

**SESSION 1**

The Crowd Welcomed Jesus

**BIBLE PASSAGE**

Matthew 21:1-11

**LIFE POINT**

God sent Jesus because He loves us.

**CHRIST FOCUS**

Jesus is special because He is God's Son!

**LEVEL OF BIBLICAL LEARNING**

God sent Jesus to help people because He loves them.

**SUGGESTED USE DATE:** April 5

**BIBLE VERSE**

God loved us and sent His Son.  
1 John 4:10 (*Paraphrase*)

God ... loved us and sent his Son.  
1 John 4:10 (*CSB*)

God ... loved us, and sent his Son.  
1 John 4:10 (*KJV*)

God ... loved us and sent his Son.  
1 John 4:10 (*NIV*)

God ... loved us and sent his Son.  
1 John 4:10 (*ESV*)

God ... loved us and sent His Son.  
1 John 4:10 (*NKJV*)

**SCHEDULE AND PROPS**

**Huddle Ups** (*optional; time varies*)  
Props (*per each small group*):

- “Follow a Path”—masking tape
- “The Crowd Welcomed Jesus”—coloring supplies, coloring sheets
- “Spell Jesus”—craft sticks (*6 per each pair of kids*), poster board, marker

**Countdown Video** (*3 minutes*)  
Props: none

**Worship Song** (*3 minutes*)  
Props: scarves or strips of crepe paper

**Welcome and Prayer** (*5 minutes*)  
Props: none

**Miss Lindy’s Library** (*3-5 minutes*)  
Props: none

**Connection Point Game** (*10 minutes*)  
Props: none

**Worship Song** (*3 minutes*)  
Props: none

**Bible Story** (*10 minutes*)  
Props: Bible, binoculars

**Worship Song and Offering** (*3 minutes*)  
Props: scarves or strips of crepe paper (*reuse from opening Worship Song*)

**Connection Point Bible Verse** (*5-8 minutes*)  
Props: none

**Connection Point Missions** (*5-8 minutes*)  
Props: none

**Real Life Connections** (*3-5 minutes*)  
Props: none

**MUSIC AND MEDIA**

- **Countdown:** *Countdown* video
- **Worship Song:** “Oh, Happy Day, Jesus Is Alive”
- **Welcome and Prayer:** *Life Point* and *Bible Verse* slides
- **Miss Lindy’s Library:** *Miss Lindy’s Library* video
- **Connection Point Game:** *Connection Point Game* slide
- **Worship Song:** “Shout Hallelujah, Shout Amen”
- **Bible Story:** *Bible Story* and *Christ Focus* slides; *Bible Story Time* video (*optional*)
- **Worship Song and Offering:** Worship song of your choice
- **Connection Point Bible Verse:** *Connection Point Bible Verse* and *Bible Verse* slides
- **Connection Point Missions:** *Connection Point Missions* slide; “Go West” missions video
- **Real Life Connections:** *Real Life Connections* and *Life Point* slides

## HUDDLE UPS (OPTIONAL)

Huddle Ups are for churches that have a drop-off time before the session begins or a pick-up time as parents arrive at the end of the session. It's a great time for interaction with a small group leader through games, conversations, or review questions. Play the countdown video to signal the end of Huddle Ups and the beginning of the session.

- ➔ Estimated time: varies according to schedule
- ➔ Tech: none
- ➔ People: Small Group Leaders
- ➔ Supplies (for each small group):
  - “Follow a Path”—masking tape
  - “The Crowd Welcomed Jesus”—coloring supplies, coloring sheets
  - “Spell Jesus”—craft sticks (6 per each pair of kids), poster board, marker

## FOLLOW A PATH

*Prep: Make a tape path on the floor.*

- Guide the children to follow the tape path.
- Suggest that the children walk very slowly.
- Invite a child to name another way to walk on the path. Prompt the child if necessary. (*Ideas include: walk backward, skip, jump, hop, crawl, tiptoe, and take giant steps.*)
- Say: “Jesus followed a road into the city of Jerusalem. People were happy to see Jesus.”
- **Leader option for older preschoolers:** Use colored tape and make several paths. Suggest kids travel each path in a different way, for example: “Hop along the red path. Tiptoe along the blue path.”

## THE CROWD WELCOMED JESUS

*Prep: Print a coloring sheet for each child.*

- Tell preschoolers they will hear a Bible story about people who were excited to see Jesus come into the city of Jerusalem.
- Distribute coloring supplies and coloring sheets.
- Invite preschoolers to color their pages while they wait for the session to begin.

## SPELL JESUS

*Prep: In large block letters on the poster board write JESUS.*

- Read aloud the word on the poster. Invite preschoolers to recall what Jesus did in today's Bible story.
- Form pairs of kids and direct them to spread out to have room to work on the floor. Give each pair six craft sticks.
- Point to the letter *J* on the poster. Challenge pairs to use the craft sticks to form the letter *J*.
- Point to the letter *E* on the poster. Tell pairs to rearrange the craft sticks to form the letter *E*. Continue with each remaining letter.
- Invite your group to combine all the craft sticks. Help children use the craft sticks to spell *Jesus*.
- Encourage the kids to spell aloud: “J-e-s-u-s.”
- Review the Life Point: **God sent Jesus because He loves us.**

## COUNTDOWN VIDEO

- ➔ Estimated time: 3 minutes
- ➔ Tech: *Countdown* video
- ➔ People: none
- ➔ Props: none

*(Play countdown video to signal the beginning of worship time. Kids will count aloud as they join the large group.)*

## WORSHIP SONG

- ➔ Estimated time: 3 minutes
- ➔ Tech: Music video, mics for singers, lights (*optional*)
- ➔ Music: “Oh, Happy Day, Jesus Is Alive” (*lead sheet available on DVD-ROM*) or download a worship song of your choice
- ➔ People: Worship Leader and/or Worship Team
- ➔ Props: scarves or strips of crepe paper

## WORSHIP LEADER

Welcome! *Welcome* means “I am glad to see you!” Today we will hear that a crowd welcomed Jesus as He came into the city of Jerusalem. It was exciting!

I will give each of you a scarf. It is fun to move as we sing. We can move fast when the song is fast, slow when the song is slow, and freeze when the music stops. Are you ready? Let's move and sing together.

*(Show the music video. Kids stand to sing. Collect the scarves after the song.)*

## **WELCOME AND PRAYER**

- ➔ Estimated time: 5 minutes
- ➔ Tech: *Life Point* and *Bible Verse* slides
- ➔ People: Bible Story Leader
- ➔ Props: none

### ***BIBLE STORY LEADER***

If friends come to your house, how do you welcome them? *(Lead kids to respond.)* You might say: "Hello." You might help them with their coats or offer them a snack. You might share your toys or let them choose a game to play.

Today's Bible story is about a large crowd who welcomed Jesus to their city. They were very happy that Jesus came.

Our Bible verse says that Jesus came to the earth because God loves us! Listen as I say the verse, and then we will say it together.

*(Show Bible Verse slide—select preferred version.)*

*(Say the verse. Lead kids to repeat it after you.)*

### **BIBLE VERSE (SELECT PREFERRED VERSION):**

- God loved us and sent His Son.  
1 John 4:10 *(Paraphrase)*
- God ... loved us and sent his Son. 1 John 4:10 *(CSB)*
- God ... loved us, and sent his Son. 1 John 4:10 *(KJV)*
- God ... loved us and sent his Son. 1 John 4:10 *(NIV)*
- God ... loved us and sent his Son. 1 John 4:10 *(ESV)*
- God ... loved us and sent His Son.  
1 John 4:10 *(NKJV)*

God loved us, and God sent His Son, Jesus! The people in Jerusalem knew Jesus was special. Many had heard Jesus teach. Some had seen Jesus provide food for people and make people well. The people were excited to see Jesus.

*(Show Life Point Slide.)*

**God sent Jesus because He loves us.** Let's say that together: **"God sent Jesus because He loves us."**

We know that Jesus loves us! Let's pray and thank God for sending Jesus.

*God, thank You for loving us and for sending Jesus. Thank You that Jesus did the things You wanted Him to do. Please help us learn more about Jesus. We love You. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.*

Let's watch Miss Lindy. Maybe she will tell us more about why God sent Jesus.

## **MISS LINDY'S LIBRARY**

- ➔ Estimated time: 3-5 minutes
- ➔ Tech: *Miss Lindy's Library* video *(optional)*
- ➔ People: none
- ➔ Props: none

*(Play the video.)*

## **CONNECTION POINT GAME**

- ➔ Estimated time: 10 minutes
- ➔ Tech: *Connection Point Game* slide
- ➔ People: Connection Point Leader, 1 adult, all kids
- ➔ Props: none

### **GAME INSTRUCTIONS:**

- *Assign boys to follow your actions. Direct the girls to follow the other adult leader's actions.*
- *Lead the children to do simple movements such as pat head, clap hands, hop, spin, and so on. (Leaders should not do the same actions at the same time.)*
- *Make the game fun! Do some motions in slow motion and others super fast.*
- *Play as your time allows.*

### **CONNECTION POINT LEADER**

*(Show Connection Point Game slide.)*

Today's game is for everyone! Let's play a follow the leader game. Our leaders will move in some fun ways, and you will do what your leader does. Boys,

you will follow my actions. Let's practice! If I raise my hands (*raise hands*), then you should raise your hands, too. (*Lead boys to respond.*) Great job!

Girls, you will follow (*adult leader's name*). If (*leader name*) claps three times (*clap three times*), then you should clap, too. (*Lead girls to respond.*) Perfect!

Pay close attention and be sure to follow your leader. The boys and the girls will do different actions, so it might get tricky!

Does everyone understand how to play? (*Answer any questions and play the game.*)

Great job! You followed your leader! If I marched, the boys marched! If (*leader name*) waved her arms, the girls did, too! It was a busy game, but you worked hard. Raise your hand if you followed your leader's actions and did a great job! (*Lead kids to respond.*) Yes! You followed directions very well.

Jesus did the things God wanted Him to do. Let's sing another song together, and then we will hear a Bible story about Jesus!

## **WORSHIP SONG**

- ➔ Estimated time: 3 minutes
- ➔ Tech: Music video, mics for singers, lights (*optional*)
- ➔ Music: "Shout Hallelujah, Shout Amen" (*lead sheet available on DVD-ROM*) or download a worship song of your choice
- ➔ People: Worship Leader and/or Worship Team
- ➔ Props: none

### **WORSHIP LEADER**

You did great following your leaders! Can you follow me as we sing? If I hold my hand high, sing loudly but don't yell. If I hold my hand low, sing very quietly. If I hold my hand in the middle, sing normally. (*Move your hand to demonstrate as you explain.*)

Stand and sing with me.

(*Show the music video.*)

(*Lead kids to sit as song ends.*)

## **BIBLE STORY**

- ➔ Estimated time: 10 minutes
- ➔ Tech: *Christ Focus* and *Bible Story* slides; *Bible Story Time* video (*optional*)
- ➔ People: Bible Story Leader
- ➔ Props: Bible, binoculars

**Option 1:** Show the *Bible Story Time* video and conclude with a short prayer.

God, thank You for loving us and sending Jesus. Thank You that we can read the Bible and learn about the things Jesus did and said. We love You. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

**Option 2:** Tell the following Bible story.

### **BIBLE STORY LEADER**

(*Show Bible Story slide.*)

Have you ever been to a parade? Parades are so much fun! Usually bands play, clowns act silly, and people throw candy to the crowd. Sometimes police officers ride horses and firefighters drive big, red trucks! Lots and lots of people stand along the road and wait for the parade to come by. Some people even bring binoculars to watch! (*Put the binoculars up to your eyes and look to the side.*) Parades are very exciting!

Did you know the Bible tells about an exciting day in Jerusalem? There were no bands or candy, but there were many, many excited people standing along the road. They were waiting for Someone special!

(*Open Bible to Matthew 21.*)

Jesus and His helpers were traveling to the city of Jerusalem. Jesus sent two of His helpers ahead of Him to a village. He had a special job for them to do.

(*Read Matthew 21:2.*)

**"Go into the village ahead of you. At once you will find a donkey tied there with her colt. Untie them and bring them to me."**

Jesus told His helpers that if anyone asked why they were taking the donkeys, they should say that Jesus needed them. Jesus knew that a long time ago, God said Jesus would ride into Jerusalem on a donkey. This was part of God's plan!

The helpers went to the village and did what Jesus told them. They brought the donkeys to Jesus. Then the helpers laid their clothes on the donkeys, and Jesus sat on them. Jesus rode toward Jerusalem.

*(Read Matthew 21:8.)*

**A very large crowd spread their clothes on the road; others were cutting branches from the trees and spreading them on the road.**

The people were so excited to see Jesus riding into Jerusalem! They gave Jesus a royal welcome by putting their coats and branches on the road.

Some people followed behind Jesus, and others went ahead of Him. They shouted: “Hosanna!” and praised God.

The whole city was excited as Jesus entered Jerusalem. Some people asked, “Who is this?”

The crowds answered: “This is Jesus!”

*(Close Bible.)*

*(Show Christ Focus slide.)*

Jesus is special because He is God’s Son! God sent Jesus because He loves us. Jesus taught about God and His plan for people.

*(Pick up binoculars.)* I think watching Jesus ride into Jerusalem sounds more exciting than a parade! Can you imagine seeing Jesus ride past you? Wow!

Let’s pray and thank God for sending Jesus

*God, thank You for loving us and sending Jesus. Thank You that we can read the Bible and learn about the things Jesus did and said. We love You. In Jesus’ name we pray, amen.*

### **WORSHIP SONG AND OFFERING**

- ➔ Estimated time: 3 minutes
- ➔ Tech: mics for singers, lights *(optional)*
- ➔ Music: Use a favorite song or download a worship song of your choice.
- ➔ People: Worship Leader and/or Worship Team
- ➔ Props: scarves or strips of crepe paper *(reuse from opening Worship Song)*

### **WORSHIP LEADER**

What did the people put on the road when Jesus rode into Jerusalem? *(Allow for responses; branches and coats)* Spreading branches and coats on the road was a special way to honor Jesus. It was a way for the people to welcome Jesus and let Him know that they knew He was special! Jesus is special because He is God’s Son.

Let’s lay our scarves on the floor in front of us and make a path. We can pretend that we were there when Jesus rode into Jerusalem, and we want Him to feel welcome. *(Guide children to make a path with the scarves and stand on both sides of it.)* Now let’s sing and pretend that Jesus is coming down our path. That will be so exciting!

*Optional Giving Segment:*

It’s time to give an offering. Some of the money people give at church helps others know that Jesus is God’s Son. If you would like to give an offering today, ... .

*(Give your own directions for how the kids can give their offerings. After collecting the offering, guide kids to stand for the worship song. Collect the scarves after kids sing.)*

### **CONNECTION POINT BIBLE VERSE**

- ➔ Estimated time: 5-8 minutes
- ➔ Tech: *Connection Point Bible Verse* and *Bible Verse* slides
- ➔ People: Connection Point leader, all kids
- ➔ Props: none

### **ACTIVITY INSTRUCTIONS:**

- *Select your preferred version of the Bible verse.*
- *Demonstrate how to make a heart with index fingers touching and thumbs touching. Hold the heart you make with your hands over your heart.*
- *Guide children to make heart shapes each time they say the world love in the Bible verse.*

### **BIBLE VERSE (SELECT PREFERRED VERSION):**

- God loved us and sent His Son.  
1 John 4:10 *(Paraphrase)*
- God ... loved us and sent his Son. 1 John 4:10 *(CSB)*
- God ... loved us, and sent his Son. 1 John 4:10 *(KJV)*

- God ... loved us and sent his Son. 1 John 4:10 (NIV)
- God ... loved us and sent his Son. 1 John 4:10 (ESV)
- God ... loved us and sent His Son.  
1 John 4:10 (NKJV)

### CONNECTION POINT LEADER

(Show Connection Point Bible Verse slide.)

Let's use our hands to make a heart. Put your thumbs together to make the point of the heart. Now bend all of your fingers and touch them together to make the top of the heart.

Hearts make me think about love. Today's Bible verse is about God's love. Listen as I say it, and then we will say it together.

(Show Bible Verse slide—select preferred version.)

(Say the verse. Lead kids to repeat it after you.)

Good! Let's say our Bible verse and make a heart every time we say the word *love*.

(Lead the activity.)

### CONNECTION POINT MISSIONS

- ➔ Estimated time: 5-8 minutes
- ➔ Tech: *Connection Point Missions* slide, "Go West" missions video
- ➔ People: Connection Point leader
- ➔ Props: none

### CONNECTION POINT LEADER

(Show Connection Point Missions slide and play the "Go West" missions video immediately following the Connection Point Bible Verse activity.)

Cal, Patty, Dillon, and Maggie share the good news about Jesus with the people in Senegal. They give the children pastries, help the fishermen, and do other things to help the people learn about Jesus. Let's pray for Senegal.

*God, thank You for missionaries all over the world who tell people about You. Thank You for Cal, Patty, Dillon, and Maggie in Senegal. Please help the people there learn about Jesus. In His name we pray, amen.*

### REAL LIFE CONNECTIONS

- ➔ Estimated time: 3-5 minutes
- ➔ Tech: *Real Life Connections* and *Life Point* slides, microphone to take to individuals in group (optional)
- ➔ People: Bible Story Leader
- ➔ Props: none

### BIBLE STORY LEADER

(Show Real Life Connections slide.)

Do you remember how the people cut branches and laid them on the road in front of Jesus? The people put branches on the road to welcome Jesus.

I will make some statements about the Bible story. Some things I will say are just right! It is what happened in the Bible story. If what I say is right, bend over and pretend to put a branch on the floor. Let's practice! What would you do if I said: "Jesus is God's Son"? (Lead kids to pretend to put a branch on the floor.) Great!

Some things I will say are not what really happened in the Bible story. If what I say is wrong, freeze and stand straight. Let's practice. What would you do if I said: "The people were sad that Jesus came"? (Lead kids to stand straight.) Very good! That's not right. The people were happy that Jesus came!

(Make the following statements and lead kids to respond. Be sure to correct wrong statements.)

- Jesus went to Washington. (No. Jesus went to Jerusalem.)
- Jesus sent two helpers into the village and told them to bring Him a donkey and its colt. (Yes.)
- The people were so excited to see Jesus that they shouted: "Hello!" and "Come to my house for pizza." (No. They shouted: "Hosanna!")
- The people put their clothes and palm branches on the road to welcome Jesus. (Yes.)
- Some people in Jerusalem asked: "Who is this?" Other people said: "This is Jesus." (Yes.)

Great job! You listened so well!

(Show Life Point Slide.)

**God sent Jesus because He loves us.** Let's say that together: **"God sent Jesus because He loves us."**

God promised to send His Son, Jesus, because He loves us! I'm glad that God sent Jesus. Jesus is special because He is God's Son.

I had so much fun with you today! We heard lots of exciting things about Jesus. Come again next time, and we will hear more.

**Leader note:** *If you plan to utilize the after-session Huddle Up, dismiss kids to their small groups.*