LET IT SHINE
11. The Prodigal Son

OBJECTIVES
Help these precious little ones understand that God always loves us, no matter what we do. BUT we have to come back to him when we do wrong, just as the prodigal son had to return to his father. When we do return to God, ready to do His will, God receives us with open arms.

PREPARATION
Print the booklet on cover stock. There will only be a cover with the lesson and a graphic, and then on the inside there will be a pig on one page and the father and son on the other page. Lay the pages together, but leave a tiny space so that after you tape it together (with wide tape, if possible) it will fold shut. Print the graphics of the children on some light color, such as ivory, peach, tan or pink. Cut them all our and give each child one set. If you are teaching only 2s, you will have to help them know where to put each graphic. Older ones should be able to know where the graphics are to be pasted if you tell them what each one represents. For example, one shows a boy who is trying to get away from his mother. You could say that he does not want to go to bed. There is a graphic of a child lying in bed nicely listening to Grandma read a story. The naughty boy goes on the page with the pig. The nice child belongs with the father and son. There is a larger graphic of the prodigal son with the pigs. You could print it in black and white for the children to color.

BIBLE STUDY: Luke 15:11-32

LESSON
Use your prepared booklet to teach the lesson. Be sure to go over the application pages showing good and bad behavior.

ACTIVITIES
Let the children glue the graphics. Then they can match the pigs. Let them color the larger graphic. If your students are old enough, you could prepare some statements to read and have them say if the child speaking is acting like the boy when he was with the pigs, or when he was with his father. You could include any types of behavior you have noticed in the class that should be corrected or commended.

SONGS AND PRAYER
Ask God to help the students to always love and obey Him. And if they do things that God does not like, pray that they will be sorry and come back to God. Sing, “Roll the Gospel Chariot Along,” but first talk about how the prodigal son was a “sinner,” and we should try to help people come back to God. When you give out the flashlights, talk about how the prodigal son let his light be blown out when he spent his money foolishly and was so hungry he thought about eating pig food. Then when he went back to his father, he was letting his light shine again. By now the children should remember that the song is about blowing out the light of a candle, and that they did not have flashlights in Bible times.