

Adventures with GOD!

MY ETERNAL FUTURE IS A GIFT FROM GOD (B.3.WINTER.11)

Biblical Reference	John 14:1-7
Key Verse	John 14:2
Key Concept	God promises me an eternal future, thanks to the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross.
Educational Objectives	At the end of this lesson, children will be able to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Find the Bible passage for this lesson in their Bibles 2. Say the Bible verse by memory 3. Describe why eternal life is a gift from God

Life Application

The future is a difficult concept for children to grasp, let alone the idea of an eternal future. This week you will have the opportunity to talk about the gift of eternal life that Jesus Christ offers each one of them. While we don't know all the specifics, the Bible makes it clear that those who follow Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior will enjoy a life with God forever, even after death. The children will have the opportunity to thank God for this incredible gift. You will also find a letter addressed to parents, which you can edit and share with the parents regarding what the children learned about the gift of eternal life.

Possible Activities and Class Plan

Activity	Materials	Time
My GROW Adventure	GROW Adventure materials	5 minutes
Opening Prayer	Candle	1 minute
Bible Reading	Bible	5 minutes
Introduction	See instructions	10 minutes
Bible exploration	Bible, illustrations,	10 minutes
Bible verse	See instructions	5 minutes
Activity	Activity sheet	10 minutes
My GROW Adventure	Review	5 minutes
Closing Prayer	Candle	1 minute

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INSTRUCTIONS

My GROW Adventure with God Weekly Review: As children enter, take time to have them reflect on their adventure with God booklets, and either discuss or use art materials to express their journey during the past week. You may wish to add any art work, written poems, prayers or songs to a GROW wall in the room. You can find my GROW Adventure with God materials at CovChurch.org/children-adventures-with-god.

Opening Prayer: Gather children around a candle. Light the candle, and explain that we are entering into a special time with God. Encourage the children to hold their hands out in front of them, palms up, as a sign they are ready to receive what God has for them today.

Prayer Example: Lord God, thank you for making us, for loving us, for forgiving us, and guiding us. We know you are here with us right now. As we enter into your word, the Bible, help us draw close to you, to understand and to listen to what you have to say to us. Amen

(For safety sake, you may wish to extinguish the candle after the prayer.)

Bible Reading: Explain that as we read the Bible we do that first to spend time with God. Children can remain with hands out stretched, palms up, to receive the word as it's being read. Alternatively they can be invited to draw what they hear. Read John 14:1-7 two times and ask children to respond.

Question Examples: What did you notice in this passage? How does it make you feel? Was there anything you would ask God about that you didn't understand or was confusing? Is God saying anything to you though the passage?

Introduction: Before class, set up the room for a party. Blow up balloons, hang streamers, etc. Ask children what they think will happen during their time together. Once again, take out the gift wrapped box and explain that today is a celebration. It's a celebration because not only is our past, present, and future a gift from God, but our eternal future is a gift from God, too. Take out different illustrations and words from the box, like a picture of children playing, a bright light, "eternal life," etc.

Bible Exploration: Have children open their Bibles to John 14:1-7. Allow children time to find the passage. In this passage Jesus is talking to his disciples, but that it is also a message for us if we chose to be his disciples. What does he tell them will happen? Where is he going? Who will

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he be with? The Bible speaks of heaven as a place where God lives, and in the book of Revelation, heaven is described as full of light, color, music, etc.

How did Jesus' friends feel when they heard he would be leaving them? Imagine that someone you love has to move far away, how would you feel? It's hard to say good-bye. The disciples felt sad. But Jesus had good news for them. Jesus told them that where God lived, there was lots of space for them, too. Jesus made it sound like a palace, where everyone can live that believes Jesus is the Son of God who came to die on a cross for our sins, and who was raised from dead. Jesus describes this eternal life with God as one of peace, joy, rest and love. The Bible tells us that this eternal life with God doesn't end. Can you imagine how long that is? We can't, but we know that Jesus' promises are true. Imagine how you will greet Jesus when you see him? Imagine that he is waiting for you with a big smile on his face, ready to give you a hug. This is reason for a celebration.

Provide a light snack for the children, as a way to celebrate this eternal life that is a gift from God. Pray together giving thanks for such a great gift, and asking for courage to share the news of this gift with others.

Key Verse: Use an illustration found on pages 6-9, where children can copy down the verse and color the picture. Ask for volunteers to say the verse by memory.

Activity: See the activity sheet on page 5.

Today's GROW Adventure with God Review:

G=God's Word: What is the story? (Give children an opportunity to express their understanding of the story).

R=Relationships: Is there anything in today's Bible story that shows us how we should or shouldn't share God's love with others? (Remind children that sometimes God uses the stories of the Bible to show us how we shouldn't act toward God or others. Give children a chance to consider how we might show God's love instead).

O=Outward Action: Is there anything in the Bible story that shows us how we should help or serve God or others? (Explore concrete ways the children could live this out in the coming week).

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W=Worship: Is there anything in the Bible story that shows us how we should accept God's love for us and others? Ask: How do you feel about God? What would you like to say to God?

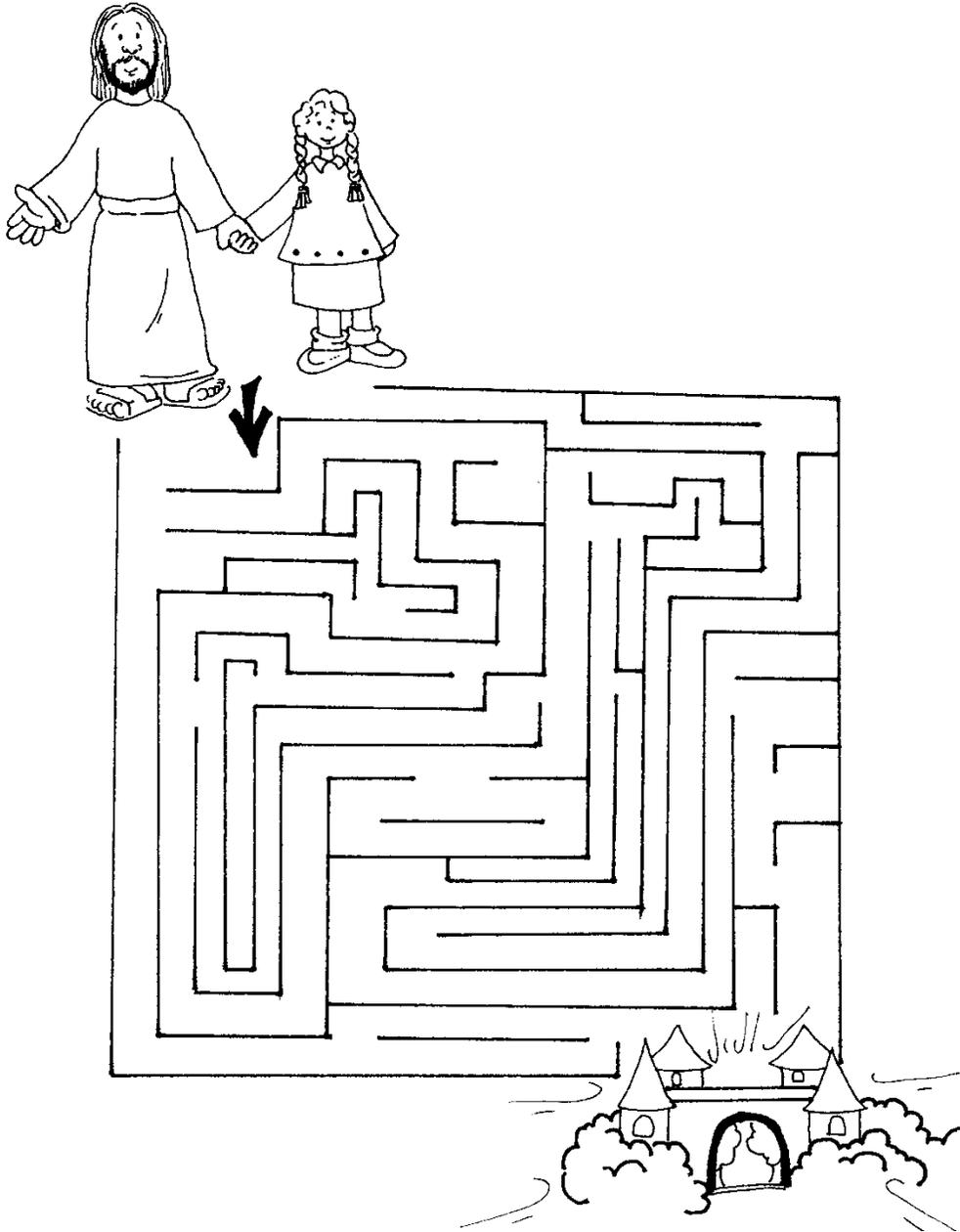
Closing Prayer: Gather children around the candle again. As you light the candle, explain that the flame is something that is present in the light and the darkness. The candle reminds us that God is always with us. Is there anything anyone wishes to say to God? After children have responded, close the prayer time.

Prayer Example: Lord God, we thank you that you are always with us, and always love us. It's good to be with you. Thank you for what we have learned today. Thank you for being with us and for teaching us through the Bible. Help us to remember what you have taught us today and to live it out when we leave. Amen

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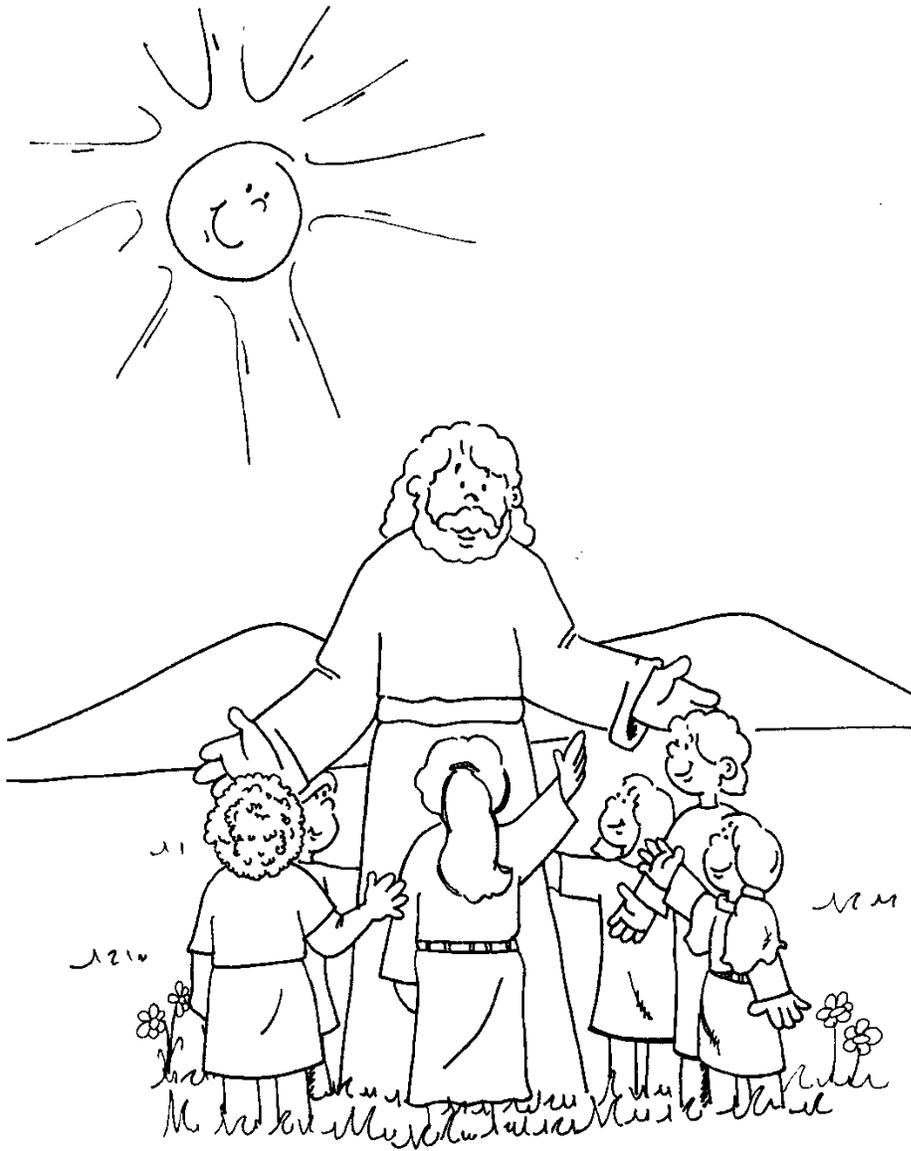
ILLUSTRATIONS

Jesus promises that we will live forever with God. Walk with Jesus to find the way to God.



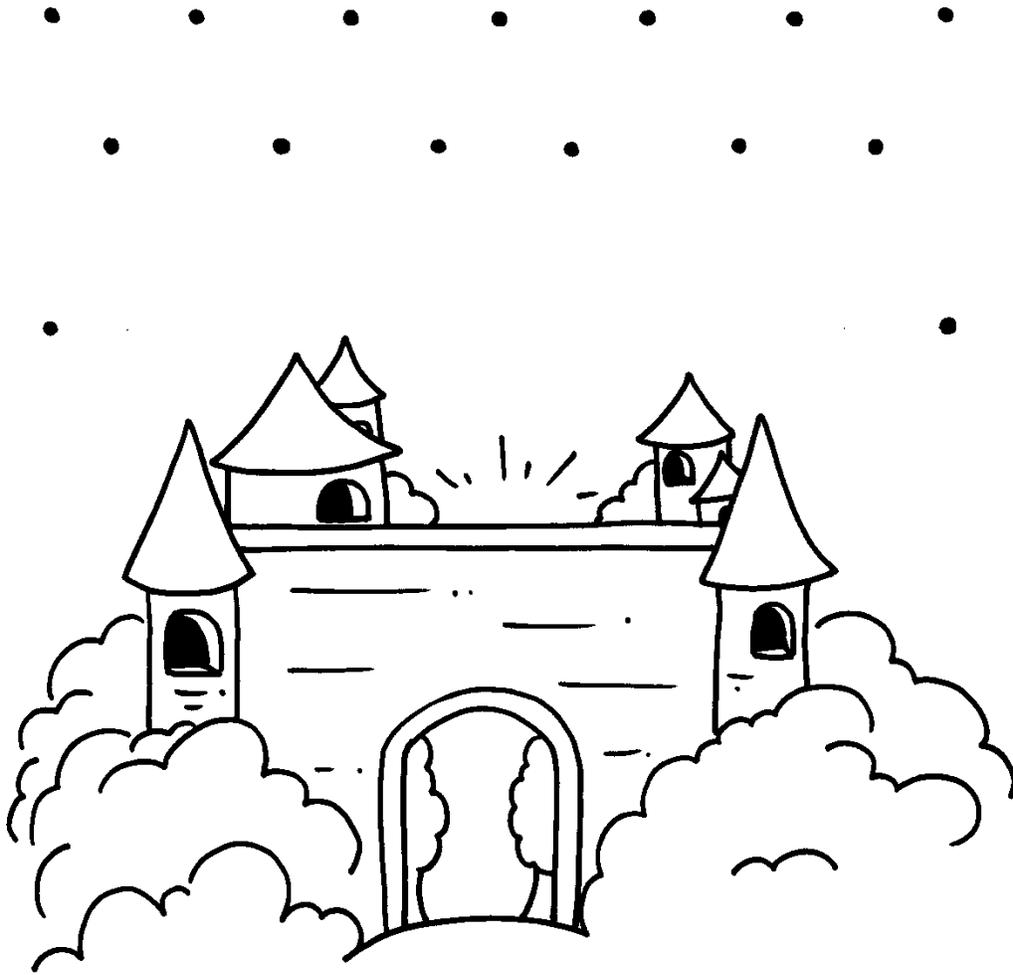
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ILLUSTRATION



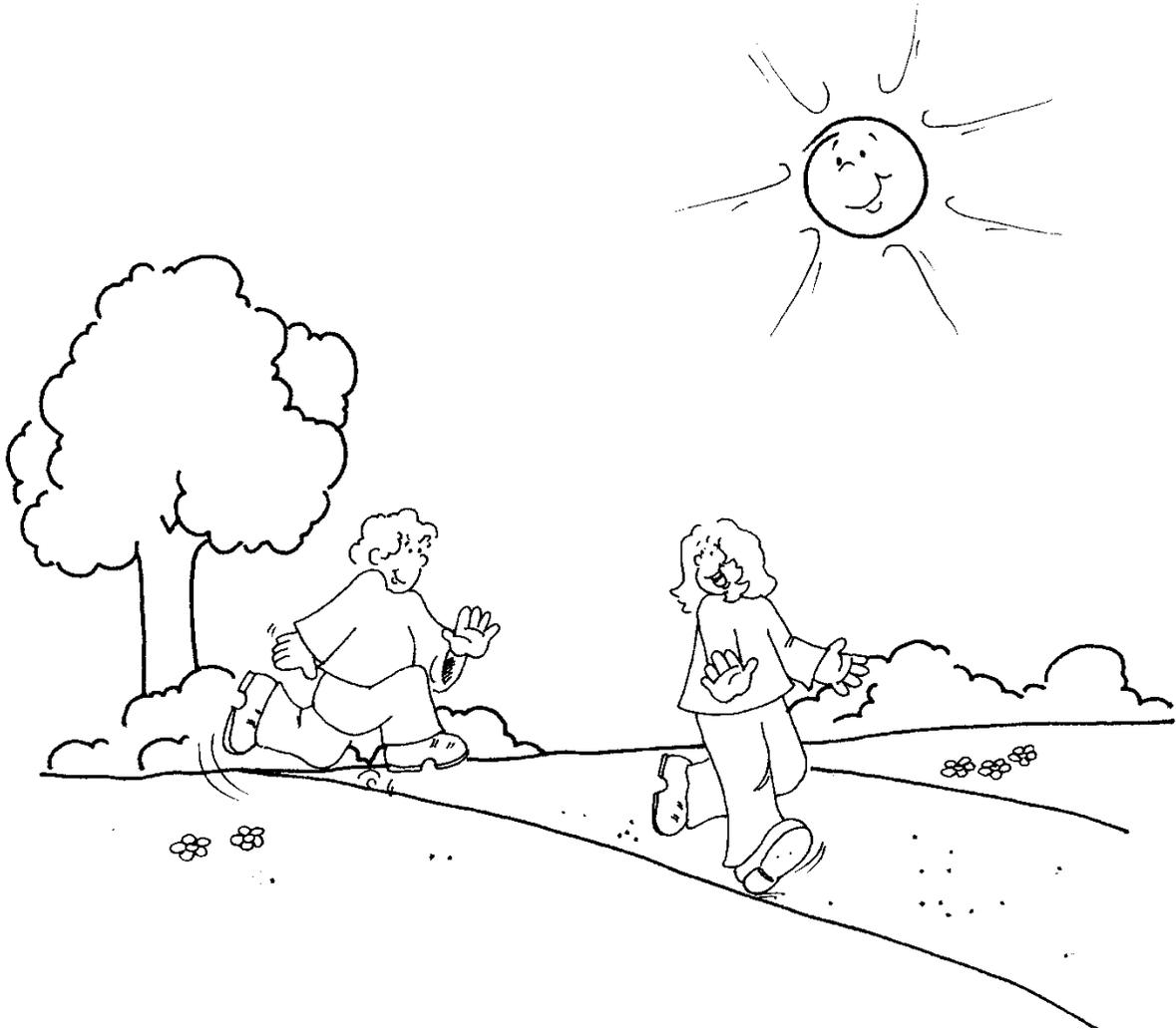
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ILLUSTRATION



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LETTER TO PARENTS

Dear parents,

Today in our time together, the children and I talked about the gift of eternal life. The children have had the opportunity to read God's word and hear Jesus' words about this gift of eternal life. We've imagined what it will be like to be in God's presence and we've found different ways to express our thanks to God for this special gift. We encourage you to read John 14:1-7 with your children and talk about what this gift of eternal life means for those of us who are disciples of Jesus.

Ask your child to share with you the Key Verse. They've been encouraged to share it with you and others.

It is a joy to walk alongside your child and I lift you up in my prayers as you guide him/her in faith in Christ.

Blessings,

Teacher