



Volume 1  
Preschool Curriculum

**Kidz Blitz!**



# Introduction



Preschool Curriculum  
For Children's Church and Sunday School

Volume 1

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## THE THEME

The first series of Critter Land introduces preschoolers to the wonderful truth that God is a good Father who wants only the best for His people. Children need a healthy image of God as a Father who does not abuse them with sickness, poverty, depression, etc. Many children grow up believing that the devil wants them to enjoy life while God is trying to make them miserable.

The Bible stories in this series depict God responding to our needs with love and kindness. God is a good Father.





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## NOTE FROM THE AUTHOR

*Thank you for choosing Critter Land curriculum to assist in teaching your preschool children. I believe you will enjoy using it as much as I enjoyed writing it. I have used Critter Land for small groups to very large groups. You'll find enough material for a long service and a format that allows you to pick and choose for shorter services. Always keep in mind that preschoolers seldom retain everything that you say. Your objective is not to convey details but to communicate The Big Idea. Have fun! May God Bless you and all the little ones He sends you.*

*Tamara Fields*

### TEACHER'S GOODIE BAG

We suggest that each master teacher carry some type of bag to class each week that the children will learn to identify as the teacher's "Goodie Bag." The kids will look for it each week and always wonder what's inside of the "Goodie Bag" this week. This simple and practical idea adds a little extra intrigue to the class.

Suggestions for the bag.

1. Glue
2. Scissors
3. Tape
4. String
5. Staples
6. The Egg
7. Candy Jar with small candy treats (such as Skittles)
8. Ball for Ball Game
9. Tools for that week's lesson
10. Props for that week's lesson
11. Crayons

### SUGGESTIONS FOR ROOM SETUP

The Critterland theme is broad and versatile. Your classroom can be set up to look like a jungle, a farm, a zoo or anyplace else there are critters.

You will need a wooden box or crate open at the top with straw inside. This will be the nesting box for your chicken and her egg. The chicken and the egg are used weekly.

Here are some ideas for room decor:

- Crates, Barrels and Buckets
- Logs
- Trees (with birds or monkeys in them)
- Stuffed Animals
- Chicken Coop w/ Chicken Puppet
- Any Animal Puppets
- Hanging Butterflies, Birds or Bugs
- Bird House
- Dog House
- Vines





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## **SUGGESTIONS FOR WORKER'S OUTFITS**

Dress your workers up in matching outfits that relate to your theme. Wearing theme related outfits will help you:

1. Project an image of excellence to the parents.
2. Make church more fun for the kids.
3. Make it easier to recruit new workers. (People enjoy being part of something that looks like fun.)
4. Build a team mentality between your workers.
5. Establish who is, and who is not, suppose to be in the preschool room.

## **HERE ARE SOME SIMPLE SUGGESTIONS FOR CRITTERLAND WEAR.**

Khaki, or bright animal prints  
Overalls  
Blue Jeans and suspenders  
Safari Hats

## **RULES**

Spend a few minutes every class reinforcing the rules. Make the rules fun so they will remember them. For example say:

1. "See these hands!" (Raise hands high in the air.) "Keep these hands in this lap." (Bring hands down to slap knees.)
2. "See these feet!" (Show feet.) "Keep these feet on the floor." (Stomp floor.)

3. "See this mouth." (Point to mouth.) "Keep this mouth quiet." (Hold your mouth closed.)

There are many different types of reward systems to keep children obeying the rules. Some of the best are:

### **1. DON'T POP THE BALLOON**

Hang four balloons somewhere visible to the children. Have a large needle taped to the end of a long stick. Call this your "Pokin' Stick." Tell the children that at any time they are not obeying the rules, you will use the Pokin' Stick and pop the balloons. If all the balloons are gone at the end of the class, they will not get a special prize (starburst candy, dum-dum sucker, etc.)

### **2. DON'T LOSE YOUR CLOTHESPIN**

When the children come in, clip two clothespins on them anywhere. Let them know that when they disobey the rules, you will take a clothespin from them. If they lose all their clothespins by the end of class, they will not get a treat from the Candy Barrel. Children will want to play with the clothespins. If the clothespins come off or they break because they were playing with them then they lose them. This will motivate them not to play with the clothespins.

### **3. SHARE THE SKITTLE JAR (OR CANDY BARREL)**

Show the children your Skittle Jar (a clear glass jar full of skittles or similar candy) or Candy Barrel (small barrel full of starburst, dum-dum





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suckers, etc.). Tell the children that everything in the jar/barrel is yours, and you've made a decision to share with your workers. Ask the workers if they want some. Act as if you have a wonderful idea: you've decided that, if everyone obeys the rules, you'll share with them also. Ask your workers if they are willing to share. When the children are rowdy, shake the jar or open the candy barrel. They will come to attention.

All of these control methods can work for you. You must establish early that you will enforce the rules. If a child is misbehaving, take a clothespin or pop a balloon. At some point during every class, you should do something to show you will stand by the rules.

If one child breaks all the rules he doesn't get a Skittle at the end of the class. Explain to the parent why "little Johnny" can't have a treat. Don't give in even if the parent throws a fit. There needs to be consequences to actions.



The theme is a thought telling the emphases of the lesson. It is not meant to be what the child learns but a focus for the teacher to think about while preparing to teach.

## KEY SCRIPTURES

These scriptures are reference scriptures to the Bible story and the theme. Take the time to read them while preparing the lesson.



## STUFF TO GET

This is a list of items that will be needed to present the lesson. The list does not include visuals, but you may want to use some to make the Bible story more creative.

## MEMORY VERSE

The memory verse is a simple verse that every child should know. There are only three different verses in each quarter. Spend a few minutes each week working on the verses with the kids. Send copies of the verse home with a note encouraging the parents to say the verses with their children a few times each day. Remember, preschoolers learn from repetition.

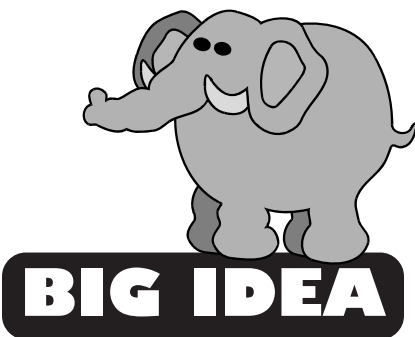




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Offering time is an important part of Critter Land. Young children should establish the habit of giving. So when they are older, giving will come naturally. Use this phrase weekly as an offering prayer. "May my God, who supplies seed to the sower, supply and multiply the seed I have sown" (II Corinthians 9:10). If you use the same phrase every week they will learn to say it with you. This is a good way of getting the idea of giving into their hearts. The week before you start the curriculum you could teach on planting seeds and how they grow. Each child can plant a seed to leave in the class. Each week during offering the child can be reminded how seeds grow and how their money is like a seed.



The "Big Idea" is the foundation of each lesson, based on the Word of God and said in the language of preschoolers. Each week the goal of the teacher

should be to send each child home being able to say and understand the "Big Idea". Repeating the "Big Idea" over and over in class will help the child to retain it. If the children get rowdy ask, "who can tell me the "Big Idea" or pick out the child who is causing trouble and have him/her tell the "Big Idea." When the class ends, make sure each child can tell you the "Big Idea."



Looney Bird is a puppet. Use the same puppet every week to familiarize the children with the Looney Bird personality. The goal of each Looney Bird skit is for the teacher to help Looney Bird solve a problem using the Big Idea. Give Looney Bird personality by changing phrases and adding your own ideas.



At the end of each lesson Looney Bird returns to tell how his problem was solved or not solved. There are two ways this is done:

- (1) Looney Bird returns knowing the "Big Idea" for the day, or thinks he does! Looney Bird pops in





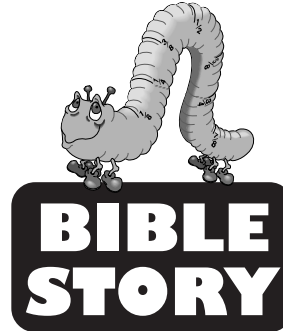
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to say he knows the “Big Idea,” but he always gets it wrong. If the “Big Idea” for the day is “Father God Will Protect Us,” instead Looney Bird will say “God will inject us.” The teacher responds with “no, no, no Looney Bird, Father God will protect us.” The kids should respond with the right words and will be very eager to correct Looney Bird. You can now use the kids to teach Looney Bird the right “Big Idea.”

(2) Sometimes Looney Bird listens and corrects his problem using the Big Idea. He returns with a praise report. During these times Looney Bird can teach the kids the Big Idea.



The egg presents the “Big Idea” in a clever way each week. Before each class, place an object inside the egg which symbolizes the “Big Idea.” The egg is then placed under the chicken (provided with the curriculum). Each week the chicken lays the egg. The teacher retrieves the egg and begins the object lesson with the object found in the egg. This is a very quick introduction before the Bible story to let the kids know what they will learn that day or after the Bible story to make sure they understand the point of the story.



Before telling the Bible story, try one of these phrases to initiate interest. “I was reading in the Bible this week and found a great story. I want to tell it to you!” or “Let me tell you what I read in the Bible this week!”

This approach sparks the children’s interest in reading their own Bible when they are old enough to read. If every week they hear an exciting story from the Bible, they will know it’s a pretty neat book!

Preschoolers are highly visual. The more props you have for the story, the better they will listen and understand. Any word that is visual can be a prop. Props can be as simple as a picture copied onto colored paper and cardstock. They can also be laminated. They can be as fun as bringing in a live pig for the prodigal son story. Use your imagination and kids will love it.

## MINISTRY TIME

Listen to God on how to close out your story. You might have an altar call, asking if anyone wants to accept Jesus into his/her heart. You might end in a story. Or, you might want everyone to hug someone if the Bible story was about love. Always be ready to pray with the children. Lay hands on them and pray. Most importantly, be open to what the Holy Spirit wants you to do.





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## CRAFT

The crafts are designed to be very simple without a lot of preparation.

To motivate the kids to do a good job on the craft, you could reward one child with a \$1.00 toy for the best job done. This also teaches a lesson in rejoicing when someone else wins.

Use the crafts made in the lesson to let the children act out the Bible story. The children enjoy retelling your story and it's fun to see what they remember.



## ACTIVITY

The activities are extra ideas to instill the lesson in the children's hearts. The activities and Critter Tales can be used in a Sunday evening class to reinforce what they learned that morning.



## BALL GAME

The Ball Game was designed to use every week to drive home the Big Idea from each lesson. Use a small, lightweight ball that cannot hurt if someone is hit with it. Have the children sit on the floor in a horseshoe around the teacher. The teacher gives the Big Idea, for example: "Father God loves you even when you do something wrong." Have all the children say it together until they can say it easily. Then toss the ball, allowing one child to catch it. The teacher must be the leader here. The children will attack the ball. As soon as you see it in a child's hands, say the child's name. The rest of the children must back away. The child who caught the ball comes to the front and says the Big Idea. (You might have some shy children for the first few weeks. Help the shy ones through it. After a few weeks, the only shy ones will be your visitors.) After he/she says the Big Idea, reward the child with a skittle or something similar. That child goes back to his/her place. The teacher throws the ball again, until all the children have had a turn. It is okay for a child to catch it twice. The second time, instead of coming to you, that child finds another child who hasn't had a turn, and offers the ball to him/her (a lesson in sharing). Control the overly aggressive children by taking them out of the game. Next week, they will be better.





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The Critter Tale is the Bible story as told by a fictional animal. The Critter Tale is designed to reinforce the main principle of the Bible story and make it more memorable to a little child. Be familiar with the story so you can tell it instead of reading it.

## ART WORK

Advance preparation of props and craft ideas will make your weekly preparation less time consuming. **You have permission to make copies of the Art Work for your classroom use.**





# the lost son



## scriptures

Luke 15:11-24  
Romans 8:37-39

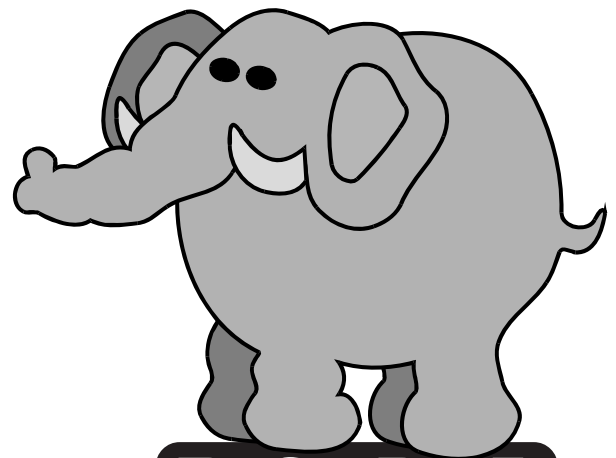
Nothing can remove God's love from us. It doesn't matter what we do, what sin we commit, or what environment we live in; nothing can change God's love.

**memory verse:** *For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. (John 3:16)*



## STUFF TO GET

- Red paper heart
- Card stock



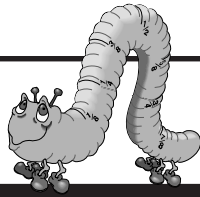
## BIG IDEA

God loves me even when  
I do something wrong





# the lost son



## BIBLE STORY

- A father had two sons.
- The younger son wanted all the money that belonged to him.
- He took the money and ran off to spend it.
- When he spent all the money, he didn't have any money left for food.

- He got very hungry.
- He got a job feeding pigs. (Oh, yuck!)
- He was still very hungry.
- He remembered that all the people who worked for his father were eating better than him.
- He decided to go back to his father and ask for a job.
- His father saw him coming and ran to his son.
- His father kissed him and hugged him.
- The son said, "But I did wrong. I spent all the money. I did all the wrong things."
- The father said, "That's okay. You were lost and now you are found."
- The father put a robe on the son.
- The father gave him a ring and sandals.
- The father made a big meal, and they were all very happy.
- The father loved his son even when he did the wrong thing.
- God loves you even when you do something wrong.



## OFFERING PRAYER

May God who supplies seed to the sower, supply and multiply the seed I have sown.



## THE EGG

Bring out the egg. Inside you will find a large, red heart. (which you have placed in the egg before class). Tell the children that the heart reminds you of God's love for us. It reminds you that "God loves us even when we do something wrong." You have just introduced

the "BIG IDEA." Have the children repeat it until everyone can say it.





# the lost son



## ACTIVITY

Using the coin bags made during craft time, let the children act out the story. They can pretend to buy things until their bag is empty. Then, they can lay down in a pretend pig pen. Have the children repent for doing wrong and decide to go back home.

When they get back home, the father (one of the children) can be there waiting with a hug, a ring, a robe, and sandals. Repeat using different children.



## CRAFT

### PREPARATION:

(Use the pictures from the art pack)

- Copy money bag on paper
- Fold in half
- Staple on two sides with the words "Money Bag" showing on the outside
- Copy bills on green paper
- Copy coins on cardstock
- Cut out coins and bills
- Prepare small pieces of foil to wrap around coins (optional)

### IN CLASS:

- Give each child a money bag, some coins and some bills.
- Color the money bag
- Wrap foil around coins (optional)



## BALL GAME

Play the Ball Game (explained in the Start-up Guide). Use the BIG IDEA: "God loves me even when I do something wrong."





# the lost son



## LOONEY BIRD

- Looney Bird: (sad) God doesn't love me.  
 Teacher: God does love you, Looney Bird!  
 Looney Bird: God doesn't love me.  
 Teacher: God does love you.  
 Looney Bird (sheepishly) I hit my sister.  
 Teacher: God loves you even when you hit your sister.  
 Looney Bird: I spilled my milk.  
 Teacher & Kids: (involve the kids in helping you to respond to Looney Bird) God loves you even when you spill the milk.  
 Teacher: Kids tell Looney Bird the BIG IDEA for today.  
 Kids: (with prompting from the teacher, shout) God loves you even when you do something wrong!



## CRITTER FOOD

- Corn Chips
- Juice

## CRITTER TALE



### OOPS THE PIG

There was once a pig named "Oops." Oops wasn't his real name but a nickname he got stuck with for being somewhat, well...clumsy.

He certainly didn't mean to be. He would get an idea or get excited or get in a hurry and sure as anything, Oops! He would break something or trip over his little, pig legs. He was nothing like his twin brother, Clive, who was always doing everything right, it seemed.

Oops' father was one of the most respected pigs in the whole farmyard -- a big strapping pig named Big Bacon, or BB for short. Oops would spend hours trying to impress his father but would always fall flat on his face. Then at the same time there was Clive, doing something in his usual perfect way.





# the lost son



## LOONEY BIRD *Returns*

Looney Bird comes back to tell the kids the BIG IDEA. He gets it wrong saying, "God loves me when I'm strong!" Help the kids teach Looney Bird the right way to say the BIG IDEA: **God loves me even when I do something wrong!**



There came a day when Oops decided that he didn't want to be an embarrassment to his father anymore, and so he decided he would sneak out of his pen and run off somewhere, anywhere else, and start all over again.

Late one night, Oops smashed through a hole in the gate (quite a squeeze for a pig the size of Oops) and ran away, squishing flowers outside the pen as he stumbled off.

Even after three whole days, Oops hadn't found a good job or anything to do with his life, and besides that, he was beginning to miss the great pig slop they served at home. Feeling pretty low, he stopped under the shade of the big tree to rest. "I sure wish I could go home again, but I'm so embarrassed," said Oops.

"Me, too," said a voice from the other side of the tree. Oops peeked around and saw a young man there. "I left home to start a new life, but I've lost everything. Now, I'm going to have to go back and tell my father that I've failed. I'm sure he'll laugh at me."

Oops and the young man talked for a while, and Oops decided to follow the young man home to see what would happen. Amazingly, the young man's father was so happy to see his lost son that nothing mattered more than the fact that his son was home safe again.

Oops was so excited, he ran all the way home and didn't fall even once. Do you know what? His father was so thrilled to have him back that he didn't even mention the squished flowers. It was then that Oops realized that his father loved him even when he made a mistake.



## THE END

