

Lesson Plan

September 13th, 2026

This Month's Truth: I Am Valued

Bible Story: The Story of the Lost Son (Luke 15:11-24; 19:10)

Theme 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 eternal life." (John 3:16)

Teachers rally with your team a few minutes before kids start to arrive: Rally is a pre-service time for you to be expectant and equipped before the kids start arriving. Go over the lesson and any ideas for the day. Pray over your space and for the kids that will be coming that they will be connected to the person of Jesus.

Share: This week, we are teaching the story of the lost son from Luke 15. After the son demanded and wasted his inheritance, his father watched and waited for him—and celebrated when the son came home. (Read Luke 15:20.) In the same way, God seeks after us and celebrates when we trust in Jesus. Kids can know that God sees them, seeks them out, and celebrates them because they are valuable to Him.

Pray: Lead the group in prayer, asking God to seek those who are far from Him, helping to trust and follow Him.

Pre Service

Arrival time, please use this time to build relationships with kids and encourage them to build relationships with one another.

Service

What To Do:

- **Teacher** Start 5-minute countdown **5 minutes prior to service start time.**

Teacher Opener: Hey, everyone! My name is ____, and it is so great to be with you today! This month, our theme is VIP! VIP means "Very Important Person!" Turn to your neighbor and say, "You are a VIP!" (You are a VIP!) God says that we are all VIPs to Him! We are so important to

God, and we are going to be learning more about that today. Isn't that amazing? Let me hear you say, "That is amazing!" (That is amazing!)

Lost Son Roundup

Leader Prep: Hide the images of the lost son in various spots around the room, ensuring that kids are able to reach them. Tape the last page of the printable with the father on the bucket. Set the bucket in the center of the room. There will be a bucket per team.

1. Split the class into different teams depending on your class size.
2. Give each team their own bucket with the father on each bucket.
3. Direct teams to take the bucket and find a "lost son," placing the image in the bucket with the father.
4. The teams will only have one minute to see how many images they can find.
5. Whoever finds the most images wins.

What To Do: Hey, team! We are going to play a game called "Lost Son Roundup!" What is it called? (Lost Son Roundup!) That's right! In our Bible story today we are going to learn about a father and a son. In the story the father sees his son coming back home to him when he was still far away. For our game, you won't be able to see the lost son. Say, "We won't?" (We won't?) You won't because I have hidden lots of pictures of the lost son from our Bible story throughout the room, and you need to find them! One team at a time, you will take the bucket with the picture of the father from our Bible story and seek after the lost son. When you find one, put it in the bucket and keep searching for more. You will only have one minute to see how many images of the lost son your team can find. If you are ready to start seeking, say, "I am ready!" (I am ready!)

Keep It Going: Play again, inviting kids to hide the pictures.

Loud And Clear: Great job, VIPs! You went seeking for the lost son. We are going to learn that the father knew his son was valuable, and God knows that we are valuable! Point to yourself and say, "I am valued!" (I am valued!) God loves you so much. God says you are valuable not because of anything you have done, but because you belong to Him! Let me hear you say, God seeks me! (God seeks me!)

Transition Script to go into the Intro Video: Would you rather have popcorn or candy when you are watching a movie? Let me hear your choice in 3-2-1! (Allow response.) My favorite movie treat is _____. We actually get to watch a video about some "movie stars," and snacks will play a

very important part for these very important people. Get our video started by saying, “VIP!” (VIP!)

Play Intro Video

What You Say: Let me hear you say, “Red mission accomplished!” (Red mission accomplished!) Awesome! Maxwell was really seeking that special popcorn bucket, and it was worth celebrating when he found it! Today, we get to learn that God seeks after us and celebrates when we have a relationship with Him. Point to yourself and say, “God seeks me!” (God seeks me!)

Worship

What You Say: Let’s all come to the front and worship together this morning!

What To Do:

- Turn lights off
- 2 songs of worship
- **Teachers and Small Group Leaders worship with the kids, modeling what it looks like to give God our praise. Stand in the front of the room, or next to the kids- but not in the back.**
- Dismiss the kids back to their seats when the songs are over

What To Do:

- Have the kids **open up** a physical Bible and find the Bible story for that day.
- Use the Bibles provided in the classroom if a kid does not have their own Bible with them.

Transition Script to go into the Bible Story Video: (Open the Bible to Luke 15:11-24; 19:10.) We get to hear a story from the Bible. The Bible is God’s true message to us about Himself. The Bible has two parts that are filled with different books. The first part of the Bible is called the Old Testament, and the second part is called the New Testament. Today’s Bible story comes from a book called Luke, in the New Testament. Our story today is called “The Story of the Lost Son.” This story teaches us that God seeks us, no matter what! We’re going to hear from a fashion designer named Quinn. Let me hear you say, “God seeks me!” (God seeks me!)

Play Bible Story Video

Questions to consider asking after the video:

- What is something that you learned about God from the video?
- What is something that you learned about people?
- What can you take away from the video?
 - How can you apply the lesson from today into your life?

Making The Connection Script: This Bible story taught that God seeks us, even when we make wrong choices. Jesus told a story about a son who made some wrong choices. The son took his share of the family's money and left home, thinking he could do whatever he wanted. But things did not go well for him. He ended up in a terrible situation, far from home, feeling lonely and afraid. And the worst part was that he felt like he did not deserve his father's love or forgiveness.

But thankfully, the story did not end there! Something amazing happened when the son finally returned home. When he was still far away, his father saw him coming. Instead of being angry, his father ran to him, hugged him, and celebrated that he was home. The father even threw a party! Everything that the son had done wrong did not change his father's love. Say, "That is incredible!" (That is incredible!)

Even when it seems like you are far from God, you can know that God is always seeking you. He came on purpose when you needed Him, providing the way to receive forgiveness and experience His love. Point at yourself and say, "God seeks me!" (God seeks me!) Give a thumbs-up to your neighbor and say, "God seeks you!" (God seeks you!) Just like the father ran to his son, God reaches out to each of us. When we respond by looking to God for forgiveness, we get to be a part of His family forever.

Use the Three Circle Graphics on the Playlist

(Circle 2) We may wonder why the son in the story chose to take his family's money, run away, and make so many wrong choices. Maybe he thought he would be happy if he just did whatever he wanted. This happened because the son's view of the world and himself was broken, and ours is broken too. Brokenness in the world is a result of sin, which is when we choose to do what we think is best instead of following what God says is best. The son did what he wanted to do, even though it was wrong. We all do the same sometimes, which means we all sin.

Just like the son's sin broke his relationship with his father, sin breaks our relationship with God. The son tried to fix his problem on his own, but he could not. No matter how hard we try, we

also cannot fix our brokenness by ourselves. Our wrong choices, or sin, deserve punishment. But just like the father in this story, God seeks after us and loves us so much that He made the way for us to be rescued from the punishment our sin deserves.

(Circle 3) God sent His only Son, Jesus, to take the punishment for sin that we deserved. Jesus lived a perfect life on earth—He never sinned! Jesus died on a cross to take the punishment we deserved for sin, but He did not stay dead. On the third day, He came back to life, showing that He is stronger than sin and death.

The way the father felt toward his lost son is exactly how God feels about you and me. Just like the father in this story loved and forgave his son, God loves and forgives us when we respond to Him by asking for forgiveness. He provided the way for us to have a relationship with Him before we were ever even born! We can know that God values us because He made the way for us to have a relationship with Him, even after we made wrong choices that separated us from Him. God sent Jesus for us, not because of anything we have done and not because we earned it, but simply because He loves us. That love never runs out, and it never changes. God values you so much! Say, “I am valued!” (I am valued!)

(Circle 1) Jesus promised that He would come back and make all things new. One day, there will be no more sin, no more death, and no more brokenness. When that happens, everyone who trusts in Jesus will be made new too! When you follow Jesus and make Him the King of your life, you get to enjoy a perfect relationship with God forever, just like He designed it in the very beginning.

When you admit to God that you are a sinner and ask Him to forgive you, He will! You can repent, or turn away, from your sin and follow Jesus. This means that you are giving over your identity and your plans to God and letting Him be the good King in charge of your life. Turning from sin to follow Jesus is the only way to have a relationship with God.

We do not have to earn God’s love, and we do not have to wait until we feel worthy of His love. Whenever you feel sad, lonely, or like you are not important, you can remember the story of the lost son. Remember the father seeking his son, hugging him, and celebrating him. Remember that God offered the same forgiveness for you when He sent Jesus. That love and forgiveness are available right now, no matter what. Say, “God seeks me!” (God seeks me!)

If you have questions about what it means to follow Jesus or want to respond to God’s invitation to have a relationship with Him, tell someone! You can talk to me or a Small Group Leader, and we would love to share with you about how to be a part of God’s forever family.

Theme Verse Review:

Theme Verse Motions:

For God loved the world in this way: (Bring both arms up, palms facing in, then close fists and bring arms to cross in front of your chest—right over left.)

He gave his one and only Son, (Holding your right pointer finger up to make a “one,” bring your arm in toward your right shoulder, then extend your arm out in front of you.)

so that everyone who believes in him (Bring both hands in front of you with palms up, right over left, and move them outward to the sides.)

will not perish but have eternal life. (Make an X with your arms in front of you, right over left, then uncross and bring both arms up, palms facing in.)

John 3:16 (Hold hands out like a book.)

What You Say: We are going to learn a Bible verse that shows how God seeks us. Sin may separate us from God, but God seeks after us and makes the way for us to have a forever relationship with Him. Let’s hear from our VIP movie star, Maxwell Sterling, as we learn our Theme verse together!

Play Theme Verse Video

What You Say: It is such good news that God values us and has made the way for us to have eternal life! Eternal life means living forever with God, which can only happen because Jesus rescued us from the punishment our sin deserves. God forgives us when we respond to Him by asking for forgiveness, turning from sin, and trusting in Jesus. When we do respond, He does not remember or punish us for the wrong things we have done. Say, “God seeks me!” (God seeks me!)

Large Group Closing:

What You Say: Isn’t it incredible that God can forgive us and made the way for us to have a relationship with Him? Say, “So incredible!” (So incredible!) He made the way for this relationship before we were born, and He did this even when we did not deserve it. Ask, “Why?” (Why?) Because God values us and seeks us! Say, “God seeks me!” (God seeks me!) Whenever you do not feel like you are valuable, you can ask God to remind you of today’s Bible

story. Remember that God loves you so much that He seeks after you and invites you into His family. Let's pray and talk with the God in 3-2-1.

Closing Prayer: God, thank You for loving us and for sending Your only Son, Jesus, so that we can have a forever relationship with You. Thank You for loving us so much and seeking after us. Whenever we wonder about our value and worth, remind us that You love us, You seek us, and You want a relationship with us. Help us to trust You, follow You, and know You. Amen.

Transition to Small Group Time: Split the kids into small groups. This can be done either by age, grade, or gender.

Small Group Time:

Option #1: Connection Questions

What To Do: Now that we know about how God seeks us, let's dive a little deeper and discover more!

1. If you could be a famous person for the day and do anything you wanted, what is one thing you would do? (Allow kids to share responses and share your own.)
2. The Bible tells us that we are valued by God, and He seeks after us! Let's open our Bibles to **Luke 15:20** and read about it together. (Invite kids to open their Bibles. Read the verse aloud or invite a kid who volunteers to read the verse aloud. Be sure to have Bibles available for kids who need one. Help kids find the verse so everyone can follow along together.) Jesus told a story about a father who ran to his son when he was still far away. The father did this even though his son made many wrong choices. That is how God treats us! God values us so much that He seeks us even when we are stuck in our sin. How can knowing that God seeks you help when you are feeling unimportant or wondering if you are valuable? (Allow responses and share your own.)
3. Jesus told this story about the lost son to show us what God is like. The Bible says that all of us have sinned. That sin separates us from God, like the lost son in the story was separated from his father. But God loves us so much that He sent His only Son, Jesus, to rescue us from our sin and make the way for us to have a relationship with Him. How is God like the father in this story? (God seeks us and forgives us.)
4. When would it be helpful for you this week to remember that God seeks you? What is something you learned today? Is there anything you have questions about? (Allow kids to answer and share your own answer.)

Option #2: The Prodigal Son Returns Home

What To Do: Today we are making a picture to help us remember our Bible story about the prodigal son returning home to his father. This Bible story will remind you that each one of you is valuable to God. You are valuable, loved, and so important! Say, "I am valued!" (I am valued!)

We're going to start by coloring our picture of the son and the father picture.

Now you can cut out the father and the picture of the son. You are going to fold up on the father image on the first line then fold down on the second line. We are going to take a popsicle stick and put it in between the folded parts and glue/tape it on. (Allow time.)

Now we are going to slice/cut across the dotted line on the son picture. We are not going to cut the whole paper across. Just enough to make a hole in the middle of the paper.

Finally, you can put the father through the hole and now you can tell our Bible story of the father running from his house to the son when he returned home.

Loud And Clear: Your pictures look amazing ! The father in our Bible story celebrated his son coming home because he loved him deeply. The pictures you made are a reminder of the story and that God values you in the same way! When you look at this picture, remember that you are valuable to God, and nothing can change how much He loves you and how much He will forgive you. He seeks you and invites you into a forever relationship with Him. You are valuable to God! Say, "I am valued!" (I am valued!)

Option #3: Activity Page

What To Do: This activity page helps us remember some big things we have learned about today. As you color and work on activities, talk to a friend about some of your favorite parts of our time together.

Leader Tip: Use this to get to know the kids better. Ask them what they remember about the Bible story or remind them that God does not value us because of our achievements. He seeks and values us because we belong to Him!

Loud And Clear: Like the father ran to welcome his lost son home, God seeks us and celebrates when we respond to Him by turning from sin to follow Him. We do not have to earn His love! He

gives it freely because we are valuable to Him. If you have questions about what it means to follow Jesus or be welcomed into God's family, I would love to talk with you. Let me hear you say, "God seeks me!" (God seeks me!)

Close out in prayer:

What To Do:

- Ask for any specific prayer requests
- Pray with the group
- Lead the group in the prayer below.

What You Say: God, thank You for valuing us so much. Thank You for sending Jesus to take the punishment for our sins. Thank You for seeking us, loving us, and forgiving us, like the father sought after and welcomed his son in today's Bible story. Help us to trust You when we feel unsure, lonely, or like we do not matter. Give us hearts that trust Your love and want to follow You. Amen.

Dismissal:

Leader Tip: Work with your team to dismiss the kids in a fun, manageable, and safe way. As kids leave, make sure they have all of the crafts and papers. Share with the person picking them up something positive you observed today. Invite them back next week.