

INTRODUCTION



Welcome to what we hope will be an exciting year of learning and worship for both you and the children who attend Children's Church.

The focus of this material is to provide for an extended Sunday school learning experience as well as a worship experience for children in preschool through upper elementary. By using this material, the concepts and lessons learned in the Sunday school hour can be reinforced and extended through the use of activities, games, and crafts that are different than those used in the Sunday school lesson.

This curriculum provides Bible study, Bible memory, Music activities, Puppet skits, Prayer time, Snacks, Crafts, Games, and more. It gives you, the leader, the flexibility of choosing the activities that fit the time you have for your program. If you have a 30-minute, 60-minute, or 90-minute program (or another variation), you can effectively use the time to lead the children in meaningful worship.

Included in this kit you will find the following:

- **Leader's Guide** (with music CD in front cover pocket)
- **Craft Book**
- **Snacks and Games Book**
- **Puppet Skits Book**
- **Park Patrol Training Book**
- **Two Puppets**

The pages of these books are reproducible for use with the Noah's Park® Children's Church program. You may need to reproduce additional pages of the Leader's Guide to give to several leaders. The craft pages need to be

reproduced (usually one page for each child—either preschool or elementary). Because of this feature, you don't have to worry about running low on material. Just reproduce extras as your program grows.

This curriculum emphasizes the involvement of the children. There are two Bible Stories provided for each lesson—one for preschool children and one for Kindergarten through third grade. You may choose to keep all the children together for the Bible Story. In that case, we suggest that you use the Elementary Bible Story. If you so desire, you can use the Preschool Bible Story with preschool through Kindergarten or first grade.

PARK PATROL

Children in fourth, fifth, or sixth grade can participate in the program as the "Park Patrol." Through this participation, these older elementary children will be learning about service as they assist the leader. By using the *Park Patrol Training Book* as the basis for preparing the students to be effective helpers, they can feel confident as they assist with the program. By using the Park Patrol, you will find that you do not need as many adult leaders to teach and guide the children.

This program will work equally well for small or large churches. Because you can combine these age groups for worship, you can have an effective, meaningful worship time for any number of children.

A CLOSER LOOK

To help you understand the curriculum, let's take a look at each section.

As you look at the Table of Contents, you will



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notice that the material is divided into twelve units. Most units take four weeks to complete; some take five. The units correspond basically to the months of the year. However, some units might take one full calendar month and one more week. So don't think in months, but in units.

This is especially important if you rotate your Children's Church leadership. Ask for volunteers to consider teaching for one unit. That way they will be able to help the children focus on the unit theme and can emphasize it consistently through the teaching of it.

Turn now to the first lesson of the first unit. You will notice the unit theme at the top of the page. This is the emphasis of all the lessons in the unit. In the special box on the left side of the page, you will see an outline of what is included in the lesson with suggested times. This can help you as you plan for the time schedule you have in your program. Do not feel that you are required to do every activity. We suggest that you select activities from each of the areas, however, in order to reach the different types of learners in your group. By having a Bible Story, puppet skit, time of singing, games or crafts, you are appealing to children who need to learn by listening, moving, doing, etc.

an object lesson. Sometimes the children listen, but often they participate more actively.

Following the Teacher Feature, we suggest that you divide up your group of children into preschool and elementary ages. If you have sufficient space, it would be best to have a separate area for the two groups as you teach the Bible Stories. Use the Preschool Bible Story for your preschoolers. If you have a small group of children, or if you just choose to keep the children in one larger group, use the Elementary Bible Story to teach the lesson.

Bring all the children back together following the Bible Stories. At this point, we suggest that you use the Noah's Park Puppets. The puppet skits are written to reinforce the unit theme and the Bible story. It's a fun way for the children to begin moving toward the next part of the worship session.

We offer a Bible Memory section. You will notice that we do not give you a specific Bible verse to use. You may choose to use a Bible memory verse that the children studied in Sunday school or you may choose to select a verse that emphasizes or reinforces the Bible Story. We provide an activity to help the children quickly and easily learn the Bible memory verse.

DISCOVERY TRAILS



The first section is Discovery Trails. We include a Teacher Feature that you can use to begin your session. This is designed to help the children begin thinking about the unit theme and help prepare them for the Bible Story to follow. The Teacher Feature may be a story, an activity, or

WORSHIP TRAILS



Now we move into Worship Trails. At this point, you can have the children involved in a time of Singing Praises to Jesus. We suggest that you use the songs on the CD included with the program. The songs are all original music written specifically for the program. Each song on the

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CD correlates with one unit. You can use other favorite songs that help to emphasize the theme as you have the time in your program.

We also offer a Share and Prayer time. Here's an activity specifically designed to help your children worship God through prayer. Many times the children will be making something that they will take home. This will help them to remember the importance of prayer in their daily lives as well as assist them in this time of worship.

WILDLIFE TRAILS

Wildlife Trails offers the children a chance to move and create. This section of the lesson includes Snack Shack, Campsite Capers, and Cozy Cave Crafts.

We offer a snack suggestion (Snack Shack) to correlate with each week's lesson. You can use these snack suggestions or others of your own choosing. All the children can have their snack time together or you can separate them into preschool and elementary groups at this time.

As you begin the Campsite Capers (Games) and Cozy Cave Crafts (Crafts) notice that there are options for preschool and elementary. These activities are designed with age-appropriate activities for each of these groups.

HAPPY TRAILS

Happy Trails gives you a chance to gather all the children back together into one large group and wrap up your session. Everyone can help

with cleanup and then have a time of review just prior to leaving. We give suggestions for Closing Activities as well as Overtime Activities. During the time at the close of your session while you wait for parents to pick up the children, we give suggestions to help you extend the session.

The Park Patrollers are your assistants. Take time before beginning your year of Children's Church to train the children. Using the *Park Patrol Training Book* will help these kids become confident helpers as they assist with the movement of the younger kids, help with the snack time, games, crafts, puppets, etc. Be sure to make assignments for the kids so that they know what is expected of them and when it's their turn to help if you use them on a rotating basis. You will find that they are learning a great deal from the Bible Stories, puppet skits, prayer time, etc. as they listen and help.

Refer to the *Craft Book*, *Puppet Skits Book*, and *Snacks and Games Book* for more information about supplies and preparation.

As the children leave your session, they will be taking home a Craft that they have made. Included with many of the crafts is a "HomeLink" to help parents extend the learning even further. Be sure to send it home with the children if it is not already attached to the craft project in some way.

Now that you have made it through this introduction, you're ready to begin!

Lesson: Jesus Knows All about Us

Choose from the options listed below to follow Adventure Trails that lead to Jesus:

DISCOVERY TRAILS

TEACHER FEATURE (5 min.)

God Chose Us as We Are

BIBLE STORY (10 min.)

Jesus Knows Nathanael (Elementary)

Jesus Knows All about Us (Preschool)

NOAH'S PARK PUPPETS (5 min.)

We Are Important to God

BIBLE MEMORY (5 min.)

Musical Verse Mix

WORSHIP TRAILS

SINGING PRAISES TO JESUS (10 min.)

SHARE AND PRAYER (5 min.)

Special People Pictures

WILDLIFE TRAILS

SNACK SHACK (5 min.)

Hidden Treats

CAMPSITE CAPERS (15 min.)

Getting to Know You (Elementary)

Name Trade (Preschool)

COZY CAVE CRAFTS (15 min.)

Hidden Message (Elementary)

Bible Story Puppets (Preschool)

HAPPY TRAILS

CLOSING ACTIVITIES (5 min.)

OVERTIME ACTIVITIES (as needed)

Today I'm going to tell you a parable about dolls. A parable is a story that is meant to teach us something. Listen carefully to see if you can figure it out. As you read the story, hold up various dolls on the table.

A rich little girl once wanted a doll of her own to love. So her father took her to the very best toy store in the town. "You may choose whichever doll you want," he told her.

She looked through all the glass cases. There were dolls dressed as nurses, ballerinas, brides, fashion models, and teenagers. There were girl dolls and boy dolls and baby dolls. She looked them over carefully and then asked the clerk, "Do you have any other dolls that I might see?"

"I'm sorry," the clerk answered. "We only have one other doll in the store, and I'm certain you wouldn't want it. It's a doll that was returned in somewhat poor condition. We've been meaning to throw it away."

"Could I see it anyway?" the girl asked.

When the clerk placed the dirty and tattered doll in the little girl's arms, the girl gave it a hug and said, "I want this one. She needs me."

What do you think this parable is supposed to teach us? (The responses might include that the best things may not always look the nicest, etc.) Who is supposed to be like God in this parable? (The little girl.) Which doll is most like us? (The dirty, tattered doll.) God sees us just as we are and we are still important to Him. God didn't choose to show His love to sinless, perfect people. He chose to show His love to us while we were still covered with dirty sins. He chose us because He knows we need His love. We are important to Him.

If you are separating the elementary and preschool children for the Bible story, have your Park Patrol members lead them to the appropriate class area at this time. If you are keeping them together, be sure to use the Elementary Bible Story to teach the lesson.

DISCOVERY TRAILS

TEACHER FEATURE

God Chose Us as We Are

Supplies: Several different dolls in new condition, one doll that looks used, table or small shelf

Preparation: Arrange the dolls on the table to look like a store display. Keep the used doll out of sight until indicated in the story.

ELEMENTARY BIBLE STORY

Jesus Knows Nathanael (John 1:43-49)

Today's Bible story is found in the book of the Bible called John. Show the children John 1 in your Bible. Then ask the children to help tell the story by adding actions. (Have Park Patrol members up in front to help lead the children with the motions.) **When I say the name "Jesus," touch the fingers of your right hand to the palm of your left hand. Then touch the fingers of your left hand to the palm of your right hand. When I say the name "Philip," pat your hands quietly on your legs to indicate walking. When I say the name "Nathanael," hold your hands as if you are holding a book.**

One day Jesus (sign for Jesus) decided to go to Galilee. As Jesus (sign) was leaving He found Philip (pat legs for walking). "Follow me," Jesus (sign) said to Philip (pat legs). Philip (pat legs) was from the town of Bethsaida. Philip (pat legs) found his friend Nathanael (hands holding book) and told him, "We have found the one written about in the Law and the Prophets—Jesus (sign) of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."

Nathanael (hands) was surprised! He responded, "Nazareth is not a very nice town. Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" But Philip (pat legs) just said, "Come and see."

So Philip (pat legs) took Nathanael (hands) to see Jesus (sign). They approached, Jesus (sign) said, "Nathanael (hands), I know you are an Israelite who is fine and true." With surprise Nathanael (hands) asked, "Jesus (sign), how could You know me? We've never met before!" Jesus (sign) said to Nathanael (hands), "You were sitting by a fig tree. I saw you then as I see you now."

Nathanael (hands) began smiling brightly as he said, "Jesus (sign), now I know You are God's promised one! You are the King of Israel."

When you've finished the story, follow up with a short time of discussion. **When someone looks in a mirror, can you tell what they are thinking or what is in their heart?** (Give the children a few minutes to think and talk about the fact that the mirror only shows

what is on the outside of us. How do you think Jesus was able to know what kind of person Nathanael was? (Jesus knows what we are like both inside and outside.) Jesus is able to see inside our hearts and knows all about us. We are important to Jesus no matter what we are like.

PRESCHOOL BIBLE STORY

Jesus Knows All about Us (John 1:43-49)

Supplies: Bible, stick puppets (Preschool Craft for Lesson G1, page GC·8)

Preparation: Create a set of stick puppets, page GC·8 of the *Craft Book*, to help tell the Bible story.

Open your Bible to John 1. **Our story today comes from the Bible. It is found in the book of the Bible named John.** Show the children where John 1 is in your Bible.

Jesus traveled to many places to tell people about God. "Walk" the Jesus puppet in front of you. **But He wanted two helpers to come with Him.**

One day Jesus met a man named Philip. "Walk" the Philip puppet in front of you until it is next to the Jesus puppet. **Jesus knew Philip was the kind of helper He wanted. Jesus said, "Philip, come with Me!"**

Philip was so excited! He had to tell someone the news about being Jesus' helper! He ran to find his friend Nathanael. Nathanael was sitting under a tree reading the Scriptures, God's Word. Put down the Jesus puppet. Pick up the Nathanael puppet. Quickly move the Philip puppet until it is next to the Nathanael puppet.

Philip said, "Nathanael! I met Him! I met the one the Scriptures tell us about! I met God's Son! His name is Jesus. He is from Nazareth."

Nathanael didn't believe what Philip was saying. But Philip was so excited that Nathanael went with him to meet Jesus. Put both puppets, Nathanael and Philip, in one hand. "Walk" the puppets to meet Jesus, held in your other hand.

Jesus saw Philip and Nathanael coming. He said to Nathanael, "I know you are a man from Israel who always tells the truth."

Nathanael was surprised. He had never met Jesus before. "How do you know me?" Nathanael asked.

Jesus said, "I saw you sitting under the fig tree before Philip found you."

Nathanael knew that what Philip had said about Jesus was true. "Jesus," Nathanael said, "You are the Son of God." So Nathanael became one of Jesus' helpers too.

Set the puppets aside. Review the Bible story with the children. **Jesus found two friends to be His helpers. Who were they? (Philip and Nathanael) Philip and Nathanael were important to Jesus. We are important to Jesus too.**

At this time, have the two groups of children come back together for the puppet presentation, Bible memory activity, and Share and Prayer time.

NOAH'S PARK PUPPETS

We Are Important to God

Prepare for the puppet skit by bringing out your Noah's Park puppet. The older children of the Park Patrol should be ready to begin the puppet presentation just as soon as the Bible stories are both completed. Have the children stand and move to the puppet theater while you play "Somebody Believes" from the CD. Today's puppet presentation is found in the *Puppet Skits Book* on page GP-7. Refer to the *Park Patrol Training Book* for suggestions on how to present a puppet skit.

BIBLE MEMORY

Musical Verse Mix

Help the children learn a Bible verse of your choice (it may be the one the children learned in Sunday school or another one you choose), by participating in the following activity.

Divide the verse into four sections and write each section on a separate piece of colored paper. Be sure to include the reference on one of the cards. Arrange the children in a circle and hand out each paper to different sides of the circle. Mix up the order of the verse before handing it to the children. Have the children pass the papers clockwise around the circle

while you play "Somebody Believes" from the CD. Stop the music after they have had time to pass the papers. The children holding the papers when the music stops move to the middle of the circle and put the words in the right order. Let them read the verse aloud and others in the circle repeat the verse back to them. They return to their places to begin again.

We are important to Jesus. Just like the little girl chose the dirty, tattered doll, God chose us. And as Jesus saw and knew Nathanael, He sees and knows us. No matter where we are or who we are with, Jesus always sees us. He knows all about us, even how many hairs we have on our head! You are important to Jesus, (Personalize the statement with each child's name.). Let's sing praises to Jesus.



SINGING PRAISES TO JESUS

Begin teaching the Unit Song, "Somebody Believes," by playing the CD and having the children listen. Then encourage the children to sing along as you play the song again. You may want to have the words (found on page G-267 of this *Leader's Guide*) of the song projected on a screen if you have children who are confident readers. You may also want to let the children choose favorite Sunday school songs to sing at this time.

SHARE AND PRAYER

Special People Pictures

Supplies: Drawing paper, crayons or markers

Let's talk about people who are important to us. Think about who is important in your life and together let's make a list on the board. Let the children share their suggestions. (*Children may mention family members, friends, teachers, etc.*)

Most of us have some of the same people who are important. That might include our parents, sisters, brothers, and friends. Some of us may have other people who are also very important

to us. They might be teachers, the pastor, our doctor or dentist, etc.

On your piece of paper, you can draw pictures of the people who are important to you. You may draw just a few pictures or you may draw many pictures. Pass out paper and crayons or markers. Then give the children time to draw their pictures. Be sure they write their names on the back.

Let's take time right now to pray for some of the people who are important to us. Let each child choose a partner to pray with or keep the children in one large group and pray sentence prayers to allow as many children as possible to participate. Put the drawings in a separate area in your classroom so the children can pick them up before they leave.



Divide the children into age appropriate groups at this time. Have the preschoolers move to another room or a separate area in your classroom to participate in snacks, crafts, and game time. The early elementary/ elementary children move to tables as well for their snacks and crafts. Have Park Patrol members (previously assigned) go with their groups to help as the children with today's activities.

SNACK SHACK

Hidden Treats

You can have members of the Park Patrol set up the snack for today if you choose to include one. See page GS-8 in the *Snacks and Games Book* for today's snack.

CAMPSITE CAPERS

Getting to Know You (Elementary) Name Trade (Preschool)

When you are ready for today's games, have the Park Patrol gather the children into an open area. The elementary game, "Getting to Know You," is found on page GS-7 in the *Snacks and Games Book*. The preschool game called, "Name Trade" is found on page GS-8 in the *Snacks and Games Book*.

COZY CAVE CRAFTS

Hidden Message (Elementary) Bible Story Puppets (Preschool)

The elementary craft project is called "Hidden Message." Refer to Page GC-7 in the *Craft Book* for the instructions on this project. You will want to reproduce enough copies for the children in this age group prior to the beginning of class. The preschool craft project, "Bible Story Puppets," also needs to be reproduced before class. The patterns and instructions are found on page GC-8 of the *Craft Book*. When the children have completed the craft activity, have them put their paper with their prayer drawings.



CLOSING ACTIVITIES

When the children have completed the crafts, games, and snack, play the unit song, "Somebody Believes," on your CD player while everyone helps with cleanup. When they are finished, gather the children back into one large group for closing time.

Sing the unit theme song, "Somebody Believes," with the CD as a review. **We are important to Jesus. He knows all about us. How do we know that Nathanael was important to Jesus?** (*Jesus knew his name.*) **What did Jesus know about Nathanael?** (*Jesus knew where he was sitting and that Nathanael was a truthful Israelite.*) If you have chosen the memory verse option, review with them the Bible words. Pass out take-home papers and their prayer papers and craft items as they leave your class today.

OVERTIME ACTIVITIES

While waiting for parents to arrive, spend time helping the children become familiar with the Noah's Park characters. Use one or more of the Noah's Park books to do this. You can read to the children or you can let the children gather in small groups of two or three to look at the books together. To purchase Noah's Park books you can call 1-800-323-7543 or visit our web site at www.cookministries.com.

