



# Faith Adventures for Children Together



*Committed to URC Children Together:  
enabling everyone to grow more like Jesus  
together in the home, church and beyond.*

For guidance on the purpose of the resource and how to use it as a launch pad for your engagement with children and families, please use this link:  
<https://urc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/FACT-how-to-sheet.pdf>

## Matthew 19: 16-22

Theme: Jesus as an influencer

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### Introduction: What would be helpful to know in my planning?

#### Matthew

The book of Matthew is the first book of the New Testament. Most people think that it was written by one of Jesus’ close friends, Matthew, who gave up being a tax collector to follow Him. Matthew shows his readers that Jesus is a great teacher, healer and leader who is the good news that God has promised everyone.

Last week we looked at how God might influence people. This week we explore how Jesus influenced people through his words and his actions – using the story of the rich young man.

This man came to ask Jesus a question. Why? Did he know Jesus? Had he heard about Jesus? He is not the only person in the Gospels who asked Jesus for advice – though he might be one of the few who asked because he needed help, rather than to try and trip Jesus up.

Jesus gave a straight answer. There was no fudging, no leeway. The man was given the choice to either accept the advice or ignore it. We have to make decisions about whether or not to heed advice every day. What influences our decision making?

When talking about the commandments, Jesus brings up some issues which may be troubling for members of your group. They may be members of blended families, or children of a marriage that is not happy. They may have parents who have stolen – they may even have stolen things themselves. You will need to consider in advance how you will respond to questions if asked. And remember that the rich young man kept all the commandments – but Jesus told him to go further if



he wanted to be perfect – it was this final step that the man was unable to take. Is 'good' enough? Is 'perfect' possible?

This chapter of Matthew has a lot of material that might take your conversations and explorations with your group down a number of different routes. To ensure you keep on track, we recommend that, rather than have the whole chapter available, you print out the specific passage to share with your group.

## Together

How do I help my group to come together and get started with the theme?

### Gathering prayer

#### Jesus, our friend

(use alternate index fingers to point and tap the middle of opposite palms)

#### Be with us today

(two hands, palms up in front of you, move up and down twice)

#### As we share together,

(two hands, palms up in front of you, move one forward and one back and alternate twice)

#### Pray together,

(hands together, palm against palm, as though praying)

#### Play together,

(hands to each side, palms up, make two small circles outwards)

#### And get to know you better,

(point up with one hand)

#### As children together in your family

(one hand out, palm down in front of you, move it sideways and up in three 'steps' as though to indicate children of three different heights)

#### AMEN

(Two thumbs up, and bring fists slowly together to meet in front of you)

OR

**Thank you, God, for bringing us together today.**

**Help us to grow closer to you in all we do.**

**Help us to speak and to listen, to learn and to grow together,**

**Adventuring together with you wherever we may go.**

**Amen**

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### In-person game – You choose

Use this opportunity for the children to influence your planning and see what games they would like to play. (It would be wise to explain that the games chosen do need to be within the resources you have access to.)

Encourage the children to lead the game. This could be used as a way of encouraging and developing young leaders. Therefore this may be an opportunity for emerging young leaders to help with your planning session.



Be prepared to help as those inexperienced with leading games may find it hard to clearly explain the rules or others may have different rules and so they would need to stop and clarify things. It would be interesting to see who the influencers in the game were and how were others influenced.

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### Alternative game

Replay a game from this theme or a game you didn't play from any of the previous sessions.

## Experience

For this story we recommend using the Easy-reader version

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+19%3A+16-22&version=ERV>

### Where can I find the story online?

Under fives: Animation by Kids on the move

[https://youtu.be/g36\\_A\\_io6sl?si=RGC61wnBXQITbjQv](https://youtu.be/g36_A_io6sl?si=RGC61wnBXQITbjQv)

Over fives: Retold by children by KidsWise

<https://youtu.be/V7u3-uKEA-Q?si=PDwOURwXTtkLcvGu>

### Songs to support the story

Under fives: Freely freely give by the children of Holy Trinity Tulse Hill

<https://youtu.be/E0IF4FOz4pM?si=MklU8Y9s1xkBN0rz>

Five to elevens: Put God first by All star Kids Club

<https://youtu.be/b2Oe6R6AFeQ?si=rOf068xaj7Bs-l9n>

## Explore

Ideas and activities to explore this week's Bible passage together

### A new way to explore the passage

Begin by exploring what it means to give and follow advice whilst also beginning to think about what Jesus would tell us to do.

Gather a couple of scenarios to give to the group to discuss, here are few to help you out:

A friend is telling tales about you – what should you do?

There is a new child in your group, who is a little awkward and quiet, everyone is trying hard to welcome them – what could you do?

A friend is jealous of a new person in the group – what should you do?

Your sister keeps playing with your toys and often breaks them – what should you do?

The group might like to offer some examples of their own to discuss.



Explain that you will give the group one problem at a time, leave some time for them to think about it personally, then open it up for discussion. Collect their responses on a large piece of paper.

Then decide which piece of advice the group should go with and why.

As a further question, you could ask '*What would Jesus do?*' Which piece of advice is most in line with what Jesus would say?

Finish by retelling the Bible story. Read the following slowly encouraging everyone to think about the question – '*What would you do?*' while listening.

You will need:

Some play people

Green felt or material

Brown felt or material

Small pieces of paper with a commandment written on each one

Start with placing some green material and some brown material to create an environment for the story to take place.

**A man** *place the man*

**came to Jesus** *place Jesus*

**and asked,** *hold the man as you read* "Teacher, what good thing must I do to have eternal life?"

**Jesus answered,** *hold Jesus as you speak* "Why do you ask me about what is good? Only God is good. But if you want to have eternal life, obey the law's commands."

**The man asked,** *hold the man* "Which ones?"

**Jesus answered,** *hold Jesus*

**You must not murder anyone,** *place the card*

**you must not commit adultery,** *place the card*

**you must not steal,** *place the card*

**you must not tell lies about others,** *place the card*

**you must respect your father and mother,** *place the card*

**'love your neighbor<sup>[b]</sup> the same as you love yourself.'** *place the card*

**The young man said,** *hold the man* "I have obeyed all these commands. What else do I need?"

**Jesus answered,** *hold Jesus* "If you want to be perfect, then go and sell all that you own. Give the money to the poor, *place the coins*

**and you will have riches in heaven. Then come and follow me!"** *place the footprints between the man and Jesus*

**But when the young man heard Jesus tell him to give away his money, he was sad.** *place sad face* **He didn't want to do this, because he was very rich.**

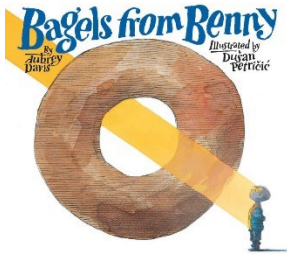
**So he left.** *Take up the coins and walk the man away*

Finish by saying 'I wonder what you would do?' 'I wonder if Jesus's words would have had any influence on your decision?'



## Modern parables

Jesus used stories to help people understand the things of God, even though they weren't necessarily overtly Christian stories. Lots of children's books can be used in a similar way as a conversation starter on the week's theme. Examples are shared here but you may think of others too.



'Bagels from Benny' by Aubrey Davis, read by Janet Newman  
[https://youtu.be/14gHE3Qh4LI?si=6Kub\\_I3vkyvtYmlo](https://youtu.be/14gHE3Qh4LI?si=6Kub_I3vkyvtYmlo)

Benny is a Jewish boy whose grandfather owns a bakery. Benny learns that giving to others is giving back to God.

### Talking together: How might we talk about the story together?

- Are you more likely to take advice from somebody you like than someone you don't like?
- Who do you go for advice and why them?
- What other ways did Jesus influence others? And how does he influence you?

### Wondering together: suggested questions to use during activities

- Why did the man go to Jesus with his question rather than another leader, especially if he knew of Jesus and could probably guess the answer would be one he wouldn't like?
- What do you think is the most important thing that Jesus has said that are of greatest influence? If there was one thing we'd share that Jesus said what would it be?
- Do we go to people who tell us what we want to hear?

### What's in the box (for under fives)

Use the special box or bag and sing "what's in the box/bag? What's in the box/bag? Let's see, let's see, what's in the box/bag" (to the tune of The Farmer's in the Dell). You could tap the top of the box twice after the word 'box'. Pull out the things one by one and then let the children play with them, talking about the theme or the story in simple terms.

This week's box could include:

- Coins and a sad face - the rich man wasn't happy with the answer he got to his question.
- Question mark – who do we go when we need the answer to a question?
- Tick or a thumbs up – Jesus always gives us good choices.
- A fork in the road sign – we can choose which way to go.
- A set of play people to act out the story or random shapes/bits you can move around to make pictures from the story as you tell it (eg stones, felt, twigs etc)
- A tactile cross of wood or fabric (A cross shape reminds us of Jesus. Jesus/God loves us and it's always in the box because Jesus/God always loves us!)
- A set of play people to act out the story or random shapes/bits you can move around to make pictures from the story as you tell it (eg stones, felt, twigs etc)



## Express

Praying together: how can you involve the children actively in prayer?

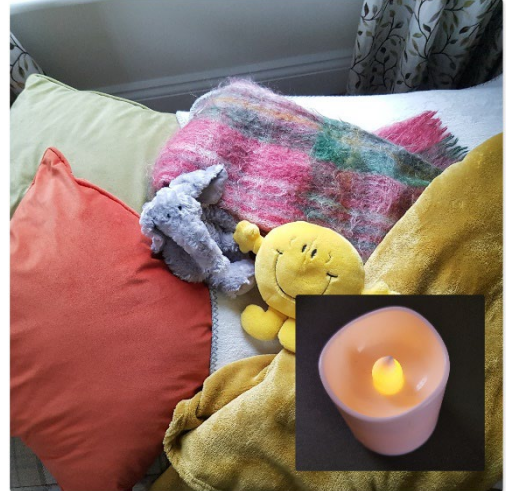
### A quiet place for listening

Take time to sit quietly and listen to God.

Get everyone to find a comfortable spot. Have a candle to look at while some quiet music is played, and if helpful something to hold like a pebble or soft toy. Explain to everyone that you are going to have a time just listening. Put the music on in the background, very quietly, and light the candle.

God, we come to spend some time with you.  
Help us to be quiet in our hearts and our minds.  
If you speak to us, help us to listen.  
Help us to enjoy resting in your love.

**Amen.**



Suggest the children close their eyes or look at the candle. When the room is still, quietly turn the music off for a minute or two.

Turn the music back up and end with a prayer.

God, we thank you for being with us all the time, wherever we are.  
As we live our lives, help us to listen for your voice. Amen

Suggestion for music

Be still and Know from Scripture lullabies

<https://youtu.be/FKWGSzxtcZA>

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### Spoken prayer

Use this prayer as an opportunity to talk about praying for others. After each short sentence pause for time of quiet to listen and to look and to sense what they are feeling.

Dear Jesus,

Thank you that you speak to us through the things we hear and see.  
O God, help us in our listening, to understand your word for us.

**Pause...**

O God help, us in our listening to open our ears to those in need.

**Pause...**

O God, help us in our seeing to notice those who need your healing.

**Pause...**

O God, help us in our listening to be aware of your creation.

**Pause...**

O God, help us in our seeing, to open our eyes to situations in the world.



### ***Pause...***

Loving Jesus, Help us to listen to your words.  
Help us to remember that your words are for everyone, **Amen.**

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## **Responding together**

Here are some suggested crafts and activities, and there is a colouring sheet at the end of this resource. You could also use small play toys and/or have a basket of resources available so children can choose their own way to respond. <https://urc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/FACT-how-to-sheet.pdf>

With an online group, plan whether to deliver any resources in advance or how you will encourage them to use what they've got to hand in their response.

However you do it, it is good for the adults to engage in the response too, and all chat together.

### **What would Jesus do bracelets**

*You will need:*

- Thread
- Letter Beads
- Ribbon or fabric strips



*What you do:*

Create a bracelet which poses the question What would Jesus do? Or simply put two words i.e. Jesus; Influencer; Choices.

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## **Marble Run**

*You will need:*

- Cereal box or cardboard box
- Kitchen or toilet roll core
- Sellotape
- Marble or small balls



*What you do:*

Cut a hole in the box. Create a hole in the top to put your marble through. Use Sellotape to stick ramps inside, using toilet paper cores cut in half or other pieces or card to create the run. You may need to stick two halves together to give you more length on the ramp.



### Alternative: Marble run

#### *You will need:*

- paper plate
- paper strips
- glue or sticky tape



#### *What you do:*

Stick some paper hoops on a paper plate to create a maze for a marble to roll around and through. You may need to try it out and adjust it if the marbles don't run easily.

The marble will not always go the route we want, it may be the best route. Jesus always answered people's questions but they chose what to do with the answer and which route to follow, it might not be the best route though.

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### Everyday with Jesus – Walking the Way

What could we do this week to carry on what we've learned? Maybe members of the group could come up with a suggestion. If not, get them to choose from these two challenges:

- Find out how your school council is influencing changes in your school. If you are not sure how to find out this information, you could ask your teacher.
  - Talk to someone older or younger than you and ask them to tell you about a time when Jesus's words and teachings influenced their life.
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We hope you enjoyed exploring the story of **Matthew** with us.

Please let us know what you liked or what you would find useful by emailing [lorraine webb@urc.org.uk](mailto:lorraine webb@urc.org.uk)

Why not have a look at next week's resource on **Ezekiel**



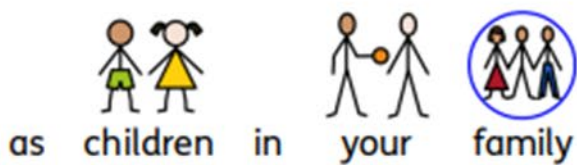
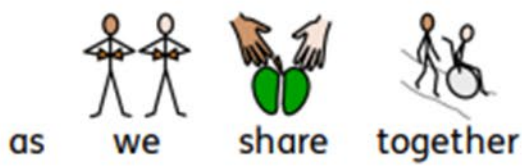




Illustration by lambsongs.co.nz via freebibleimages.com Jill Kemp and Richard Gunther



