



SMALL GROUP: WEDNESDAY

BIBLE STORY: Jesus' Parable of the Lost Son (Luke 15:11-32)

MEMORY VERSE: You will fill me with joy when I am with you. Acts: 2:28

KEY QUESTION: Who can celebrate Jesus?

BOTTOM LINE: I can celebrate Jesus!

PLAY TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

LOST SON STORY SCENES

WHAT YOU NEED:

"Lost Son Story Scenes" and "Lost Son Story Stickers" Activity Pages,

WHAT YOU DO:

During the Activity: Give each child a piece of paper and ask them to point to the picture with the dad giving the son money. Give each child a sticker with the money bag to add to the picture. Review this part of the story. Next, have the children point to the picture of the son feeding the pigs. Give each child a pig sticker to add to the page as you review the next part of the story. Then, have the children point to the picture of the dad hugging the son. Give each child a heart sticker to add to that page as you review that part of the story. Finally, ask the children to point to the picture of the dad and son at a party. Give each child a sticker with the party horn to add to their last picture as you review the rest of the story.

After the Activity: Review the Bottom Line.

WHAT YOU SAY:

Before the Activity: "Friends, come find a seat at the table. I love today's Bible story! Jesus told this story because He wanted us to know that God loves us no matter what."

During the Activity: "Your page has several different pictures from our Bible story today. I have a sticker for you to add to each part as we review. The first picture I want you to find is the picture of the dad giving the son money. The son asked his dad for a lot of money so he could leave home. The dad didn't want his son to leave, but he gave him the money anyway. Let's put this sticker on that picture. (Pass out money bag stickers.) The next picture I want you to point to is the picture of the son feeding the pigs. The son had spent all his money and made bad choices, and now he didn't have money to buy food. He was so hungry he thought about eating pig food. Let's



add a pig sticker to this picture. (Pass out the pig stickers.) Now point to the picture of the dad hugging his son. The son decided he would go back home and tell his dad he was sorry for the bad choices he made. While he was walking, his dad saw him, ran to him, and gave him a big hug! The dad was so happy to see his son again. Let's add a heart sticker to this picture. (Pass out the heart stickers.) The last picture is the dad and son at a party. The son told his dad he was so sorry for the bad choices he made. But the dad loved him no matter what. He was SO happy to have his son home that he threw a huge party to celebrate. Let's add a party horn sticker to this picture. (Pass out the party horn stickers.) Great job completing your pictures."

After the Activity: "I'm so glad God loves us no matter what. He loves us so much that He sent Jesus to be our friend forever. We can celebrate Jesus, our forever friend. **Who can celebrate Jesus? I can celebrate Jesus!**"

JOURNAL AND PRAYER

WHAT YOU NEED:

Memory Verse Card from Day One in Bible, journal, and a fun-shaped pen

WHAT YOU DO:

During the Activity: Lead the children to oink like pigs as they walk to the Small Group spot. Talk about today's Bible story, say the memory verse, and write in the journal.

After the Activity: Pray with the children using the list you made in the journal.

WHAT YOU SAY:

Before the Activity:

"It's Small Group time! Let's pretend we are little pigs while we walk to our Small Group spot. What does a pig say? (Pause.) Oink! Oink! That right! So oink this way and follow me! (Oink like a pig as you lead the children to your Small Group spot.) We made it, little pigs! Let's sit down and talk about today's Bible story. One, two, three, sit down with me!"

During the Activity: (Open the Bible and lay it in front of the children.) "In our Bible story today, Jesus told a story about a son who left home, spent all of his money, and got a job feeding pigs. The son was so hungry that he even thought about eating the pigs' food. The son went back home and told his dad he was sorry for making bad choices. Do you remember what the dad did when he saw his son? (Pause.) Yes! The dad was so happy his son was home that he hugged him, kissed him, and threw a party with lots of food! The dad even gave his son a robe, ring, and shoes. Jesus told this story to teach us that God loves us no matter what. We can always talk to God



when we make bad choices, and God will forgive us. God will never, ever, EVER stop loving us! Wow! That is such good news! I'm SO glad we have Jesus to teach us how much God loves us. I want to celebrate Jesus! Yay, Jesus!

"You can celebrate Jesus, too! So when I ask you, '**Who can celebrate Jesus?**' I want you to say, '**I can celebrate Jesus!**' Let me hear you say it! **Who can celebrate Jesus? I can celebrate Jesus!** Yay! (Clap and cheer.) I love celebrating Jesus together.

"Now let's talk about the Bible verse we have been learning. It will help us remember one of the reasons we celebrate Jesus. It says (turn the pages of your bible to the Memory Verse Card), 'You (point up) will fill me with joy (brush flat hands upward twice) when I am with you (fists together with thumbs on top), 'Acts 2:28.(Open hands like a book.)

(Close Bible and lay it down.) "Let's stand up and say those words together with the motions. Just say what I say and do what I do. 'You (point up) will fill me with joy (brush flat hands upward twice) when I am with you (fists together with thumbs on top); Acts 2:28. (Open hands like a book.)

(Repeat the verse with motions a few times.)

"You sound wonderful! Way to go! Now let's sit down so we can write in our prayer journal and talk to God. (Hold journal and fun-shaped pen.) In the story Jesus told, the son told his dad he was sorry for making bad choices. Have you ever told someone you were sorry for something you did? (Pause.) Let's make a list of things we've said we're sorry about and then we can use the list when we pray. (Remember to print so the children can recognize their names and the letters.) Thank you for making this list with me. It's hard to say, 'I'm sorry,' when we make a bad choice, but when we talk to God about it, He will always love us and forgive us. Let's talk to God right now."

After the Activity:

"Would anyone like to pray before I pray? (Give each child who wants to pray the opportunity to do so.) Dear God, sometimes we make bad choices, like when we (read the list the children made). Thank You for sending Jesus to teach us that we can talk to You about everything, and You will always love and forgive us. That is good news worth celebrating! You're the best, God. In Jesus' name, amen."