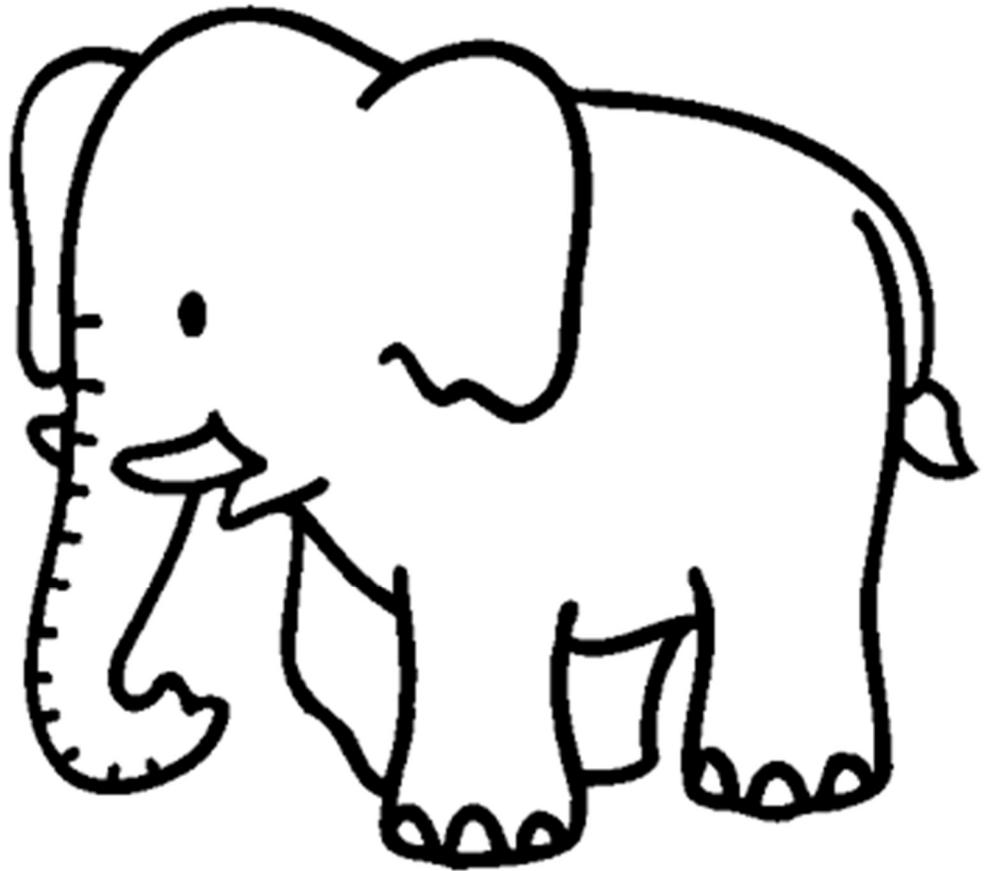


Day One: Jesus knows me!

Here is how God showed his love among us. He sent his one and only Son into the world. He sent him so we could receive life through him. 1 John 4:9 NIRV

▶ Welcome to the land of Gospeltopia. We're so excited you're joining us for Virtual VBS! This week we are going to go on an adventure through the land of Gospeltopia. And even though we are not all gathered together at the church for Vacation Bible School, you are not going on this journey alone... this is an adventure with Jesus. If you don't know Jesus, don't worry... you'll get to meet him this week and learn all about him. We'll meet some of the animals that live in Gospeltopia this week, too!

Today I'd like to introduce to Erika. She's an elephant. There's an old saying that an "elephant never forgets." If that's true, then an elephant must know a whole lot. Someone I know that never forgets is Jesus. And he knows everything. He knows me. He knows you, perfectly. In fact, that's the something new we're going to learn today: "Jesus knows me." Not only does Jesus know me perfectly, he loves me perfectly too.



Let's say a prayer together and then get on with our adventure with Jesus.

Dear God, I am ready to go on an adventure with you! I want to know you as well as you know me. In Jesus' name, Amen

To learn more about elephants, visit kids.nationalgeographic.com/animals/mammals/african-elephant/

▶ **Bible Story: Zacchaeus**

Who knows more about you than anyone else? Who knows your favorite flavor of ice cream? Who know what makes you sad or scared? You might be thinking about your parents. Or a friend. Or a brother or sister. But we're going to talk today about someone who knows even more about you than they do. I wonder if you can guess who it is.

Our story today comes from God's word, the Bible. It's about a man named Zacchaeus who wanted to know more about Jesus. Follow along with me as I read today's bible story:

He entered Jericho and was passing through it. A man was there named Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was rich. He was trying to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was short in stature. So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree to see him, because he was going to pass that way. When Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down; for I must stay at your house today." So he hurried down and was happy to welcome him. All who saw it began to grumble and said, "He has gone to be the guest of one who is a sinner." Zacchaeus stood there and said to the Lord, "Look, half of my possessions, Lord, I will give to the poor; and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will pay back four times as much." Then Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he too is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek out and to save the lost." Luke 19: 1-10

Zacchaeus lived in Jericho. He was a tax collector. The people of Jericho knew Zacchaeus and they didn't like him. When Jesus came through Jericho, the crowds came out to see him. Zacchaeus wanted to see Jesus but he was too short to see over the crowd of people, so he climbed a sycamore tree. To everyone's surprise, Jesus went over to the tree. He looked up and said, "Zacchaeus, come down right now. I must stay at your house today." Zacchaeus must have been thinking, "How does he know my name? How can Jesus know me when we've never met? And if he knows me, why would he want to stay at my house? Everyone who knows me, hates me." Zacchaeus came down from the tree, and took Jesus to his house. As Zacchaeus ate with Jesus, he got to know Jesus. Jesus changed his life. Zacchaeus stood up and promised to give back to the people all of the money he stole, and more and to give half of his possessions to the poor.

Who knows you better than anyone? It's not your parents or your best friend. It's not even you. Jesus knows you. He knows everything about you. And Jesus loves you. That's pretty incredible! Jesus wants us to know him too. If we meet Jesus and get to know him, his love can change our lives, just like it changed Zacchaeus' life. Let's get to know Jesus this week. And let's remember that Jesus knows and loves us completely.

PRAYER: Dear God, You know everything about me – the good and the bad – and you love me like no one else. Thank you. In Jesus'

▶ **Song: Zacchaeus Was a Wee Little Man**

Zacchaeus was a wee little man and a wee little man was he.
He climbed up in a sycamore tree for the Lord he wanted to see.
And as the Savior came that way, He looked up in that tree
And He said, "Zacchaeus, you come down from there,
For I'm going to your house today! I'm going to your house today!"

▶ **Craft: Prayer Journal**

Jesus knows you and he wants to talk with you. Prayer is talking to God. When you pray, you tell God what's going on, thank him for what he has given you, ask him for help for others or for yourself, ask forgiveness, and praise him. When you pray, you also listen to God. Today's craft is a prayer journal that you can use to write down the things that you are praying for. Use your journal this week to write down our daily prayers, and then keep using it even after Vacation Bible School to write down your prayers and help you talk to God. For video instructions, please visit our YouTube channel.

Get moving: Erika Elephant Yoga

Do you know what yoga is? Yoga is making shapes with your body; it is exercise for our bodies and our minds. Do you think Erika Elephant could do yoga? What about other animals? Today's movement activity is animal yoga, where you will act out five different animals through yoga poses. These ideas and images are from the website kidsyogastories.com.

ELEPHANT: Standing forward bend

From standing, step your feet hip-width apart, bend your upper body, clasp your hands together, and sway your arms like the trunk of an elephant.



TIGER : Cat pose

Come down to all fours, tuck your chin into your chest, and round your back like a tiger.



CROCODILE: Plank pose

Come down to a plank on your hands and toes like a crocodile.



HIPPO: Child's pose

Come to sitting back on your heels, slowly bring your forehead down to rest in front of your knees, rest your arms down alongside your body, and take a few deep breaths. Pretend you are a hippo resting in the water.



Snack time: Gummy bears

We won't meet any bears on our adventures through Gospeltopia this week, but we hope you'll enjoy your yummy gummy bear snack today!