

Starting School

By Paige Evers



Going off to Preschool or Kindergarten or First Grade for the first time is an exciting milestone for children and their families. As children prepare to venture out from home and begin a new routine at school, they'll hear Jesus' promise to be with them always. Together, the family will create a visual reminder of Jesus' great love for children.

For
Young Family

Season
Summer

Needed
Bible or children's Bible (or see text of Mark 10:13-16 that follows), school bag or backpack, crayons or markers, Picture Frame Worksheet

Prepare in Advance

- Print out the Picture Frame Worksheet.
- Cut around the scroll to make the frame.
- Cut out the heart shape so you can attach a picture of your child to the back of the scroll and frame it with the heart shape.

Activity Plan

1. Say this prayer aloud to begin.

Dear God, we thank you for _____ (child's name). Soon she will start going to school! Be with us as we hear from the Bible how much Jesus loves _____ (child's name). Amen.

2. Have your child sit in your lap or right next to you. Read Mark 10:13-16.
 - After reading the story, teach your child the following hand gestures and tell this simple version of the story while acting it out.
 - People were bringing their children to Jesus (*move your arms like you're running*).
 - The disciples said: STOP! (*put your hand out, palm forward*).
 - Jesus said, "Let the children come to me" (*motion with your hand moving toward you*).
 - Jesus picked up the children, hugged them, put his hands on their heads, and blessed them (*give your child a big hug*).
3. Tell your child that Jesus loves her just like he loved the children in the Bible story. He sends his love to her through the hugs that Mom, Dad, and other loved ones give her. On the first day of



school, family members or other loved ones will give her a big hug before she gets on the bus or goes into her classroom. Jesus' love is in those hugs, too.

4. Point out his school bag or backpack. Your child will take Jesus' love with him, just like he takes his bag or backpack, as he begins each new school day.
5. Move to a table or another area for a brief craft. Show your child the Picture Frame Worksheet (already cut out). Explain that you will take a picture on the first day of school that you can put in the frame and display in your home. Read the saying at the bottom: "Jesus loves you! Jesus is with you wherever you go!"
6. Have her write, or write for her if appropriate, her name and school name. Invite her to color or decorate the frame. After you have a printed picture from the first day of school, attach it to the back of the frame, review the Bible story, and discuss how Jesus' love has been with your child in her new setting.
7. Give your child a blessing. Have each member of the family take turns putting their hands on the child's head, as Jesus did in the Bible story. Say the blessing, "Remember, Jesus is with you wherever you go. Jesus loves you and so do I."
8. Finish with a prayer:

Dear God, be with _____ (child's name) on his first day of school. Be with his teacher _____ (teacher's name) and his friends. Give them all a great start to their school year together. Help _____ (child's name) to remember that Jesus loves him and to share that love with others wherever he goes. Amen.

Jesus Blesses the Children

Mark 10:13-16

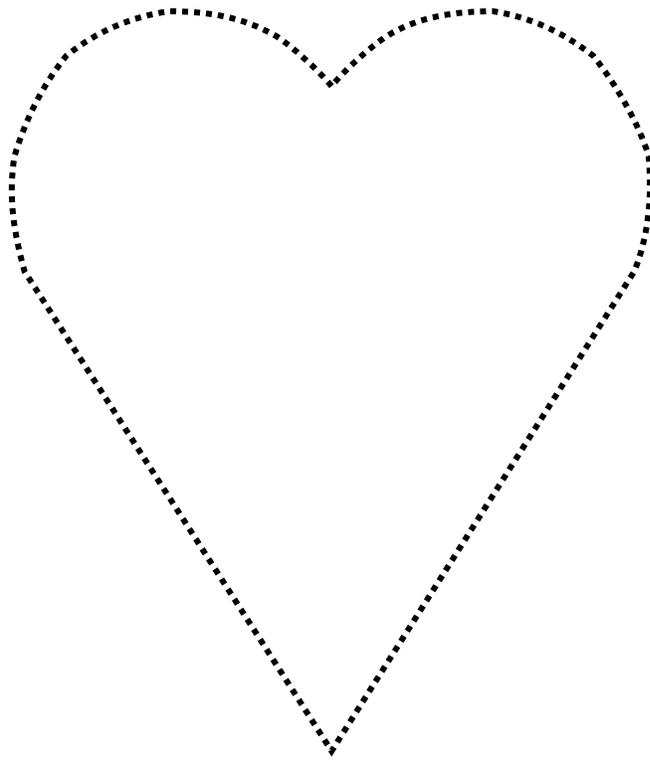
People were bringing little children to him in order that he might touch them; and the disciples spoke sternly to them. But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, "Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it." And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.



Picture Frame Worksheet

My Name:

My School:



Jesus loves you!
Jesus is with you wherever you go!

