



Imagination Station

A Soldier Believes Jesus

BIG IDEA: I can believe in Jesus.

BIBLE BASIS: Matthew 8:5–13

KEY VERSE: “Anyone who believes in [Jesus] has eternal life.” John 3:36

★ PLAY TIME ACTIVITY

ANIMAL RESCUE

Supplies: Stuffed animals (4 or more), band aids (1 box), tongue depressors or craft sticks (4 or more), any other medical supplies you might have access to such as a toy stethoscope, thermometer, etc.

Directions: Tell the children to imagine that their friends (the stuffed animals) are sick and they need our help. Tell the children that their friend got a cut. Ask what they might give them to help, then allow the children to put a band aid on the stuffed animal. Tell the children that their friend has a cough. Ask what they might do to help, then allow the children to check the animal’s throat with a tongue depressor. Continue making up ailments and asking children how they might use the medical supplies to help.

Say: In today’s true Bible story, there is a man who is very, very sick. What do you think might be wrong with the man? (*Allow children to answer.*) We’ll find out if you’re right when we hear the story. During our story, we’re going to learn that **I can believe in Jesus.**

Question: Have you ever been really sick before? What was wrong? What did your mom or dad do to help you get better?

★ LARGE GROUP LESSON



★ SMALL GROUP ACTIVITIES

CRAZY CREATURES (Application Activity)

Supplies: Blank piece of paper (1 per child), markers or crayons

Directions: Have the children sit in a circle. Give each child a blank piece of paper and some crayons or markers. Tell the children that they are going to work together to create some crazy creatures. Begin by telling the children to draw the first body part on the list below. After they finish drawing that body part, tell them to pass their drawing to the child on their right. Instruct the children to then draw the next body part from the list on their new drawing. Continue passing the drawings to the right and adding parts until the crazy creatures are finished. In the end, all (or most) of the children will have contributed something to each of the crazy creatures. Have the children take turns showing their final crazy creature to the group. Ask the children questions like, "What is your creature's name?" or "What does your creature like to do for fun?" When finished, ask the questions below.

Creature Features:

- Round body
- Square head
- Squiggly arms
- Banana legs
- Giant ears
- Three eyes
- Silly mouth
- Crooked nose
- Spots

Question: Is your crazy creature real or NOT real? Why do you think that?

Question: Is Jesus real or NOT real? Why do you think that?

Say: Sometimes it's hard to know what is real and what is not real. Our crazy creatures are definitely not real, but Jesus is absolutely, completely, totally real. Even though we can't see Him, we can believe in Jesus, just like the commander from our story did.

COMMANDER SAYS (Application Activity)

Supplies: None

Directions: "Commander Says" is played the same way as "Simon Says." Explain to the children that you are the commander and they are your soldiers. They must follow your orders, but only when you begin by saying, "Commander says..." If you don't say, "Commander says," they shouldn't perform the action. For example, if you say, "Commander says touch your toes," the children should touch their toes. But if you say, "Clap your hands," the children shouldn't clap their hands because Commander didn't say to. Perform the actions along with the children, even when Commander doesn't say to. (This will make it trickier.) For added fun, give the orders

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in the style of an army commander. The list below contains suggested actions, but you can make up your own as well. If time permits, allow some of the children to be Commander.

Actions:

- March in place
- Salute
- Do jumping jacks
- Karate chop the air
- Play the air guitar
- Jump up and down
- Waddle like a penguin
- Blink your eyes
- Cry like a baby
- Clap 3 times
- Rub your tummy
- Cluck like a chicken
- Tickle yourself
- Stand on 1 foot
- Smell your feet
- Hug yourself
- Spin around 3 times
- Wiggle your nose
- Hop like a frog
- Flex your muscles
- Roar like a lion
- Do a silly dance
- Clap 5 times
- Shake your body

Say: When an army commander tells his soldiers to do something, they do it. In today's true Bible story, the commander believed that Jesus could command his servant's sickness to go away. The commander believed in Jesus and **we can believe in Jesus, too.**

Question: What would you tell somebody if they said that Jesus wasn't real?

TOSS ACROSS (Bible Memorization Activity)

Supplies: Beach ball

Today's Bible verse:

"Anyone (*fan your arms out in front of you*) who believes in [Jesus] (*spread arms outward like a cross*) has eternal life (*march in place*)." John 3:36 (*extend hands like you're holding a book*).

Directions: Have the children sit in a circle. Practice the verse together until the children can remember it. When ready, pass the beach ball to a child across the circle. As you pass the ball, have the entire group recite the first word of the verse. Have the group continue passing the ball to different children. Each time the ball is passed, say the next word from the verse. Continue until the entire verse has been recited. Challenge the children to say the entire verse without dropping the ball. You can also challenge the children to go faster and faster each round.

WHAT'S NEXT? (Bible Story Review Activity)

Supplies: None

Directions: The following activity is designed to help children remember the sequence of events in a story. Ask the children, "What happened first in today's Bible story?" Allow the children to answer. Then, ask the children to come up with one motion or action that represents that part of the story. For example, if the answer is, "Jesus walked to the boat on the sea," the children could stand and march in place. Next, ask the children what happened next in the story. Then, just like before, have them come up with a corresponding action. After each new action is created, have the children perform all of the actions from the very beginning. In the end, the children will have created a series of actions that will help them remember the entire story from beginning to end

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COLORING SHEET AND SNACK TIME (GO! Deeper Activity)

Directions: Give each child a Bible story coloring sheet and some crayons or markers. While the children are coloring, give them a snack to eat and ask the following questions to help them go deeper into the story:

Question: In today's story, the commander believed that Jesus could heal his sick servant. What kind of things do you believe Jesus can do?

Question: Our Bible verse says that anyone who believes in Jesus will live forever with Him in Heaven. How does that make you feel? Why?

Say: In our true Bible story for today, Jesus healed a sick person. We're going to say a prayer right now and ask Jesus to help our friends and family who are sick or hurting.

Prayer: Begin by asking if any of the children would like to pray. Allow any children who want to pray the opportunity to do so. When they're finished, close the prayer by asking Jesus to help the sick and hurting people that the children talked about.