

Good News for Outsiders

Luke 18:15-17

# Jesus Welcomes Children

Bible Point

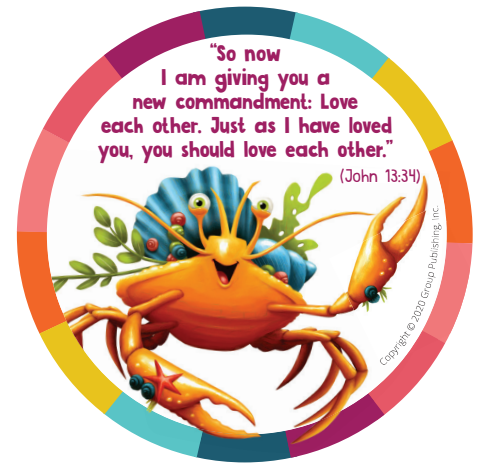
**Jesus loves everyone...and pays attention to us.**

**Purpose**

Let's face it; even as adults, we can run into cliques: at work, in the neighborhood, even at church—people who make us feel unwanted and like outsiders. It's not a pleasant feeling.

But it's even worse for kids. Friendships change by the day or even by the hour in their world. And they don't have the benefit of years of experience to help them remember that Jesus is always with them and always loving them.

Use this lesson to help kids understand that no matter what's happening in their lives, Jesus is always with them, always paying attention, and always loving them—and will never leave them.



**Prayer**

God, there are kids in my group who are feeling left out, isolated, or ignored. They may not identify themselves as such, but they're there. And they're hurting. Please lead me into conversation and relationship with those kids. You alone know their needs. Please love them through me. In Jesus' name, amen.

**Prep**

Opening Options	Sing & Play	Bible Discovery & Friendship Finale	Apply-It Options
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Option Cards*</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Pipe Cleaner People</i>: chenille wires, child-safe scissors</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Paper Plate Emojis</i>: paper plates, construction paper, child-safe scissors, yarn, markers, tape, glue sticks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> countdown video*</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Buddy Video</i> DVD*</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Music Video</i> DVD*</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Decker Bible Memory Buddy poster*</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> media player</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Bible (bookmark John 13:34)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> "Jesus Welcomes Children" Bible Story poster*</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Decker Bible Memory Buddy stickers* (1 per child)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Take-It-Home Flyers* (Unit 3, Week 3) (1 per child)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Bible (bookmark Luke 18:15-17)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Explore More</i>: Bibles, construction paper, pencils, child-safe scissors, glue sticks, tape, markers</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Game</i>: markers</li> </ul>

\* in your **Simply Loved Kit**

# Opening Options

Set up one—or both—of these intro activities to start your time together. Each activity connects kids to the Bible Point and to each other. Cut apart the Option Cards, and place one by each activity you choose. Crew Guides will follow the directions and build friendships with kids as they make discoveries together!



## Pipe Cleaner People

### Supplies

- chenille wires, child-safe scissors

Create chenille wire people; make some small like kids and one bigger like an adult. Have the “kids” interact with the “adult.”

In today's Bible story, Jesus welcomes a group of kids.

? Who do you feel welcomed by? Why?

? Where do you most feel welcome?

It feels good to be welcomed. We're always welcomed by Jesus because **Jesus loves everyone.**

## Paper Plate Emojis

### Supplies

- paper plates, construction paper, child-safe scissors, yarn, markers, tape, glue sticks

Make emoji faces on paper plates.

? Tell about a time you felt happy or excited.

? Tell about a time you felt sad or disappointed.

When we feel happy, sad, disappointed, or excited, Jesus loves us. Our loving faces can show people that **Jesus loves everyone!**

# Opening

Now's a great time for Opening Options. Choose one—or both—to introduce today's Bible discoveries.



countdown video (1 minute)

Help kids transition, clean up the activities, and sit with Connect Crews. A Connect Crew is a small group of kids with one Crew Guide.

## Sing & Play

Welcome, friends! It's great to see you! Let's have some fun together. We'll start with a song!



"To God Be the Glory" music video

### Bible Point

We're going to have a blast exploring how **Jesus loves everyone**. That's our Bible Point today, so every time you hear the words "**Jesus loves everyone**," I want you to respond in a certain way. Do what I do!

- Cross hands over your heart and say, "Thank you, Jesus!"
- Repeat several times.

Repetition cements learning, so be sure to say today's Bible Point A LOT. Have fun with it! Kids will love listening for it and responding with "Thank you, Jesus!"

I'm so glad that **Jesus loves everyone**. (*Thank you, Jesus!*) Let's have a little fun celebrating his love with another song.

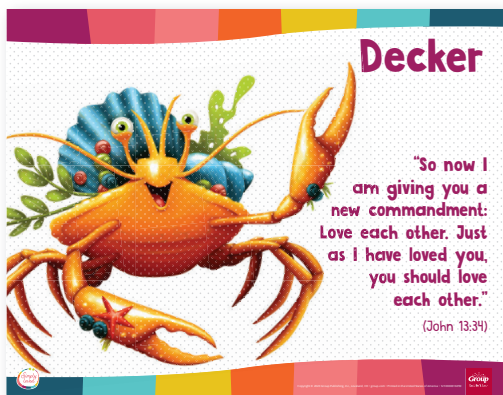


"Let's Get a Little Crazy" music video



### Supplies

- Bible
- media player
- *Buddy Video* DVD
  - Decker Bible Memory Buddy video (Week 3)
- *Music Video* DVD
  - "To God Be the Glory" music video
  - "Let's Get a Little Crazy" music video
  - "One Thing Remains (Your Love Never Fails)" music video
- Decker Bible Memory Buddy poster



## Bible Memory Buddy & Verse

Decker the decorator crab is our Bible Memory Buddy. How much do you know about decorator crabs? Let's find out with a This-or-That Challenge! You'll hear two fun facts about crabs. It's up to you to decide which is true—this fact or that!

- ❓ **Do decorator crabs attach starfish or sea sponges to their shells?**
- Have everyone crab walk their hands in the air to vote for *this* (starfish) or crab walk their hands on the floor to vote for *that* (sea sponges).
- Make a drumroll sound by patting your thighs or the floor.
- Dramatically give the answer: **They attach cool creations like sea sponges to their shells!**
- Watch the Decker Bible Memory Buddy video.



**Decker Bible Memory Buddy video (Week 3)**



Show the Bible. **The Bible is God's true story of love! It's a book that's been helping people grow closer to God for thousands of years—and it can help us today! Our Bible Memory Verse is John 13:34. Let's say the verse together. I'll say a line, and then you repeat after me.**

**"So now I am giving you a new commandment:** *(hold hands out like a tray)*  
**Love each other.** *(give a friend's shoulder a squeeze)*  
**Just as I** *(point up)*  
**have loved you,** *(point forward)*  
**you should love each other."** *(give another friend's shoulder a squeeze)*  
 (John 13:34)

I love that God's Word helps us know how to live and love! And I'm so glad to know that **Jesus loves everyone.** *(Thank you, Jesus!)* His love will never give up on us. Let's celebrate with a song!



**"One Thing Remains (Your Love Never Fails)" music video**

# Bible Discovery

## Circle Up & Connect

Let's circle up and spend a little time just getting to know each other in smaller groups called **Connect Crews**.

- Have kids form Connect Crews with one helper—or Crew Guide—per group.
  - Invite kids to sit in knee-to-knee circles with their Connect Crews.
  - Have kids give their Crew Guides and each other backhand high-fives.
  - Have kids take turns saying their names and answering this question. Crew Guides go first.
- ❓ **Who's the most welcoming person you know? Why?**

## Experience the Bible Story

**I need your help describing something that happened in the Bible. I'm going to put you in two groups.** Select at least two kids, and place your hands on their shoulders.

**You're one group, and you'll be at the front of the room facing me. Everyone else is the other group. You'll sit toward the back of the room.** Position the second group at the back of the room so kids are facing front, then return to the front of the room. **Simple so far, right?**

**The group in the back will play the part of little kids who are maybe a year or two old. You can walk, but you sort of toddle around like you're about to fall down. Let's see you toddle.** Pause.

**And you're still sucking your thumb. Let's see a little thumb-sucking action.** Pause. **Perfect. You're great little kids! Keeping acting out what I say along the way.**

**Imagine you're with your parents, standing in a crowd that's listening to someone really important: Jesus. Stay there for now.**

To the first group: **The rest of you are Jesus' disciples—his closest friends. And I'll play the part of Jesus. You disciples have been with me all day, and you're tired of people interrupting me...and that happens a lot. When I come to a town, lots of people want to be with me.**

**There are sick people who want to be healed, people with problems who want my help, and always a huge crowd that wants to hear what I say.**

**So sometimes you disciples act like you're my bodyguards. Stand like you're bodyguards keeping people away from me.** Pause. **You want to keep people from interrupting me. At least, *unimportant* people—like those kids back there. Look at them—still sucking their thumbs.** Pause. **And they're waving at us, too.** Pause. **And now what are they doing? They're jumping up and down!** Pause.

### Supplies


- Bible
- "Jesus Welcomes Children" Bible Story poster

We call helpers Crew Guides. If you lead a small class, you can be the Crew Guide. Simply circle up with the kids. If you have helpers, form smaller groups so each child can be known—and so kids can befriend your helpers, too!




You disciples, turn around and face the back of the room. Keep an eye on those kids—they might wander up here and distract me. Let me know if they come toddling in this direction.

Here's what the Bible says happened on one particular day.

 Read aloud Luke 18:15.

Uh-oh. Here come those kids and their parents. They're walking toward us. Pause. Jesus may not see that as a problem, but you disciples do. So lock elbows to form a wall to keep those kids away. Pause. The Bible says the disciples scolded the parents for bothering Jesus. Wave your fingers at those parents, disciples. Pause.

The Bible says when Jesus saw what was happening, he was upset with his friends. Take a look at this. Show the Bible Story poster. And listen to what Jesus said.




 Read aloud Luke 18:16-17.

You heard it! Better let the kids through, disciples. Pause as kids move toward you, and gently pat the “kids” on their heads.

Thank you, actors! Everyone take a seat!



## The Heart of the Matter

Jesus' disciples wanted to keep the kids away from Jesus. They didn't want them to bother Jesus, and they didn't want them around. Talk about this in your Connect Crews.

-  **When have you felt like someone didn't want you around? What was that like?**
-  Give Connect Crews a few minutes to talk.
-  Invite a few willing kids to share their answers with the whole group.

It can hurt when someone doesn't want us around.

But Jesus is never like that. **Jesus loves everyone.** *(Thank you, Jesus!)* And Jesus is always paying attention to us. He cares about us all the time. You have people here at church who care about you, too. Let's talk about this in Connect Crews.

-  **When is a time you're especially glad to know that Jesus loves and cares about you?** Invite Crew Guides to share first.
-  Give Connect Crews several minutes to discuss.

Remember, Jesus is always paying attention to you. Jesus knows everything that happens to you. He always cares, and he always loves you!



Now's a great time for Apply-it Options. Choose one—or both—of the following reinforcement activities to support today's Bible discoveries before the Friendship Finale.


# Apply-It Options

Choose one—or both—of these activities to support kids' learning after Bible Discovery.

## Explore More

### Supplies

- Bibles, construction paper, pencils, child-safe scissors, tape, markers

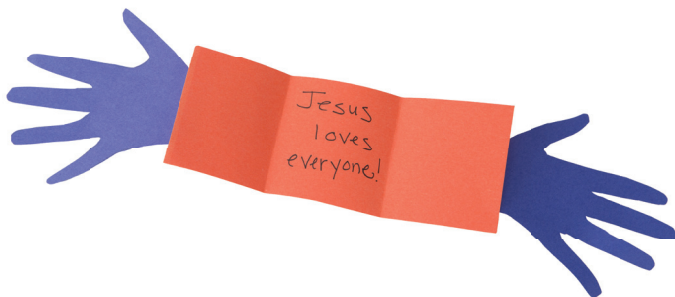
 Distribute Bibles, and help kids find and read Romans 8:38-39 together.

**? What surprises you about this passage? How does it make you feel?**

**How amazing! Nothing—absolutely nothing—can separate us from the love of God that's in Jesus!**

- Cut paper into strips that are each about 3 x 11 inches.
- Fold a paper strip into thirds.
- Trace two handprints on a sheet of paper, and cut them out.
- Tape a handprint to each end of the paper strip, fingers facing out.
- In the center of the paper strip, write "Jesus loves everyone!"
- Fold the handprints inward so the fingers intertwine in a hug.

**Show your craft to someone at home, and tell that person **Jesus loves everyone.**** *(Thank you, Jesus!)*



## Game

### Supplies

- markers

**Let's pretend these markers are priceless treasures.**

- Have each Connect Crew pair up with another Connect Crew.
- One Connect Crew surrounds the "treasure," facing out.
- Another Connect Crew tries to grab the treasure while the first Crew tries to keep them away from it.
- Have Connect Crews switch roles and play again.

**? How did it feel to be kept away from the treasure?**

**In our game, people tried to keep you away from the treasure in the center. That's kind of like how Jesus' disciples tried to keep children away from him. And Jesus really *is* a treasure! Thankfully, **Jesus loves everyone.** *(Thank you, Jesus!)* **With Jesus, we're always welcome.****

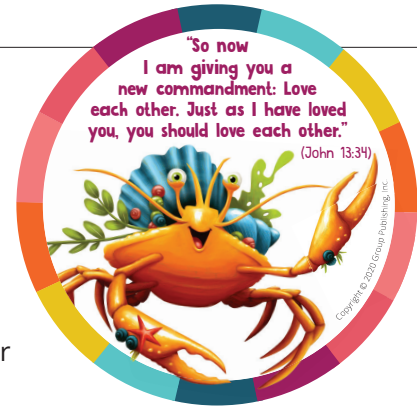


## Supplies

- Decker Bible Memory Buddy stickers (1 per child)
- Take-It-Home Flyers (Unit 3, Week 3) (1 per child)

# Friendship Finale

Invite kids to sit in knee-to-knee circles with their Connect Crews.



**Decker, our Bible Memory Buddy friend, can help us remember that Jesus loves everyone.** (Thank you, Jesus!) You'll each receive a Decker sticker to help you remember how much Jesus loves you. You can wear it now or collect your stickers at home. Crew Guides will give each person a sticker like this.

- Ask a willing Crew Guide to help you demonstrate the following actions.
- While holding the Decker sticker, Crew Guides stretch arms out wide like a giant welcome, then place a sticker in the child's cupped hands.
- As they give each child a Bible Memory Buddy sticker, Crew Guides say, "[Child's name], **Jesus loves you!**"
- Crew Guides give thumbs-up when finished.

Saying each child's name in a loving way helps kids simply experience Jesus' love through you!

Today's Bible story shows how much love Jesus has for kids—kids just like you! But he doesn't love just kids; **Jesus loves everyone!** (Thank you, Jesus!)

I'd like to read you something about our friend Jesus. As you listen, close your eyes and imagine you're hanging out with Jesus. Maybe you're on a couch in your living room or eating lunch at your kitchen table. Pause. Can you picture it? Now listen as I read.

- Read the first section of the Unit 3, Week 3 Take-It-Home Flyer.
- **Now I'll give you one of these flyers to help you talk about Jesus' love in your Connect Crews and at home, too.**
- Distribute Take-It-Home Flyers to Crew Guides, and have them share about their own friendship with Jesus as they answer the "Talk Starter" question and then invite kids to talk.
- Kids share prayer requests—things they'd like to tell Jesus—in their Connect Crews.
- Connect Crews pray together.
- Crew Guides distribute Take-It-Home Flyers and follow the directions to help kids fold the paper to "fly" home. 🦋

