

GROUPS 1/4

Special Gift

Memory Verse Review

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

→ No Supplies Needed

Note

You can find examples of hand motions in the "Memory Verse Hand Motions" PDF and video, included in the Prelude folder and on Pinterest.

Inclusive Pro Tips



Select a movement that is best for the group in place of running.



① What You Do

Before the Activity

1. Gather children in an open area of the room.

During the Activity

1. Encourage children to run in place for a bit, then stop to say the verse as you do the motions together.

After the Activity

Connect the Bottom Line to the Bible Story.

② What You Say

Before the Activity

"Friends come over here, we're going to do something fun to review our Memory Verse."

During the Activity

"Everyone let's run in place. **(Pause.)** Wow, great job! Stop running and let's say our verse and do the motions together. 'God **(flat hand with thumb to forehead, pull down)** loved the world so much **(cross arms over chest)** that he gave his only Son,' **(rock arms like a baby)** John 3:16. **(Open hands like a book.)** Super-duper! Now let's run in slow motion. **(Pause.)** Stop running and let's say our verse. 'God **(flat hand with thumb to forehead, pull down)** loved the world so much **(cross arms over chest)** that he gave his only Son,' **(rock arms like a baby)** John 3:16. **(Open hands like a book.)** This time, let's run super, super fast. **(Pause.)** Wow, that was so fast. Stop and let's say our verse with the motions one more time. 'God **(flat hand with thumb to forehead, pull down)** loved the world so much **(cross arms over chest)** that he gave his only Son,' **(rock arms like a baby)** John 3:16. **(Open hands like a book.)** Great job running and fantastic job saying the Memory Verse with the motions!"

After the Activity

"Today in our Bible Story, the shepherds ran **(run in place)** to find Baby Jesus. They knew Baby Jesus was the best gift ever. How do we know that God loves us? **[Bottom Line]** God gave us Jesus!"

GROUPS 2/4

Hidden Story

Bible Story Review

Faith Skills

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Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ "Hidden Story" Activity Pages
- ☐ Cardstock
- ☐ Painter's tape
- ☐ Hand towels
- ☐ Option: Paper towels



① What You Do

Before the Activity

1. Copy "Hidden Story" on cardstock, one set per Small Group.
2. Tape each story picture to the floor, picture side facing up.
3. Cover each picture with a towel.

During the Activity

1. Guide children as they take turns lifting the towel as they look for baby Jesus.
2. Each time a child finds baby Jesus, say the Bottom Line together, then put the Jesus picture in a new spot.

After the Activity

Connect the Bottom Line to the Bible Story.

② What You Say

Before the Activity

"Hey, everyone! Come over here and stand with me. We're going to play a game!"

During the Activity

"In our Bible Story, an angel told some shepherds that Jesus had been born. When the shepherds heard the good news, they ran to find baby Jesus! When I say your name, it will be your turn to try and find baby Jesus under one of these towels. Okay, **[child's name]**, it's your turn to find baby Jesus! Lift one of the towels. **(Pause.)** Did you find baby Jesus? **(Pause.)** No, but you found **[picture]**! Go sit down and **[child's name]** can have a turn! Lift one of the towels. **(Pause.)** Did you find baby Jesus? **(Pause.)** Yay! You found baby Jesus! We know God loves us because **[Bottom Line] God gave us Jesus!**" **(Reset and repeat with each child.)**

After the Activity

"That was fun finding baby Jesus, just like the shepherds did in our Bible Story! We know God loves us because **[Bottom Line] God gave us Jesus.** So, when I ask you, how do we know God loves us, I want us all to say **[Bottom Line] God gave us Jesus!** Ready? How do we know God loves us? **[Bottom Line] God gave us Jesus!** Yay! **[Bottom Line] God gave us Jesus!**"

GROUPS 3/4

Shepherd Freeze Run Dance

Application Activity

Faith Skills

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What You Need

- ☐ Music player
- ☐ Upbeat worship music

Inclusive Pro Tips



Instead of "run" encourage children to "move" to Jesus.

Repeat the cue words clearly and consistently, FREEZE, RUN, DANCE, paired with exaggerated body language.



① What You Do

Before the Activity

1. Gather children in an open area of your room.

During the Activity

1. Explain to the children they'll pretend to be shepherds with the following three motions.
2. Explain the motions with visual cues or gestures: FREEZE = Stop and listen (hands to ears like listening to the angel) RUN = Run in place or run across the space to "Jesus" DANCE =
3. Celebrate by jumping or swaying with joy.
4. Start the music and play.
5. Mix the commands and repeat several times with enthusiasm.

After the Activity

Connect the Bottom Line to the Bible Story.

② What You Say

Before the Activity

"Hello friends! Come join me over here and spread out. We are going to play a game where we pretend to be shepherds!"

During the Activity

"I want you to listen for three words as we play our game. Freeze, run, and dance. When I say FREEZE, (*hands to ears like listening to the angel*) we're going to stop and listen to the angel. When I say RUN, we're going to run to Jesus. And when I say DANCE, we're going to celebrate by jumping or swaying because God gave us Jesus! Ready? Let's play!"

(Call out commands with energy and mix them up!) "FREEZE! The angel says, 'Don't be afraid!' (*Pause for responses.*) RUN to the manger! (*Pause for responses.*) DANCE and celebrate! Wow! You guys are amazing being shepherds!" (*Repeat as desired.*)

After the Activity

"Great job, shepherds! You listened, you ran, and you celebrated! The shepherds in our Bible Story did the same thing. They were SO happy because **[Bottom Line]** God gave us Jesus. How do we know God loves us? **[Bottom Line]** God gave us Jesus."

GROUPS 4/4

Sheep Prints

Application Activity

Faith Skills

Hear from God

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What You Need

- ☐ "Sheep Prints" Activity Page
- ☐ Cardstock
- ☐ Mini muffin pans
- ☐ White washable paint
- ☐ Black washable paint
- ☐ Paintbrushes
- ☐ Paper plates
- ☐ Plastic tablecloth
- ☐ Crayons
- ☐ Baby wipes
- ☐ Permanent marker

Inclusive Optional Supplies

- ☐ Dot markers



Inclusive Pro Tips

Offer dot markers in place of putting finger in paint.

① What You Do

Before the Activity

1. Copy "Sheep Prints" on cardstock, one per child.
2. Write each child's name on their paper.
3. Cover table with tablecloth.
4. Pour white paint on several plates and place on the table.
5. Pour a small amount of black paint on a plate, one for every four children, and place on the table.

During the Activity

1. Encourage children to color their story picture.
2. Ask children to paint the backside of three top muffin cups on a pan.
3. Help children flip the muffin pan over and press it down on the bottom of their paper.
4. Encourage children to press their pointer finger into the black paint then press it in the center of each white painted circle.
5. Ask children to press their finger into the black paint again and press it down at the bottom of each circle for the sheep's legs.
6. Help children clean their hands as needed.

After the Activity

Connect the Bottom Line to the Bible Story.

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Inclusive Pro Tips

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② What You Say

Before the Activity

"Everyone come over and let's create some story art to help us remember today's true story from the Bible."

During the Activity

"Today in our Bible Story, we learned that one night, some shepherds were in the fields taking care of their sheep. God sent a special messenger to tell them the good news. Color your paper. **(Pause.)** Great. Now let's make our sheep. Spread some paint on these three muffin cups. **(Point.)** Now press the muffin pan near the bottom of your paper. **(Pause.)** Lift it up and look! There are three circles! Let's make these circles into sheep. Put your finger up in the air and press it in the middle of your sheep. **(Pause.)** You made the sheep's head with your finger. Add two black fingerprints at the bottom of the sheep circles for legs. **(Clean hands as needed.)** These look great!"

After the Activity

"An angel came and told the shepherds, "Don't be afraid! I bring you good news of great joy! God's Son, Jesus, has been born! Then more angels came! There were angels everywhere! The angels praised God and said: "Glory to God in the highest!" **(Luke 2:14 NIV)**

"The shepherds were excited because **[Bottom Line]** God gave us Jesus. So they ran to find baby Jesus. The shepherds found baby Jesus in the manger, just like the angel said. They were so happy the shepherds told EVERYONE that Jesus, God's Son, was born! How do we know God loves us? **[Bottom Line]** God gave us Jesus."