



**Book Resource
Guide**

Jesus, Were You Little?

Sally Metzger

Illustrated by
Caroline Baker Mazure



Stepping into Scripture

Jesus Grew in Age, and His Love for You Grew, Too!

A parent or older person can slowly read the following story to their child, pausing as long as it seems appropriate for the child to imagine the scene. As you read, feel free to “Step into Scripture” yourself and encounter Jesus right along with your child. Participating will help you be an inspired reader!

Leader: You have a beautiful imagination — a gift from God you can use to grow closer to him. Through your imagination, you can be with Jesus in an extraordinary way. So become a part of this story. See what you would see, hear what you would hear, and feel what you would feel — on your skin and in your heart. Ask God to help you be there.

Please allow your eyes to close. Imagine you’re sitting cross-legged on some soft grass. (Briefly pause.) You look up at all the grown-ups standing close by you. You’re happy that a person you trust is with you, and you grab their foot — all dusty in their sandals. They smile at you as you make a little hill of dirt and grass beside you.

A grownup shouts, “It’s Jesus! He’s coming!”

You can’t stop looking at Jesus. The light of the sun makes his face glow! His voice sounds magical, like a song. “You shall love your neighbor as yourself,” Jesus is saying.

You want to love that way and make Jesus happy. You feel so calm. You almost feel like you could fall asleep!

The next thing you know, voices in the crowd awaken you. “People are getting hungry,” a man tells Jesus. Jesus needs food to feed the people, and you have a basket with bread and two fish. The bread feels soft. Your stomach growls. But you hold your basket high in the air.

A tall man with skin like leather takes your basket to Jesus.

Soon people are laughing and eating. And there’s a lot of food for everyone! Your stomach feels warm and full. Then all the talking stops. It’s quiet as Jesus walks toward you, kneels beside you, and looks at you with love. It’s like, to him, you’re the only person in the world. Jesus’ eyes shine. “Child, what you’ve done today will be written down, and people will talk about it forever. I love you, Child! I’ll always be with you; even when you can’t see me, I’m by your side.”

How do you respond? You can talk to Jesus about anything, or just enjoy his warm hug.



More Images of Jesus

Jesus was once a little boy. As a resident of a “land flowing with milk and honey,” he probably spilled his milk and got stung by a honeybee or two. The olive trees of Nazareth, with their low branches, invite little boys to climb them, and children of ancient Palestine enjoyed playing catch with a leather ball.

Children started studying about God in Jesus’ day when they were very young. At three or four years old, many children began learning Hebrew, the language of Scripture. Students didn’t practice writing their letters using paper and pencil. Their tablet was usually the sand or dirt beneath their feet. They might write with their finger or a perfect stick they found.

Jesus would have begun studying the Scriptures by age five. We don’t know much about the child Jesus’ prayers, but we can imagine how sweet it sounded when Jesus spoke to “Abba,” his daddy.



Activity

Draw a picture or write a short story about the child Jesus doing things children did in Palestine 2,000 years ago.

“Wonder-ful” Questions and Activity Suggestions

1 The children in our book ask Jesus, “Were you little? Just like me? I wonder, Jesus, did you ever ...” Finish this question for yourself. What do you wonder about Jesus?

2 Let’s play a guessing game: **GUESS HOW JESUS FELT**
First of all, do you think children can have different feelings about the same thing — like a great big dog or a clown? Actions can be right or wrong, but feelings aren’t right or wrong. It’s OK to feel sad, mad, or afraid. Jesus sometimes felt those things. So in this guessing game, there are no right or wrong answers!
There are four feelings spread across the board:

Sad Afraid Mad Happy

Think of a question the children asked Jesus in the book. Each person can slowly move to the feeling word on the board that shows how they think Jesus might have felt when he was doing what the child imagined him doing. Volunteers can share why they think Jesus might have felt that way. Take turns recalling questions and continue moving around the room.

3 Have you ever shared your feelings with Jesus? Why or why not?

4 Think of a time you made something you were proud of and that you loved. Can you share what you created? We see in the book that Jesus carefully designed you. Why is it important to know Jesus planned you and loves you just as you are? When you talk to Jesus, can you just be yourself? Why or why not?

5 Here’s your chance to show how your love for Jesus grows when you think of him as a real little boy. Create a dance to perform, a drawing, a story, or a song about your love for Jesus. We’ll all join in singing if you choose to write a song and use a familiar tune.

