



**INVITATION
TO
PLAY**

30 IDEAS FOR

BIBLE BASED

INVITATIONS TO PLAY

ABOUT

In June 2016 I posted an idea for praying creatively with under 5's on social media every day. There was such a positive response to these that I decided to do something similar for 2017, and so for the 30 days of June I posted on social media every day with Invitation to Play ideas that linked in with Bible stories.

The 30 ideas (15 that link in with Old Testament Stories, and 15 for New Testament Stories) have been included in this booklet for you to try out for yourself. I realise that for some of you, this can seem like a lot of effort when time and money is short, however many of the activities can be put together quite cheaply and can be used again and again. Hopefully you'll find that you soon build up a stock of items that can be pulled out to use with very little preparation.

I pray that the suggestions will encourage you to offer opportunities for spiritual play in your groups for small children. The aim is to give the children space to develop their own thinking about God by linking things that they discover from Bible stories to their own lives, and provide opportunities to connect with God as they play.

Blessings

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What is an Invitation to Play?

The concept simply means putting things out in an inviting way. If you've never heard of them before, this article from The Imagination Tree provides a fantastic explanation, as well as providing ideas for how to create your own:

<http://theimaginationtree.com/2012/05/creating-invitations-to-play.html>

OLD

TESTAMENT



God the Creator *Genesis 1*

Remember that God created the world and everything in it.



Noah and the Flood *Genesis 7-9*

God promised never to flood the earth again. Drop the pom-poms down the matching coloured rainbow tube.



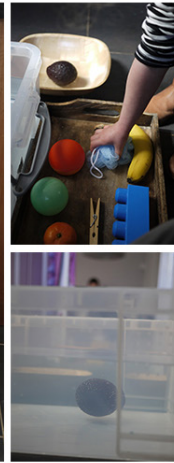
Abraham and Sarah *Genesis 13*

Abraham and Sarah travelled through the desert. Have fun making your own desert scene.



Joseph and his Coat *Genesis 37*

Discover beautiful colours like on Joseph's coat beneath the shaving foam.



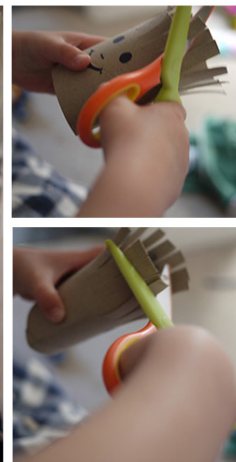
Baby Moses Exodus 2

Investigate items that float and sink. Moses' basket floated and God kept him safe on the river.



Moses Parts the Red Sea Exodus 14

Play with an ocean themed sensory tray. Part the 'sea' to make a path for Moses.



Samson and Delilah Judges 16

Give the cardboard tube 'Samson' a haircut. Use child-safe scissors or simply tear.



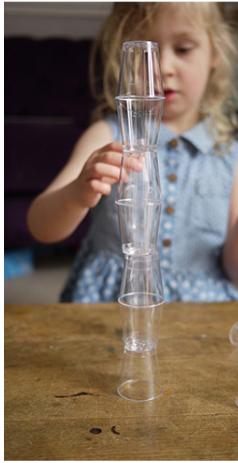
Naomi and Ruth Ruth 2

Create a sensory bin with seeds and grains. Ruth collected left over grain for her and Naomi.



Solomon Builds a Temple *1 Kings 5*

Construct a big Temple like the one that Solomon built so people could worship God.



God feeds Elijah *1 Kings 17*

Make ravens like the ones that God sent to provide food for Elijah.



Jeremiah and the Potter *Jeremiah 18*

The potter wanted his pots to be the very best he could make. Make the very best pot you can.



Daniel is Tested *Daniel 1*

Daniel ate only vegetables, not the royal food. Sort the play food into fruit and veg.



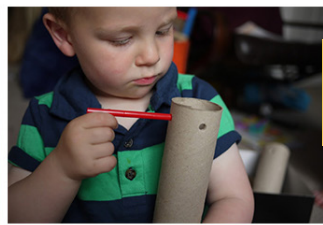
Queen Esther
Esther 5-10

Queen Esther was very brave and saved God's people. Make beautiful play dough crowns fit for a Queen.



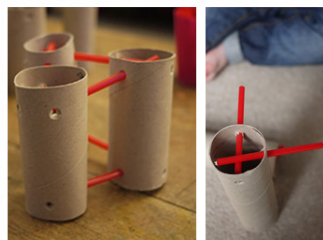
Jonah and the Big Fish
Jonah 1-2

Make a big fish out of play dough like the one that God sent to swallow Jonah.



Nehemiah Builds for God
Nehemiah 2

Nehemiah wanted to rebuild the walls and gates of Jerusalem for God. Can you build a city wall?



NEW

TESTAMENT



Jesus is Born *Luke 2*

Jesus came to earth as a gift for all people. Wrap wooden blocks in foil to make the look like shiny gifts.



John the Baptist *Matthew 3*

Remember that John the Baptist lived in the wilderness eating locusts and honey.



Jesus Heals a Leper *Mark 1*

Pretend your toys are poorly like the leper. Put plasters and bandages on their sore skin.



Wise and Foolish Builders *Matthew 7*

The wise man built his house on the rock. Paint patterns on rocks with water.



Precious Perfume *Luke 7*

A woman anoints Jesus with perfume. Make an amazing scented 'perfume' with warm water, fruit and herbs.



The Story of the Seeds *Mark 4*

Design patterns on play dough with seeds. We want to be the seed that fell on good soil!



The Hidden Treasure *Matthew 13*

Find the shiny treasure hidden in the tray of sand or coloured salt.



Jesus Calms the Storm *Matthew 8*

Discover items that are rough and smooth. Learn that Jesus made the rough sea calm.



Jesus Feeds the 5000 *John 6*

Experiment with bread and cutters remembering how Jesus fed many people.



Mary and Martha *Luke 10*

Clean things like Martha did to get things just right for Jesus.



The Lost Sheep *Luke 15*

Hunt for cotton wool balls around the room. Add them to the sticky sheep to make its fleece.



Zacchaeus *Luke 19*

Jesus asked Zacchaeus if he could stay at his house. Have a pretend tea party to welcome Jesus.



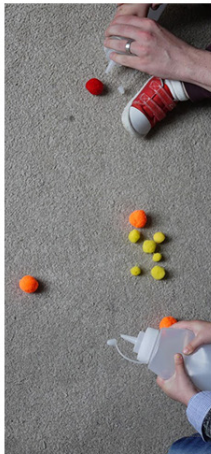
Palm Sunday **Mark 11**

Create art with palm leaves like the ones that people waved for Jesus when he rode into Jerusalem.



Easter Day **Luke 24**

The tomb was empty and Jesus was alive! Play with empty plastic eggs on a light box.



Pentecost **Acts 2**

The Holy Spirit came as wind and fire – create 'wind' with squeeze bottles to move the pom-poms.