

**Focus:** Keys to Jesus

**Materials:**

- Prayer Altar: Cross, Candle, Chasuble on stand (priest’s vestment) and Altar Cloth
- CD-America’s 25 Favorite
- Bible: In lesson
- Key cut outs
- Red and green cards
- Book: 100 Bible Songs-100 Bible Stories

**Gathering** (children find/sit on a carpet square)

Say: *Good Morning everyone, my name is \_\_\_\_\_. Last week we talked about remembering that Jesus is with us and helps us to do the right thing even though it can be hard sometimes. This week Jesus tells us to be loving and kind to everyone. That is the way we will live forever with him.*

**Opening Prayer**

Together we make the Sign of the Cross (do in reverse so children can mirror).

Say: *Now let’s put our hands together and bow our heads.*

*Let us pray.*

*Loving God, Thank you for sharing your life and love with us. Help us to live our lives filled with your love. In the name of Jesus we pray.*

*Amen.*

**Song/Movement**

*There is Power in the Name of Jesus, track: 19, from America's 25 Favorite*

Play music, encourage children to stretch or move to the music (clapping, stamp feet march in place to the beat), turn to each other and shake hands, saying hello, etc. Have children sit on their carpet squares when finished.

There is \_\_\_\_\_, in the name of  
Jesus. (3x)

There is \_\_\_\_\_ in that wonderful  
name.

Power, Glory, Healing

There’s Salvation in the name of Jesus  
(3x)

There’s Salvation in that wonderful name  
(3x) –to fade.

**Memory Verse**

Say: *Now let’s take a moment together to learn a verse from the bible.*

*Love is the key to heaven.*

Have the children repeat the verse after you a couple of times.

Say: *God is love. Heaven is God’s kingdom. It’s not a kingdom like we think of one with a castle and guards. It is a place where everyone lives in God’s love all the time. Love is the way to God. Sometimes people think that rich and powerful people are more important than poor and powerless*

*people. Jesus teaches us that everyone is important to God. Jesus welcomes everyone, including the children, the poor, the sick, and the lonely. Jesus didn't teach us to be rich and powerful; he taught us to be loving and kind.*

### **Gospel Story**

*Say: Today we are reading from the Gospel of Luke.*

Have children make sign of the cross on their forehead, mouth and heart saying. *"Lord, open my mind, my lips and my heart so that I may learn it, speak it and love it."*

**Read:** None, pp. N/A,

Someone asked Jesus:  
    [Chatty hand, thumb against fingers.]  
"How many people will go to heaven?"  
    [Point heavenward]  
Jesus answered:  
    [Chatty hand, thumb against fingers.]  
"The door to heaven is small.  
    [Hold thumb and forefinger about an inch apart]  
Lots of money,  
    [Raise arms, spread them apart.]  
will not open it.  
    [Shake your head.]  
Strength and power  
    [Clench arms and hands to show strength]  
Will not open it.  
    [Shake your head.]  
Love  
    [Cross hands over your heart.]  
Is the key.  
    [Turn an imaginary key in a lock.]  
Small acts of kindness.  
    [Hold thumb and index finger about an inch apart.]  
Open the door  
    [Swing arms wide, pushing open an imaginary door.]  
Serving others  
    [Extend arms in service.]  
Is the way to God's heavenly table."  
    [Point heavenward.]

After the reading say: *The Gospel of the Lord*

Children respond: *Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ*

**Discussion Starters:**

- *Who is called to go to heaven?*
- *Why does Jesus say the door to heaven is small?*
- *Will money help us get into heaven?*
- *Will strength and power help us get into heaven?*
- *Will love help us get into heaven?*
- *What can small acts of kindness do to the door to heaven?*

**Reflection on Reading:**

*When Jesus says the door to heaven is small, he doesn't mean that big people can't get into heaven. He is saying that we have to put down things like selfishness and power to be able to get into heaven. If you are trying to get into a place that has a small door, you take with you only what you need. Jesus wanted us to know that all we need is love. Jesus wanted us to share what we have because we can't carry lots of possessions into heaven anyway. He wants us to serve others because acting big and important only makes it harder for us to get through the small door.*

**Gospel Activity**Activity 1:**Keys to Heaven**

Use the Red/Green Cards or use thumbs/up thumbs down.

*Today's bible reading talked about love being the key to heaven. Small acts of kindness will open the door to life forever with Jesus. If we remember that in doing these things we will be spreading Jesus' love in the world, we will know there are many keys to the door to heaven.*

*I am going to hold up a key and you will decide whether that key would open the door that Jesus talked about.*

(List of actions) –examples in brackets [], not on the cards

- Give them a compliment-[tell them they look nice or they are fun to play with]
- Paint someone a picture
- Do one of their chores for them
- Tell them a joke-[knock, knock, who's there, Heaven, Heaven who, Heaven I met you before]
- Sing them a song
- Tell them you love them
- Smile at everyone you see
- Share a story
- Play with them
- Give them a hug
- Write a happy message on the sidewalk
- Stick googly eyes in silly places. [a napkin at the table, a light switch, the bathroom mirror]
- Push someone out of the way
- Talk when someone else is telling a story
- Get mad when you don't get your way

*Dear Jesus-help us to always remember to spread kindness and love to others, so they may know that we are children of God. We ask this in your name. Amen.*

Activity 2:

Read from **100 Bible Stories/100 Bible Songs**

Jesus used other images of doors of ways to get to heaven. In one story he told us that prayer would be a way for us to be closer to God. When we are closer to God it is easier to be kind and loving to others.

Read: Ask-Seek-Knock page 120

Play: Disc 2 Track 8-This one has a good rhythm for clapping or stomping.

Complete the weekly bulletin as a group-let the children color them if there is extra time

**Closing Prayer**

(Children respond: "I Believe!")

Ask: *Do you believe in God, who invites everyone to enter the door to God's kingdom?  
Do you believe in Jesus, who is the only door to God's Kingdom?  
Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, who fills us with the glory of God's life?*

**Sending Forth**

*Say: This week we can be extra nice to others and practice all the good things we talked about today. Remember that spreading kindness and love is our way of showing others we are followers of Jesus.*

**Lining Up/Closing Song**

Play "*I've Got Peace Like a River*" track 4 from America's 25 Favorite while children put away any materials and lineup. Hand out weekly bulletins. Remind them it is important that they return to their family quietly so that we may all listen and pray together in church.