



WEEK 1

RIVER KIDS LESSONS & ACTIVITIES

LEVEL UP

BIG IDEA

Jesus trusted God.

THE BIBLE

The Garden of Gethsemane: Matthew 26:36-46

SUNDAY MORNING - WELCOME TIME

MUSIC | Worship Time

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Ask the kids to sing along to a few songs. We have posted some suggested song on the C3KidsWheeling.com website.
 - EVERYONE PRAISE THE LORD, by Saddleback Kids
 - I am the Resurrection
 - One Two Three
 - I believe in Jesus, Saddleback Kids

ACTIVITY | Garden Moves

- Today's story takes place in a garden. Let's play a garden game with these special flowers.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Use masking tape to make labels on the stems of artificial flowers. On each label, write an action such as skip or hop (or you can use colors and say, "Skip for blue, hop for yellow"). Place flowers in a pot or vase. One at a time, have each kid pick a flower. Read the label and have kids move around the room as the label directs. Try to give each kid a chance to pick a flower. For more fun, play lively music while the kids move. When the music stops, kids freeze and wait for the next flower to be picked. (Bonus: Add more actions for the kids to do if you want more variety, such as crawl, clap, dance, etc.)



TEACHING TIME

THE BIG IDEA | Jesus trusted God.

- Today, we are going to talk about a time when Jesus went into the garden to spend time with God. Jesus was going to do something really hard — the hardest thing ever. But Jesus trusted God. That is this week's Big Idea: Jesus trusted God.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Print out this week's printable and have the kids color in the flowers. As they color, you can have them repeat the Big Idea among themselves a few times.*

PLAY THE VIDEO FIRST.

VIDEO | Level Up, Episode 1

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Play this week's preschool [teaching video](#).*

YOU CAN FOLLOW UP WITH THIS CONVERSATION STARTED AND QUESTIONS.

BIBLE STORY | Matthew 26:36-46

- Now pretend you are one of the flowers in the Garden of Gethsemane. Listen to the story and imagine you are watching everything that happened.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Read Matthew 26:36-46 slowly and with expression, encouraging the kids to imagine the scene.*
- **How many times did Jesus pray?** Jesus prayed three times because Jesus was about to do something really hard. **Can you count with me?** One, two, three (*Ask the kids to count along on their fingers*).
- **What did Jesus' friends do while Jesus was praying?** That's right! They were sleeping! Show me how you sleep (*Ask kids to pretend to sleep*).
- **How do you think Jesus felt while praying?** Jesus was probably very sad. How do you look when you are sad (*Ask everyone to make a sad face*)?
- Jesus had a hard choice to make. **But Jesus trusted God.**

ACTIVITY | Garden of Trust

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Post a large piece of mural paper on the wall. Provide each kid with two flower-shaped cutouts and a crayon.*
- Pick one of your flower cutouts. Imagine you had a hard decision to make like Jesus did. **How would you feel?** Draw a face on your flower that shows how it feels to have to do something really hard.
- Now, bring your flower up to our garden and we will help you glue (or tape) it on.



LEVEL UP | WEEK 1 PRESCHOOL LESSON

- This time, get your other flower. Think about how it would feel to trust God about your decision. Draw a face on your flower showing what that would feel like.
- Bring that flower up to our garden mural for us to help you glue it on.
- Look at all those flowers with all those big feelings. I'm so glad we can trust God to help us just like Jesus trusted God.
 - **TODDLER HACK:** Give each child two flowers - one with a sad face and one with a happy face. Help them choose which face to bring up to the mural for each question.

AFTER YOUR CONVERSATION, TAKE SOME TIME TO INTRODUCE THE NEW MEMORY VERSE.

MEMORY VERSE | Hebrews 12:2

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Introduce kids to this month's memory verse, teaching them the signs (a combination of SEE and ASL) we've provided.
- Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. - Hebrews 12:2a
- The sign language motions are available on the Level Up Week One page.

PRAYER

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Either give each kid an artificial flower from earlier to hold, or, if space allows, ask them to gather around the garden mural you just created.
- Let's pray in our garden, just like Jesus did.
- Dear God, help us to trust You just like Jesus did. Amen.

WHEN YOUR DONE, MAKE A FUN SNACK TOGETHER.

SNACK | Garden Snacks

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Serve flower-shaped cookies and apple juice. While the kids are eating their snack, have an informal discussion about what the kids have learned today! You can ask questions like:
- **Why was Jesus in the garden?**
- **What did Jesus do?**
- **What did Jesus' disciples do?**
- **Do you think they understood what Jesus was going through?**



ACTIVITIES FOR THE WEEK

BELOW ARE A GATHERING OF ACTIVITY IDEAS THAT YOU CAN USE THROUGHOUT THE WEEK WITH YOUR KIDS. BIG ONE A DAY, THEN REVIEW THE MEMORY VERSE. CLOSE YOUR TIME.HAVE FUN!

ACTIVITY | Praying in the Garden

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Let each kid choose which part to play to re-enact today's story — Jesus, a disciple, or a flower in the garden. If no kids are comfortable pretending to be Jesus, play that part yourself. If more than one want to be Jesus, repeat the exercise, letting a different kid play the Jesus role. Remember, this does not have to be a line by line accurate enactment, just a general idea of what happened.*
- Jesus prayed because He didn't want to do the hard thing, but in the end Jesus trusted God.

ACTIVITY | Trust Poster

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Write TRUST in big letters in the center of a poster board. As you ask the kids these questions, write some of the answers on the poster.*
- **Who can you trust in your life?**
- **How do you know you can trust them?**
- **Do you think you can trust God? What things remind you that you can trust God?**
- **What hard things might God be asking us to do?**

ACTIVITY | Coloring Page

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Use this time while the kids color to remind them of today's Bible story, the Big Idea, and the memory verse.*

ACTIVITY | Garden Play

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Provide artificial flowers and an upside-down colander for fine motor skills practice. Encourage the kids to stick the stems of the flowers in the holes of the colander to make their own floral arrangements.*

ACTIVITY | Play-Doh Garden

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Provide Play-Doh and chenille stems for children to use to make the garden Jesus was in when Jesus prayed.*



ACTIVITY | Flower Yoga Poses

- In today's story, Jesus went into the garden to spend quiet time with God. We have been moving around a lot in our garden, so let's quiet our mind and our body to get ready to hear about Jesus and God.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Instruct kids in the following modified yoga poses:*
- **Tree Pose:** Tell kids to plant one foot firmly on the ground and then rest the other foot on the leg that is standing. Tell them to lift their hands in the air like tree branches.
- **Lotus Pose:** This pose is basically the criss-cross applesauce pose most kids know from preschool class — sitting with legs crossed and hands on knees.
- **Lotus Mudra:** Tell kids to hold their hands together like a closed flower and then slowly spread their fingers out to resemble a flower blooming.
 - **TODDLER HACK:** *Toddlers should not be expected to stand on one foot. Just ask them to stand up tall and reach their hands up like a tree.*

MEMORY VERSE | Hebrews 12:2

- Let's plant a memory verse garden! When I plant the flower, say the word with me.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Write one word from the memory verse on each construction paper flower. As you put each flower on a green poster board, say the word and have the children repeat it after you. Then, say the verse together two or three times as you point to the flowers.*

**TAKE FRIDAY AS A FAMILY DAY.
GO TO A PARK.
TAKE A WALK.
PLAY IN THE YEAR.
WATCH A MOVIE.
PLAY A BOARD GAME.
PLAY A VIDEO GAME.**

**AS EASTER APPROACHES, THINK OF SOME FUN EASTER IDEAS.
DYE EGGS.
HAVE AN EGG HUNT.
USE THE RESURRECTION EGGS KIT.
STROLL THROUGH PINTEREST AND GET A FEW IDEAS.**