



*Year 1, Session 5*  
**THE MINISTRY OF JESUS**



**Aims of Lesson:**

- (1) To help the children feel accepted by God, knowing that God loves them and everyone.
- (2) To encourage the children to thank God for His love and goodness.



**Bible Reading:**

Matthew 9 verses 35-36



**Memory Verse Review:**

Review Romans 6:23.



**Teaching Story:**

Use the story, "The Ministry of Jesus", including the text and Picture Cards MJ-1 to MJ-8.



**Activity:**

Set up a special chair in front of the group. Perhaps you could cover it with a colourful piece of material.

"I want you to imagine that you were one of the children that Jesus took up in His arms or sat on His knee. What question would you like to ask Him while you had the chance? If you can think of a question you would like to ask Jesus, come up to the front and sit in this special chair. We will also imagine that you are sitting on His knee!"

Have the children come up one by one to ask their questions. After each one, ask all the others, "What do you think Jesus' answer might be to that question?" See what ideas you get, then add your own. Of course, there will be times when you are not able to give a full answer (or maybe any answer at all!)



**Prayer Topics:**

"When the children came to Jesus, He put His hand on them and prayed for them. Imagine again that He is here today (which, of course, He is even though we cannot see Him), and ask Him to help you with something. It can be anything at all!" Have each child in turn ask God to help them with one thing. Suggest that if they cannot think of anything else, they could ask Jesus to help them get to know Him better.



**Bible Study:**

Photocopy the Bible Study 1/3 'The Ministry of Jesus' for every child who is doing one. Use it either in group time or give to the children to take home.

# THE MINISTRY OF JESUS

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## **PURPOSES OF LESSON:**

- (1) *That the children will feel accepted by God, as they discover that God loves everyone, including children.*
- (2) *That the children will thank God for His love and goodness.*

## **VISUALS:**

Use Picture Cards MJ-1 to 8.

## **BIBLE REFERENCES:**

Matthew 18:1-14, 19:13-15, Mark 10:13-16, Luke 17:11-19, John 4:46-53.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Jesus is God's Son and He was sent by God His Father to live on this earth 2000 years ago. While He was here, Jesus spent a lot of time teaching the people what God was like.

Large crowds of people wanted to hear the things Jesus taught about God.

Sometimes there were so many people pushing around Him that they could not all see or hear him.

### **CARD MJ-1:**

So there were times when Jesus got into a boat and went out a little way from the shore. Then everyone on the shore could see him and hear him.

The people knew that Jesus was not just an ordinary man. It seemed by the way he taught that Jesus really **knew** God. And those people knew that the things Jesus taught were true.

What did he teach? Many things, but today we will just talk about one of them. Jesus taught that God is a God of love.

Jesus did not just tell people that God loved them. He also showed them this was true by the things he did.

In Jesus' day there were people with leprosy. This disease ate away at the skin

on their hands and feet, and it could be spread to other people.

So if you had leprosy you had to leave your house so no one would get the disease from you.

You not only had to leave your house. You had to leave your town or village and live out in the country so you would not be near other people.

You could never join a crowd like this listening to Jesus.

Often the lepers would live together out in the countryside. If anyone came along the road near them, the lepers had to call out "unclean, unclean" to warn people that they had the disease. Of course everyone kept as far away from them as they could.

### **CARD MJ-2:**

As Jesus was walking from town to town, he came across a group of lepers. But he was not like the other people who crossed to the other side of the road and kept as far away as they could.

He went right up to them and talked to the lepers as if he really cared about them.

Jesus knew that the lepers thought, "No-one cares about us, no-one really loves us."

Jesus knew that being a leper was just about the worst thing you could be!

The lepers must have been so surprised when Jesus talked to them! No one had ever showed them such love and concern before.

I think Jesus' friends who were walking with him were also very surprised. They had never seen anyone show such love to people that no one else liked.

Jesus was really showing us that God loves everyone, no matter what they are like on the outside, and that He loves people no one else loves.

Another way Jesus showed God's love for these lepers was by healing them of their disease.

One of the lepers was so thankful that he knelt down in front of Jesus.

I can imagine him saying, "Thank you, Jesus for loving us. No one else cares about us. Now we know that God really does love **us**, too."

*(Point to children)* And God loves every one of **you** too, even if you think nobody else does. In fact, Jesus has a special love for children.

And because He loves you so much, it is good for you to say "thank you" to Him for His love.

### **CARD MJ-3:**

Jesus had some special friends who were known as His disciples. Wherever Jesus travelled, His disciples travelled with Him.

One day the disciples were talking together, wondering which of them was most important.

So they came to Jesus for an answer to their question. They asked Him, "Jesus, who does God think is the greatest person?"

They got a real surprise at what Jesus did next. He did not say, "Oh, yes, Peter you are the greatest." Or, "John, God thinks you are the most important."

Instead, he looked around and noticed a young child standing not far away. Jesus called the child over and stood him right in the middle of the group.

Then Jesus said to them, "Whoever is like this child is the greatest in God's Kingdom."

Jesus' disciples were certainly surprised at His answer. I think they expected to hear that one of them was the greatest, or the most important.

But Jesus was showing them that God thinks children are great and that they are really important to Him

Then Jesus went on and warned His friends about some things. He told them, "Do not ever neglect a child!"

Some people today neglect children. They think, "Oh, I cannot be bothered with children. I do not want to spend any time with them." Some even forget about children altogether! But Jesus told His friends, "You must not be like that."

He also warned them, "Do not think that children are not important. Do not think, "Oh, they are only kids. They are too young to be concerned about."

Some people today say to children. "Oh, you are just a child. What do you know?" And they try to make you think you are not important.

Jesus did not want His disciples to treat children that way. He said, "When you welcome a child and spend time with them, it is just the same as if you are welcoming me.

"But if you turn children away, then it is the same as if you are turning me away."

Jesus also told His disciples something else. "God does not want any child to be lost away from God."

He was telling them that He does not want any child to be out of His family because He loves and cares about them so much. Why? Because they are so important to Him.

But the disciples did not take any notice of what Jesus was saying.

### **CARD MJ-4:**

Soon afterwards some important people came to Jesus. These were some of the religious leaders of the country, and everyone thought they were very important people.

They had many questions they wanted to ask Jesus, to see if He knew the answers.

Of course, Jesus answered all their questions, and told them everything they needed to know.

While Jesus was teaching, some parents were there too. They were probably saying to one another, "We know that what Jesus is teaching is really the truth. Perhaps He really is the Son of God. We want our children to meet Him."

Some of the mothers decided, "We want our children to go right up to where Jesus is and we want to ask Jesus if He will pray for them." They were very brave because Jesus was talking to the important people.

The mothers came up close to Jesus, and hoped He would notice them.

When the disciples of Jesus saw these mothers bringing their children to Jesus they said, "Hey! What are you doing? What are you bringing those children up here for? Do not interrupt Jesus. He is busy talking to the adults. And those men are very important people.

"Jesus has not got time for you. Adults are much more important than children. Go on – shoo! Get them away." And they tried to get the children out of the way.

Maybe they even said, "Jesus has been very busy today. He is too tired. He cannot be bothered with the children."

#### **CARD MJ-5:**

But Jesus heard what the disciples said. He was very annoyed and unhappy with them. They had not remembered all He told them the day before about how important children were.

So Jesus stopped talking to those important people and He turned to His disciples.

He said, "You let those children come to me! Do not turn them away! Do not stop them coming to me, because the things of God are for children too."

Some adults say, "Oh, children are too young to understand anything about God. They are too young to come to God." But Jesus does not think that. He says, "No, you

let the children come. God belongs to the children too."

Jesus stopped talking to all the adults and sat down. Then he called those children over to where He was.

He ignored all the important people. It was as if He was saying, "No, I have no time for you at the moment. I want to spend time with the children."

#### **CARD MJ-6:**

Jesus picked up some of the boys and girls in His arms. I imagine He sat them on His knee. And then He took time to talk to each one of them in turn.

As they were sitting there on His knee, I am sure they asked him some questions. He did not ignore them or shoo them away, or say, "That is a silly question." Instead, He took time to answer each one of their questions.

I wonder if you had been there that day, what questions you might have asked Jesus. It must have been great to sit on His knee!

After Jesus had talked to each child, He put His hands on each one and He prayed for them.

Perhaps He said, "God, please bless this child. Help them to know You and to love You. Help them to know how important they are to You."

When He had finished talking to one child, they would get off Jesus' knee and another one would get on. He had time for every one of those children, no matter what age they were.

Maybe you think, "I wish I could have been there. I would like to come to Jesus too." Did you know you can come to Jesus any time you want to?

You cannot sit on his knee like those children did, because He is invisible to us. But you can pray to Him. Praying is just talking to God and Jesus, either out loud or silently in our minds.

When Jesus had finished talking to and praying for each child, what do you think each one said to Him before they went home with their parents? (*Get ideas*).

I think they said, "Thank you, Jesus!" How often do you thank Him when you talk to Him in prayer?

Jesus showed his concern and love for children in other ways too. Once a royal government officer heard that Jesus was visiting a nearby town.

#### **CARD MJ-7:**

This man had a son who was lying in bed, very sick with a fever. In fact, he knew that his son could die at any time.

In those days, many children died when they got a fever, because there were not all the good medicines that we have today.

The father must have heard about some of the wonderful things Jesus had done to help and heal people. Perhaps he had even heard how Jesus had healed the men with the leprosy disease.

The man was so concerned about his sick boy that he decided to ask Jesus to come and heal him. Since the man was a government officer, I suppose it was easy for him to visit the other town where Jesus was.

When he arrived in the early afternoon and found Jesus, he begged him, "Please come and heal my son. He has a fever and is close to death."

Jesus began to talk about something else but the officer did not give up. Once again he asked Him, "Sir, come down to my town before my child dies."

I think Jesus knew that the man really believed He could heal the boy. So Jesus told him, "You can go home now. Your son will live." Immediately the man believed the words Jesus had spoken, so he left to go home.

#### **CARD MJ-8:**

The next morning while he was still on the way back to his own town, he came across some of his servants who were hurrying along the road to meet him. They quickly told him, "There is good news. Your son is healed! He has not died, but he is alive and well."

The man asked, "What time did my son get better?"

"Sir, the fever suddenly left him at one o'clock yesterday afternoon." The father suddenly realised that this was the exact time at which Jesus had said to him, "Your son will live." Now he knew that Jesus was not just an ordinary man. He really must have come from God.

The government officer finally got home and saw his boy was completely well again, and told his family all that had happened. Then the whole household believed that Jesus had come from God.

I am sure they spent time thanking and praising God for the miracle of healing that had taken place. Maybe they thanked God for His love, and for sending Jesus to show this love to everyone.

Jesus wants to show His love to each one of you too.

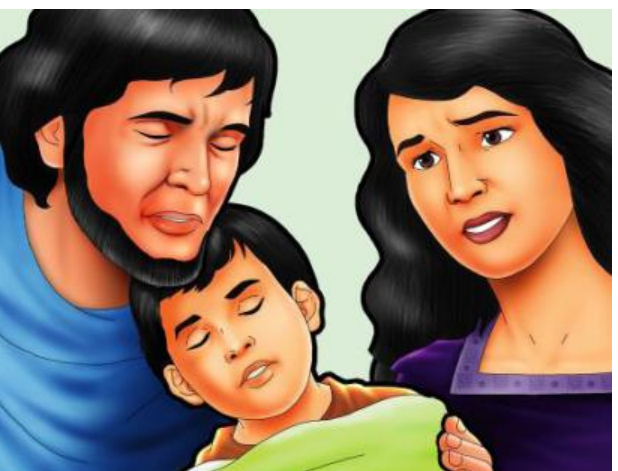
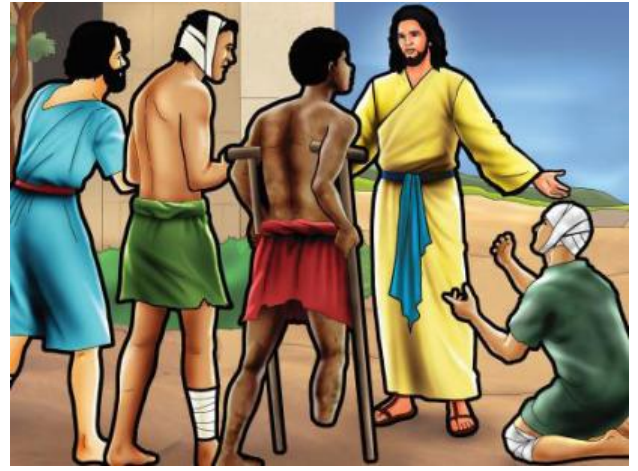
Remember that at any time Jesus will welcome you if you come to Him. Even though you cannot sit on His knee, you can talk to Him about anything, just like the government officer did.

Let us all close our eyes right now and those who want to can talk to God silently in their minds.

Maybe you want to thank God that He loves children just as much as adults. If you need God to help you with something, you can also ask for His help.

*(Give the children an opportunity to pray silently, before you close in prayer.)*





Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

Read Acts 10, verse 38. What does this verse tell us that Jesus did while He was on earth?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Look up each of these verses, and match them with the person Jesus helped, by drawing a line between the verse and the person.

Mark 5, verses 22-24 & 35-43

A leper

Matthew 14, verses 15-21

A sick girl

Luke 17, verses 11-19

A blind beggar

Matthew 9, verses 2-7

A hungry crowd

John 9, verses 1-7

A lame man



Read Mark 10 verse 13  
What happened when people brought children to Jesus?

\_\_\_\_\_

Read Mark 10 verse 16

What two things did Jesus do for these children?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



Read Matthew 7 verses 28-29

When Jesus taught about God, what did the people think?

\_\_\_\_\_

Jesus didn't teach like the other teachers of religious laws.

Verse 29 says he taught like a person who had \_\_\_\_\_