2026-10-11 Jesus Gives Rest to Weary Sinners

Introduction

In this lesson, children will learn that Jesus gives rest to weary sinners. From Matthew 11:28-30, they will hear Jesus' own invitation: "Come to Me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." God's Law is perfect, holy, and good, but sinful hearts cannot keep it. No matter how hard we try, we always fall short. Trying to earn God's love by being good enough is like trying to lift a bag that is way too heavy for us: exhausting and impossible. But Jesus came to do what we could not. Jesus kept every single one of God's rules, perfectly, for sinners. When we stop trying to save ourselves and trust in Jesus, He lifts the heavy load of sin off our shoulders and gives our souls real rest.

Main Ideas:

- **God's Rules Are Good:** God's laws are holy, righteous, and good. God wants us to love and obey them.
- **Too Heavy to Carry:** Sinners cannot fully obey God's perfect law. Trying to earn heaven by being good is a burden too heavy for anyone to carry.
- **Jesus Is the Perfect Law-Keeper:** Jesus obeyed every one of God's rules perfectly, in our place, so that sinners could be saved.
- **Jesus Gives Rest:** When we stop trying to save ourselves and trust in Jesus, He lifts the heavy load and gives rest to our hearts and souls.

Praise and Worship (15 mins)

> **Parents:** The parent and child scheduled for this week will lead us in singing on Sunday. Please take time to practice the songs together at home, helping your child feel confident and joyful as they prepare to lead.

https://www.youtube.com/embed/ip5hI3xRHoA?list=RDip5hI3xRHoAstart_radio=1

https://www.youtube.com/embed/vAaQS0poL-Q

Prayer and Offering (5 mins)

> **Parents:** Please encourage your children to bring an offering to church. You may help your child prepare by setting aside a coin for them to bring on Sunday. This is a great opportunity to teach them about giving to God with a thankful heart and trusting Him to provide.

What is Offering?

Offering is when we **give something to God** to show our love and thankfulness. In church, we often give money as an offering, but we can also give our time, talents, and kindness to God and others.

Why Do We Make an Offering?

To Thank God – Everything we have comes from God! Giving back is a way to say, “Thank You, God!”
To Trust God – When we give, we show that we trust God to take care of us.
To Help Others – Offerings help the church teach about Jesus, help people in need, and share God’s love.

The Bible says in 2 Corinthians 9:7,
"God loves a cheerful giver!" That means God is happy when we give with a joyful heart!

Prayer for Offering

> “ Dear God, thank You for giving us everything we need. We want to give back to You with joyful hearts. Please use our offering to help others and share Your love. Help us to always trust You. In Jesus’ name, Amen!

Review Verse from Last Week

Mark 10:14b

[Jesus said,] "Let the children come to me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God."

Bible Story (10 min)

Introduction (2 min)

Props Needed:

- A sturdy cloth bag or pillowcase filled with heavy objects (books, a bag of flour, rocks): too heavy for a child to lift easily
- A few light objects (cotton balls, tissue, a paper napkin)
- Ten paper signs numbered 1-10, each with one of God's commandments written simply (e.g., "1. Love God most," "2. No idols," "3. Honor God's name," etc.). Attach string so they can be hung over someone's neck.
- A "JESUS" sign on string to hang over an adult volunteer's neck (Perfect Law-Keeper)
- A Darkened Heart and a Red Heart from past lessons
- An adult volunteer (arranged beforehand) who will stand with arms out like a cross

(Place the heavy bag and the light objects on the floor at the front. Pick a child volunteer to come up.)

Teacher: "I need a strong helper! [Child's name], can you come here? Good. Here is your job: please pick up this bag and carry it over to that corner. I will pick up these light things."

(Start picking up the cotton balls and paper easily. Let the child struggle with the heavy bag. Let them try for a few moments, then stop and bring them back.)

Teacher: "Wow, that bag is HEAVY, isn't it? Look, I had no problem with my tissues and cotton balls. But [child's name] is working SO hard, and the bag will not move. Why do you think that is?"

Interaction: "Everyone, was the bag too heavy?"

Teacher: "Yes! The bag is way too heavy for a child. Even if [child's name] tries with all their might, they just can't do it. I am bigger and stronger, so I can help. Here, [child's name], let me carry that for you. Good job trying!"

(Lift the bag easily and set it aside. Thank the volunteer and have them sit down.)

Teacher: "Sometimes we try SO hard to do something good, but it is just too big for us. That happens with rules too. Our parents make good rules, and we try to obey. But sometimes we break them anyway, right?"

Interaction: "Who has ever tried really hard to be good, and still messed up? Raise your hand!"

Teacher: "Me too. Everyone has. Today we are going to hear about the biggest rules of all, and about someone who can carry the heaviest load FOR us."

Story Telling: Jesus Gives Rest to Weary Sinners (8 min)

Props / Visuals Suggested:

- Ten Commandment signs on strings
- "JESUS" (Perfect Law-Keeper) sign on string
- Heavy bag from the intro
- Darkened Heart and Red Heart
- Adult volunteer to play the role of "the Perfect Law-Keeper"

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> ### Part 1: God's Rules Are Good (2 mins)
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> **Teacher:** "The most important rules in the whole world are God's rules. The Bible says God's rules are HOLY, RIGHTEOUS, and GOOD. God gave us rules because God loves us. God

knows what is best."

Interaction: "Everyone, two thumbs UP for God's good rules!"

Teacher: "A long time ago, God gave Moses ten very special rules called the TEN COMMANDMENTS. Let's count them on our fingers!"

(Call a child forward. Hang the ten Law signs, one by one, around the child's neck as you list them. Keep it light and fast.)

- "One! Love God MOST of all."
- "Two! No idols, no other gods."
- "Three! Honor God's name."
- "Four! Rest on God's special day."
- "Five! Honor your mom and dad."
- "Six! Don't hurt people."
- "Seven! Be faithful."
- "Eight! Don't steal."
- "Nine! Don't lie."
- "Ten! Don't be jealous and want what other people have."

Interaction: "Look at [child's name]! Whoa! That is a lot of rules. Pretend YOU are wearing all those signs. Are they getting heavy?"

Teacher: "Every one of these rules is GOOD. And God's rules did not stop there. God has even MORE rules about how to love Him and love our neighbors. God wants us to obey ALL of them, perfectly, all the time. Every day. No slip-ups."

Part 2: The Rules Are Too Heavy (2 mins)

(Hold up the Darkened Heart.)

Teacher: "But here is the problem. Do we have a shiny, perfect heart that LOVES to obey God? No. The Bible says ALL of us have a darkened heart. We were born with a sinful heart. And a sinful heart CANNOT keep all of God's rules, no matter how hard it tries."

Interaction: "Shake your head: 'No, we can't!'"

Teacher: "In Jesus' day, many people tried SO hard to obey all the rules. They thought, 'If I can just be good enough, God will be happy with me. I will earn my way to heaven.' But they got tired. And frustrated. And sad. Because no matter how hard they tried, they kept breaking the rules. And the more rules they tried to keep, the more tired and sad they got."

(Hold up the heavy bag again.)

Teacher: "Trying to be good enough for God is like this bag. It is TOO HEAVY. Nobody can carry it. Not the strongest grown-up. Not the best-behaved kid. Nobody."

Interaction: "Pretend to try to lift a giant bag. Grunt! Ugh! Too heavy!"

Teacher: "Sinners can NEVER be saved by trying to obey all the rules. We need help. We need someone stronger to do it FOR us."

Part 3: Jesus' Big Invitation (2 mins)

Teacher: "One day, Jesus saw crowds of tired, sad sinners who were trying and trying and trying to be good enough. And Jesus said the most wonderful words. Listen carefully. This is Jesus speaking, right out of the Bible."

(Open the Bible to Matthew 11:28-30.)

Teacher: "Jesus said: 'COME to Me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you REST. Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light.'"

Interaction: "Stretch your arms out wide like Jesus, and say with me: 'Come to Me!'"

Teacher: "Jesus was saying, 'Are you tired? Are you sad? Are you trying so hard to be good and it is not working? COME TO ME. I will take the heavy load. I will give you REST.'"

Interaction: "Let your shoulders drop. Big breath out. Ahhhh, rest."

Part 4: Jesus the Perfect Law-Keeper (2 mins)

(Invite the adult volunteer to come to the front. Hang the "JESUS" / Perfect Law-Keeper sign over their neck. Have them stand with arms stretched out wide like a cross.)

Teacher: "How can Jesus give us rest? Watch this. Remember all those rule signs on our friend [first child's name]? They were too heavy. But Jesus said, 'I will take them.'"

(Gently lift the Law signs off the child, one by one, and hang them over the outstretched arms of the volunteer playing Jesus. Five on each arm.)

- "Jesus obeyed rule one: Jesus loved God most." *(Hang a sign.)*
- "Jesus obeyed rule two: Jesus worshiped only God." *(Hang a sign.)*
- "Jesus obeyed rule three: Jesus honored God's name."
- "Jesus obeyed rule four: Jesus kept God's day holy."
- "Jesus obeyed rule five: Jesus honored His mom and dad."
- "Jesus obeyed rule six: Jesus never hurt anyone."
- "Jesus obeyed rule seven: Jesus was always faithful."
- "Jesus obeyed rule eight: Jesus never stole."
- "Jesus obeyed rule nine: Jesus never lied."
- "Jesus obeyed rule ten: Jesus never wanted anything that wasn't His."

Interaction: "Jesus kept EVERY rule. Clap for Jesus!"

Teacher: "Jesus is God. Jesus NEVER broke a single rule, not even once, His whole life. And then Jesus did something amazing. Jesus said, 'Sinners, I will take all the rules FOR you. I will carry the heavy load you could not carry. And I will carry it all the way to the cross.'"

(Point to the volunteer's arms stretched out like a cross.)

Teacher: "On the cross, Jesus took the punishment for every rule WE have broken. Jesus did the job we could not do."

(Switch the Darkened Heart for the Red Heart.)

Teacher: "When we stop trying to save ourselves, and we come to Jesus and trust Him, Jesus gives us REST. Our heart goes from dark and tired to clean and peaceful. That is the good news. That is what Jesus does for weary sinners."

Interaction: "Everyone say with me: 'Jesus does it for me!'"

Review with Actions

Teacher: "Let's remember it with actions!"

- **Teacher:** "God's rules are good!" *(Two thumbs up.)*
- **Teacher:** "But they are too heavy for sinners to carry." *(Pretend to struggle with a huge bag.)*
- **Teacher:** "Jesus says, 'Come to Me!'" *(Open arms wide, like Jesus.)*
- **Teacher:** "Jesus kept every rule for us." *(Hold up ten fingers, all ten.)*
- **Teacher:** "Jesus carried our load to the cross." *(Arms stretched out like a cross.)*
- **Teacher:** "Jesus gives us rest!" *(Shoulders drop, big sigh: Ahhh.)*

Teacher: "Now faster!"

- "Good rules!" *(Thumbs up.)*
- "Too heavy!" *(Struggle.)*
- "Come to Me!" *(Arms wide.)*
- "Jesus obeyed!" *(Ten fingers.)*
- "Cross!" *(Arms out like a cross.)*
- "Rest!" *(Big sigh.)*

Wrap-up & Discussion (4 min)

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(Gather children close for reflection.)

Discussion Questions:

> **Teacher:** "Let's think about what we learned today."
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> **Question:** "Are God's rules good or bad?"
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> **Teacher Key:** God's rules are GOOD. The Bible says they are holy, righteous, and good. God gives us rules because He loves us and knows what is best.
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> **Question:** "Can anyone obey all of God's rules perfectly?"
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> **Teacher Key:** No! Because we have sinful hearts, we cannot keep all of God's rules. No matter how hard we try, we fail. Only Jesus kept them all perfectly.
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> **Question:** "Why was the bag too heavy for the child to lift?"
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> **Teacher Key:** It was just too heavy for a little person. In the same way, trying to earn heaven by being good enough is too heavy for any sinner, big or small.
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> **Question:** "What did Jesus say to tired, sad sinners?"
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> **Teacher Key:** "Come to Me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Jesus invites weary sinners to stop trying to save themselves and come to Him.
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> **Question:** "How does Jesus give us rest?"
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> **Teacher Key:** Jesus kept every one of God's rules for us, and then He took the punishment for our rule-breaking on the cross. When we trust Jesus, He does the work we could never do, and our hearts can rest.
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> **Question:** "Does being good make God love us?"
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> **Teacher Key:** No. We cannot earn God's love by being good, just like we don't have to earn our mom and dad's love. God loves us first. Jesus saves us. We love and obey Him because we are thankful, not to earn anything.
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> **Teacher:** "If you feel tired of trying to be good, tired of messing up, tired of feeling not-good-enough, Jesus says one word to you: COME. Come to Me. I will give you rest."

Closing Thought & Prayer

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> **Teacher:** "God's rules are perfect. Our hearts are not. But Jesus is. Jesus kept every rule, carried every heavy load, and died for every sin, so that tired sinners like us could finally rest in Him. What a Savior!"
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> *(Fold hands and bow heads.)*

> **Prayer:** "Dear Jesus, thank You that You kept every one of God's rules perfectly, for us. Thank You that You took our heavy load of sin all the way to the cross. We cannot save ourselves. We come to You tired, and we trust You. Please give us rest in our hearts. Help us love Your good rules, not to earn Your love, but because You already love us. In Jesus' name, Amen."

Memorizing Verse: Matthew 11:28

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> **Matthew 11:28**
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> [Jesus said,] "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."
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> **Hand Gestures:**
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> - **"Come to me,"**: Stretch both arms out wide, then beckon with both hands toward yourself (Jesus inviting sinners in).
> - **"all who labor"**: Wipe brow as if tired from hard work, then mime scrubbing or digging.
> - **"and are heavy laden,"**: Hunch shoulders and pretend to carry a huge, heavy sack on your back.
> - **"and I will give you rest."**: Drop the invisible sack off your shoulders, stand tall, take a big breath out ("ahhh"), and fold hands peacefully.
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> **Teacher Tip:** Focus the memorization on the short, powerful bookends: "Come to Me... I will give you rest." Ages 4-6 can all learn that. Make it a call-and-response chant: teacher says "Come to Me!" (arms wide), kids answer "I will give you REST!" (sack off, big sigh). Do it three times, getting faster each time.

Craft & Game (10 mins)

Game: "Too Heavy!" Backpack Relay

Adapted from the source lesson's Burden Game. Children take turns trying to lift a backpack loaded with too many heavy items. After everyone has struggled, the teacher (playing Jesus) lifts it easily and reminds them: trying to save ourselves is too heavy, but Jesus carries it for us.

? **Time:** 5 minutes

? **Age Group:** 4-6 years

? **Lesson Connection:** Reinforces that earning our way to heaven is too heavy for any sinner, and that Jesus is the one who carries the load for us.

? Setup & Materials Needed:

- A large, sturdy backpack
- Many heavy items to fill it (books, canned food, small bags of flour): enough weight that a 4-6 year old cannot carry it, but light enough that a grown-up can lift it easily
- Open floor space
- Keep items low-risk (no sharp corners). Use caution so no child is injured.

? How to Play:

Step 1: Children sit in a circle. Place the empty backpack and the pile of heavy items in the center.

Step 2: The teacher walks around the circle and gently taps one child on the head. That child gets up, loads all the heavy items into the backpack as quickly as they can, and tries to carry (not drag) it to the teacher.

Step 3: Everyone cheers the child on. When they can't carry it, the whole group says together: "Too heavy!"

Step 4: The teacher says: "Trying to save ourselves by being good enough is like this bag. Too heavy. We cannot do it!" Then the teacher lifts the backpack easily and says: "But Jesus can."

Step 5: Recite the memory verse together with actions: "Come to Me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Repeat with a few different children.

Craft: "Perfect Law-Keeper" Jesus Craft

Adapted from the source lesson's Perfect Law Keeper activity. Children make a simple paper figure of Jesus with arms outstretched, then hang little "rule" cards on His arms as a reminder that Jesus kept every rule for us, and wrote the memory verse on the back.

Materials: Pre-cut Jesus figure on cardstock (arms outstretched like a cross), crayons or markers, glue sticks, scissors, small paper rectangles (pre-cut, about 1" x 2") or index cards cut in strips, a short piece of string or yarn, tape, the memory verse printed on a small strip for the back.

The Activity:

- **Step 1:** Give each child a Jesus figure. Have them color it.
- **Step 2:** On each of the small paper rectangles, have them draw a simple picture that shows one of God's commands (e.g., a heart for "love God," a family for "honor parents," crossed-out fists for "don't hurt," a zipped mouth for "don't lie"). Teachers can help with ideas.
- **Step 3:** Tape a piece of string to the top of each small rule card and drape it over Jesus' outstretched arms. Tape the string down on the back.
- **Step 4:** On the back of the Jesus figure, glue the memory verse strip: "Come to Me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (Matthew 11:28)
- **Step 5:** Write or have the teacher write: "Jesus kept every rule for me."
- **Take Home:** Children show their family: "Jesus is the Perfect Law-Keeper. He obeyed every rule for me, so I can rest in Him."

Response Song

https://www.youtube.com/embed/vD-xe9H6w-0

Closing Prayer & Snack Time (10 mins)

> "Dear Jesus, thank You that You are the Perfect Law-Keeper. Thank You that You obeyed every rule for us, and carried the heavy load of our sin all the way to the cross. We are tired little sinners, and we come to You. Please give us rest in our hearts. Help us trust You, not our own good works. In Jesus' name, Amen."
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> Now, let us thank You for the snack we're about to enjoy.
> We fold our hands.
> We bow our heads.
> We thank You, God,
> for this daily bread.
> Amen.

Free Time & Children Pickup (15 mins)

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