



Heart OF JESUS

GAMES AND ACTIVITIES

These additional games and activities can be used throughout the Heart of Jesus series. If you want to integrate more movement and interaction into your lesson, check out these options. We've included tips to make the games and activities inclusive for all kids and have designated those intended for each lesson in the series.

GAME 1: "BUSY BEE" ATTITUDE TELEPHONE CHARADES

SUPPLIES: paper (1 sheet per kid), marker, tape

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: Beatitudes Sheet NIV or NIV (1 sheet per 5–8 kids)

This game works great with
The Beatitudes lesson!

Ahead of time, print one copy of the Beatitudes Sheet NIV or NIV for each team (5–8 kids), cut apart the strips, and place each set in a bucket or container.

In this game, kids play Telephone and Charades using the Beatitudes.

Divide your group into teams of 5–8 kids. Set the buckets containing the Beatitudes' strips in them on the floor at one end of the room. Assign a bucket to each team, and ask kids to line up single file with their teams across from their buckets.

Each container has slips of paper with Beatitudes on them. The Beatitudes are the eight statements Jesus made at the beginning of His Sermon on the Mount. Can you remember any of the Beatitudes? Allow kids to share. Then remind them of any they didn't mention. (Refer to the Beatitudes Sheet NIV or NIV as needed.)

The first person in your team's line is the line leader. When I say, "Go," the line leaders will run to their team's bucket and grab a Beatitude strip. They will read their slips silently and hand them to me. Then as fast as they can, the line leaders will go back to their line and whisper the Beatitude that was on their slip of paper to the next person in line. That person will act it out for the rest of the team to guess what the Beatitude is.

The person who grabbed the slip is not allowed to guess. Once the team guesses correctly, the person who acted it out will run to his team's bucket and follow the same steps. Teams will continue this way until they have guessed the Beatitudes on all eight slips. For teams with fewer than eight kids, some kids will go more than once. The first team to successfully guess all eight Beatitudes wins! Once kids are ready, count down to get them started: **In 3, 2, 1. GO!**

Be sure to stand near the containers where kids can easily hand their slips to you, and be ready to help younger kids read their slips.

Leader Tip: Consider writing the eight Beatitude statements on a whiteboard for kids to reference as they guess what is on each slip.

Leader Tip: For Younger Kids. You can modify this game to be a simple game of Telephone, where kids whisper each Beatitude from person to person.

Gather kids together. **Great job! Jesus used the Beatitudes to explain God's way of valuing people in the world. These are the people that the world thinks have no reason to be happy. But Jesus says that the people God will make happy are the ones who need Him the most. Have you ever felt like you needed God's help when things were hard? Give kids time to answer. Even when our world seems full of suffering, we can trust that God is in control. Jesus' way is different.**

GAME 2: ATTACK OF THE SALT AND LIGHT!

SUPPLIES: cotton balls (1 per kid), large straws (1 per kid), flashlight, blue and green painter's tape (1 roll of each color, prep only)

This game works great with the Salt and Light lesson!

In this game, kids bring salt to the earth by blowing "salt" in order to turn on the light!

Before kids begin, use the blue painter's tape to create "the earth" on the ground. Feel free to be as creative as you'd like, but essentially you simply need a large blue circle. Divide the circle in half with green tape and place the flashlight in the center of the earth on the dividing line.

Divide the group into two equal teams, and have each team form an arched line along opposite edges of the earth. Give a cotton ball and a straw to each kid.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus calls His followers the "salt of the earth" and the "light of the world" (Matthew 5:13-14, NIV). In this game, the cotton ball you hold in your hand represents salt. Each person on your team has a granule of salt. You will place your cotton ball "salt" on the ground along the taped edge of the earth.

When I say, "Go," you will use your straw to blow your salt across the center line and onto the other team's side of the earth. Once it's on the floor, you may not touch your salt. The first team to get all your salt to the other side of the earth will turn the flashlight on and yell, "You are the salt of the earth and the light of the word!" together. That team is the winner.

Before playing, encourage kids to repeat their line several times, and give everyone a few seconds to practice using their straws to blow their cotton balls. It might also be helpful to ask teams to designate one person to turn on the flashlight. Once kids are ready, count them down to start: **3, 2, 1. GO!**

Make It Inclusive

Tip for Including Kids with Unique Abilities

Kids with physical disabilities or who struggle with mobility can hold the flashlight and turn it on when the first team gets all its salt to the opposite side of the earth.

After the game, gather everyone together. **Jesus says that His followers are like salt that keeps food from going bad. With the help of the Holy Spirit, we can follow Jesus' example and can help keep evil from "spoiling" our world. What are some ways we can be salt this week at home with our family or at school with our friends?** Give kids time to share. **Great ideas! What are some ways we can be light to others and show them Jesus?** Give kids time to share. Thank you for sharing! When we let our lights shine, others will notice. **Jesus teaches us to be salt and light.**

GAME 3: HEART EMOJI MY ENEMIES

SUPPLIES: colored paper (7 sheets, each a different color), cardstock or posterboard (1 sheet), blindfold, scissors (prep only), permanent marker (prep only), glue (prep only), tape (prep only)

This game works great with Loving Our Enemies' lesson!

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: Emoji Cutout Sheet

In this game, kids get to practice emotional intelligence in alignment with God's Word.

Prior to kids' arriving, print a copy of the Emoji Cutout Sheet. Cut out the Emojis. Then cut out seven paper hearts using a different color for each heart. Glue the hearts in a circle on the cardstock or posterboard. This will be your game board. Use the permanent marker to label each heart with one of these terms: bully, sibling, parent, friend, teacher, classmate, neighbor. Tape the gameboard to the wall at kids' height.

Gather kids together. **Have you ever had a day where you were picked on at school, or laughed at by a friend, or felt left out?** Wait for kids to respond. **I have too. In today's story, Jesus teaches us to love everyone, even the people who mistreat us. And that's what we're going to practice today.**

Show the kids the gameboard. **On these hearts are the categories of people who can be difficult to love sometimes. I need a few volunteers.** Select one kid to come up front. Address the kid volunteer: **With a blindfold on, you will spin around three times, then walk forward with your finger pointing forward. Whichever heart your finger is closest to when you touch the wall will represent the person who is hard to love. Then together we will imagine how that person may have hurt you. You will use an emoji to respond the way God wants us to love.**

First, let's do a practice round. Let's say my finger landed on the heart that says "friend." What might a friend have done to hurt me? Get one or two answers from the kids. (If kids'

ideas are not appropriate, modify the game by providing your own ideas each time.) **Maybe my friend didn't invite me to her party, and my feelings were really hurt. Which emoji could I choose to show God's love to my friend even though she hurt my feelings?** Show kids the emojis and let them answer. **Great! Let's try a few more.** Blindfold the first kid volunteer. Gently spin him around three times and guide him toward the game-board until he points to a heart. Remove his blindfold, and as a group discuss what that person may have done. (Or provide your own ideas.) Then encourage the kid volunteer to choose an emoji that best represents how he could love that person. Repeat this process several times with a different kid volunteer each time.

Leader Tip: Sadly, some kids in your ministry may be experiencing abuse or mistreatment. It's important for kids to understand that to love someone who has hurt us does not mean that their wrong actions and words are OK.

It would be easy to act kindly only to people who are kind to us. But God's way is much harder: love your enemies. Jesus says to pray for them, to ask God to turn them away from evil. No one can follow these commands alone. It takes the Holy Spirit to give us the strength to do what we can't do on our own. Jesus teaches us to love everyone.

GAME 4: REFRAME YOUR WORRIES

SUPPLIES: painter's or masking tape (prep only)

This game works great with the Worry lesson!

In this game, kids reframe the things they worry about with truth.

Before the game begins, use the tape to create a "circle of worry" on the ground.

Gather kids together. **Sometimes we can be overwhelmed with worry, right? Like what if I don't pass my test, or what if I miss the bus, or what if I can't remember my lines for the school play? What are some things you worry about?** Allow kids to respond. **Wow, it's great to know I'm not the only one who worries!**

In just a moment we're going to practice reframing our worry—or thinking about it in a different way. We'll take turns standing in the "circle of worry." Once someone steps in the circle, they will share one worry starting with the words, "What if." Then someone outside the circle will think of a way to reframe their worry with an action or a truth from God's Word.

Let's try one together; I'll go first. Step into the circle and share a worry. **What if I forget what I'm supposed to say while I'm leading today?** Wait for the kids to help you reframe your worry. They might give suggestions like, "You can look at your notes" or "You can trust God to help you." **OK, who wants to go next?** Trade places with the first kid volunteer.

Rotate through as many kids as possible to help them see they are not alone and can help each other reframe worry.

Leader Tip: This activity works great in small groups. It gives kids the opportunity to talk more and to quickly establish trust among each other.

Gather kids together. **We tend to find all sorts of things to worry about. If we spend all our time worrying, we'll be distracted from bringing the hope of Jesus to the world! How can you use God's Word to reframe your worries this week?** Wait for a few answers. **How can you help someone else reframe their worry and trust God?** Wait for a few answers. **As people of God, we don't need to let worries rule us. The way of Jesus is to walk by faith, praying that God gives us all that we need to be His messengers for the kingdom. Jesus teaches us how to live.**

GAME 5: UPSIDE DOWN, RIGHT SIDE UP

SUPPLIES: plastic cups (100), timer

This game works great with any lesson in the Heart of Jesus series!

In this game, one team tries to turn cups right side up, while the opposing team tries to turn them upside down.

Divide your group into two equal teams. You will play two rounds. Have Team A stand at one end of the room while Team B stands at the opposite end. Scatter 100 plastic cups on the floor throughout the room. 50 of the cups should be right side up, and 50 should be upside down.

When I say, “Go,” Team A will run around the room and try to flip all the cups right side up while Team B runs around the room trying to flip all the cups upside down. You can’t move the cups, but you will simply turn them over and place them back in the same place. At the end of two minutes I will shout, “Stop!” Everyone must stop immediately, raise their hands above their heads, and remain standing where they are. Team A will be awarded one point for every cup that is right side up, and Team B will be awarded one point for every cup that is upside down. Any cups lying on their sides won’t count for any points.

Set a timer for two minutes and shout, “Go!” When time is up, invite two adult volunteers to count the cups. Then award each team the appropriate number of points, and congratulate the winning team. If time allows, play another round, making sure that 50 cups are right side up and 50 are upside down before you begin.

Make It Inclusive

Tip for Including Kids with Unique Abilities

Invite kids with physical restrictions or disabilities to be judges who make sure everyone follows the rules. They can also help count the cups at the end of the game.

Wow, that game was crazy awesome! It reminds me of the kingdom of heaven. The kingdom of heaven is available now, and it seems rather upside-down. Can anyone tell me why the kingdom of God might feel upside down? Call on several kids to share their ideas. Those are great ideas! The values in God’s kingdom flip the world’s values upside down. In the kingdom of heaven, the least likely people are blessed, worry is no more, and enemies are loved!