

# Jesus Gets Ready for the Cross

## Matthew 26:1-13

### Sunday School Lesson

[Tony Kummer](#) for [Ministry-To-Children.com](#)

Jesus is the best friend kids can find. In this lesson, children will learn how Jesus did the hard things to win their salvation and how they can trust him to keep loving them no matter what!



**Scripture:** Matthew 26:1-13

**Passage Main Idea:** Jesus knew and accepted all the bad things that would happen to him once he came to Jerusalem. He was determined to finish his mission and save the world from sin – even though it would mean his suffering.

**Lesson Main Idea:** Because Jesus did the hard things to win our salvation, we can trust that he will never abandon or forget his promise to save us.

**Target Ages:** This lesson is broadly elementary (age 6 – 12), please modify as needed for preschool or preteen students. It's ideal for children's church or Sunday School. Please leave us feedback on how you used this material work for your ministry.

**Lesson Aim #1:** The children will show a basic knowledge of this passage by ...

- Acting out the Bible story as a group
- Responding to the STAND or SIT activity below

**Lesson Aim #2:** The children will explore their trust in Jesus, by ...

- Completing the group activity below – NEVER and NO WAY
- Group discussion about Jesus being the best friend.

**Materials Needed:**

- Printed version of this lesson plan
- Bible for the teacher and preferably every student, depending on teaching context.
- Perfume (optional) for acting out the story or using as a prop during the lesson

- [J is for Jesus Coloring Page](#) – attached to this PDF
- [C is for Christ Coloring Page](#) – attached to this PDF

**Background Information:** The whole of Matthew 26 shows how Jesus was prepared to do the hard things to secure our salvation. None of these events were a surprise, our savior was ready and willing to suffer in order to finish his mission. Our lesson is limited to the first 13 verses of the chapter, but you could easily continue reading if you have an older group of students.

### Lesson Introduction

Tell the children you are going to plan a simple game called “Would You Ever” to see how loyal you are to your friends. Read the following statements and ask for a show of hands if they children would do that statement for their best friend. For each item, choose one child to explain their answer. The goal of this introduction is to get kids thinking about the concept of doing hard things to help a friend.

### Would You Ever?

1. Share your lunch with a friend who forgot their lunch box? (ask for raised hands)
2. ... even if that mean you would be hungry? (ask for hands – *then ask why?*)
3. Help your friend finish their chores faster so you could play? (ask for raised hands)
4. ... even if he had a lot of chores? (ask for hands – *then ask why?*)
5. Let your friend borrow your favorite toy and take it home? (ask for hands)
6. ... even if you always played with it before bedtime. (ask for hands – *then ask why?*)
7. Give your friend that same toy if they asked to keep it? (ask for hands)
8. ... even if he already had more toys than you? (ask for hands – *then ask why?*)
9. Tell the mean kids to stop being mean to your friend (ask for hands)
- 10.... even if they would start picking on you instead? (ask for hands – *then ask why?*)

### Bible Teaching: Matthew 26:1-13

The following are talking points for the passage, please use your own teaching talents to make it your own and engaging for your specific class. Eye contact with the kid is much more important than reading from our lesson script.

(SAY) Your friends must be happy to have such loyal people as friends. In the Bible passage today, we are going to see how Jesus was willing to do hard things to help his friends too. Let’s look at the passage together. (READ)

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*26 When Jesus had finished saying all these things, he said to his disciples, <sup>2</sup>“As you know, the Passover is two days away—and the Son of Man will be handed over to be crucified.”*

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(SAY) That’s some serious news Jesus was telling his disciples. We know that nothing was a surprise to Jesus, but this was enough to make his friends very sad and a little afraid.

Does anyone know what crucified means? (allow for answers) That’s right, it means put up on a cross until you die. It was a very bad thing they would do to criminals. So, Jesus’ friends were very surprised because he wasn’t a criminal but spent all his time helping people.

Let’s look and see why that bad thing was going to happen to Jesus. (READ)

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*<sup>3</sup> Then the chief priests and the elders of the people assembled in the palace of the high priest, whose name was Caiaphas, <sup>4</sup> and they schemed to arrest Jesus secretly and kill him. <sup>5</sup> “But not during the festival,” they said, “or there may be a riot among the people.”*

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(SAY) There were a lot of people mad at Jesus because he told the truth from God. They were also jealous that all the people listened to him instead of them. Those people were the leaders and decided they were going to hurt Jesus.

But Jesus wasn’t surprised at all, he already knew that was going to happen. He was just telling his disciples so they would start to understand. He was going to do some very hard things to finish the work of saving people from their sin.

Some of Jesus friends were staring to understand. Let’s read about that. (READ)

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*<sup>6</sup> While Jesus was in Bethany in the home of Simon the Leper, <sup>7</sup> a woman came to him with an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume, which she poured on his head as he was reclining at the table.*

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(SAY) That may sound a little strange, like she was pulling a joke on a friend. But it was something special in their culture. Pouring perfume on a person was a sign of love and showing that Jesus was the most important thing in her life.

But some of the disciples thought it was wasted money. (READ)

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*<sup>8</sup> When the disciples saw this, they were indignant. “Why this waste?” they asked. <sup>9</sup> “This perfume could have been sold at a high price and the money given to the poor.”*

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*<sup>10</sup> Aware of this, Jesus said to them, “Why are you bothering this woman? She has done a beautiful thing to me. <sup>11</sup> The poor you will always have with you,<sup>[a]</sup> but you will not always have me. <sup>12</sup> When she poured this perfume on my body, she did it to prepare me for burial.<sup>13</sup> Truly I tell you, wherever this gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her.”*

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(SAY) Was Jesus mad at the woman? (allow for responses)

No, he was happy and told the disciples to stop being mean to her. After that he repeated what he said about how he about to die. She was doing something hard to show her love for Jesus, so he promised that her story would always be a part of his good news. That’s a cool way to say thank you!

In the rest of this chapter we see more hard things Jesus was going to do to finish his mission. Judas was about to betray him. Then he was going to let the soldiers arrest him. Then Peter would deny him. Then he be on trial. It was going to be a very hard mission, but Jesus did not give up because he knew that was the way God planned to save people from their sin.

When we read about these things, we need to remember that Jesus is the best friend we can ever find. We can trust him to always keep his promises and do whatever it takes to make sure we get to heaven with Him.

Let’s pray.

### Lesson Aim #1 – Activities to teach understanding

**Acting out the Bible Story:** Have the children role play through the key parts of this story as you narrate or read the passage again. If you group is large, you can repeat until everyone gets a turn. The point is to review the passage with class involvement. You can ask questions as appropriate to reinforces the teaching.

- **Part One:** The Plot Against Jesus – Matthew 26:1-6
  - Parts: Jesus (speaks v2), Disciples (acts confused), Caiaphas (speaks v5), group of elders (acts mad), narrator (reads the passage while the kids play act).
- **Part Two:** Jesus Anointed at Bethany Matthew 26:6-13
  - Parts: Jesus (speaks), Simon the Leeper (smiles and welcomes Jesus), woman (puts perfume), Disciples (acts mad, speaks), narrator (reads the passage while the kids play act).

**Stand or Sit: Lesson Review:** For each of the following statements ask the students to stand for true and sit with arms folding for false. This is a more active way to do “true or false”

lesson review questions. For false answers you can ask a volunteer to give you the right version of the Bible story.

1. Jesus knew that he was going to die on the cross. (TRUE – STAND UP)
2. The leaders wanted Jesus dead because he was too rich. (FALSE – SIT DOWN)
3. The leaders knew that Jesus would rise from the dead. (FALSE – SIT DOWN)
4. The people might have started a riot if Jesus was arrested publicly. (TRUE – STAND UP)
5. Jesus went to visit Simon the Leeper. (TRUE – STAND UP)
6. The lady poured dollar tree perfume on Jesus, to save money. (FALSE – SIT DOWN)
7. The disciples were happy the lady loved Jesus so much. (FALSE – SIT DOWN)
8. They said the money would be better spend helping poor people. (TRUE – STAND UP)
9. Jesus said the perfume would make the leaders like him better. (FALSE – SIT DOWN)
10. Jesus said the woman did a beautiful thing. (TRUE – STAND UP)
11. This lady thought Jesus would make her rich. (FALSE – SIT DOWN)
12. Jesus was willing to do hard things to save us. (TRUE – STAND UP)

### Lesson Aim #2 – Activities that help children explore trusting Jesus...

**NEVER and NO WAY – Group Activity:** Read the following statements to the class, ask them to complete the statements by choosing: Never and No Way. The goal is to help kids think about how Jesus can be trusted in every life situation. To make it visual, write the following on a marker board and have the children complete the phrase with a different color marker.

1. Jesus will \_\_\_\_\_ turn his back on his friends – NEVER
2. There was \_\_\_\_\_ Jesus was going to give up his mission to save us – NO WAY.
3. Satan can \_\_\_\_\_ make Jesus stop loving us – NEVER
4. There is \_\_\_\_\_ to earn God's love – NO WAY
5. Because God \_\_\_\_\_ stops loving us – NEVER

Feel free to add your own (I ran out of time so didn't get test this this part in my teaching).

**Discussion While Coloring:** If time allows, you can lead a group discussion while the children are working on their coloring sheets (J is for Jesus, C is for Christ). Use the following talking points to help direct the conversation. This is just a starting point, take up any line of conversation the Holy Spirit may be using to encourage the children in their relationship with God.

1. Why do you think Jesus is welcoming the children?
2. What does it mean to be Jesus friend?
3. Do you think you could ever do something to make Jesus not like you anymore?

4. Why does the artist draw Jesus kneeling to welcome the children? Isn't he very important like a president?
5. What does the word "Christ" mean?
6. How can you help your friends learn about Jesus?

## [Matthew 26:1-13](#) New International Version (NIV)

### The Plot Against Jesus – Matthew 26:1-13

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### Jesus Anointed at Bethany Matthew 26:6-13

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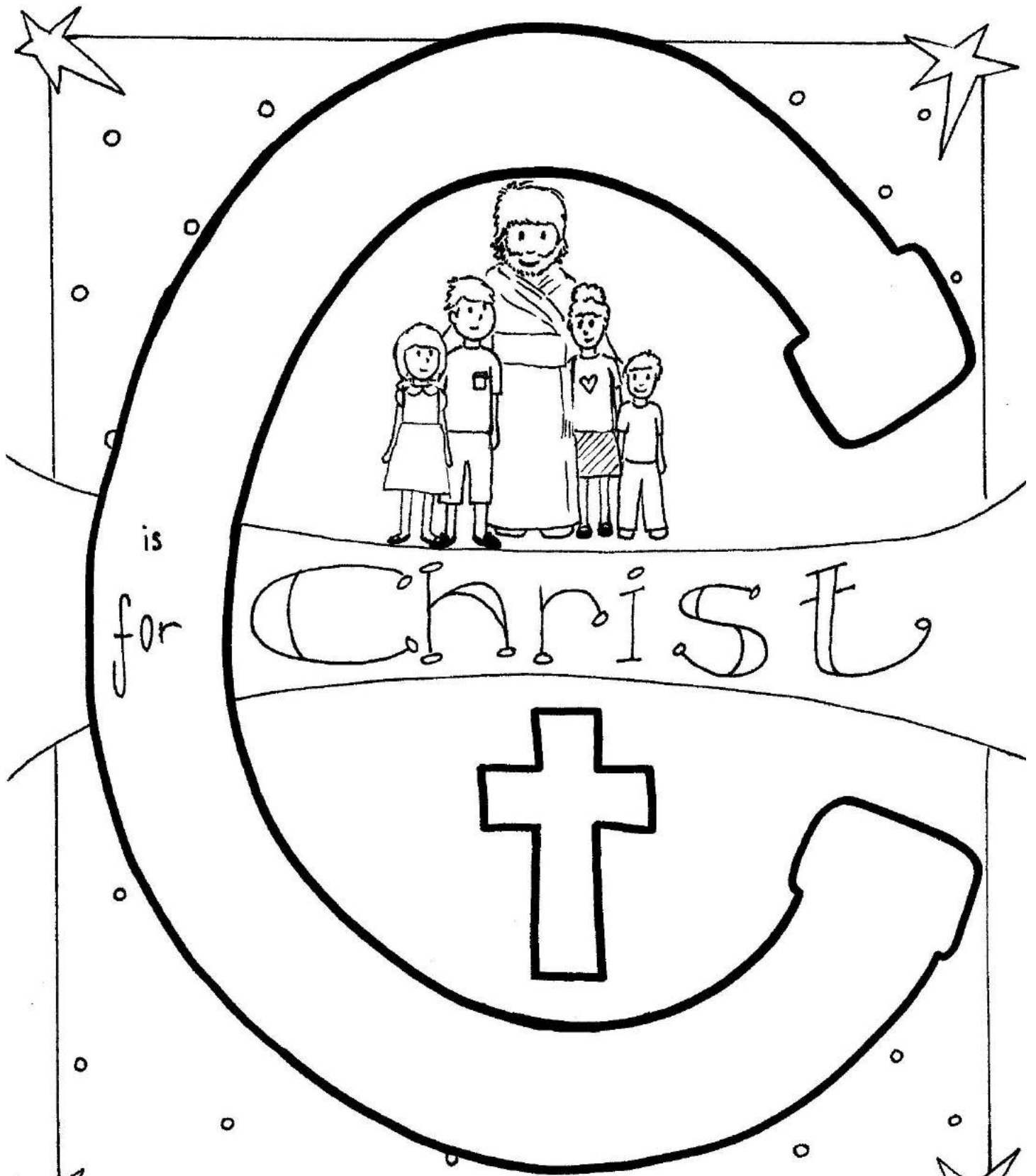
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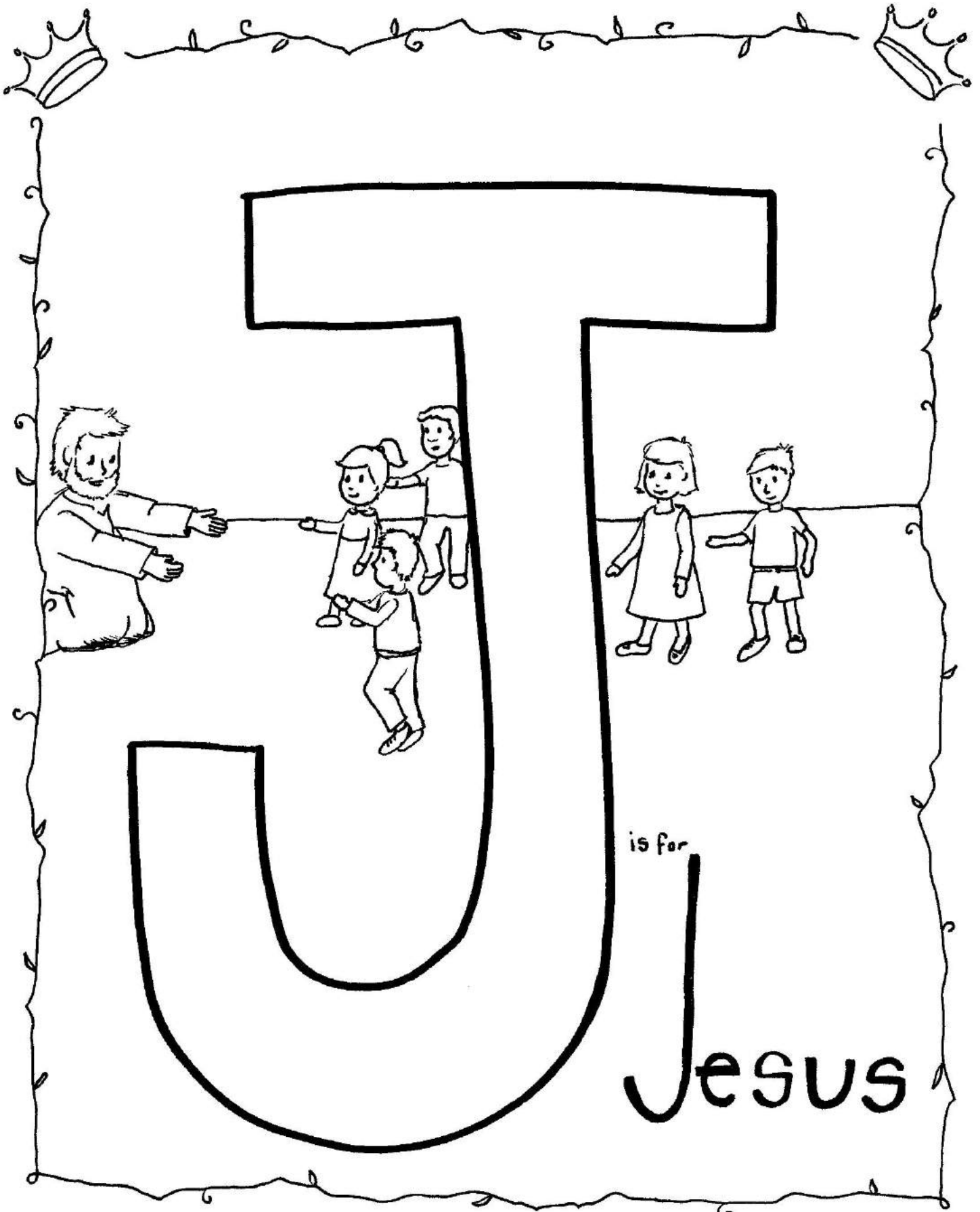
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