

# This I Know

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[www.vanessamyers.org](http://www.vanessamyers.org)

# Note for Parents

*This I Know* is designed for families and children to learn more about the love Jesus has for them. We know that Jesus loves us because the Bible tells us so. This month we will be focusing on four stories from the New Testament that show us how we know that Jesus loves us.

## **This resource includes the following:**

- 4 Family Devotions (1 per week)
- 4 Games (1 per week)
- 4 Crafts (1 per week)
- 4 Valentine's Snack Ideas (1 per week)

## **When is a good time to do these activities each week?**

Use it on Saturday or Sunday and do all activities for that week in one day.

Or spread out the activities over the whole week. For example, you could read the devotion before school one morning. Then another day do the craft, next day game, next day make the snack.

Spending time together in God's Word as a family is so important. Once you create this habit, your children will want to do it every day and will remind you if you miss a day! These habits will hopefully form in your children a love of God's Word that will stay with them throughout their lives. You are building a foundation of God and His love into your children by spending time together in His Word.

# Week 1 – Jesus Welcomes Us

## Read Mark 10:13-16 (The Little Children and Jesus)

**\*\*For preschoolers, read "Jesus and the Children" from *The Beginner's Bible* by Zonderkidz**

Raise your hand if you know the song, "Jesus Loves Me." If you do, take a moment to sing this song with your family: *"Jesus loves me this I know. For the Bible tells me so. Little ones to Him belong. They are weak but He is strong. Yes, Jesus loves me. Yes, Jesus loves me. Yes, Jesus loves me. For the Bible tells me so."*

I love the lyrics to this song because it specifically tells us how we know that Jesus loves us...because the Bible tells us so! This month, we will be looking at four different ways that the Bible shows us we are loved by Jesus. The four stories we read about will help us KNOW that Jesus loves us.

This week, we know that Jesus loves us by the way He welcomes us. In our Bible story today, we find Jesus and the disciples out and about teaching others about God. So many people had heard about Jesus and all that He had done (like performing miracles and healing people). They wanted to be with Him and learn from Him...even the children.

On this day, parents were bringing their kids to see Jesus because they wanted Jesus to lay His hands on them and bless them. They just wanted their kids to have a chance to be near Jesus and receive a blessing from Him. When the disciples saw them coming, they started yelling at them and telling them to go away and not to bother Jesus. But when Jesus heard and saw what they were doing, He became angry. He couldn't believe that His closest followers were telling kids to go away from Him.

Then Jesus spoke the sweetest words to the kids, *"Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these."* (Mark 10:14). Jesus tells them (and is telling us through this story) that He welcomes everyone...adults AND children. He loves every one of us no matter our age.

I love what Jesus does next. *"And then he took the children in his arms, placed his hands on them and blessed them."* (Mark 10:16). Isn't that so cool! Jesus shows us that He loves us by the way He welcomes the children with open arms and gives them great big hugs and blesses them. He loves you so much. Never forget that!

*Holy God, thank You for the way You show us You love us. Thank You for this story that lets us know that You love us because You welcome us into Your kingdom. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

# Week 1 – Family Game

## Honey, If You Love Me

*Supplies Needed: None*

The object of this game is to get a person to smile! Here's how it works:

Sit your family in a circle and have one person be in the middle. This person will pick one family member whom they will try to get to smile. To get them to smile you will say these words, "*Honey, if you love me, will you please smile?*" You can make silly faces and do funny voices, but you cannot touch them. Then that person will have to say back to the person in the middle (without smiling), "*Honey, I love you, but I just can't smile.*" If the person does not smile, then move on to another family member and repeat the same thing. If the person does smile, then they must be the one in the middle next.

This is a fun game to act silly and try to make people smile and laugh! Remember how much Jesus loves you so much!

# **Week 1 – Family Craft**

## **Jesus Loves Me Banner**

*Supplies Needed: Jesus Loves Me banner template, markers or crayons, yarn, single hole puncher*

Let's make a banner that reminds you that Jesus loves you!

Print out the banner template. Cut out the pennants. Color the pennants and individual letters however you like. Using a single hole puncher, punch 2 holes in each pennant (one at either end). Then string in order (Jesus Me) using the yarn and threading it through each hole. Hang the banner in your home to remind you that Jesus loves you!

# **Week 1 – Family Snack**

## **Valentine Trail Mix**

Golden Grahams

Marshmallows

Chocolate Chips

M&Ms (Valentine colors)

For trail mixes, I don't put a certain amount in of each item. I like to tell people to add in however much of each item they want! All you need to do is combine the above ingredients in a large bowl and mix together. Serve this simple snack to your kids after school or send in Ziploc bags in their lunchbox.

# Week 2 – Jesus Provides for Us

## Read Luke 9:10-17 (Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand)

***\*\*For preschoolers, read "Jesus Feeds Thousands" from The Beginner's Bible by Zonderkidz***

Want to know something about me? I always have a snack in my purse. I don't like to be out somewhere and get hungry and then can't find something to eat. My family likes to make jokes about how I have to eat at certain times of the day, too. I really don't like being super hungry because then I will be super cranky!

I wonder if that's the way the people felt when they followed Jesus that day to a town called Bethsaida. I'm sure they packed some light snacks...just in case...they didn't want to get too hungry. But they probably didn't expect to be gone all day and certainly not till dinner time. So why would they pack anything to eat for dinner? Jesus wouldn't talk that long, would He? I bet they thought they would be home in time for dinner. But that wasn't exactly what happened...

The disciples recognized how late it was getting and they suggested to Jesus that He send everyone to the surrounding villages so they could get something to eat for dinner. But Jesus had a different idea. He told them to go out into the crowd and find food. The disciples probably scratched their heads and were confused, but they did as Jesus asked. They came back with five loaves and two fish that they had found from a boy. I'm sure they were wondering how in the world Jesus planned to feed 5,000+ people with such little food.

But Jesus takes the bread and the fish, looks up to heaven, gives thanks and blesses the food. And guess what? The food multiplied!! They had enough for everyone and also took up 12 baskets of leftovers! What a miracle!

Jesus provided for the people because He loved them. He didn't want to see them go hungry. He took care of them and gave them food to eat. And He does the same for you and me. He will always provide what we need when we need it. Does that mean He will always give you what you want (like the newest video game system or a new car)? Maybe or maybe not. But it does mean that He will give you what you need when you need it (like in the case of this Bible story the people needed food and He gave it to them).

Jesus loves you so much and we know this because the Bible tell us so. The Bible tells us of stories like this one that reminds us of how He provides for us. And He provides for us because He loves us. And He always will.

*Great God, thank You for always providing what I need. Help me to trust You and remember that You will always take care of me. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

# Week 2 - Family Game

## Heart Stacker

*Supplies Needed: conversation hearts, timer*

Do you like to eat Valentine conversation hearts? Well, before you eat them, let's try stacking them!

Empty a carton of conversation hearts onto a flat surface (table works great). Set a timer for one minute and see how many hearts you can stack in that time frame. To make it a competition among family members, keep track of how many hearts each family member can stack in one minute. The winner gets to keep and eat all the conversation hearts!

After you finish the game, remind kids of how much Jesus loves us because He provides for us (like by providing food in our Bible story this week).



## **Week 2 – Family Craft**

### **Christian Valentine Cards**

*Supplies Needed: Valentine card printables, candy, tape*

I was inspired to create these Christian Valentine's cards after hearing one of my church kids tell me that he created his own so he could spread the name of Jesus to his classmates! So awesome!

You can use the templates I have provided, or you can create your own using construction paper or cardstock. If you use the template, just print and cut out the card. Write in their name and your name on the "To" and "From" lines. Then attach a piece of candy (my favorite is Skittles). Deliver these Valentine's to your friends at school during your class party or mail them to friends and family to tell them about Jesus.

## **Week 2 – Family Snack**

### **Valentine Pancakes**

Pancake Mix

Red & pink sprinkles

Heart-shaped cookie cutter (use metal one)

Syrup

Prepare pancakes according to the box (just add water). Add in the red and pink sprinkles and stir. To make heart-shaped pancakes, use a metal heart-shaped cookie cutter. Grease the inside of the cookie cutter and place in a heated, greased skillet. Pour batter into cookie cutter and fill half full. Cook the pancake until bubbles form on top. Remove the cookie cutter then flip. Cook for a few more minutes then take out. Repeat until all batter is used. Serve with syrup (you can also add whipped cream, strawberries, or chocolate syrup!)

#### **Extra tips:**

- Want red heart pancakes? Add in red food coloring to batter and stir.
- If you do not have a metal heart-shaped cookie cutter, just pour batter into skillet as normal.

# Week 3 – Jesus Cares for Us

## Read Luke 15:1-7 (The Parable of the Lost Sheep)

***\*\*For preschoolers, read “The Lost Sheep” from the Beginner’s Bible by Zonderkidz***

Have you ever wondered if you were important to God? Like how does God care about you if there are so many people in the world?

But we know we are important to Him and He cares about us because He loves us. And we know this because of the parable Jesus tells in the Bible of the Lost Sheep. In this story, Jesus tells of a person who has 100 sheep. One of the sheep gets lost and the shepherd leaves behind the 99 to search for the one lost sheep. And he doesn't just look in one place. He looks all over until he finds that one lost sheep.

Think about how your parents would feel if you ever got separated from them and then they found you. Or think about how you would feel if you had lost your favorite toy or stuffed animal and then found it. Your parents would be overjoyed and would be hugging you so hard. And you would probably do a happy dance when you found that lost toy.

How do you think the shepherd felt when he found that one lost sheep? He was thrilled and excited! The Bible says he threw the sheep onto his back and carried it home. Then he called all his friends and family and had them celebrate with him. He was glad to have that one sheep back!

This is exactly how Jesus feels about us! He rejoices when we come back to Him when we are lost and haven't been following Him closely. There will be times in your life when you make mistakes, mess up, and do the wrong thing. There may be times when you wonder if Jesus even cares about you. But I pray you will remember this story and know that Jesus DOES care about you and He DOES love you. It doesn't matter how many people live in this world. He will leave the 99 in search for the one lost sheep because He cares about you. He wants all of us to follow Him closely and He rejoices when we are found. So remember that you are important to Jesus because He cares for you and He loves you so much.

*Almighty God, thank You for caring so much about me. Help me to remember Your presence with me and show me how to follow You closely. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

## **Week 3 – Family Game**

### **Bible Verse Scavenger Hunt**

**Supplies Needed:** *Bible Verse Scavenger Hunt list, Bible, writing utensil*

In this game, you will search the Bible for the verses provided that contain the word "love." You will use the Bible Verse Scavenger Hunt list provided to look up the verses listed. Write down the verse in the box. If you can't write yet, draw a picture about what the verse says.

So grab your Bible, something to write with, and the Bible Verse Scavenger Hunt list. If you need help looking up the verses, ask your parents to help you. After you have finished looking up the verses, pick one of them to memorize this week.

## **Week 3 – Family Craft**

### **Sticky Note Love**

*Supplies Needed: sticky notes, markers*

Show some love to your family members today! Each family member should get a stack of sticky notes and a marker. Then write encouraging notes to your family members and stick them where they will see them.

Some examples:

"Thank you for being the greatest Mom ever!"

"I love that you are so patient with others."

"I love how you share your toys with your sister."

"I love your smile!"

Places you could leave them: on their bedroom door, on the mirror in their bathroom, in the car, on the fridge, on their toybox, on your dad's recliner.

And don't just leave one sticky note, but write many! Shower each family member with some love!

## **Week 3 – Family Snack**

### **Valentine Yogurt Parfait**

Vanilla Yogurt

Sliced strawberries

Granola

This is a healthy and easy snack to make for your kids!

In a cup or a bowl, layer the ingredients: vanilla yogurt, sliced strawberries, granola. Repeat layers until cup or bowl is full. Eat and enjoy!

# Week 4 – Jesus Died for Us

## Read John 19:17-42 (Jesus Dies on the Cross)

***\*\*For preschoolers, read "Jesus is Arrested and Crucified" from The Beginner's Bible by Zonderkidz***

All this month we have been discussing ways of how the Bible tells us that Jesus loves us. And today's story is probably the ultimate story of God's love for us.

Jesus was born on this earth for one reason...to save us from our sins. When Jesus was 30 years old, He began His ministry career and traveled around Israel preaching and teaching about God. He healed people, forgave people of their sins, and performed many miracles. At the age of 33, He gave His life for us by dying on the cross.

He spent the last week of His life in Jerusalem where He taught about God to all who were there and listened. But the Pharisees (the religious leaders) did not like Him. They didn't like that Jesus called Himself the Son of God (because they felt that He really was not). They were the ones who convinced Judas Iscariot (one of Jesus' disciples) to betray Him. They were the ones who had Jesus arrested that night in the Garden of Gethsemane. They were the ones who got the crowd all riled up and were shouting to crucify Jesus. They were the ones who spear-headed the plot to kill Jesus and have Him crucified on a cross (which means that He would be hung on a cross to die).

Could Jesus have stopped all this and freed Himself from being crucified? Absolutely. But if He had, then He would have stopped God's ultimate plan for saving His people. Because of Jesus' sacrifice, we are forgiven of our sins, we are no longer separated from God, and all who believe in Him and what He did for us can have eternal life. Isn't that amazing?!

I know that Jesus loves me because He died for me so that I could live forever with Him. And He died for you, too, because He loves you. This love is wrapped up into one Bible verse that you may already know:

*"For God so loved the world, that he gave his one and only Son that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." John 3:16*

Thank you, Jesus, for dying for all of us so we can live with You forever!

*Dear God, I am so grateful that You sent Your Son, Jesus, to die for me. Help me to follow You every day and to remember that You love me. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

## **Week 4 – Family Game**

### **Heart Matching Game**

*Supplies Needed: Heart matching game printable*

You will play a matching game using the printable provided. Each of the things listed on the hearts are things Jesus says to us in the Bible.

Cut out each heart (there will be 2 of each heart). Shuffle the cards. Lay them out in rows. Take turns trying to find a match. First player will turn over 2 hearts. If they don't match, then they turn them back over and the next player goes. If they do match, the player picks up the 2 matching hearts and places the match beside them. Then that same player gets to take another turn. Their turn is over when they don't find a match.

Continue until all hearts have been matched. The person with the most matched hearts, wins!



# Week 4 – Family Craft

## John 3:16 Puzzle

*Supplies Needed: DIY blank puzzles (can buy from Oriental Trading or Amazon), markers*

You will be designing your own puzzle that displays the John 3:16 verse.

Using a blank puzzle (that is put together), write in the John 3:16 verse:

*"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall never perish but have eternal life."*

Then use the markers to decorate your puzzle. After you are finished, separate the puzzle pieces, mix them up, then put them back together again. If you have a sibling, switch puzzles with them and you put together theirs and they will put together yours. Or you can give the puzzle to one of your parents and have them put it together.

After you finish, recite John 3:16 out loud and work on memorizing the verse.

## **Week 4 – Family Snack**

### **Valentine Cookie Bars**

1/2 cup butter

1 1/2 cups graham cracker crumbs

Sweetened condensed milk (14 oz)

White chocolate chips (12 oz pkg)

1 cup red and pink M&Ms

Preheat oven to 350°. Place butter in a 13x9 pan and melt it in the oven. Take out and pour crumbs over butter, making sure they are evenly spread. Pour sweetened condensed milk on top. Then top with white chocolate chips and M&Ms. Bake for 25-30 minutes. Let cool before cutting.

