


**BEAR
HUG 19**

Jesus Loves Blind Bartimaeus

Make It Stick: | John 4:14: ... *The Father has sent the Son as Savior of the world.* (Short version is in bold.)

The Big Buzz: Jesus performed many miracles to show that He was God's Son, the Savior. One of these miracles was the healing of blind Bartimaeus. Jesus loves all people and came to earth to save us from our sin.

HONEY FROM THE COMB

Read: Mark 10:46-52; Luke 18:35-43; 2 Corinthians 4:4-6

Memorize: | John 4:14

This week's lesson introduces Bartimaeus, a blind beggar. Scripture is not clear about whether Bartimaeus was born blind or became blind later in life. Either way, his situation was so unbearable to him that he cried out to Jesus in desperation and would not stop crying out, even when others told him to be quiet.

Imagine, for a moment, what your life would be like if you were blind — unable to distinguish light or colors, unable to see the faces of those you love. Add to that the devastating consequences of blindness for those in Bible times. Blindness was seen as a punishment for sin, so the blind were often outcasts, left to beg beside busy streets.

This is where we first meet Bartimaeus. Although he was physically blind, he saw the true identity of Jesus that day. As Jesus approached, Bartimaeus cried out, "... *Son of David, have mercy on me!*" His title for Christ, Son of David, revealed that Bartimaeus recognized Him as the promised Messiah, the only one who could heal him.

Our loving Savior had compassion on him that day, and because of Bartimaeus' faith, his sight was restored.

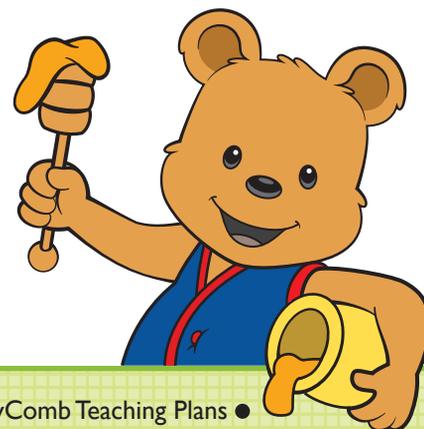
Consider that many of your Cubbies are still spiritually blind. Scripture tells us that nonbelievers are blind and cannot see the light of the gospel or the glory of God in the face of Christ (2 Corinthians 4:4-6). Like all of us, your Cubbies were born blind — blind to their sinful nature, blind to a loving, compassionate God who longs to save them. Some Cubbies have trusted the Savior, but others are still without Him. You can be a tool, used by God to gently guide them to spiritual sight.

TASTE AND SEE!

Cubbies need to *taste and see that the LORD is good (Psalm 34:8)*! Pray that the Holy Spirit would work through this lesson so Cubbies:

1. Hear about the love Jesus showed to blind Bartimaeus.
2. Learn that Jesus is God's Son, the promised Savior.
3. Recognize that all of us are sinners and understand that Jesus came to love people and to save them from their sin.
4. Know that if we trust Jesus as Savior, we can live with Him forever in heaven someday. In heaven no one will be blind or sick or sad.
5. _____

(Add a goal the Holy Spirit brings to your mind and heart as you pray for Cubbies.)



COMING IN

(10-15 minutes before club officially starts)

IDEA 1: Guess the Object

What You Need

- Lunch bags
- Objects familiar to Cubbies (crayon, toy truck, leaf, block, rock, cup, straw, etc.)

Place one object in each bag and set a few bags on each table. Explain to Cubbies that if they could not see, they would have to use their other senses more (touch, hearing, smell and taste). Direct groups of Cubbies to rotate to different tables and feel inside each bag to guess the object. Talk about what it might have been like for Bartimaeus when he was blind. Ask Cubbies: How do you think he got around? How did he find his friends? How did he eat dinner? Why do you think he was happy after Jesus healed him?

IDEA 2: Dark Glasses

What You Need

- Glasses patterns printed on card stock (resource CD)
- Black construction paper
- Crayons, including several white crayons
- Pairs of child-sized scissors
- Glue sticks
- Hole punch
- Pipe cleaners

Precut a glasses pattern for each Cubbie from card stock. (Do not cut out the insides of the glasses.) Let Cubbies glue their glasses onto a sheet of black construction paper and cut out the glasses, giving the glasses a black backing. (This step can be skipped for younger Cubbies; it only enhances the darkness of the glasses.) Cubbies color the front of their glasses. Leaders punch a hole at both sides of each pair of glasses and loop the end of a pipe cleaner through each hole. The loop end should be twisted around the pipe cleaner to secure it. Cubbies put on their glasses and bend the pipe

cleaners to fit around their ears. Cubbies can wear their glasses as they try to write their name or complete some other task. Monitor Cubbies' safety. These glasses can be used for Play Time Idea 2.

IDEA 3: Use Your Eyes Centers

What You Need

- Cubbies eye chart (resource CD)
- Bible story puzzle pieces printed and cut from card stock (resource CD)
- Paint chips (from a hardware store)
- Masking tape or mounting putty
- *Optional* — Laminate Bible story puzzle pieces for reuse. Gather paint chips in shades of dark blue, red, white, green and gold or yellow for a gospel activity in Bear Hug 22.

Set up one or more of these three centers. Center 1: Hang the eye chart on the wall at Cubbies' eye level. Cubbies will stand at a distance from the chart, cover one eye at a time and try to name the characters on each line of the chart. Center 2: Cubbies will fit the appropriate pair of puzzle pieces together to create a Bible story scene. Review the Bible story together. Center 3: Beforehand, cut several paint chips in half. Mix up the chips and let Cubbies match colors. As Cubbies work, explain that God made our eyes and gave them power to see. Thank God together for your eyes.

STARTING TIME (3-5 minutes)

Continue your starting routine. Include the "Cubbies Song," Cubbies key verse and motto, unit Core Truth: Jesus Came to Save Us and the A and C verses, along with your favorite visuals, songs and motions.

PUPPET SHOW

(3-5 minutes)

What You Need

- Cubbie Bear puppet
- Katie Collie puppet
- *Optional* — blindfold

(Beforehand, plan a place for the Cubbie puppet to hide at the appropriate time. If you have the blindfold, tie it around Katie Collie's head, covering her eyes.)

LEADER: It's really quiet around here. I wonder what Cubbie Bear and his friends are doing? Let's find out. Help me call for Cubbie, OK? One — two — three. CUBBIE!

CUBBIE *(looking all around, and then whispering):* Hello, Cubbies!

LEADER *(whispering):* Cubbie, why are you whispering?

CUBBIE *(in a soft voice, but no longer a whisper):* Timothy, Katie Collie and I are playing a game.

LEADER: What kind of game?

CUBBIE: We're playing Hide-and-Seek. Katie is "It." She has to cover her eyes so she can't see anything. Then she counts to 10. After she's done counting, she goes to look for Timothy and me. We have to be very quiet and hide in a good spot so Katie can't see us. Katie is REALLY good at Hide-and-Seek, so I have to make sure she can't see me.

(Lower Cubbie behind the stage so that only the top of his head is showing. If you don't have a stage, hide him behind another nearby barrier, such as a shelf or a desk or a leader sitting beside you. Part of his head should be visible.)

(Bring Katie Collie into view, barking. She should be wearing the blindfold if you have it.)

KATIE: Ruff, ruff! Hi, everyone! Are you out there? I can't look right now, because my eyes are supposed to be covered as I count to 10. *(If you don't have the blindfold, bring Katie's paws up to cover her eyes or direct another leader to cover Katie's eyes.)* 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10. Ready or not, here I come!

(Remove the blindfold or paws from over Katie's eyes, and turn the puppet's head from side to side, as if she is looking all around. Cubbie is still trying to hide.)

KATIE *(barking loudly and looking towards Cubbie):* Ruff! Ruff! Cubbie! I found you! I see your head!

(Cubbie pops into view.)

CUBBIE *(laughing):* Wow, Katie! You found me! I guess it's my turn to be "It" now!

LEADER: Katie, you are really good at this game.

KATIE: Yep! I have really good eyes, and I looked all over for places where Cubbie and Timothy could be hiding.

LEADER: Katie, did you find Timothy yet?

KATIE: No, not yet. I'm going to go look for him.

CUBBIE: I'll help you look for him, and then it's my turn to be "It!"

LEADER: Have fun with your game, Cubbie and Katie!

CUBBIE and KATIE: Goodbye, everyone!

(Have children wave goodbye as the puppets are put away.)

SNACKS (5-10 minutes)

Snacks are optional and can be done at any time during club.

IDEA 1: Eyes for You**What You Need**

- Round crackers or small rice cakes
- Cream cheese
- M&Ms
- *Optional* — Use round banana slices instead of cream cheese.

Give each Cubbie two crackers, each topped with cream cheese and one M&M. Put the same color of M&Ms on each pair of crackers. (If you are using banana slices, top each cracker with a banana slice and press the M&M into the center of the banana.) Ask Cubbies: Do the crackers remind you of eyes? What color are your eyes? What problem did Bartimaeus have with his eyes in the Bible story? How did Jesus help him? Explain that even though Bartimaeus was blind, he knew that Jesus was God's Son, the Savior. Pray with Cubbies, thanking God for giving us eyes and for sending Jesus to be our Savior.

IDEA 2: Guess the Snack**What You Need**

- Snack of choice (cookies, pretzels, animal or fish crackers, orange slices, etc.)
- One lunch bag

Before any Cubbies see the snack, place one or more snack pieces in a lunch bag. Explain to Cubbies that if they were blind, they would not be able to see the food they were eating. They would need to use their senses of touch, taste and smell to know what the foods were. Choose a few Cubbies to reach in the bag to feel the snack without looking at it. They may also close their eyes and smell inside the bag. When the Cubbies have correctly guessed the snack, serve the snack to the group. Throw away the snack portion in the lunch bag.

SONGS (3-5 minutes)

Songs can be done before or after Lesson Time.

SING:

- **“Hallelu, Hallelu”** Divide Cubbies into two groups. One half will stand and sing the “Hallelu” and “Hallelujah” parts, and the other half will stand and sing the “Praise ye the Lord” parts. Cubbies go faster each time the song is repeated. Remind Cubbies that Bartimaeus praised God after Jesus healed him. We should praise God too!

Hallelu, Hallelu, Hallelu, Hallelujah;
Praise ye the Lord (*repeat first two lines twice*)
Praise ye the Lord, Hallelujah (*repeat 3 times*)
Praise ye the Lord!

- **“J-E-S-U-S”** (from Unit 4) Display a teaching card (TC) for each verse as a review. Sing the first verse about the paralyzed man (display TC63), the second verse about the dead girl (display TC69), the third verse about the hungry crowd (display TC72) and then add this new verse about Bartimaeus (display TC76). End the song with the verse about Jesus saving us from sin (display TC5).

Who can make a blind man see?
Do you know His name?
J-E-S-U-S (*Sing 3 times.*) Jesus is His name.

Who can save us from our sins?
Do you know His name?
J-E-S-U-S (*Sing 3 times.*) Jesus is His name.

PRAYER (1-2 minutes)

(Use this time to intentionally model and teach Cubbies the basics of prayer.)

Jesus is God. When He lived on earth, Jesus made many sick people well. Do you know anyone who is sick? (*Pause for responses. If Cubbies mention anyone, be sure to include them during your prayer. Include leaders, Cubbies, family members or others you know who are dealing with sickness or health issues.*) Let's talk to God and ask Him to help these people feel better. (*As you pray, mention any specific requests to God.*)

LESSON TIME (15-20 minutes)

What You Need

- Teaching Cards (TC) 75-78
- Bible with bookmarks placed at Mark 10:46-52 and I John 4:14
- *Optional* — sheets of gray, brown and blue construction paper, small, closed metal container filled with silver coins

(Note: Because of the nature of the lesson, be sensitive to any Cubbies who may be blind or have a family member who is blind.)

(Adapt and personalize the words of this lesson so it fits you and your Cubbies. Open with prayer.)

Wow! It sounds like Katie is good at playing Hide-and-Seek. Cubbie said that Katie had to cover her eyes and count to 10. Let's try it. Everyone, close your eyes and cover your eyes with your hands. No peeking! **(Count to 10 together, and then have Cubbies open their eyes.)** Cubbies, how did it feel to not be able to see anything while we were counting? *(Pause for responses.)*

Our creator God made us with eyes to see the world around us. What do you see with your eyes right now? **(Call on several children to describe one thing they see.)**

(Open your Bible to Mark 10:46-52.) There is a true story in the Bible about a man who was blind. He could not see ANYTHING. Can you imagine not being able to see any of the wonderful colors around us, like the blue sky, the green grass or a red apple?

I am going to use these colors **(hold up the gray, brown, and blue sheets)** to help me tell today's true story from the Bible.

The blind man's name was Bartimaeus. **(Display TC75 and point to blind man in blue cloak.)** Since Bartimaeus could not see, he had a hard time getting places and doing things. In those days, blind people often had to sit by the road and ask people for money to buy food. **(Hold up the gray construction paper. Ask Cubbies if they see anything gray in TC75. They may notice the coins, rock or mountains.)**

Optional: Pass around the metal container of coins. Encourage children to shake the coins.

(Hold up the brown sheet of construction paper. Tell Cubbies the paper is brown like a dirt road.)

One day, Bartimaeus was sitting by the side of the brown dirt road near Jericho. He heard a lot of voices talking and feet shuffling. **(Shuffle your feet as you speak.)** *Wow! There are a lot of people walking on the road today!* he thought. He asked the people near him what was happening.

"Jesus of Nazareth is passing by!" someone said.

Bartimaeus had heard about Jesus! He knew that Jesus is God's Son and that He could do wonderful things. Bartimaeus knew that Jesus was the ONLY person who could heal him! Bartimaeus listened very carefully as the people in the crowd spoke to one another. "Look, there's Jesus!" someone said.

Bartimaeus wanted Jesus to help him, so he shouted out, "Jesus, have mercy on me!" When he asked Jesus to have mercy on him, he meant he wanted Jesus to be kind to him and help him. **(Have children shout, "Jesus, have mercy on me!")**

"Be quiet, Bartimaeus!" people scolded. But Bartimaeus could NOT stay quiet. He called out even louder than before.

"Jesus, have mercy on me!" he cried. **(Have Cubbies shout louder, "Jesus, have mercy on me!")**

Because Jesus is God, He knew that Bartimaeus was blind. He loved Bartimaeus and wanted to help him. He stopped walking and said to the people, "Bring Bartimaeus to Me."

(Point to Bartimaeus' blue cloak in TC75. Then hold up the blue sheet of construction paper and tell Cubbies the paper is blue like Bartimaeus' cloak.)

When Bartimaeus heard that Jesus was calling for him, he threw off his cloak, which is like a coat, jumped to his feet and came to Jesus.

(Display TC76.) "What do you want Me to do for you?" Jesus asked Bartimaeus.

Bartimaeus believed that Jesus is God's Son. He knew that Jesus could make him well. "Lord, I want to see," he said.

Jesus said, "Go! Your faith has made you well."

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Cubbies, Bartimaeus had faith in Jesus. That means Bartimaeus believed that Jesus is God's Son, the Savior that God promised to send.

(Display TC77.) All of a sudden, Bartimaeus could see! **(Hold up the sheets of construction paper.)** He could see everything, like the gray mountains, his blue coat, and the brown road where he was standing. He was so happy! He shouted, "Praise God!" **(See Luke 18:43.) (Have Cubbies stand and shout, "Praise God!")**

Bartimaeus was so glad that Jesus had healed him. He started following Jesus and praising God. Other people praised God too when they saw what God did for Bartimaeus.

(Display TC78.) Bartimaeus believed that Jesus is God's Son, the Savior. Bartimaeus knew that **Jesus came to save us!** **(Repeat the Core Truth together. Explain that you will learn about Zacchaeus in the tree next week. Jesus came to save him from his sin.)** When Jesus lived on earth, He helped many people. He made sick people well. He made blind people see. But Jesus chose to do the MOST IMPORTANT thing that He could ever do for us: Jesus came to forgive sin.

The Bible says that all have sinned. **(Review that the A on their Cubbie vest stands for all. Have Cubbies trace the A on their vest as they say together, "All have sinned.") (Open your Bible to 1 John 4:14.)** Even though we are sinners, God sent Jesus to save us. Our Bible verse says: ... *The Father has sent the Son as Savior of the world (1 John 4:14).* **(Have children repeat the verse with you.)**

Jesus died on the cross to save us from our sin. Then three days later, He came alive again. If we trust Jesus as our Savior, one day we can live with Him forever in heaven! God promises that no one will be blind or sick or sad in heaven. It will be a happy, perfect place.

I am so glad that **Jesus came to save us.** Let's praise Jesus for coming to save us! **(Have children stand, clap their hands and say together "Jesus came to save us!")**

Optional: Teach motions that go along with the Core Truth for this unit: Make up your own motions, or teach Cubbies the ASL sign language for the words Jesus and Save.

HANDBOOK TIME

(15-30 minutes)

Give each handbook group leader a copy of Bear Hug 19 Handbook Leader Sheet from the resource CD.

IDEA 1: Bear Hug 19 Activity Sheet

What You Need

- A copy of the Bear Hug 19 Activity Sheet for each Cubbie. (print on card stock if you are doing the optional activity)
- Crayons
- *Optional* — cotton balls, craft grass or small strips of green paper, bag of gray or white gravel with small pebbles, glue sticks, pairs of child-sized scissors, construction paper

Show older Cubbies how to color the picture by number. Review 1 John 4:14 with Cubbies and ask them to name some of the loving things Jesus, the Savior, did when He came to the earth. Emphasize that the most important thing Jesus did was to save us from sin. For fun, Cubbies may glue optional materials on their picture to embellish it and then mount it on a construction paper to hang up at home.

IDEA 2: Play-Doh Faces

What You Need

- Cans of various colors of Play-Doh
- *Optional* — laminated Play-Doh Face Mats (resource CD)

Show Cubbies how to make eyes by rolling and flattening a small ball of dough to make a circle and rolling a smaller ball of dough to put in the center of the circle as a pupil. Talk about how our eyes help us and thank God for making eyes. Cubbies can shape other facial features with the dough. Set the Play-Doh Face Mats out as samples for Cubbies.

PLAY TIME (15-20 minutes)

Find ways to include Cubbies with visual or hearing impairment in your Play Time. For example, choose a buddy to stay near a blind Cubbie during IDEA 1: Picture Scavenger Hunt. The buddy could be an adult leader or another Cubbie who helps the blind Cubbie find a picture and stand in the correct group. Review the document “Can I Come Too?” (resource CD) for additional ideas for including the diversity of Cubbies in your club.

IDEA 1: Picture Scavenger Hunt**What You Need**

- Precut Jesus pictures and cross pictures (resource CD)

Ahead of time, print, cut out and hide the pictures around the room. Explain to Cubbies that they will use their eyes to search for ONE (and only one) picture of either Jesus or the cross. After they find a picture, they will return to the game leader and stand with the other Cubbies who have the same picture. The game leader leads the group in reciting 1 John 4:14. Cubbies holding a picture of Jesus will say the first part of the verse about the Father sending the Son. Cubbies holding a picture of the cross will say the second part of the verse about the Savior coming to the world. Repeat this several times. Then hide the cards and repeat the game.

IDEA 2: Blindfolded Games**What You Need**

- Blindfolds or dark glasses made during Coming In
- *Optional* — Create a simple obstacle course. Include mats to jump over, cones or chairs to slalom around, a rope laid on the floor to walk like a tightrope.

Play one or both of these games with blindfolds: 1. Divide Cubbies into pairs. One partner will be blindfolded. The other partner will lead his blindfolded partner around the room or through an obstacle course. Once the pair has made it to an end point, they will switch roles

and travel back through the room or course. 2. Play Follow the Leader. Direct Cubbies to form a line, put on glasses or blindfolds and place their hands on the shoulders or elbows of the Cubbie in front of them. A leader will lead them around the room. If you do not have eye coverings, Cubbies can simply place one hand over their eyes.

Talk about what it would be like to be blind and review the Bible story of Bartimaeus from Mark 10:46-52. Remind Cubbies that in heaven with Jesus, no one will be blind or sick or sad!

IDEA 3: Color Games**What You Need**

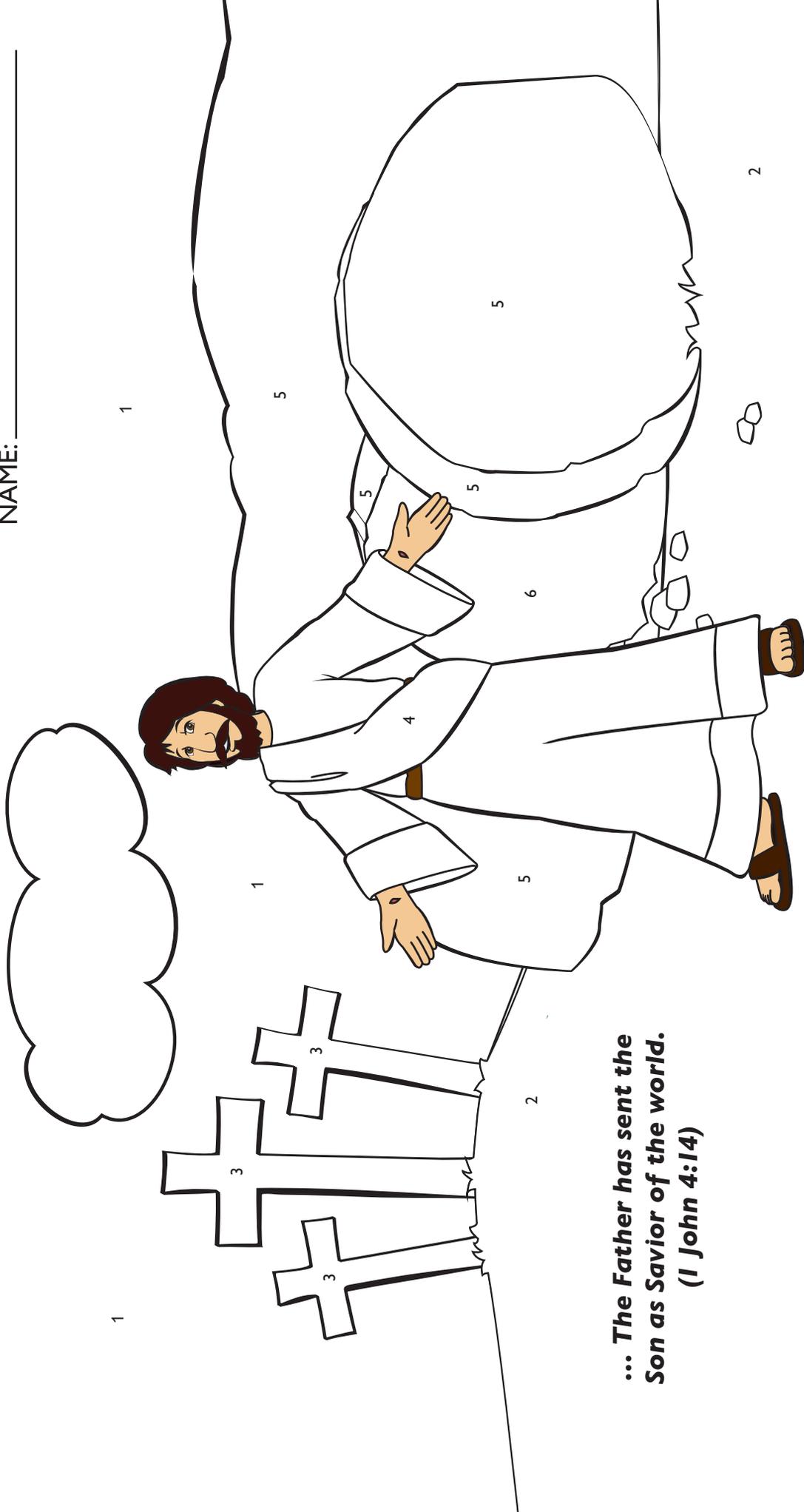
- Awana Game Square or red, blue, green, yellow construction paper
- Masking tape

Use the Awana Game Square or tape one color in each corner of your play area. A leader will close her eyes and slowly count to 10 while Cubbies run to any of the four corners or color lines. On the count of 10, the leader, without looking, calls out a color. Any Cubbies standing at that corner or on that line will recite 1 John 4:14 with the leader. Remind Cubbies that God made our eyes to see many different colors.

GOING HOME (5-10 minutes)

Play a game of I Spy as you wait for parents to arrive. Silently select an object in the room that can be seen by all Cubbies. Say, “I spy with my little eye” and then offer one or more clues, such as “something yellow” or “something pointy.” Cubbies try to guess the object. After a few rounds, let Cubbies take turns spying an object for the group. Pray together and thank God for making our eyes. Also thank God that we can know the Savior, Jesus Christ. Jesus saves us from our sin, and that is even more important than being able to see!

NAME: _____



... *The Father has sent the
Son as Savior of the world.*
(1 John 4:14)



Basic Instructions: In our Bible story, Bartimaeus knew that Jesus was God's Son, the Savior (Mark 10:46-52). Color the picture of the Savior. For an extra challenge, color the picture by number, using the crayon color key provided.

Even more fun: Stretch out cotton balls and glue them on the cloud. Glue strips of green paper or craft grass on the grass. Glue small gray or white gravel pebbles on the tomb. (Best if printed on card stock.)

Ultimate Fun: Cut off the bottom of the sheet along the line. Mount your picture on a piece of construction paper and hang it somewhere in your home. Tell someone in your family about the picture. Tell him or her that Jesus died on the cross for our sins and came alive again.