This free Bible lesson is based on Matthew 25:31-46 where Jesus describes the separation of sheep and goats. It is designed for children’s church or Sunday School. Please modify as best fits your ministry.

If your church follows the Revised Common Lectionary, this teaching plan would correspond to Year A – 24th Sunday After Pentecost, Gospel Reading – Matthew 25:31-46.

**Opening Activity – The Least of These – What’s the Word?**
Supplies – small container, paper, writing/coloring utensils, play-doh, blocks, pipe cleaners, other misc. art or building supplies

Before class write the following on slips of paper and place them in a small container. If you have more than 15 kids, assign some the same word. If you have less than 15 students, assign similar words to some children.

When the kids arrive, have them choose a slip of paper, and any art or building supplies they wish, to help them illustrate their word. This could be through writing about it, drawing or building it, silently acting it out, etc. Encourage them to use their creativity!

- Jesus
- God
- King
- Inheritance
- Heaven
- Hungry
- Thirsty
- Invite
- Clothes
- Sick
- Prison
- Brothers
- Sisters
- Eternal Punishment
- Eternal Life

Lesson – The Least of These

(If the space allows, sit in a large circle so everyone can see each other.)

So today I am super excited for you to tell me a story! Did I forget to tell you? Oops!

Don’t worry too much, I know you will do just fine. No, you won’t do fine, you will do fantastically. brilliantly, crazily, wonderfully, amazingly, awesome!

So I’m going to get us started, and when it’s your turn, I want you to show us whatever it is you came up with earlier. Ready?

**JESUS** was talking to a big crowd one day about being saved and going to **HEAVEN**. He said that when it came time, we would all be separated into two groups. One group would get to go to **HEAVEN**, and the other group wouldn’t.

**GOD** would say to the first group, “Come join me in **HEAVEN** and enjoy your **INHERITANCE**! When I was **HUNGRY**, you fed me. When I was **THIRSTY** you gave me something to drink. When I was alone and a stranger, you **INVITED** me in. When I was naked you gave
me CLOTHES to wear. When I was SICK you took care of me. And when I was in PRISON you visited me.”

The people in this group were super excited. They were going to get to go to HEAVEN! But they were also really confused. They didn’t remember doing any of those things. You would think you would remember if you happened to meet GOD one day, and you definitely remember if He was NAKED!

But that wasn’t what GOD was talking about. He said, “What ever you did for the least of your BROTHERS and SISTERS, you did for me. So accept your INHERITANCE of ETERNAL LIFE and join me in HEAVEN.”

GOD doesn’t need us to feed Him dinner, or wipe His runny nose, but there are people who do. And when we help them, it’s like a gift to GOD. He loves it when we love each other.

But don’t forget that there were two groups.

GOD would say to the second group, “Go away from me, you have NO INHERITANCE! When I was HUNGRY, you wouldn’t feed me. When I was THIRSTY you never gave me a drink. When I was alone and a stranger, you didn’t INVITED me in. When I was naked you wouldn’t give me CLOTHES to wear. When I was SICK you wouldn’t care for me. And when I was in PRISON you ignored me.”

The people in this group were super upset. And they were also really confused! They never would have ignored GOD like that! They would have loved to cook GOD dinner, or buy Him a new pair of shoes. But they never had that chance. They never met God in person form, so how could they!?!?

But that wasn’t what GOD was talking about. He said, “What ever you didn’t do for the least of your BROTHERS and SISTERS, you didn’t do for me. So you have no INHERITANCE. And instead of ETERNAL LIFE, you will have ETERNAL PUNISHMENT.”

GOD doesn’t need us to do any of those things Him, but there are plenty of people who do. Each and every one of us need help sometimes, and each and every one of us can be that help. JESUS tells us many times that we should love our neighbor just like we love ourselves, which includes making sure that others have food and clothes and love. And when we do those things for others, it’s just like doing them for GOD.

Activity A – The Least of These – Bible Verse Challenge

Supplies – Bibles
Verse – Matthew 25:40

Pass out Bibles to students. Bibles should be closed and sitting on the table face up in front of each child. When you say go, have the kids look up this week’s Bible verse. As each child finds the verse, have them stick one finger on the verse and quietly raise their other hand. The first one to find the verse gets to read it to the rest of the class.
Help younger kids and new kids find the verse by following these steps.

1. Look in the Table of Contents for the book you are looking for. Make an effort to show them if it is found in the Old Testament or New Testament to help them in the future. Then open the Bible to the page number listed in the Table of Contents.
2. Show them the large numbers in the text, known as the chapters. Flip through pages until you find the large chapter number you are looking for.
3. Then scan through the text with them pointing out the smaller verse numbers until the correct number is found.

**Activity B – The Least of These – Loving Letters**

**Supplies –** paper, writing/drawing utensils, scissors, glue, embellishments

Ask your church office for a list of people in need of some extra love or encouragement (sick, death in family, job loss, military, etc.) and have the kids draw pictures, make cards, or write letters to send them. You can even make some generic cards to keep on hand for the next time someone is in need.

**Closing Prayer – The Least of These**

Ask for a volunteer to pray for the class before leaving, and encourage them to thank God for the opportunity to love Him by loving others.