

May 17, 2026

John's Ministry

Story:

★ Introduction & Story:

In the last couple of weeks, we have talked about Paul and Peter. These are two of the men that helped to spread the Gospel (the Good News of Jesus) to the world after Jesus ascended (went back to Heaven). Paul mostly took the Gospel to Gentiles (people who were not Jewish or related to Abraham) and Peter mostly took the Good News to the Jews (people related to Abraham).

Today we are going to talk about John. Not John the Baptist who preached to people about the coming of Jesus, the Messiah, but John the Disciple.

Remember that John was one of the first disciples that Jesus chose. John and his brother James were fishermen. They were business partners with Andrew and Simon Peter (whom we call Peter.) They all left their fishing boats and their fishing business to follow Jesus. Jesus promised them that He would make them “fishers of men.” John was one of the disciples that was especially close to Jesus. He wrote the Gospel of John in which he refers to himself as “the one whom Jesus loved.” In that Gospel, he wrote down the experiences he had with Jesus. He said that he wrote these things down so that we would believe that Jesus is the Christ and that we would have life in His name. (John 20:31). He also wrote the book of First, Second, and Third John and the book of Revelation.

When John first became a disciple, he had much to learn from Jesus about loving others. John and his brother James were very passionate and sometimes used their desire to serve Jesus in the wrong way. They were sometimes pushy and loud. Jesus even nicknamed them “the sons of thunder” because of the way that they would charge ahead without thinking. But as John spent time with Jesus, he came to understand that humility and love were important parts of being a servant of Jesus and sharing the gospel of Jesus with others.

When Jesus was dying on the cross, he asked John to look after his mother. From that time on, John took care of her like she was his own mother. (John 19:25-27) John was courageous and bold for Jesus, but he did so in love. In his short letters, First, Second and Third John he spoke a lot about knowing the truth of who Jesus was – and that Jesus was truly fully man and fully God. He also talks a lot about love and how important it is to love one another in the way that Jesus loved us. His desire was to speak the truth in love to people and then watch them grow in their faith.

When John was old, he was exiled to the island of Patmos. He was probably sent there by the emperor of Rome because he would not bow down and worship the emperor but preached about Jesus and his love for us.

While he was on the island of Patmos, he had a vision about what heaven would be like. He wrote everything down that he saw. The writing became the book of Revelation. He wrote about the things that were revealed to him. It is Revelation - not Revelations - because it is a Revelation of Jesus Christ. This is the only book of prophecy in the New Testament. This means the book tells us of Jesus Christ and what is to come at the end.

John lived to be a very old man. He talked to people about Jesus every chance he got.

He loved Jesus very much and wanted others to love him, too.

★ **Connection to God's Overall Story/Plan:**

***God's Plan:** The book of John begins with talking about Jesus being there in the beginning when the heavens and earth were created. Then John moves to describe Jesus' life. First, Second, and Third John tell us to be faithful to Jesus. Revelation tells us what Jesus is going to do at the end of time. Through all of these books, John is telling us that Jesus is God and fully man, the Savior, and the one who gives eternal life.

***Historical Evidence:** There are a lot of Johns in the time of Jesus and the New Testament. John is a true person who lived and we know this because he is mentioned by others in the Bible (like Paul) and by others who did not write the

Bible. We believe that John the Disciple wrote these books because the writing styles are the same.

***Theological:**

- **Jesus shows us who God is** — Jesus is God’s Son, and when we learn about Jesus, we learn what God is like: loving, true, powerful, and full of life.
- **Love God and love others** — Real faith means trusting Jesus, obeying Him, telling the truth, and showing love through kindness, forgiveness, and helping people.
- **Stay with Jesus because He wins** — Even when life is hard, we can keep following Jesus, because He is stronger than evil, He is always with us, and one day He will make everything new.

Follow Up:

- ★ **Retell:** Have kids share what they recall from the story. Fill in any major holes they missed.
- ★ **Examine:**
 - Comprehension Questions:
 - Why do you think that John referred to himself as the “one that Jesus loved?”
 - What were two topics that were very important to John? (Truth and love.)
 - John may have initially thought that being exiled to Patmos was a bad thing. But God gave him the book of Revelation there. Do you think that God can turn difficult things into something good?
 - Ask, “What do we learn about God from this story? What does He do?”
 - God has a plan and it isn’t a plan that He made up as time went on. God’s plan has so many connections from the past to the new that only God could carry it out. The God at the beginning of the world is the God at the end of time. God uses people to share who He is.
 - Ask, “What do we learn about humans from this story? What are humans doing?”

- We can choose to be loving, faithful, and obedient when times are hard. We can let Jesus change our ways from sinful to obedient.

★ **Application:** Ask, “What is Jesus asking us to do through this story? Why did God include this in the Bible?”

- Jesus is telling us to share the Bible with others. Jesus is telling us to be obedient and stay true to what we believe about Him.

★ **Prayer**

Memory Verse Practice:

★ **Verse:** Dear friends, let us love one another, because love is from God, and everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. -- 1 John 4:7

★ **Bonus:** John 3:16 – For God loved the world in this way: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.

Sticky Activities:

- ★ Worksheets & coloring pages
- ★ Crafts
- ★ **Sensory:**

Visual

- **“John the Beloved” Timeline Walk:** Create a simple visual timeline from John as a fisherman → disciple → witness of the resurrection → exile on Patmos → writer of Revelation.
- **Light vs. Darkness Display:** Show images of light vs. dark scenes while connecting John’s themes (“Jesus is the Light of the World”).

Smell

- **Sea Air / Fishing Nets:** Bring in a “sea breeze” scent or saltwater smell to connect to John’s early life as a fisherman.
 - **Patmos Island Scents:** Use earthy or outdoorsy scents (like cedar or herbs) to represent John writing Revelation in exile.
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Touch

- **Fishing Net Texture:** Let kids feel rope or netting while talking about John leaving his fishing life to follow Jesus.
 - **Stone Writing Surface:** Let them touch smooth stones to represent John writing or receiving Revelation on Patmos.
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Movement

- **“Follow Jesus” Call Game:** One child calls “Follow me!” like Jesus did with John, and others follow quickly.
 - **Boats to Patmos Role Play:** Act out moving from a fishing boat (John’s early life) to exile on an island (Patmos).
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Sound

- **“Thunder Voice of Revelation” Echo Game:** Whisper phrases like “Jesus is coming!” and compare soft vs. loud prophetic tones from Revelation imagery.
 - **Love One Another Chant:** Practice John’s repeated teaching from 1 John: “Love one another!”
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Crafts

- **Eagle Symbol Craft:** John is symbolized by the eagle—kids can make an eagle representing “high view of Jesus.”

- **Light Candle Craft:** Make paper or battery candle art with “Jesus is the Light” written on it.
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Taste

- **Fish Snack:** Simple fish crackers or goldfish to connect to John’s fishing background.
- **Honey or Sweet Fruit:** Taste something sweet while discussing John’s message that God’s Word is sweet and life-giving.

1. “Light That Overcomes Darkness” (John’s Gospel Theme)

Object Lesson:

- A dark box or dim room + a flashlight or small lamp

How it works:

1. Show the room/box in darkness.
2. Ask kids what it’s like (scary, hard to see, confusing).
3. Turn on a **small flashlight**.
4. Let kids notice how even a small light changes everything.

Teaching connection:

- John wrote: “*The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it*” (John 1:5).
- Jesus is the Light John followed and wrote about.
- Even a small light wins over darkness.

Big takeaway: Following Jesus brings light into dark places.

2. “Love in Action Backpack” (1-3 John Theme)

Object Lesson:

- A backpack filled with heavy items (books, rocks, etc.)
- A few simple “love actions” cards (helping, sharing, encouraging)

How it works:

1. Have a child try to carry the heavy backpack alone.
2. Ask: “Does this feel easy or hard?”
3. Explain: “Living without love feels heavy and hard.”
4. Remove items one by one and replace them with “love actions” (e.g., forgive, help, encourage).
5. As the weight is removed, it becomes easier.

Teaching connection:

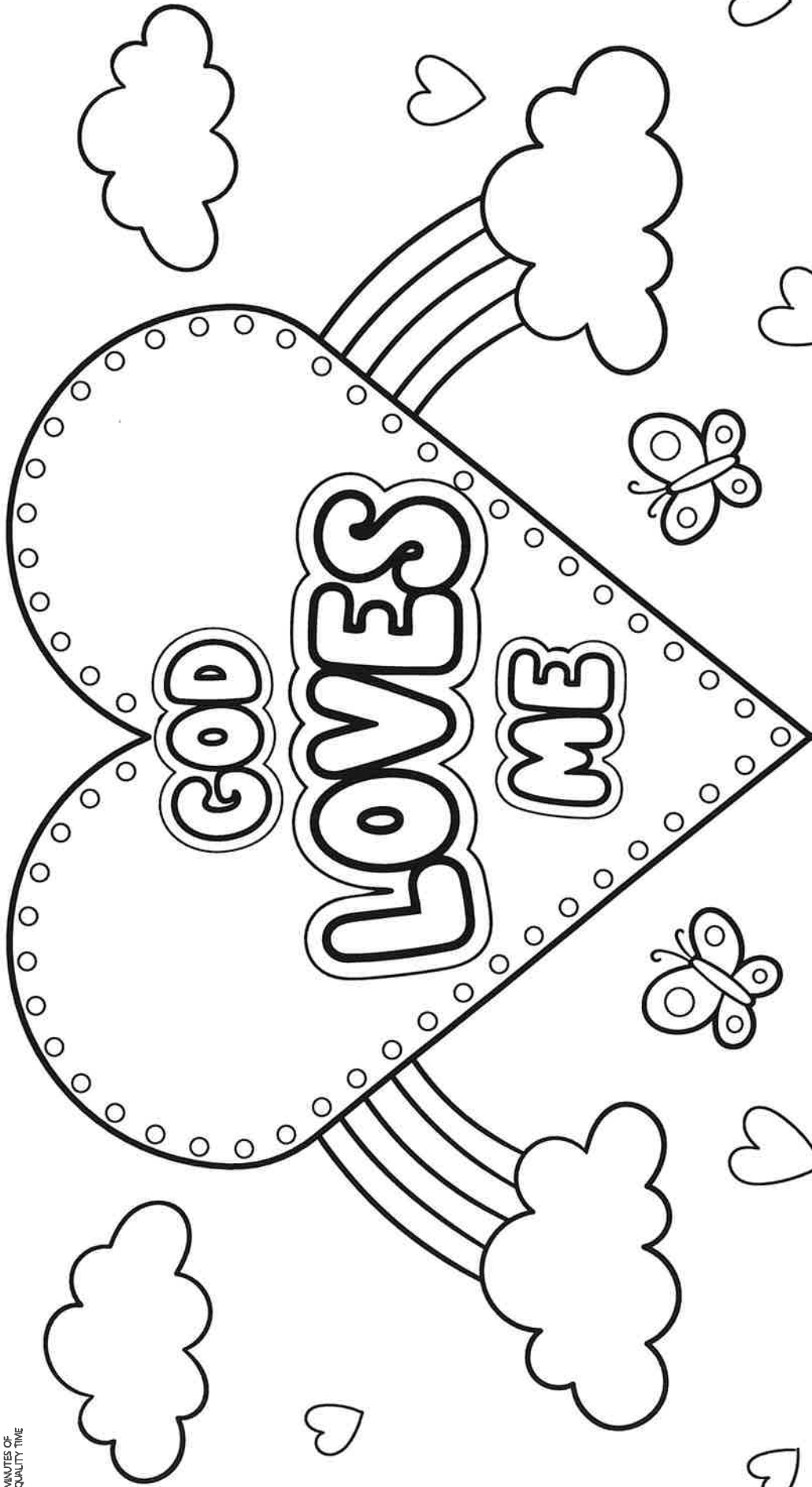
- John wrote: “*Let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth*” (1 John 3:18).
- Love isn’t just a feeling—it changes how we live.

Big takeaway: God’s love makes life lighter when we live it out.

Crafts:

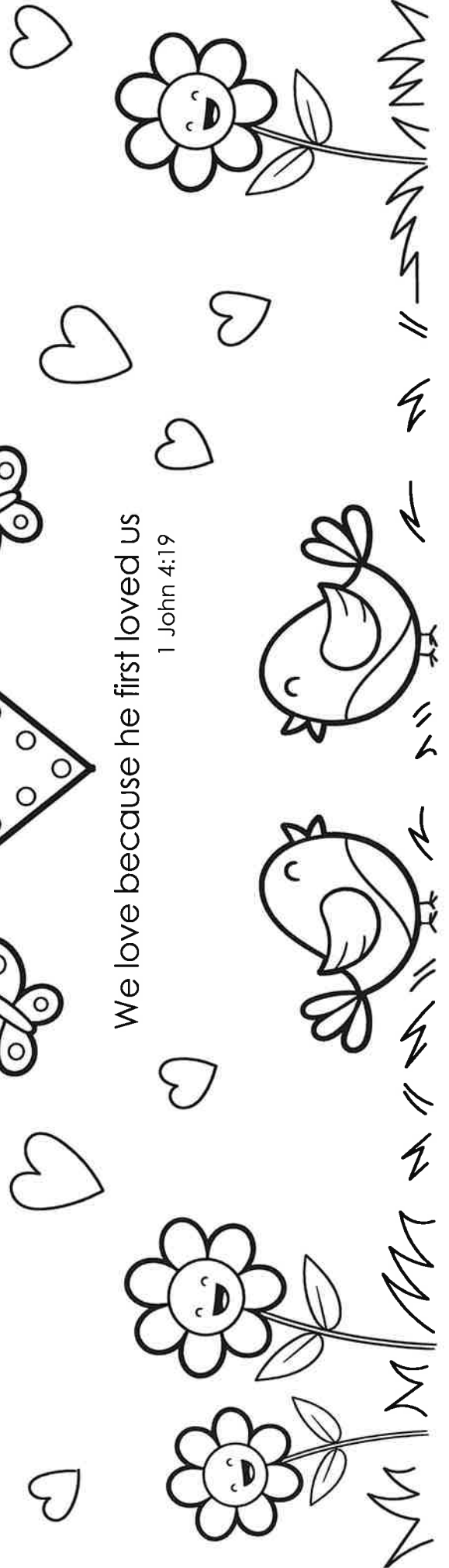


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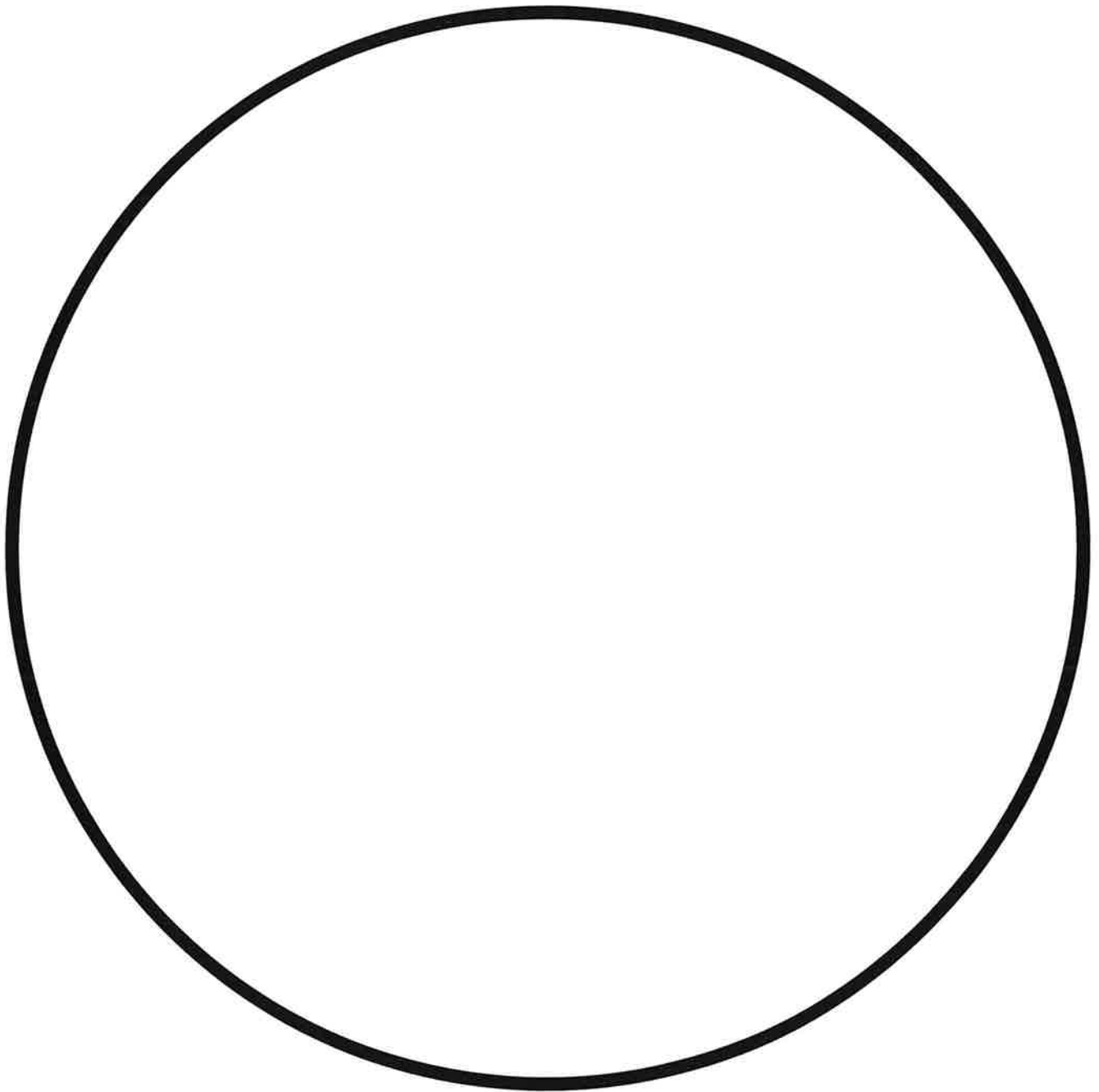


We love because he first loved us

1 John 4:19



For God loved the world in this way:



He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. John 3:16 CSB

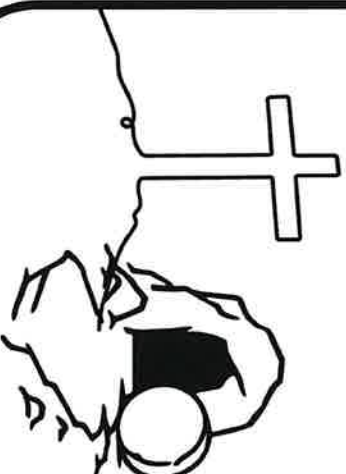
Three Bible

Creation



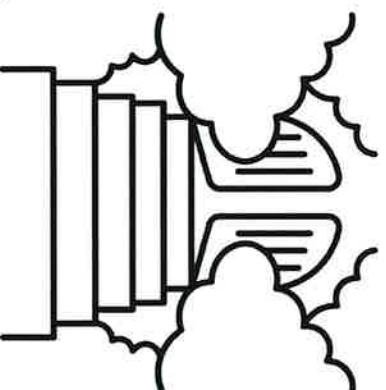
God created everything and it was good.

Savior

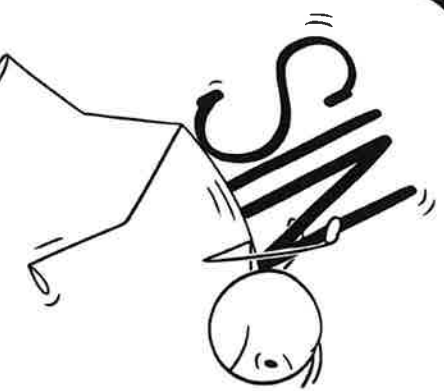


Jesus - the Son of God - came to live a perfect life as a fully man and fully God. He died in our place so we can be with God again.

Eternal Life



If we choose to follow God, we will be with God forever in Heaven. He is always with us even now - in the good times and the hard times.



We all sin. Sin is anything we think, say, or do that displeases God. We are separated from God and can never earn our way back.

Memory Verse:

**Dear friends, let us love
one another, because
love is from God, and
everyone who loves has
been born of God and
knows God. --1 John 4:7**

Memory Verse:

**For God loved the world in
this way: He gave his one
and only Son, so that
everyone who believes in
him will not perish but have
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***Kids that recite the memory verse**

to the check in desk person next week earn a prize ☺

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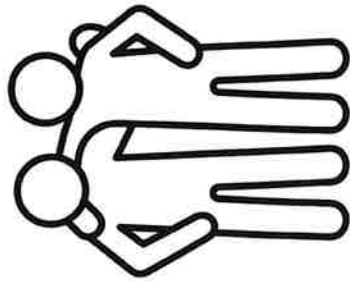
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- **May 24th - July 5th - Birth to Preschool programming only**
 - Kids that have finished Kindergarten through 5th grade will sit with their families during the service. We will have crayons and clipboards with sermon-based worship packets available. We view this as a discipleship opportunity. During this time, consider this practice for your kids to sit through a service, notice the order of the service, hear preaching, and observe communion.
 - Kids entering kindergarten will remain in the Rainbow Preschool room through July 5th. They will be promoted to the Fireweed Kindergarten classroom on July 12th.
- **July 12th - Resume Birth-5th grade full programming**
 - Kids will be promoted to the next grade on this Sunday. So incoming kindergartners will move to Fireweed and incoming second graders will move to Trees (which is the grade that we start taking the kids downstairs for lessons on Sunday morning).
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Fill in the Blanks

Dear _____, let us _____
one another, because _____ is
from _____, and everyone who
_____ has been born of _____
and _____ God. --1 John 4:7

Draw or write how you can love
others like God loves them.



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Dear _____, let us _____
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