The advertiser would have us believe that the effort required by both methods was the same.

As you might suspect, what people think about love can be a lot like that advertiser's message: Love should be easy and convenient. It should just happen, like a chemical reaction. But what is God's definition of love? First John 3:16 tells us, "This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us." When Jesus surrendered His life for us, He did not do what was easy or convenient. Jesus showed us *agape* love—total and complete.

Before your week of VBS work begins, take time to consider your definition of love. How closely does it align with Jesus' definition? Then commit yourself to do cheerfully the work that will be needed—whether easy or difficult, convenient or inconvenient. Ask God to help you show His love, especially during trying moments. God has put you in this place, this week, to help children learn to know what His love really is!



Bible Learning Activities

(40-45 minutes)

These activities are set in several centers that you can create in your classroom: Jacques' Aquarium (Science and Water Activities), The Treasure Chest (Blocks), The Sandy Beach (Dramatic Play) and Cooky Island (Art). (See pp. 6-7 for decorating and setup suggestions.) Select the activities for which you have the equipment, space and personnel—at least one teacher for each activity center. The activity marked ♦ will be shared during Together Time.

During Bible Learning Activity time, children may move freely around the room, participating in several activities for as long as time and interest allow. (If a group of children arrives at the same time, gather children and briefly explain activity choices. Dismiss several children at a time to the centers of their choice.)

Materials Checklist

- ♦ Name Tag Patterns (p. 51)
- ♦ colorful card stock
- ♦ scissors and hole punch
- ♦ permanent markers and crayons
- ♦ marine animal stickers

For each child—

- ♦ one large safety pin

Optional—

- ♦ name tags (available from Gospel Light)
- ♦ Island Assortment Stickers (available from Gospel Light)

WELCOME TIME



PREPARATION: For name tags, photocopy Name Tag Patterns onto card stock; make several of each pattern so that each child and teacher can make a name tag of their choosing. Cut out. Punch two holes at the top of each name tag and fasten pin to tag. (Optional: Instead of making name tags, you may purchase theme-related name tags from Gospel Light.)

PROCEDURE: Greet children and invite each child to choose a name tag. Use permanent marker to print child's name on tag. Children decorate tags with crayons or markers and place stickers on name tags. (Optional: Provide Island Assortment Stickers.)

Sandy, you chose the starfish sticker to decorate your name tag! What color is your starfish? Pin tags to children's clothing. Briefly explain the activities at each center and help each child become involved in an activity.

Materials Checklist

- ♦ various sea creature posters from *Teaching Resources*
- ♦ 3 c. flour
- ♦ 1 c. salt
- ♦ 1 ¼ c. water
- ♦ food coloring
- ♦ 3-4 squirts dishwashing liquid
- ♦ large bowl
- ♦ coffee, cocoa and various spices, including cinnamon, nutmeg and cloves
- ♦ craft sticks

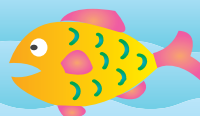
JACQUES' AQUARIUM (SCIENCE AND WATER ACTIVITIES)

TREASURE DOUGH

PREPARATION: Display pictures of sea creatures from *Teaching Resources*. Mix flour, salt, water, food coloring and dishwashing liquid in large bowl. Knead mixture until soft and pliable. (Recipe makes enough dough for six children.) Divide dough into fist-sized lumps and roll into balls. Press thumb into each ball and place a small amount of spice, coffee or cocoa into the impression. Leave impression open so that children can smell "treasure" inside.

PROCEDURE: Children smell spiced dough. They roll and work their dough until the treasure is completely blended in. Then they form marine animals of their choice, referring to pictures for ideas. Show them how to roll and shape dough into fish shapes. Children use craft sticks for cutting shapes or imprinting details on animals.

KEY CONVERSATION: Hidden inside our play dough is a special "treasure." Let's sniff to discover what that treasure is. Lead children to identify different smells.



Let's use our dough to make fish and animals you would see in the ocean. What would you like to make, Annie? We can use our play dough to make a starfish. What else do we see in the ocean that we could make? Katie, thank you for sharing your rolling pin with David. What is the name of another friend here today? God's love is giving. God has given you a lot of friends. You can thank God for loving you and giving you good friends. Lead child in short prayer. Dear God, thank You for giving us good friends. Amen.

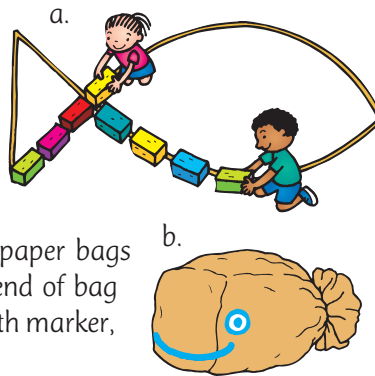
YOUNGER CHILD OPTION: Younger children will enjoy just playing with the dough, without making recognizable shapes. Look for opportunities to talk about good things God has given them.

KINDERGARTEN ENRICHMENT: Children use play-dough toys (toy marine animals, marine animal cookie cutters, children's scissors, small rolling pins, etc.) to build habitats for toy marine animals.

THE TREASURE CHEST (BLOCKS)

OCEAN OUTLINES

PREPARATION: Cut apart Scenic Island Block Cards. Tape each card onto a separate block. Place masking tape on the floor to create outlines of one or more fish (sketch a). Remove tape after activity so that it doesn't leave marks on the carpet or floor. (Optional: Make paper-bag whales for children to use throughout the week in their block play. Stuff large paper bags three quarters full with newspaper. Gather the open end of bag and twist to create a tail. Use yarn to tie bag closed. With marker, draw whale features on bag [sketch b].)



PROCEDURE: Children place blocks on masking tape lines to outline sea creatures. Children may also build underwater scenes using Scenic Island blocks and toy fish.

KEY CONVERSATION: If you were swimming in the ocean, what would you like to see, Bryan? Whales are very big and fun to watch. I'm glad God made whales for us to look at. God made so many wonderful things for us to see. God loves us. He showed love for us when He sent His Son, Jesus. Our Bible says, *God loved us: He sent His Son.*

KINDERGARTEN ENRICHMENT: Children use tape to make sea creature outlines of their own choosing.

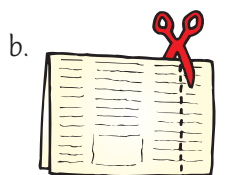
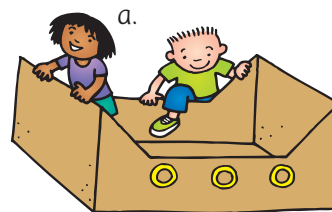
Materials Checklist

- ◆ Scenic Island Block Cards from *Teaching Resources*
- ◆ scissors
- ◆ tape
- ◆ blocks in a variety of shapes and sizes
- ◆ toy fish
- Optional—**
- ◆ large brown paper bags
- ◆ newspaper
- ◆ yarn
- ◆ marker

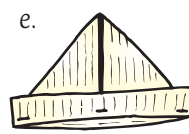
THE SANDY BEACH (DRAMATIC PLAY)

GOIN' ON A BOAT RIDE

PREPARATION: Using marker, draw outline of boat shape on box. Use craft knife to cut along outline and make a boat (see sketch a). Cut out circular portholes in the boat sides for windows. Make captain hats for children to wear by folding and stapling newspaper sheets (see sketches b-e).



Cut off 4" (10 cm).



Materials Checklist

- ◆ marker
- ◆ large appliance box
- ◆ craft knife
- ◆ newspaper
- ◆ stapler
- ◆ items for boat ride (sunglasses, discarded or toy cameras, toy binoculars, empty sunscreen containers, beach clothing, life vests, sailor hats, etc.)

PROCEDURE: Children pretend to go on a boat ride. They put on hats, clothing, life vests and sunglasses and pretend to put on sunscreen. Children use binoculars and cameras to sightsee.

KEY CONVERSATION: What do you think you might see when riding in a boat on the ocean? I see a dolphin. Quick, take a picture! Let's look through our binoculars to see what other animals we might find.

Corinne, I see that you are putting sunscreen on your arms. Sunscreen helps to keep the sun from burning your skin. I'm glad God gives you good things to keep you from getting hurt or sick. What are some other good things God gives you to help you stay well? (Food. Medicine. Warm clothes.) Let's thank God for loving us and giving us good things. God's love is giving. Children take turns thanking God for specific items.

YOUNGER CHILD OPTION: Use masking tape to make an outline of a boat on the floor. Children sit inside outline to go on a boat ride.

Materials Checklist

- ◆ Underwater Picture from Teaching Resources
- ◆ tape
- ◆ white butcher paper
- ◆ liquid starch
- ◆ shallow containers
- ◆ blue, green and brown liquid tempera
- ◆ white glue
- ◆ water
- ◆ paint smocks or old shirts
- ◆ paintbrushes
- ◆ sand

◆ COOKY ISLAND (ART) ISLAND MURAL

PREPARATION: Tape a piece of white butcher paper to table. Pour a small amount of liquid starch into shallow containers. Add paint to containers. Mix paint and liquid starch together. In two other containers, dilute glue with a small amount of water.

PROCEDURE: Children put on smocks or shirts. Children dip their fingers into blue and green paint and finger-paint on the paper, mixing the colors to create the water for island mural (see sketch). Remove and set aside to dry (outside of classroom, if possible, to avoid children stepping on painted paper). Tape another piece of white butcher paper to table. Children use brown paint to create an island. When children are finished painting, set out glue, paintbrushes and sand. Children brush a layer of thinned glue around bottom edge of island. Children sprinkle sand over glue. When paint is dry, cut out an island shape and attach to the blue-green water.

NOTE: If desired, you can make this mural an ongoing project throughout the week. To prepare children to make the mural, follow the instructions on page 7. It will serve as the background for subsequent island art activities. At the end of VBS, remove items from mural for children to take home.



KEY CONVERSATION: Show Underwater Picture. What colors do you see in this picture? Chloe, I see you used blue to paint the water in our mural. Which color do you like best? God is good to give you eyes and hands so you can see and paint beautiful pictures. What are some other good things God has given you? God's love is giving. Let's pray and thank God for giving us good things. Lead children in brief prayer.

YOUNGER CHILD OPTION: Children finger paint water only, using blue paint. Precut island shape from brown butcher paper. Children glue sand to the bottom of island.

CLEANUP TIME

Signal Cleanup Time each session by playing a song from *Son Treasure Island CD*. Encourage children to participate in cleanup by giving specific instructions to one child at a time. Renee, I need your help stacking the square blocks on the top shelf. When cleanup is nearing completion, guide children who have finished to the area where teacher is ready to begin Together Time.



Together Time

(10-15 minutes)

For younger children, use only the activities marked ♦.

♦ **SONG:** Play “Around and ‘Round” from *SonTreasure Island CD*. Sing song once with children. Then sing again and lead children in motions while singing song.

♦ **WELCOME/JACQUES PARROT PUPPET:** Puppet enters. **Hello, boys and girls. My name is Jacques (ZHAKK). I live in the trees here on SonTreasure Island. Do you know what kind of bird I am? (A parrot.) Parrots have lots of pretty-colored feathers. You’ll have fun learning about my friends who live on the island and in the ocean. I want to learn your names. So every time I say this rhyme, I want one of you to say your name.**

SonTreasure Island’s lots of fun, and I’m so glad you came!

So now each time I point to you, please clap and say your name.

Children take turns clapping and saying their names until every child has answered. (In a large group, point to more than one child at a time.) **I’m happy that you are here visiting my island this week. Bye.** Puppet exits.

At SonTreasure Island we’re going to learn that God loves us. He loves us so much that He sent His Son, Jesus. I’m glad that God loves us.

♦ **FINGER PLAY:** “God Loves Me”

God gave me feet that can turn me around;
God gave me hands that can touch the ground.
God gave me legs that can jump to the side;
God gave me knees that can bend and glide.



God gave me food and a place to live;
God gave me people with love to give.
So I thank God, ‘cause it’s easy to see
God is good and He loves me!

YOUNGER CHILD OPTION: Omit one stanza to shorten the finger play.

SHARING: Refer to Island Mural and show Underwater Picture. **What are some things you see underwater?** Volunteers respond. **What are some things you see on the picture we painted?** (The ocean. Sandy beach.) **What would you like to do in the sand? In the ocean? I’m glad God gives us good things to see and do. What are some other good things God gives to us?**

♦ **BIBLE VERSE:** Hold Bible open. **Listen to what our Bible tells us. God loved us: He sent His Son.** Children repeat verse. **Who is God’s Son? (Jesus.) I’m happy that God gave us Jesus. God gives us many good things. I’m glad that God’s love is giving!** Children repeat, “God’s love is giving.”

SONG: Play “Treasure Forever” from CD and lead children in singing and doing motions for song.

♦ **PRAYER:** **Let’s talk to God. Closing your eyes will help you think about God while you talk to Him.** Pray and thank God for loving each child and for sending His Son, Jesus, to show His love.

♦ **TRANSITION:** **Do you or anyone you know have a baby brother or sister at home? Today we are going to hear a story about a very special baby.**

Materials Checklist

- ♦ Bible
- ♦ *SonTreasure Island CD* and player
- ♦ Jacques Parrot Puppet (Purchase a parrot puppet, or make paper-bag puppet described in *Reproducible Resources*.)
- ♦ Underwater Picture from *Teaching Resources*
- ♦ Island Mural from *Cooky Island* activity

Bible Story/Application

(10-15 minutes)

Materials Checklist

- ◆ Bible
- ◆ Figures 1-5 from *Teaching Resources*
- ◆ flashlight
- ◆ crayons or markers (including green, blue and yellow)

For each child—

- ◆ Session 1 *Treasure Guide*

(Note: See “Storytelling Tips” on p. 10 for ways to present the story.)

PREPARATION: Before class, prefold *Treasure Guide* pages to form storybooks, and then reopen pages. In class, children will find it easier to refold the page.

GOD GIVES US JESUS

(Hold Bible open to Luke 1 as you expressively tell the story. Do motions and show figures as indicated.)

Hold up Bible. **What is this book called?** Children respond. **Listen carefully to hear a true story from the Bible. It’s a wonderful story of what God did to show that He loves you!**

AN ANGEL VISITS MARY

One day a young woman named Mary was alone. (*Show Figure 1.*) Suddenly she saw an angel right in front of her! (*Show Figure 2.*)

“Do not be afraid, Mary,” the angel said. “God loves you very much. You will be the mother of a special baby boy. Name the baby Jesus. This baby will grow up to be very great, for He will be God’s special Son.” Mary was so excited and happy!

At last it was almost time for the baby to be born. Mary’s husband, Joseph, said, “We must go to Bethlehem and write our names in the king’s book.”

Bethlehem was far away. They started their trip with Mary probably riding on a little donkey while Joseph walked alongside. (*Pat hands on the floor to make clopping sounds.*) All day long they traveled. At night they stopped to rest. Finally they came to Bethlehem.

The streets were crowded with people and animals. All of the places to stay were full of people. Finally, Joseph knocked on the door of an inn. An inn is like a motel. “May we stay here tonight?” Joseph asked the man who opened the door.

“No,” said the innkeeper. (*Shake head no.*) “There is no room. I do have room for your donkey in the stable. You may stay there, too, with the animals.” And that was where Mary and Joseph stayed.

That night, a very special baby boy was born! (*Show Figure 3.*) The baby was Jesus, God’s Son! Mary wrapped baby Jesus in soft cloths and gently laid Him on clean hay in the manger. A manger is a box full of hay from which animals eat. Joseph and Mary named the baby Jesus, just as the angel had said.

SHEPHERDS VISIT JESUS

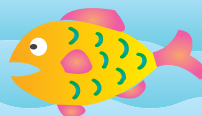
(*Show Figure 4.*) That same night, some shepherds were sitting together on a hill, taking care of their sheep. Suddenly, there was a bright light in the nighttime sky! (*Turn on flashlight and shine it on Figure 4.*) Right before their eyes was an ANGEL! The shepherds were very frightened! (*Shake body.*)

“Do not be afraid,” the angel said. “I have good news for you and for EVERYONE! Tonight in the city of Bethlehem, Jesus, the Savior, is born!”

Before the shepherds had a chance to say anything, the sky was filled with more and MORE angels. (*Point up.*) The angels praised God together: “GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST!” The angels were thanking God for sending Jesus.

Then the angels went back to heaven as quickly as they had come. The shepherds said, “Let’s hurry to Bethlehem. We want to see this baby the angel told us about!” (*Pat hands on floor to make running sound.*)

When they found the stable, they saw baby Jesus in the manger with Mary and Joseph watching over Him.



Oh, so quietly, the shepherds came nearer. They wanted to see the baby who was so important that angels told about Him! They saw baby Jesus and loved Him. The good news was true!

Then the shepherds went back to their sheep. And as they went, they were so excited they told everyone they saw the good news that Jesus was born!

Note: For younger children, you may wish to omit the following section.

JESUS VISITS JOHN

When Jesus grew up, He went to see His cousin John. Jesus wanted John to baptize Him. When someone is baptized, water is used to show that God washes away the wrong things they have done. Even though Jesus had never done anything wrong, He wanted to be baptized to show that He loved and obeyed God. So John and Jesus walked down to the river. (*Show Figure 5.*) As Jesus was baptized, something surprising happened! (*Look surprised.*) God spoke from heaven! "This is My Son, whom I love! I am pleased with Him!" God said.

CONCLUSION

Mary and Joseph loved Jesus and were glad that Jesus was born. We can be glad, too! We can thank God for loving us and for giving us His Son, Jesus. Have children repeat phrase, **God's love is giving!** Lead children in prayer saying, **Dear God, thank You for loving us. Thank You for giving us good things. Thank You for sending Your Son. In Jesus' name, amen.**

APPLICATION

Teachers and helpers sit at tables with children. Pass out *Treasure Guide* page and crayons or markers. Children fold page to make mini-storybook.

To review the Bible story, children follow along as you read the "God Gives Us Jesus" story. **Who is God's Son?** (Jesus.) **Who did God send to tell the shepherds about baby Jesus?** (Angels.) **We're glad God's Son, Jesus, was born.**

Children unfold mini-storybook and repeat Bible verse with you. **God sent Jesus because He loves us. God loves us so much, He has given us many good things.** Children complete "God Gives Me Good Things" activity. **What other good things has God given to us?**

Recreation Game

(10-15 minutes)

STARFISH SCRAMBLE

PREPARATION: Cut several starfish shapes of each color from card stock, making enough to give one to each child. Place five hula hoops representing oceans several feet apart in playing area. In each hula hoop, place a different color of starfish.

PROCEDURE: Give each child one starfish, varying colors between children. Call out a color. Children with that color run to put their starfish in the "ocean" that matches the color named. Continue until all colors have been called. Collect starfish and play additional rounds as time and interest allow.

KINDERGARTEN ENRICHMENT: Between each round, children cover their eyes while you vary the locations of the starfish colors, so that colors are in a different ocean for each round. Also, at the end of each round, invite children to count the number of starfish in each ocean.



Materials Checklist

- ◆ scissors
- ◆ card stock in 5 colors
- ◆ 5 hula hoops

Snack/Craft

(25-40 minutes)

Materials Checklist

Food items—

- ◆ several kinds of fruits, such as kiwi, orange, banana, strawberry, grape and melons
- ◆ small bag of raisins
- ◆ small bag of miniature marshmallows
- ◆ package of licorice laces or candy straws

Utensils—

- ◆ knife
- ◆ paper plates and bowls
- ◆ napkins

SNACK ♦ SEA CREATURE SNACKS (10-20 minutes)

PREPARATION: Cut fruit into small chunks. Place all food items on paper plates or in bowls.

PROCEDURE: Children wash and dry hands.

What kinds of animals live in the ocean?

(Fish, whales, sharks, octopus, etc.) **Today we are going to make sea creatures we can eat!**

Give each child a paper plate. Children arrange fruit chunks and other items to create one or more sea creatures of their own design.

NOTE: Post a note alerting parents to the food items used in today's snack. Also check registration forms for possible food allergies.



CRAFT ♦ NATIVITY SCENE DIORAMA (15-20 minutes)

Children make nativity scenes. For complete craft instructions, see "Nativity Scene Diorama" in *Island Crafts for Kids*.

Music Fun/Good-Byes

(10-15 minutes)

Materials Checklist

- ◆ Bible
- ◆ *SonTreasure Island* CD and player
- ◆ Jacques Parrot Puppet
- ◆ seashell

Play CD as children gather.

SONG: Play "Before All Time" from *SonTreasure Island* CD. Lead children in singing song while doing motions.

GAME: Hold a seashell. **I'm going to pass this shell to someone who is wearing a bow in her hair.** After children identify the child you have described, hand shell to child. Then say, **Tami, please pass the shell to someone who is wearing a red shirt.** Continue activity until all children have been described. To end the activity, say, **Pass the shell to someone who is wearing** (describe your own clothing).

BIBLE VERSE: Today we've learned that God loved us so much that He sent His Son, Jesus, to show His love for us. Open Bible. **Our Bible says, God loved us: He sent His Son. Let's say our Bible verse together.** Lead children to repeat verse.

PRAYER: Let's pray to God and thank Him for loving us and sending Jesus to us. Children repeat phrases of prayer after you. **Dear God, thank You for loving us. Thank You for sending Jesus to show us Your love. In Jesus' name, amen.**

GOOD-BYE/JACQUES PARROT PUPPET: Puppet enters. **Did you have fun today on SonTreasure Island? There is still so much to do and to see that you will have to come back tomorrow! I'd better fly home now. My mom has my lunch waiting and I don't like to be late or my little sister, Jackie, might try to eat my food. Bye-bye!** Remove children's name tags and distribute take-home materials. (Optional: Play songs from *SonTreasure Island* CD and provide rhythm instruments for children to play until parents arrive.)

