
 **Luke 2:41-52**

Leader Guide for Ages 3-6

Teachers Dig In

Dig In to the Bible

- Read: Luke 2:41-52
- In This Passage: In today's Bible passage, Jesus is 12. He's at the Temple for a festival, and when his family leaves, he stays behind. His parents, Mary and Joseph, realize he's lost and look for him for three days. They finally find him in the Temple, wowing the people there with his wisdom. After he returns home, he continues to grow in wisdom.
- Bible Point: Jesus is wise.
- Summary Verse: "And a voice from heaven said, 'This is my dearly loved Son, who brings me great joy' " (Matthew 3:17).

Dig Deeper

- You'll Be Teaching: *Jesus is wise.* Kids today have more going on in their lives than ever before. And with all their activities and responsibilities come a lot of choices. While kids may not always know the wisest choice, they can see that Jesus had the wisdom they need even when he was still a child. Encourage kids to turn to Jesus for wisdom.
- Think About: What's an area of your life where you could use more wisdom? What can you do to turn to Jesus for wisdom?

Dig In to Prayer

- Kids can make you feel worried and frantic just like Mary and Joseph! Write down the names of kids who cause you to worry—and pray for them specifically to find Jesus' wisdom.

Quick Tip

- You may be tempted to give kids a reward for positive behaviors, but this provides an extrinsic motivation that will fade. Instead, speak words of affirmation to them, and let them know you see Jesus shining through their lives.

This Lesson at a Glance



OPENING

Preschoolers talk about people who know what to do when someone is in need.

Supplies

- Bible



CORE BIBLE DISCOVERY

Preschoolers talk about 12-year-olds, party with Jesus, go on a hunt, ask questions, and talk about church.

Supplies

- Bible
- "Find Jesus" handout (1 copy) (download [here](#))
- 1 roll of crepe paper
- 3 inflated balloons
- individually wrapped candies (1 per child)
- music player
- preschool music
- crayons

Easy Prep

- Cut apart the two sections on the "Find Jesus" handout.
- Hide one of the pictures in your room. Keep one of the pictures of Jesus on hand.



PRESCHOOL PUPPET SKIT

Recommended for preschoolers.

Supplies

- Theophilus the FaithRetriever™ Puppet (order [here](#))
- Bible



CRAFT

Preschoolers make a mural of raised hands.

Supplies

- bulletin board paper
- paper
- crayons
- glue sticks
- markers

Easy Prep

- Cut one 8x4-inch strip of paper per child.
- Write "Jesus is wise" in large letters across the top of the bulletin board paper. You'll want the bulletin board paper to be about 5 feet long for every 20 preschoolers. You may want to make several banners if you have a large group.



MUSIC VIDEO

Preschoolers sing songs of praise to God.

Supplies

- “All That Is Good” (watch or download [here](#))
- “Million Reasons” (watch or download [here](#))
- “We Can Trust Him (Psalm 33:4)” (watch or download [here](#))



HIGH-ENERGY GAME

Preschoolers follow the leader to different colors in the room using various actions.

Supplies

- 1 sheet of each of the following: red, yellow, blue, and green construction paper
- tape

Easy Prep

- Tape each color of construction paper to a different area of your room.



LOW-ENERGY GAME

Preschoolers play a version of “Mother, May I?”

Easy Prep

- If you don't already have two adult or teen leaders in your room, recruit someone to help you.



LIFE APPLICATION WRAP-UP

Preschoolers pray for wisdom.

Supplies

- "Jesus Knows What to Do" handout (1 copy per child) (download [here](#))
- "Praying Hands" handout (1 copy per child) (download [here](#))
- glue sticks

Easy Prep

- Cut apart a "Jesus Knows What to Do" handout for each child.



TAKE-HOME

Preschoolers receive a take-home page about the lesson.

Supplies

- this week's “Dig In @ Home” handout (1 per child) (download [here](#))

Easy Prep

- Add your church announcements to the “Dig In @ Home” handout.

**Marked supplies can be reused from Core Bible Discovery*

Let's keep kids safe! You can help by using supplies as instructed for only ages 3+, purchasing child-safe items, and being aware of allergy concerns.



OPENING Welcome

[5 min]

Supplies

- Bible

Welcome

Thank the preschoolers for coming.
Just for fun, have preschoolers show their goofiest faces to everyone around them.

Make announcements.
Introduce new preschoolers.
Celebrate birthdays by saying "Happy birthday" in a funny voice.
Collect the offering.

Introduce the Lesson

Say: **Today we'll learn that Jesus is wise. That means Jesus always knows what to do! Jesus knows what to do when someone is sad or when someone needs help. Jesus knows what to do when someone is hurt or when someone is lost.**

Share

Tell about someone *you* know who often knows what to do when others need help.

Have small-group leaders ask preschoolers: **Who knows what to do when you're hurt? Who knows what to do when you need help?**

Say: **It sounds like your friends and family know what to do a lot of the time. That means they're wise.**

Summarize

Open a Bible, and say: **The Bible helps us know what to do, too. It tells us about Jesus. We can learn from Jesus and the Bible right now!**

Pray: **Jesus, thank you that you're here right now, ready to talk with us. Thank you, Jesus, for always knowing what to do. Help us learn from you. In your name, amen.**



CORE BIBLE DISCOVERY

Passover Festival at the Temple (Luke 2:41-52)

[20 min]

Supplies

- Bible
- "Find Jesus" handout (1 copy) (download [here](#))
- 1 roll of crepe paper
- 3 inflated balloons
- individually wrapped candies (1 per child)
- music player
- preschool music
- crayons

Easy Prep

- Cut apart the two sections on the "Find Jesus" handout.
- Hide one of the pictures in your room. Keep one of the pictures of Jesus on hand.

Think About Jesus' Age

Say: **Today we're learning that Jesus is wise. That means he *a/ways* knows what to do and say. We learn about things Jesus says and does in the Bible.**

Open your Bible to Luke 2.

Say: **In this Bible story, Jesus is a child like you.**

Invite the children to shout their ages.

Say: **Jesus is older than you in this Bible story. But he's still a child; he's 12 years old.**

Tell about someone you know who is 12 years old, or tell about someone who was recently 12. (If you have a preteen helper in the room, mention him or her.) Share a couple of things, such as their grade in school and favorite hobby or sport.

Ask: • **Do you know any kids who are 12 years old?** If any children know a 12-year-old, invite them to share things about 12-year-olds they know.

Party With Jesus

Say: **One thing I know about 12-year-olds is they usually like parties! Raise your hand if you like parties.** Pause. **When Jesus was 12, he went to a very special party with his parents.**

Tell details about a special party you've been to that fit in these categories: music, food, games, or decorations.

Ask: • **Think about a party you went to. What things did you see or do at the party?** Listen for things that fit into the categories of music, food, games, and decorations. Guide children's answers to fit the categories, if needed.

Say: **Let's make our room like a party right now.**

Repeat at least one thing the children mentioned about the music, and then turn on music. (Leave it on as you add other elements of the party to your room.)

Repeat at least one thing the children mentioned about decorations, and then toss the crepe paper over the children's heads while you hold one end of the roll.

Have the adult leaders or children toss the crepe paper in different directions a few times to "decorate" the area.

Repeat at least one thing the children mentioned about games, and then toss the three inflated balloons into the group of children. Let them bop the balloons around for a minute.

Repeat at least one thing the children mentioned about food, and then give each child an individually wrapped candy.

Soften the music and collect the balloons, but leave the other party elements in place.

Say: **The special party Jesus went to lasted for *eight days*!** Have the kids count to eight with you.

Say: **Jesus went to this party every year.**

Tell one or two things your family has parties for every year.

Ask: • **What kinds of parties do you go to every year?** (Have kids answer in small groups with adult or teen volunteers.)

Say: **Jesus went to this party to thank God for something great he did, kind of like how we have parties for Christmas and Easter.**

Find Jesus

Say: **After eight days, the party was over. It was time to go home.**

Stop the music, and have the children help you clean up the decorations. Set the decorations out of sight.

Show your Bible.

Say: **The Bible says Jesus' family left to go home. Their home was far away. They had to walk or ride on animals for a long time to get home.**

Have the children stand and pretend to ride on animals around the room once.

Say: **That night, Jesus' parents couldn't find Jesus. Remember, Jesus was only 12 years old, and they lost him. That must've been scary. Let's help Jesus' parents look for Jesus.**

Show children the picture of Jesus.

Say: **This is a picture of Jesus. Let's look for a matching picture to find Jesus.**

Have the children look through "binoculars" they make with their hands in front of their eyes. Lead the children to look in the distance to the left and then in the distance to the right.

Say: **Jesus' parents went all the way back to the party to look for Jesus.**

Lead the children around the room. Have them pretend to walk up a hill by leaning forward as they march. Have them walk down a hill by leaning back as they march.

Say: **Jesus' parents didn't find him for three days!**

Lead the children to lie on the floor and pretend to sleep for a few seconds, and then have them get up and stretch, as if it's morning. Repeat this three times.

Lead kids to where you hid the picture of Jesus.

Say: **After three days, Jesus' parents found him! He was in the Temple. A temple is kind of like a church.**

Point to the general area of the hidden picture, and show the matching picture that you have on hand. Say: **Let's pretend this area is the Temple. I think we can find the matching picture of Jesus here.** Have the children look for the picture. Help them find it, if needed.

Ask Questions Like Jesus

Say: **Jesus was at the Temple the whole time! The party was at the Temple. And Jesus stayed at the party even when it was over! Jesus wanted to talk about the Bible. Jesus knew he could talk about the Bible at the Temple. That's why he stayed.**

Show the Bible.

Say: **The Bible says that Jesus' parents found him sitting with the teachers at the Temple. He was listening to the teachers. Point to your ears. And he was asking questions. Point to your mouth. Let's ask questions and listen like Jesus.**

Ask: • **What's something you want to know more about?** If kids are stumped, share some things kids ask, such as "How do birds fly?" "Why do some people cry when they're happy?" or "Why aren't there any dinosaurs anymore?"

Say: **You ask good questions. When you ask questions, you learn and grow. When Jesus was 12 years old, he asked questions, too. Jesus surprised the teachers with his questions. He had *really* good questions. The teachers could tell Jesus was already wise. Jesus already knew a lot about God and the Bible.**

Talk About Church

Say: **When Jesus' parents found him, they didn't know what to think. Here's what his mom said:**

Read Jesus' mother's quote from Luke 2:48.

Say: **Jesus' parents felt scared when they lost him. They felt angry or confused that Jesus stayed at the Temple. He was only a child.**

Briefly share about a time you wandered off as a child, or talk about a time your child, a friend's child, or family member's child wandered off.

Ask: • **Have your parents ever been upset at you for wandering off? What did they do?** Have kids answer in small groups with adult or teen volunteers.

Say: **Jesus' mom wasn't happy. But Jesus told her something surprising.**

Read Luke 2:49.

Say: **Jesus said they should've known he was there. He called the Temple his Father's house. The Temple was kind of like a home for Jesus.**

Share something you like about being at church.

Ask: • **What is something you like about church?** Have kids answer in small groups with adult or teen volunteers.

Say: **Jesus loved being at the Temple. It was like home to him. But it was time for Jesus to go to his home where his mom and dad lived. The Bible says Jesus went home with his parents. Jesus obeyed his parents. That means he did what they told him to do. Jesus was wise to do what his parents told him to do.**

Read aloud Luke 2:52.

Say: **Jesus grew and got older, just like you're doing! Jesus was already wise at 12 years old. But he grew and learned more as he got older. Jesus shows us that we can grow and learn like he did. We can learn from him about how to be wise. We can learn from him about what to say and do. Jesus is wise, and he can help us be wise.**



PRESCHOOL PUPPET SKIT

Theo Needs Wisdom

[10 min]

Supplies

- Theophilus the FaithRetriever™ Puppet (order [here](#))
- Bible

Tip

- You may find it helpful to highlight your part and set the script on a music stand nearby during the skit.

Leader: **It's time for our puppy friend, Theo, to come for a visit. Let's call him to our class with a "woof, woof." Ready?** *(Leads kids to bark until Theo is brought into view.)*

Theo: **It's good to see you!** *(Pants.) I really, really want a good scratch. Friends, will you scratch my back?* *(Circulates among kids so each child can pet him.)*

Leader: **Thanks for giving Theo a warm welcome, friends!**

Theo: **Yeah, thanks!**

Leader: **What's new with you, Theo?**

Theo: **I've been busy playing soccer.** *(Looks to kids.) What sports do you like to play?* *(Responds to kids' answers, and then looks to the leader.) What about you?*

Leader: *(Shares favorite sport.)*

Theo: **Soccer is my life.** *(Sighs.) It's been taking up all my free time because my team is getting ready for the championship.*

Leader: **Wow! Congratulations, Theo!** *(High-fives Theo and then encourages all the kids to give him a high-five.)*

Theo: **Thanks! I'm pretty excited.** *(Sighs.) But my mom doesn't seem very excited right now.*

Leader: **Why do you think that?**

Theo: **I haven't had time to clean my room. I was going to practice some more kicks after this, but my mom doesn't want me to.**

Leader: **Hmmm. Well, I bet she's excited about your game, but maybe she also wants you to clean your room.**

Theo: **I know. I just can't decide what to do.**

Leader: **Do you know who could help you decide what to do?**

Theo: ***You?***

Leader: *(Chuckles.)* **I can help you, but I'm going to ask Jesus to help *me* help you!**

Theo: ***Huh?***

Leader: **Jesus is wise. He can help me make good decisions. He knows way more than me, so I think we should find out what Jesus says.**

Theo: ***How are we going to do that?***

Leader: **Two things we could do are pray and read the Bible. Let's start with prayer.** *(Leads kids in a brief prayer, asking Jesus for wisdom and inviting the children to pray if they want to add anything.)*

Theo: ***Thanks!***

Leader: **I know of a couple of verses that might help us, too.** *(Reads aloud Colossians 3:20 and Ephesians 6:1.)*

Theo: ***Oh. I don't think I've been obeying my mom very well. (Looks to kids.) You heard what the verses said. What do you think I should do? (Listens to kids' responses and quietly contemplates.)***

Leader: **The Bible says it's important for us to obey our parents. I think you should clean your room before you do anything else.**

Theo: ***I think you're right. But do you think I can go practice after that?***

Leader: **As long as your mom says it's okay!**

Theo: ***Do you always ask Jesus and look in the Bible for help when you need to make a decision?***

Leader: **Well, Jesus is wise, so that's the best thing to do.**

Theo: ***What if I'm deciding whether to wear red shoes or yellow shoes?***

Leader: **We can ask Jesus for help anytime! He might not care whether you wear red or yellow shoes, and when you have a decision like that to make, that's not what wisdom is all about.**

Theo: ***Oh. Thanks for explaining.***

Leader: **Of course! Jesus is wise, so you can ask him for help anytime you need to!**

Theo: ***Neat! I think I'm going to go home right now and clean my room. Then I might have some extra time to practice. (Looks to kids.) Thanks again for your encouragement about my soccer team! (Gives each child another high-five.)***

Leader: Okay, Theo. Friends, give Theo a big “woof, woof, goodbye”! *(Leads kids to say “woof, woof, goodbye,” and then places Theo out of sight.)*



CRAFT We Ask Jesus Mural

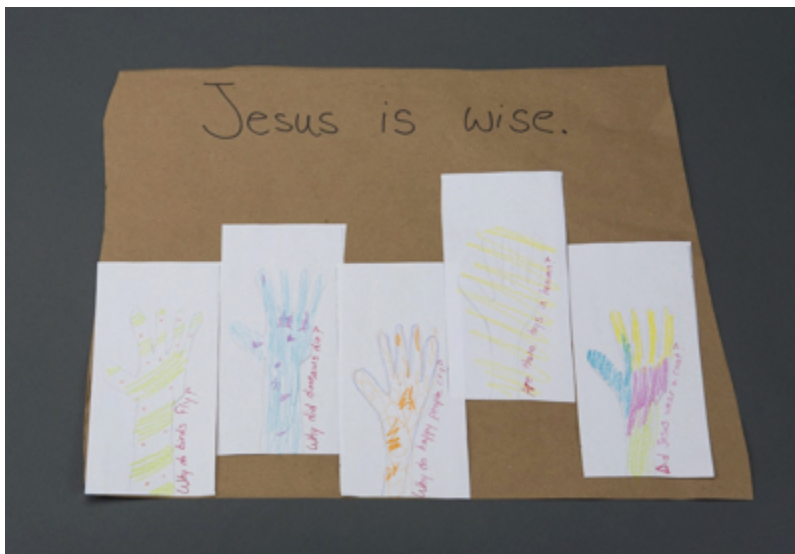
[20 min]

Supplies

- bulletin board paper
- paper
- crayons
- glue sticks
- markers

Easy Prep

- Cut one 8x4-inch strip of paper per child.
- Write "Jesus is wise" in large letters across the top of the bulletin board paper. You'll want the bulletin board paper to be about 5 feet long for every 20 preschoolers. You may want to make several banners if you have a large group.



Ask Questions

Say: **Jesus' parents thought they had lost him. When they looked for him, they found him at the Temple. Jesus was talking to the teachers. He was asking questions. Asking questions helps us learn. Asking questions helps us be wise like Jesus.**

Sometimes teachers want us to raise our hands when we have a question. Let's make a hand craft with some of our questions.

Raise your hand, and then say: **I have a question: I wonder...** Share about something you wonder about.

Ask: **• Now it's your turn to ask questions. Raise your hand when you think of a question. What's something you wonder about?** Choose one child. As he or she shares the question, use a marker to trace the child's hand and part of the arm on a strip of paper. Have all the children repeat that child's question.

Have adult or teen volunteers repeat the same process with the rest of the children in small groups of five or six.

Color "Raised Hands"

Have kids color their "raised hands." As children work, have adult or teen volunteers write children's questions along the side of the traced arms on preschoolers' paper strips.

Create a Mural of "Raised Hands"

As children finish coloring, help them arrange and glue the hands along the bottom of the banner. Place the hands at varying heights all the way across the banner so it looks like a group of raised hands.

After most of the hands are on the banner, say: **This banner says "Jesus is wise." When we talk to Jesus and ask him questions, we can learn a lot. Jesus can help us be wise. He can help us know what to say and do.**



MUSIC VIDEO

All That Is Good

[10 min]

Supplies

- “All That Is Good” (watch or download [here](#))
- “Million Reasons” (watch or download [here](#))
- “We Can Trust Him (Psalm 33:4)” (watch or download [here](#))

Tip

- Don’t have internet in your classroom? That’s okay! You can choose your own worship songs from our Best Of Dig In Music DVD [here](#).

Sing Songs to God

Sing the three songs in any order.



HIGH-ENERGY GAME

Go to the Color

[10 min]

Supplies

- 1 sheet of each of the following: red, yellow, blue, and green construction paper
- tape

Easy Prep

- Tape each color of construction paper to a different area of your room.

Go to the Color

Say: **Jesus is wise**. That means he knows what to do. Jesus can help *us* know what to do, too. When we listen to Jesus, he helps us know what to do.

Let's play a listening game.

Have kids stand in the center of the room.

Point out the colored sheets of paper taped around the room.

Say: **Remember to listen carefully. When I name a color, go quickly to that color. Ready?**

Name a color, and lead the kids to that color.

Repeat this process a couple more times.

Say: **You're doing great! Let's make it a little harder. Now I'll name a color and an action. Let's practice. Ready?** Pause. **Crawl to** [name a color]. Lead kids in crawling to the color you named.

Remind kids to listen carefully, and then repeat this process several more times, varying the actions. You can have kids jump, march, hold hands while they walk, or clap while they walk.

Play for about six minutes. If kids seem to be mastering the game, let kids take turns leading the group after you give the instructions. You can also let kids take turns choosing the color or the action.

Talk About It

Ask: • **How did you know what to do in this game?**

Say: **Listening carefully helped us know what to do in this game.**

Copying a leader helped, too. We can listen carefully to Jesus. And we can copy what Jesus says and does. Jesus helps us know what to do. Jesus is wise!



LOW-ENERGY GAME

Jesus, May I?

[10 min]

Easy Prep

- If you don't already have two adult or teen leaders in your room, recruit someone to help you.

Ask for Wisdom

Say: **Jesus is wise. That means Jesus knows what's good for us—and Jesus knows what's *not* good for us. Jesus always knows the best thing to do! Let's play a game to help us learn what it means to be wise.**

Have preschoolers and your helper stand against one wall of the room while you stand against the opposite wall.

This game is a variation of "Mother, May I?"

Say: **Let's see who can get to this wall.** Point to the wall you're standing against. **Ask Jesus a question, like this.** Have your helper demonstrate by saying, "Jesus, may I hurt a friend?"

Say: **Do you think that's wise?** Have children give a thumbs-up if they think it's a wise thing to do. Have them give a thumbs-down if they think it's not wise.

After kids vote, say: **Jesus says that's not wise.**

Have the helper ask, "Jesus, may I hug a friend?" Have the kids vote with thumbs-up or thumbs-down, and then say: **Jesus says that's wise.**

Say: **Our friend asked a wise question and can move forward.** Have the helper take one step from the wall.

Say: **If you thought that was wise, you can take a step forward, too.** Have all the children step forward if they voted with a thumbs-up.

Have your helper continue to ask these wise and unwise questions:

- Jesus, may I lie to my mommy?
- Jesus, may I tell my mommy the truth?
- Jesus, may I sneak a toy from my friend?
- Jesus, may I ask a friend to share her toy?
- Jesus, may I say something mean to my daddy?
- Jesus, may I say nice things to my daddy?

For each question, let the children vote with their thumbs before you respond. The children who vote correctly on each "wise" question can move forward one step.

After several of your questions, let any older children who want to participate ask some of their own questions. For younger children, teen or adult helpers can make up more questions.

Play for five to six minutes. If kids reach the wall, you can have them go back to the wall they started at and play again.

Talk About It

Ask: • **Which things does Jesus say "no" to?**

• **Why do you think Jesus said "no" to [name one of the things]?**

• **What are some good things Jesus likes you to do?** If kids have trouble, help them by giving examples such as sharing or being nice to others.

Say: **Sometimes you might not know what to do. You can talk to Jesus. You can ask him questions, like you did in our game. Jesus is wise. He always knows what to do. Jesus can help you be wise. He can help you know what to**

do.



LIFE APPLICATION WRAP-UP

Ask Jesus in Prayer

[5 min]

Supplies

- "Jesus Knows What to Do" handout (1 copy per child) (download [here](#))
- "Praying Hands" handout (1 copy per child) (download [here](#))
- glue sticks

Easy Prep

- Cut apart a "Jesus Knows What to Do" handout for each child.

Ask Jesus When I'm Scared

Say: **Today we learned that Jesus is wise. That means he can help us with anything. He always knows what to do. We can pray to Jesus when we don't know what to do.**

Give each child a "Praying Hands" handout and each of the pictures from the "Jesus Knows What to Do" handout.

Say: **If you're scared, Jesus knows what to do.** Have children find the picture of the "scared" child and glue the picture onto the praying hands.

Pray with kids, thanking Jesus that he's wise and that he knows what to do when they're scared.

Ask Jesus When I'm Sad

Say: **If you're sad, Jesus knows what to do.** Have children find the picture of the "sad" child and glue the picture onto the praying hands.

Pray with kids, thanking Jesus that he's wise and that he knows what to do when they're sad.

Ask Jesus When I'm Hurt

Say: **If you're hurt, Jesus knows what to do.** Have children find the picture of the "hurt" child and glue the picture onto the praying hands.

Pray with kids, thanking Jesus that he's wise and that he knows what to do when they're hurt.

Ask Jesus Whenever I Don't Know What to Do

Say: **Anytime you *don't* know what to do, Jesus knows what to do.** Have children find the picture of the child with the "I don't know" pose and glue the picture onto the praying hands.

Pray with kids, thanking Jesus that he's wise and that he knows what to do whenever they don't know what to do.

Thank kids for coming, and tell them you look forward to seeing them next week.



TAKE-HOME Dig In @ Home

[0 min]

Supplies

- this week's "Dig In @ Home" handout (1 per child) (download [here](#))

Easy Prep

- Add your church announcements to the "Dig In @ Home" handout.

Distribute a copy of the "Dig In @ Home" handout to kids as they leave, or email it to parents during the week.