

## SUNDAY SCHOOL RESOURCES

*AIM: The aim of today's Sunday School is for the children to know that JESUS places them in the CENTRE of His Kingdom. He also wants them to place Him in the CENTRE of all they do.*

### Activities and Games

The aim of the activities is for children to explore how they could make Jesus the centre of their lives

#### GAME 1: Cat and Mouse

For this activity you will need:

- One child to be the mouse
- One child to be the cat

The object of this game is for children to keep the child who is the cat, *out* of the circle (who is trying to catch another child, the mouse) who is in the *centre* of the circle.

- Choose two children to be the cat and the mouse. Ask the rest of the children to make a circle around the child who is the mouse. Ask them to join hands. As the cat tries to get to the mouse the children need to raise their arms up and down to block the cat catching the mouse.

#### Teaching Point

- This illustrates that when we have Jesus in the centre of our lives, other distractions will try and get into our circle of friendship with Jesus. We keep focused on Jesus, and keep other distractions out by understanding stories from the bible and spending time with Jesus in prayer.

#### GAME 2: How big is my circle?

For this activity you will need:

- A small hand held bean bag or a bag of rice (that will not break)
- Chalk or tape

The object of the game is for children to throw the rice or bean bag into the centre of different sized circles.

- Draw a very small circle with the chalk or mark out with tape on the floor. Ask the children to stand about 12 steps away from the circle and throw the rice or bean bag into the small circle. Comment on how hard it is to get the rice or bean bag into the centre of the circle.



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- After each child has had a turn, make the circle slightly bigger and then start another round of the game. Keep on making the circle slightly bigger for each round until eventually the children can get the rice or bean bag into the circle which should be quite a large circle.

### **Teaching Point:**

- Sometimes we only want Jesus in a small part of our lives but Jesus wants to be part of our all our lives. Just like it was hard to get the rice or bean bag into the small circle, life will be harder if Jesus is only in a small part of our lives.
- I wonder if you noticed that it was much easier to get the rice or bean bag into the circle when it was much bigger. When Jesus is in all parts of our lives, the centre of our lives we will find much more joy in our lives. Jesus will help us, guide us and we can live a life full of hope.
- Spend time with the children discussing how we can make Jesus the centre of our lives. (Praying, reading the bible, spending time with other people who love Jesus, asking Jesus to be with you in everything that you do, memorising scripture verses, talking to Jesus about everything etc.)

### **Jesus in the centre of my heart**

For this activity you will need:

- Many stones or rocks or shells

The aim of this activity is for the children to see that Jesus can be the centre of our lives; all we have to do is ask him to be our friend.

- Ask each child to choose a stone or rock or shell for every activity that is part of their lives, (sport, family, school, job, corps life etc.) Allow them to choose one larger stone that will represent Jesus.
- Ask the children to place their stone that represents Jesus on the table or floor in front of them. Ask them to place their other stones, one by one around the rock that represents Jesus. As they place each rock down, encourage the children to say out loud, 'Jesus please be part of my . . . . . life' (whatever that rock represents). This will demonstrate that Jesus can be the centre of every part of their lives.



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## Main Teaching Story (from Matthew 18:1-7)

- Jesus' disciples were arguing, they wanted to know, 'Who was the most important person in God's kingdom? They spent some time arguing amongst themselves. They all wanted Jesus to like them the best and they started thinking that they had to do something to make themselves special to Jesus. They thought that if they were the brightest or nicest, Jesus would like them the best.
- They were too busy arguing to remember that no matter how good you are, or how nice you are, or how rich you are or how good looking you are or how important you are, it doesn't make any difference to God. God had been showing people for a long time that God's love is a gift and that it is a free gift. All you have to do is ask God to be your friend.
- So while Jesus' disciples were busy arguing, some little children were playing near Jesus and he called them over. (Encourage the children to picture the children arriving to see Jesus with their parents, or some arriving with their friends, some walking up to Jesus, some even could have come to Jesus skipping.)
- Jesus' disciples tried to send them away. They told the children that he didn't have time for them because was too tired and busy. But how wrong were they because Jesus always had time for children. Jesus told his friends, 'Don't ever send them away! 'Bring the children to me.'
- These children were so excited, they ran straight up to Jesus and let him pick them up in his arms and embraced them. Then they may have sat on Jesus lap and he may have listened to all their stories and had a chat to them.
- Children loved Jesus, and they knew they didn't need to do anything special for Jesus to love them. All they needed to do was to run into his arms. And so that's just what they did.
- After Jesus had spent some time with each of the children he placed them in **the centre** of his friends and told them that no matter how big you grow or how old you get, you will never get so old that you lose your child's heart. You should never lose a child's way of fully trusting in God. Jesus told his disciples they needed to be more like these children.



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## Comments on the story

- In this story Jesus made sure that the children were not overlooked, he didn't push them aside. Jesus knew how important children were and he showed his disciples how important they were to him. He acknowledged that children have a faith that is full of trust in God.
- God used many children in the Bible to do great things for him. For example, you could tell the story of Samuel OR the Boy with the loaves and fishes.
- Jesus still loves to place children in the centre of everything He is doing. This means that being in the 'centre' means God wants to include you in everything. God also wants you to include him in what you are doing. He wants to be in the centre of your lives whether it is at home, in your community or in the Corps.

## Instructions on how to use the CHILDREN'S PERSONALPRAYER and ACTION PLAN:

1. Use the PERSONAL PRAYER and ACTION PLAN as an activity at the END of the Sunday school time.
2. Display a copy of the PERSONAL PRAYER and ACTION PLAN on a multi-media/screen if possible. If not have some copies available for the children to see.
3. Give each child their own PERSONAL PRAYER and ACTION PLAN.
4. Encourage the children to spend time together discussing or writing the types of actions that could be placed in their plan (family, community and kingdom).
5. There are examples in each section that can be used as a guide.
6. After the children have completed their PERSONAL PRAYER and ACTION PLAN, encourage the children to pray about their plan. They may wish to pray out loud or silently.
7. Encourage the children to take their PERSONAL PRAYER and ACTION PLAN home and place it somewhere in their house to remind them of their plan.



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# My Personal Prayer & Action Plan

Using an 'I can' statement, write or draw how  
you can be in the **CENTRE** of your Family,  
Community and God's Kingdom



Family

*for example: I can read Bible stories to my brother, sister or cousin*

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Community

*for example: I can collect clothing for people in need*

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Kingdom

*for example: I can welcome new children into our Corps*

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***I can do all things through Christ  
because he gives me strength.  
Philippians 4:13 (ICB)***



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