

Teaching Content & Wondering Questions

Show the children the cue image of Jesus standing with the little children (image is taken from the Miracle Maker which if you are regular BalloonBox user the children will likely be familiar with). What do they notice about the picture? Are they surprised to see Jesus surrounded by children?

Explain to the group that Jesus loved spending time with children and would often be surrounded by them, and use them to help Him to teach the grown-ups who were there.

In fact, one time Jesus said He felt like a parent Himself, specifically, a mother hen who wanted to gather up her chicks!

"I wonder..."

- ...would you have spent time playing with and talking to Jesus if you had been alive when He was on Earth as a human all those years ago, like the children in the picture?
- ...do you think Jesus meant He was actually a chicken when He said He felt like a mother hen? What do you think He meant? *Explore together that Jesus was using a metaphor – a word picture to teach us something that we did not already know, just like when He told parables – special made up stories that help us to understand something about God. If the mother hen represents Jesus, who might the chicks represent...? They are us!*
- ...why do you think that Jesus picked a mother hen rather than any other animal for His description? *Because more than any other animal, chicks are always running away! Mother hens try and snuggle all of the chicks down in their feathers and under their wings, but chicks are always trying to pop out and go exploring... just like us. Are the children like good chicks who always follow instructions or inquisitive chicks who run away all the time?*
- ...what do you think are the responsibilities or jobs of a parent or other grown up who cares for children? *Note that this might be difficult for some of the children to think of; focus on positive qualities such as spending quality time, showing you care, listening, being fair, etc. How are these qualities similar or different to the way we think Jesus cares for us?*
- ...did you know that Christians believe that God is an example of a perfect parent – like the very best mum, dad or other grown up. He loves us so much that even when we wander away from Him – just like little chicks do to their mother hens – He wants to gather us up again. How can we say thank you to Him for doing that for us? How can we say thank you to the grown ups who do that for us? *Think about practical acts of service and thanks that the children can do to show appreciation to the grown ups who care for them, with the 'gold standard' being to follow the commandment that says to 'honour them'. Explore how honouring our heavenly Father and/or earthly carers is all about returning to them when they call us back – just like chicks returning to their mother hen when she clucks to them – following instructions without answering back. Is that an easy thing or a difficult thing?*