

Lesson

1

Jesus Teaches Us about God's Love

BIBLE BASIS

Jesus teaches that God cares for His people (Matthew 6:25-34; Luke 12:22-31).

BIBLE TRUTH

Don't worry, God knows what you need.

MEMORY VERSE

"The Father himself loves you." John 16:27

LESSON AIM

That your students will understand that God gives them everything they need to live.

1

LIFE NEED (5 MINUTES)

- Students play a game and talk about needs they worry about



Materials: Two paper signs: "I Need" and "I Don't Need," tape

2

BIBLE LEARNING (10–15 MINUTES)

- Tell the story of Jesus teaching that God knows what we need
- Review with questions and an activity

Materials: Bible, "Jesus Teaches about God's Love" Teaching Aid 2, *Storytime* for Lesson 1

3

BIBLE APPLICATION (10 MINUTES)

- Teach the memory verse with a poem
- Make a closet sachet



Materials: *Early Elementary Make-It/Take-It* for Lesson 1, crayons, yarn, cotton balls, tape; *Optional*—cologne or air freshener

4

LIFE RESPONSE (10 MINUTES)

- Read a story about moms making sure children have what they need
- Talk about worries and ways children can trust God when they worry

Materials: *Storytime* paper for Lesson 1, crayons

Understanding Your Students

Even though your students are beginning to become independent, they still have a strong need for security and acceptance. Some of the students you teach may come from homes where family situations cause them to experience early feelings of worry and confusion about who really does care for them. These children may be affected by their neighborhood violence, single-parent pressures, or unemployment. Other children who move frequently may also feel uprooted. Your classroom can be one place where all the children feel loved.



This symbol means extra preparation or supplies are needed.

Understanding the Bible

The Sermon on the Mount, found in Matthew 5—7 and Luke 6:20-49, is a profound teaching about love and how to fulfill God's law. This sermon was delivered to the disciples by Jesus.

Today's Scriptures, Matthew 6:25-34 and Luke 12:22-31, teach about anxiety over economic issues. Jesus warned that anxiety can affect all of us. Those without wealth can fall into the trap of worrying about how they will survive, while the wealthy can fall into the sin of covetousness and also worry about their future well-being. Worry takes the joy and blessing out of every gift from God.

When Jesus said, "Do not worry about your life" (Matt. 6:25), He was not suggesting that Christians stop planning and preparing for the future. Instead, Jesus was advising against needless worry and anxiety over daily needs.

Jesus used the lilies and birds in the area as examples for His teachings. Since God feeds the birds, which do not plan ahead, and He clothes the grass, which "is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire" (vs. 30), He will surely feed and clothe us.

Jesus reminded His followers that worry cannot add "a single hour" to anyone's life (vs. 27). The futility of worry is stated very clearly.

Jesus concluded that each day has enough cares

without adding those that might arise in the future. God will provide as we have needs just as He fulfills all of His promises in His own time.

This understanding may be challenging to hold onto. Today, many of us are privileged to have homes, transportation, food, jobs to go to, schools to send our children to, and more. However, there may be other anxieties that we allow to plague us. Many other folks are missing out on some of these basic life needs. However, if we study the settings in which Jesus was preaching His sermons, we can see that many had little in Bible times too. What they did or did not have did not change the truth of Jesus' message.

Jesus quite probably preached the same sermon material in a number of different locations (the Word is preached from city to suburb today). Luke's version of the sermon is called the Sermon on the Plain (see Luke 6:17).

It is interesting to observe the different wordings in the two Gospel accounts. It may seem odd to us that Luke 12:28 would talk about "the grass of the field" being "thrown into the fire," but in the Holy Land there is very little firewood available for cooking. Most houses would be made out of stone. Consequently, things such as thorns (Isa. 33:12) or dry grass might be used as fuel for cooking.

Classroom Tips

These tips will help students become more aware that God knows what they need.

- Find opportunities to tell children that God has provided people in their lives who make sure their needs are met. Encourage children to thank God for meeting their needs.
- Provide plenty of discussion to help children know the difference between needs and wants.
- Help anxious children hear that God cares about their deepest worries and promises to take care of them. They can rely on God because His love never fails. He knows their every need. Encourage these children to talk to God about their worries and needs. Take time to pray with them.

Worship Activities

- Play the instrumental of "God Loves Me" from the DiskIt CD in your Creative Teaching Aids packet to bring the children to worship.
- Choose one student to pass the offering container. Sing an offering song or lead in a prayer of thanks.
- Pray with your class. **Dear God, help us to trust You when we worry. You promise to take care of our needs. Thank You for loving us. We love You. In Jesus' name. Amen.**



Before Class

Give each child a personal greeting. **I'm so glad to be in God's house today. We will learn about how God cares for us.** Write the children's names on the Summer Attendance Chart from your Creative Teaching Aids packet. Hang the chart on a wall at the children's height. They may mark their attendance with a sticker, a happy face, or by coloring in a square. Lead children to the first activity of the day.



Attendance Chart

Getting Started

The following activities will prepare the children for the story of Jesus teaching that God knows what we need.

-  **Bulletin Board:** Punch out the picnic basket from page 3 of the Make-It/Take-Its. Have students color the baskets. Finished pictures may go on a bulletin board titled "God Gives Us Everything We Need." Read the words on the basket: **Thank You, God, for giving us what we need.**
- **Sorting Pictures:** Have children cut out pictures of things from old catalogs and magazines. Ask them to separate the pictures into piles of things they need and things they don't need.
- **Nature:** Set up a simple nature table with items like flowers, grass, and bird nests. **We will learn about how God takes care of the birds and flowers. He takes care of you too.**



Life Need 5 minutes

Objective: That your students will play a game and talk about needs they worry about.

This activity will prepare children for the lesson of Jesus teaching us not to worry because God knows what we need. To get the children thinking about the difference between needs and things they don't really need, play the following game. Tape your two signs, "I Need" and "I Don't Need," in places on opposite sides of your room. Gather the children around you. When they are listening, point to each sign as you read each one aloud. Ask the children to imagine they are lost in a hot desert. Tell them that you will name several different things. You will ask them to decide if they need these things or not. Ask them to go stand under or near the sign that best describes what they think. There aren't any right or wrong answers because the children will have different reasons for their ideas. The game is just to get the children thinking about needs in a fun way.

Water—Is water something you need or don't need in a hot desert? (Let the children move to the sign they think tells what they think about water in a desert.)

Extra sand—Go to the sign that shows what you think about more sand. (Let the children move.)

Shoes—Do you or don't you need shoes in a hot desert? (Give time for the children to move if they want.)

Continue the game by naming more things the children might need, or not need, in a hot desert. Name items in an order that will get most of them moving back and forth between the signs. Here are some more things to name: healthy foods, your mom or dad, candy, sunglasses, TV, sunny sky, bicycle, pet fish, clothes, a favorite toy, map, package of carrot seeds, a pillow, and so on. Feel free to have fun adding your own ideas too.

You know a lot about what is needed in a hot desert. Let's talk about things we think we need.

What kind of things do we need to stay alive? (Reinforce answers that identify basic needs such as healthy foods, water, clothes, air to breathe, shelter, etc.)

What are some things you would like to have but don't need to live? (Allow time for responses. Listen to all of their wishes. Point out how these things are not really needs because we can stay alive without them.)

Do you worry about things you need? Why or why not? (Let children talk. It's okay if they aren't sure about why they do or don't worry.)

Jesus taught us to not worry about things we need. Let's listen to learn why we shouldn't worry.

2

Bible Learning 10–15 minutes

Objective: That your students will learn that Jesus taught us not to worry because God knows what we need.

Have Teaching Aid 2 ready to show when indicated in the story. Open your Bible to Matthew. Tell the children that the Bible story you will tell comes from Luke 12:22-31 and also Matthew 6:25-34. Keep your Bible open to either passage as you tell the Bible story.

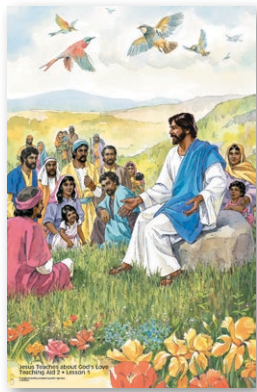
BIBLE STORY

Jesus went out on a hill and found a place to sit in a field of green grass and flowers. The disciples and a large group of people sat on the ground where they could listen to Jesus teach. *(Show teaching aid.)*

Jesus said, “I tell you, do not worry. Don’t worry about your life and what you will eat or drink. And don’t worry about what you will wear. God knows what you need.”

Jesus talked about the birds flying in the air. *(Point to the birds on the teaching aid.)* He explained, “Look at the birds of the air. They don’t plant seeds or gather crops and store food in barns. But God knows what they need and feeds them.” Jesus went on to say that we are much more valuable to God than the birds. If God knows that the birds need food, then He surely knows that we need food. Don’t worry, God knows that you need food.

(Look at the teaching aid.) Jesus and the people were sitting in a beautiful field of flowers. Jesus talked about the flowers as another example of how we can be sure God knows what we need. Jesus said, “Look at the flowers in this field. *(Point to the flowers.)* The flowers don’t worry about what they will wear. They don’t spend their days working so they can buy clothes. They don’t weave cloth to sew into clothing. But the



“Jesus Teaches about God’s Love” Teaching Aid 2

flowers look nicer than a rich king in very fine clothes. God dresses all the plants in the fields. You are much more important to God than them. They are here today but gone tomorrow. They get stepped on, eaten by animals, or cut with the grass. So don’t worry; God dresses the flowers, and He knows that you need clothes too.”

Jesus said, “Do not worry, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear?’ People who don’t know Me worry about these things. They become so busy with trying to get what they need that they don’t have time for what is important to God. Don’t worry like they do; God knows what you need.”

Instead of being concerned about what we need, Jesus said, “Put God first. Do what He wants you to do. When you do, you will also be given all you need.”

Jesus teaches us that worrying isn’t good. It doesn’t change anything. God wants us to know that because He loves us and knows what we need, we can depend on Him to take care of us. So don’t worry, God knows what you need.

BIBLE STORY REVIEW

- What does Jesus tell us not to worry about? (What we need; what we will eat, drink, or wear.)
- How do the birds and the flowers help us know that God knows what we need? (God gives them food and clothes, but we are more important than the birds and flowers.)
- What should we do instead of worrying? (Put God first, learn about Him, pray to Him, read the Bible.)

Distribute *Storytime* for Lesson 1 and have students complete the activity on page 4.



Storytime, Lesson 1, page 4

3 Bible Application 10 minutes

Objective: That your students will learn that they don't need to worry because God knows what they need.

MEMORY VERSE

Help students find the memory verse on page 4 of *Storytime*. Read the verse together: **“The Father himself loves you” John 16:27.** Explain that Jesus said these words about God, who is His Father. **God is our Father, too, and He loves us so much. Listen for the Bible verse as we say the poem.**

God made the green grass under your feet.

(Touch ground.)

And God made the sky so blue.

(Wave arms overhead.)

God will keep you safe every day.

(Point to students.)

“The Father himself loves you.”

(Hug self.)

The last line is our Bible verse. Let's say it again: “The Father himself loves you” *(Hug self.)*
John 16:27.

- **Who is our Father?** (God.)
- **Who knows what we need?** (God.)

Collect the *Storytime* papers and put them away until the end of class.

HANDCRAFT

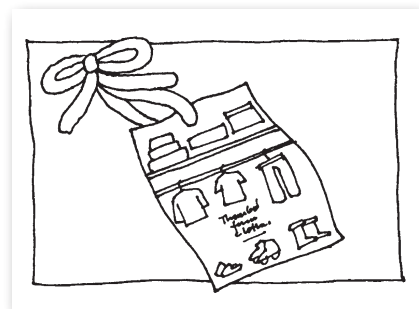
Before class, tear out Lesson 1 from each student's Make-It/Take-It book. Each student will also need an 18-inch piece of yarn and four cotton balls.

Distribute crayons so the students can color their projects. Then show them how to fold the paper on the broken lines and tape the bottom and sides together. *Optional*—you may want to spray the cotton balls with cologne or an air freshener before you show the students how to place the cotton inside the sachet. Then they can tape the top of the project together.

Help your students punch out the circles at the top, thread a piece of yarn through them, and tie the yarn in a bow.

People put sachets in their closets to help their clothes smell fresh. You can hang your sachet on a hanger in your closet. When you see it, you can remember not to worry because God will give you clothes and food and other things you need.

You may give your sachet to someone at your house who cares for you.



Make-It/Take-It, Lesson 1



4

Life Response 10 minutes

Objective: That your students will discuss how they can trust God.

Read aloud to your students “Just In Case” from pages 2 and 3 of *Storytime* for Lesson 1. Or you may read the story summary below.

PRESENT-DAY STORY

Story Summary: Maya answered the front door to let Mrs. Crawford and Natalie in. They came to go on a hike with Maya and Mrs. Williams.

“I am so glad you are finally here,” said Maya. “Now we can go for our hike. What do you have?” she asked Mrs. Crawford.

“I am glad we could come with you,” said Mrs. Crawford. “I brought sandwiches.”

“Why did you bring sandwiches?” asked Maya.

“In case we get hungry,” Mrs. Crawford said.

Maya went into the kitchen and saw her mom pouring lemonade into a big thermos.

“Mama, why are we taking lemonade?” asked Maya.

“In case we get thirsty,” her mom said. “Will you please get our big, furry blanket?”

“Why?” asked Maya.

“In case we get tired,” said Mom.

Maya saw Natalie putting an insect book in the backpack. She asked, “Are you really going to take your insect book, Natalie?” asked Maya. “You take it everywhere.”

“Yes, I am,” said Natalie. “I might see a bug I want to find in my book.”

The girls and their moms walked in the woods. They saw trees and flowers, birds and squirrels.

“I am hungry!” said Natalie.

“I am thirsty!” said Maya.

They found a great spot to stop and have a picnic. “I needed rest,” said Mrs. Crawford.

“We needed everything we brought,” said Maya.

Natalie saw a ladybug on Maya. “Hey, that is a

ladybug,” she said. “My book says ladybugs eat insects that are harmful.”

“I guess God gives us all we need to live . . . including ladybugs,” Maya said smiling.



Storytime, Lesson 1, pages 2-3

CLOSING ACTIVITIES

Maya and Natalie didn't have to worry about what they were going to eat or drink while on their hike. Their moms made sure they had everything they needed. God is like that. He makes sure we have everything we need.

- **What are some worries you have had?** (Listen carefully to students' responses. Share some of yours.)
- **What are some ways you can trust God when you begin to worry?** (Pray to Him; remember that He is a great God and that He cares for you; remember the story Jesus told the people about God caring for the flowers and birds; when you see birds and flowers let them remind you of God's great care for you, remember that you are more important to God than flowers and birds.)

Have students join hands as you pray. **Dear God, we never have to worry because You always give us what we need. Thank You for Your loving care. Help us to trust You. In Jesus' name. Amen.**

Make sure children have their Make-It/Take-It projects, *Storytime* for Lesson 1, and the quarterly *Storytime* Parent page. Explain to parents that this page provides them with the Bible lessons and memory verses being studied this quarter as well as family activities to do for the quarter.

Say a personal goodbye to each student. **Trust God to give you what you need.**



Storytime, Parent page



Storytime, Lesson 1, page 1