

Sparkies! This girl is not in the Bible, but she is probably like many children who came to see Jesus.



A Child



Track 23

of the King

“When will it be MY turn?” the excited girl asked her mother.

“Soon,” answered her mother, softly. “Just be patient.”

The girl looked at the crowd of cheery faces. Mothers carried tiny babies. Fathers held the hands of

wiggly, young sons. Brothers and sisters whispered and giggled. She even saw a few 8-year-olds, just like her!

“Jesus! Jesus!” the parents called. “Will you please pray for our children?” One by one, the families brought their children to Him.

But Jesus' disciples scowled at them. "Go away!" they yelled at the parents. "Can't you see the Teacher is busy with more important things?"

Slowly, the families turned away. Some of the children started to cry.

Oh no! The girl felt like crying too. *Would she miss her turn to see Jesus?*

Just then, a man raised His voice. It was Jesus! And He sounded angry.

"How DARE you send these children away!" He scolded His disciples.

"Allow the children to come to Me, and don't try to stop them," He said. "The kingdom of God is for those with faith like these children."

The hopeful girl tugged at her mother's hand. "Does this mean I'll get to see Jesus now?" she asked.

"Yes, child, let's go."



CHILDREN ONLY!

You're invited to hang out with Jesus!

Who: *ALL children*

When: *Anytime*

Where: *Anywhere*

Why: *Because you are important to Jesus!*

The girl and her mother moved closer to Jesus. They watched as He placed His hands on each child that came.

Finally, He smiled at the waiting girl. "Come," He said.

The girl didn't waste a minute. She rushed towards Him, and He caught her in His arms.

He lifted her up with a laugh and set her on His lap.

"Can I stay here forever?" the girl asked. She rested her head on His chest and snuggled close.

Jesus stretched out His hand and placed it gently on her head. He

gazed up to heaven and said a prayer just for her.

Then Jesus turned to His disciples. "See how easily this child trusts in Me? I tell you the truth, if you want to enter God's kingdom, you must welcome Me like she does."

The girl smiled up at Jesus. She was glad to know she belonged to the kingdom of heaven. And most of all, she was happy to be a child of the King.

Learn from the child's biography:

- Jesus loves and cares for children. Children are important to Him.
- The kingdom of heaven is for those who trust Jesus like a child.
- Trust Jesus as your Savior, and you will become a child of God.

Parent Ideas

A Child of the King

Scripture: Mark 10:13-16

KEY LEARNING POINTS

- Jesus loves and cares for children. Children are important to Him.
- The kingdom of heaven is for those who trust Jesus like a child.
- Trust Jesus as your Savior, and you will become a child of God.

1. Read-together activity

The girl in this biography is a fictional character, but she represents the way a child might have responded to Jesus. Help your child to imagine meeting Jesus for the first time. Before you read, cross out all the words *girl* and *she* or *her* in the biography and insert either your child's name and correct gender pronouns or the words *you* and *your*. Then ask your child to sit quietly, close his eyes and picture himself in the biography as you read it. (Remove any distracting background noises.) Stop occasionally and ask your child to describe what he sees, feels, hears or smells. After the reading, invite your child to draw a picture of what he would have done if he met Jesus that day.

2. Read-together activity

Gather pictures of children from around your house. These could be pictures from magazines, books, photo albums or the Internet. Include children of different ages and ethnicities. Divide the pictures into two stacks, one for you and one for your child. As you read the biography aloud, take turns holding up pictures of children whenever you hear the word *child* or *children*.

3. Discussion activity

To add some fun to your discussion, pretend to be a local news reporter interviewing your child, who will act as an eyewitness to the biography events. Use a real microphone or an imaginary microphone made out of a hairbrush or a banana. Ask your child questions like these:

- Why were so many parents bringing their children to Jesus today?
- We heard about some trouble over there. Why did the families start turning away?
- What made the families come back?
- Does Jesus really love children? How could you tell?
- Jesus' disciples and many other people in our village don't make time for children. Why are children so important and special to Jesus?

Jesus commends children for welcoming Him with eager hearts. Children usually express simple, unquestioning trust in Jesus. Jesus wants all of us to trust Him in the same way. Children are examples of faith to grown-ups!

Parent Ideas

A Child of the King

Scripture: Mark 10:13-16

4. Application activity

Ask your child to tell you how a person (of any age) becomes a child of God. Read John 1:12 together and explain that a person must believe (trust) in Jesus Christ as Savior to become God's child. If your child has not yet trusted Christ, explain the gospel clearly, using key gospel verses from Sparks® handbooks (e.g, Romans 3:23; Romans 6:23; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; Acts 16:31). If you need help explaining the gospel, talk to your child's Sparks leader.

If your child has already trusted Christ, rejoice together. Ask her to name three reasons why she is glad to be a child of God. Then pray that other children in your family, church, community or in other countries will trust Christ too.

Optional craft idea: Cut out some of the pictures you gathered from the second Read-together activity. Make a collage by gluing them onto a 9"x12" (23 x 30 cm) poster board. After the glue dries, make a place mat by pressing a sheet of clear self-adhesive paper on the front of the poster board and another sheet on the back. Whenever you sit together for meals, the place mat will remind you to pray for children.

5. Application activity

The parents in the biography desperately wanted their children to meet Jesus. How desperately do you want your child to know Jesus? Do you bring him to church often? Do you read the Bible with him? Do you talk about Jesus during everyday family activities?