

James and John

Lesson At-A-Glance

Scripture Reference
Mark 10:35-45

Lectionary Sunday/
Church Season
Pentecost 20

Lesson Focus
I am special to Jesus.



Gather (10 minutes)

Play Time

Kids create chenille craft stem families to play with in the sand, use props to imagine heaven, and create coffee filter doves.

Spark Resources

Coloring Pages



Supplies

Chenille craft stems, shallow pans, sand, chairs, fabric pieces (various colors), crown, fake jewelry, stuffed animals, cotton balls, coffee filters, clear tape, markers, crayons

Circle Time

Kids welcome each other with a name game and discuss questions related to James and John.

None

None

Prayer Time

Kids repeat a refrain as they pray.

None

None

Open the Bible (15 minutes)

James and John Storytelling

Kids use thigh-clapping to interact with the story James and John.

Spark Resources

Spark Story Bibles

Supplies

None

Find Jesus

Kids trace a path and use stickers to remember the story of James and John.

Leaflets, Lesson Stickers

Crayons or markers

Activate Faith (15 minutes)

	Spark Resources	Supplies
Made Special Kids color a happy and sad face to show Jesus is with them always.	Leaflets, Lesson Stickers	Crayons or markers
A Special Place in Heaven Kids use collage materials to show their idea of heaven.	Leaflets, Lesson Stickers	Paper scraps, kid-friendly magazines, scissors, glue sticks
Do You Know the Holy Spirit? Kids sing a song about the Holy Spirit during Pentecost.	Leaflet	None

Send (5 minutes)

	Spark Resources	Supplies
Good-bye Time Kids do a quick review of the lesson and do an action rhyme to close.	Leaflets	None
Prayer Time Kids name places they will go in a prayer.	Family Pages 	None



Visit www.sparksundayschool.org for more Spark content! Watch a short Lesson Prep video that will prepare you and give you confidence to explore this Bible story with the kids you are leading. You will also find four downloadable resources for this lesson: a Coloring Page, a Family Page, and two additional in-class activities.

Gather (10 minutes)

Play Time

Set up three activity areas before kids arrive. Place the shallow pans, each filled partway with sand on an open sturdy surface. Set out the chenille craft stems nearby. As kids arrive, demonstrate how to bend and twist the craft stems to make simple shapes and stick figures. **In our Bible story today, we are going to hear about two brothers walking along a dusty, sandy road. Let's make a big family to play with in the sand. Someone may want to make Jesus, because he's always with our families.** Put the fabric, crown, fake jewelry, and stuffed animals out in another area. **We're talking about heaven in today's story. I wonder what heaven is like.** Encourage kids to do some imagining. **We are so special to Jesus that he promises us that we get to be in heaven with him some day.**

Set the cotton balls, coffee filters, tape, and markers out at a work space, and encourage kids to use them creatively to make doves. Filters can cover over or be covered with cotton balls; edges can be scrunched to suggest wings. Help kids position tape anywhere to secure the shapes, and add features with markers. Provide copies of the downloadable Coloring Page for this lesson for the kids to color. Be sure to help them put their names on their papers.

When the kids have all had time to play, ask them to clean up their materials. As they do so, use the following rhyme to help them transition to Circle Time. Repeat the rhyme as many times as needed, inviting kids to join in as they are able.

**We've tried something new,
We haven't done before.
Please come join us now.
Let's learn something more.**

Spark Resources

Coloring Pages



Supplies

Chenille craft stems
Shallow pans
Sand
Chairs
Fabric pieces (various colors)
Crown
Fake jewelry
Stuffed animals
Cotton balls
Coffee filters
Clear tape
Markers
Crayons

Circle Time

Gather the kids together in a circle on the floor. Once all the kids have joined your circle, you may begin. **Welcome to Sunday school, everyone! I'm glad to see you all here today. Let's start by seeing who's here today!**

Welcome each kid by using this format: **We're glad you're here today; tell us your name today.**

Each kid responds by saying his or her name. The whole group responds with: **Hi, _____!**

Start with one person in the circle and continue around, making sure everyone gets a turn. Don't forget to include yourself.

Use the following questions to discuss Play Time and introduce the story. Allow time between each question for kids to respond. **Who imagined what it might be like to be in heaven during Play Time? What was that like? Who made doves? Will you show us what you made?** Let the kids show what they made. **Raise your hand if you made brothers and sisters, as part of a family to play with, in the sand pan. Today's story talks about two brothers—and what they thought about heaven. Let's get ready to listen as we say a prayer!**

Spark Resources

None

Supplies

None

Prayer Time

Before we hear our story, let's pray together. Invite kids to say, "Be with us, Jesus," after each phrase of the prayer.

As we gather for our story, *(Be with us, Jesus.)*

Help us listen *(Be with us, Jesus.)*

And learn. *(Be with us, Jesus.)*

Amen.

Spark Resources

None

Supplies

None

Open the Bible (15 minutes)

James and John Storytelling

Bring everyone together in the area of your choosing to tell the story. Hand out Spark Story Bibles. **It's time for the story, James and John. Remember, I told you there would be brothers in this story. Their names are James and John! The brothers have something to ask Jesus about heaven. Find the story on page 336 and follow along as I read.** Help kids find the story. **Then you can help retelling in a new way.** Read the story, encouraging kids to follow along as they are able.

After reading it through once, direct kids to sit with their legs crossed so they can clap their hands on their thighs to indicate movement in the story. **There's a lot of moving in this story, isn't there? Let's use our hands and legs to help tell it again.** Guide kids to clap on their thighs as the tempos suggest, with the following phrases:

- Jesus and his disciples walked along a dusty road. (*walking tempo clap*)
- They ran to catch up with him. (*running tempo clap*)
- Jesus stopped. (*stop clapping*)
- . . . one on the right side (*clap right leg*)
- . . . and one on the left!" (*clap left leg*)
- Jesus called the disciples together. (*walking tempo clap, then stop*)

Discuss the story by asking the kids the following questions. **What were the names of the two brothers?** (*James and John*) **Where did James and John want to sit in heaven?** (*to the right and left of Jesus*) **Why do you think James and John wanted to sit next to Jesus in heaven?** Accept all answers, and then point to Jesus and the group of people on page 336 of the Spark Story Bible. **All of these people have a special place in heaven with Jesus. We are all special people to Jesus. Jesus promises to be with all of us and says that we all have a special place in heaven with him. Let's take a look at our leaflets to find out more about this story!**

Spark Resources

Spark Story Bibles

Supplies

None

Find Jesus

As a group, move to tables or a similar workplace. Hand out the leaflets and direct kids' attention to the front page.

Find James and John. Have kids point to James and John. Distribute the sticker of James and John. **Let's finish the picture of James and John by adding a sticker.**

James and John are trying to find Jesus! Use your finger to trace the paths.

Which one leads to Jesus? Allow time for kids to do so, finding the path free of obstructions that leads to Jesus.

Distribute the crayons or markers, so that all kids have access. **Now use a crayon or marker to trace the path to Jesus. In the story, James and John wanted to be somewhere special. Where?** (*in heaven, to the right and left of Jesus*) **What did Jesus tell James and John about heaven?** (*Everyone has a special place.*) Hand out the stickers of Jesus and the group of people. **Let's put this sticker in the thought bubble by Jesus to show what Jesus knew about heaven! We are all special to Jesus, and we all have a special place in heaven with him. Jesus will be with us in heaven, but Jesus is always with us here, too!**

Spark Resources

Leaflets
Lesson Stickers

Supplies

Crayons or markers

Activate Faith (15 minutes)

Made Special

Invite kids to look next at the back of their leaflets.

Find the two hands. Let's pretend these hands are yours. There are two of them because your face doesn't always look the same. It can look different depending on how you feel. Your two hands are different even though they are a matched set. And guess what? Your hands and your fingerprints are like no one else's. You are one-of-a-kind, made specially and loved by Jesus!

Let each kid use an ink pad to stamp each fingerprint on the leaflet hands. Compare them with their neighbor's and affirm that each one is unique. **In today's Bible story John and James learned that everyone is special to Jesus. Jesus is always with us and we will be with him in heaven, too. Every time you look at your own very special fingerprints they can remind you just how special you are—to Jesus!** Give each child an "I was made special!" sticker to stick near their hands.

Spark Resources

Leaflets
Lesson Stickers

Supplies

Crayons or markers

A Special Place in Heaven

Set out collage materials on an open work area. Point out the empty space on the bottom of the leaflets.

In the Bible story James and John, Jesus said, “Everyone has a special place in heaven.”

Imagine what your special place might look like. What are some of your ideas? Encourage kids to share their ideas. **Use the supplies to make a picture of it! Isn’t it great to know that we are so special to Jesus that we have a special place with him in heaven? Here is a sticker for each of you to help you remember that you are special to Jesus.** Give each kid a “Special to Jesus!” sticker, inviting them to put the stickers on their clothes.

Spark Resources

Leaflets
Lesson Stickers

Supplies

Paper scraps
Kid-friendly magazines
Kid-friendly scissors
Glue sticks

Do You Know the Holy Spirit?

Gather the kids together in a circle on the floor. Hold up the leaflet for all to see, pointing to the seasonal icon. **During the church season of Pentecost, we learn about the helper part of God, called the Holy Spirit. What are some things you need help with?** Allow time for kids to respond. Kids might offer concrete tasks, such as reaching a high cupboard or tying a shoe. Introduce behavioral situations, such as getting along with siblings or sharing toys.

The Holy Spirit helps us to learn new things and act more like Jesus would like us to act. Let’s sing a song and play a game to remind us about our Helper, the Holy Spirit. Invite kids to sing the following song and do the actions with you. Sing the song to the tune of “Do You Know the Muffin Man?”

Do you know the Holy Spirit, *(point to head)*

The Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit? *(wave arms back and forth to indicate the wind)*

Do you know the Holy Spirit *(point to head)*

Who helps us every day? *(hug self)*

Yes, we know the Holy Spirit, *(point to head, nod “yes”)*

The Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit. *(wave arms back and forth like wind)*

Yes, we know the Holy Spirit, *(point to head, nod “yes”)*

Who helps us share our toys.* *(pretend to share toys)*

*Insert different situations from the kids’ discussion earlier.

Repeat the song several times so that kids can learn and join in. Continue to insert different situations from the kids’ discussion to complete the last line.

Spark Resources

Leaflet

Supplies

None

Send (5 minutes)

Good-bye Time

Gather the kids together. **We sure had fun learning about the Bible story of James and John. We learned that all of us are special to Jesus, so special in fact that each one of us has a special place with Jesus in heaven. Jesus promises to be with us in heaven, and promises to always be with us here on earth, too! When you take your leaflet home, talk with your family about Faith on the Go! It has a fun activity to help you remember that Jesus is always with you!** Show the kids where the Faith on the Go! activity is.

Before we leave today, let's think about our time together. Remind kids to echo your words and actions.

It's time to say, "Good-bye." *(wave)*

We've all learned something new. *(point to head)*

We'll keep growing in our faith *(slowly lift hands)*

In everything we do! *(spread arms wide)*

Spark Resources

Leaflets

Supplies

None

Prayer Time

Have kids stand in a circle for a closing prayer. **In our prayer, I will name a place I will go this week, then you can take turns naming places you will go this week, if you wish.**

Dear Jesus,

Be with us this week at home,

Work, and other places we name now,

Like the grocery store, . . . *(pause, allowing kids to name places)*

Thank you for being with us everywhere!

Amen.

Be sure to send the leaflets and Family Pages home with kids, dismissing them as appropriate.

Spark Resources

Leaflets

Family Pages



Supplies

None