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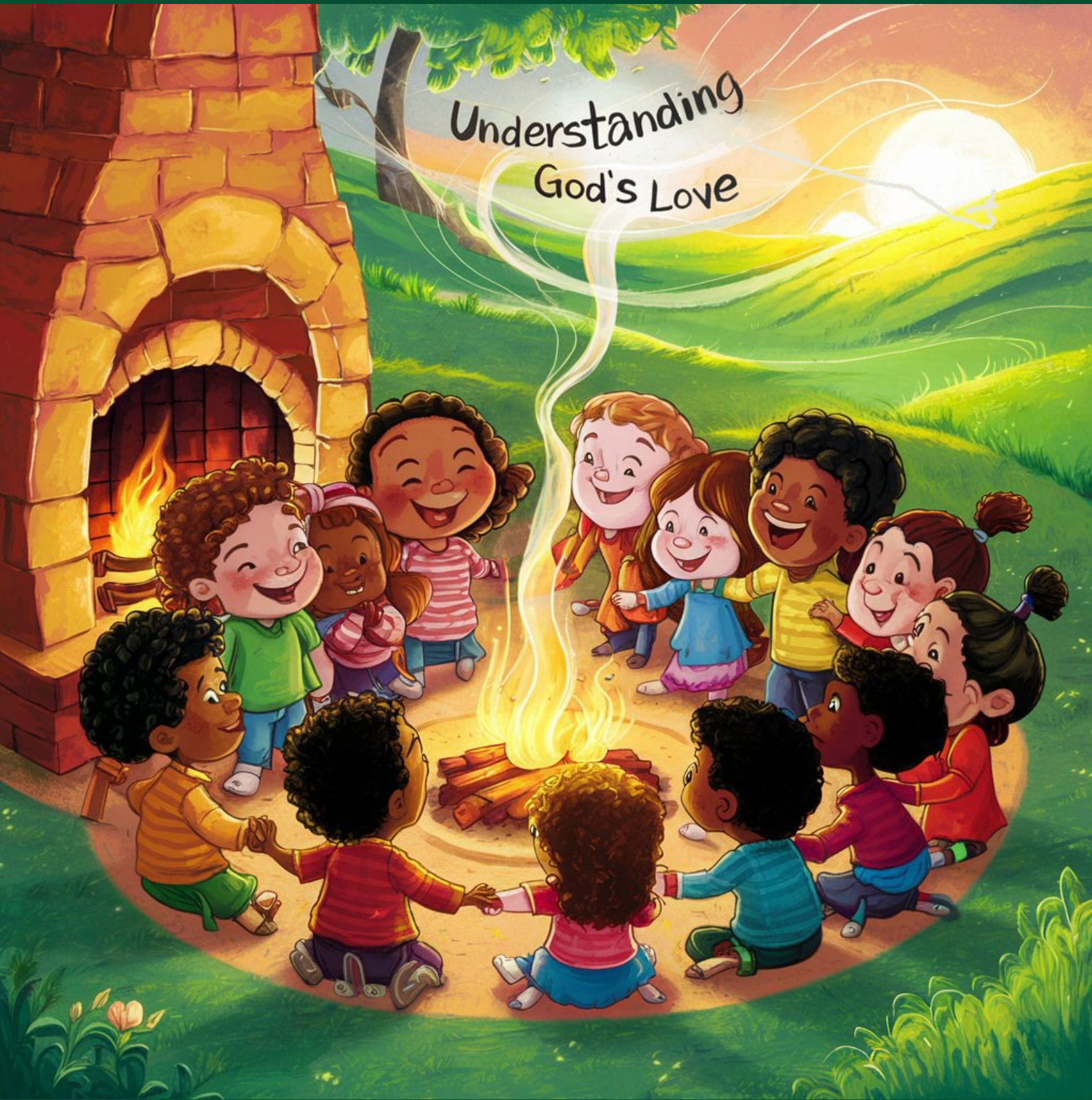
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Understanding God's Love





Year 1—Quarter 1 “God the Father”

Quarter Aim: God is not distant or unapproachable; rather, He is a caring Father who loves us deeply and wants the best for our lives.

Lesson 1: Understanding God’s Love

Lesson on God’s Love

Read these Bible verses: 1 John 4:19, “We love because he loved us first,” and 1 John 4:12, “If we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.”

God made you so He could love you! God tells you in the Bible over and over again how much He loves you and how many different ways He loves you. God’s love for you never ends!

(See the list of Bible verses on the supplement page for ideas of other passages to share with your class.)

When we show love to others, that is God living in us. God sent his Holy Spirit to live in us (1 John 4:13). And we can love others because God loved us first. Our hearts need to be filled with love in order to share that love.

God’s love is perfect. His love never changes. His love doesn’t end. It is so vast that it never runs out. God doesn’t stop loving. And, nothing can ever separate you from God’s love. Isn’t that good to know?

Look at Jesus’ Life

This is what Jesus told His disciples, “Anyone who has seen me has seen God the Father.” When we read the life of Jesus in the Bible, we see that Jesus is the walking, talking, visible picture of who God is, what He does, and how He loves. How God loves people. Jesus was saying to His followers, “Want to know how to love? Look at me. Stay focused on me.”

Jesus loved His followers very much. Because Jesus was God, every time He loved His followers, He showed them that God’s love is patient, kind, forgiving, and considers what is best for the one being loved. To learn how to love God’s way, we need to stay focused on Jesus. Jesus shows us how much God loves us. We can see God’s love clearly when we look at Jesus’ life in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John and see how Jesus interacted with people.

By faith, you can look to Jesus and watch what He did as He lived each day on earth. To love like Jesus loved, pray for Jesus to share His heart for people with you and to help you love others like He does. God’s love is patient, kind, forgiving and considers what is best for the one being loved. You can stay focused on Jesus so that you can learn how to love others with God’s love.

Power Point

There is always more and more of Our Father’s goodness and love.

Lie:

God doesn’t love me.

Truth:

Romans 8:39, “Nothing at all can ever separate us from God’s love because of what Christ Jesus our Lord has done.” (NIRV)





Digging Deeper

Bible Verses about God's Love for Kids

Here are some of my favorite Bible verses about God's love for kids – and some Bible verses about our love for God and for each other.

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. – John 3:16

We love because he loved us first. – 1 John 4:19

Love is patient. Love is kind. – 1 Corinthians 13:4

A friend loves at all times. – Proverbs 17:17

Let love and faithfulness never leave you. – Proverbs 3:3

Let all you do be done in love. – 1 Corinthians 16:14

Love never fails. – 1 Corinthians 13:84

If we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us. – 1 John 4:12

Love your neighbor as yourself. – Mark 12:31

How wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ. – Ephesians 3:18

Nothing in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God. – Romans 8:39

The Lord's unfailing love surrounds the one who trusts in him. – Psalm 32:10





Object Lesson

God's Love: Cookie Comparison



Buy a giant cookie and have it decorated with the words “God’s Love” in icing. Buy a pack of regular-sized chocolate chip cookies. Take one out of the pack. Before class, arrange the giant cookie and the single cookie on two separate platters. Keep the cookies covered and talk to kids about different kinds of love. Talk about how Susie loves Johnny, how kids love parents and how pet owners love their pets. Share about whom you love and how they make you feel. Of course, keep everything PG!

Then it is time for the big reveal. Show the two platters. Tell kids that the small cookie is the love we have for each other and all the kinds of love you talked about. Show kids the giant cookie. Tell kids this is God’s love. Explain to kids that God’s love is deeper, bigger and better than any other kind of love you can receive. Then eat the cookies, after the blessing!



God our Provider





Year 1–Quarter 1 “God the Father”

Quarter Aim: God is not distant or unapproachable; rather, He is a caring Father who loves us deeply and wants the best for our lives.

Lesson 2: God Our Provider

God Cares for Us

Understanding Matthew 10:24-39 for Kids

Read Matthew 10:24-39 aloud to the children. Explain that in these verses, Jesus is teaching his disciples about the cost of following Him. He tells them not to be afraid because God, who takes care of even the smallest sparrow, will certainly take care of them.

Application: God Cares for All His Creations

Discuss with the children how God cares for all His creations, from the flowers in the fields to the birds in the sky. Use the example of wildflowers, which grow and bloom without any human help, to illustrate how God provides for all His creations.

Application: God, Our Heavenly Father

Explain to the children that God is our Heavenly Father and that He loves us more than we can imagine. Just as our earthly parents take care of us, God, our Heavenly Father, takes care of us even more. He provides us with everything we need (not always what we want), just like our earthly parents do.

God’s Love and Care – Discuss the ways in which God shows His love and care for us. Explain that God loves us so much that He sent His Son, Jesus, to die for us. This shows the extent of God’s love for us.

Small Group Discussion

Divide into Small Groups — Give the group leader this guide:

Discussion: Trusting in God

Ask: What are some of the things God provides for us? (Land, water, food, etc.)

Teach the children about the importance of trusting in God. Even when we can’t see, hear, or feel Him, we can be confident that He is there and that He hears our prayers. Encourage the children to talk to God anytime, just as they would talk to their earthly fathers.

Learning Activity – Drawing

Have the children draw a picture of a wildflower field or a bird in the sky. As they draw, remind them that just as God takes care of these, He also takes care of us.

Conclusion and Prayer

Conclude the lesson by reminding the children that God is our Heavenly Father and that He will always be there for us. Ask the children to think of ways they can show their trust in God during the week. Pray together, thanking God for His love and care, and asking Him to help us trust Him more.

Power Point

God cares for
all His
creations.

Lie:

God doesn’t give me
what I need.

Truth:

Phil. 4:19, “My God will
meet all your needs. He
will meet them in keep-
ing with his wonderful
riches that come to you
because you belong to
Christ Jesus.” (NIRV)





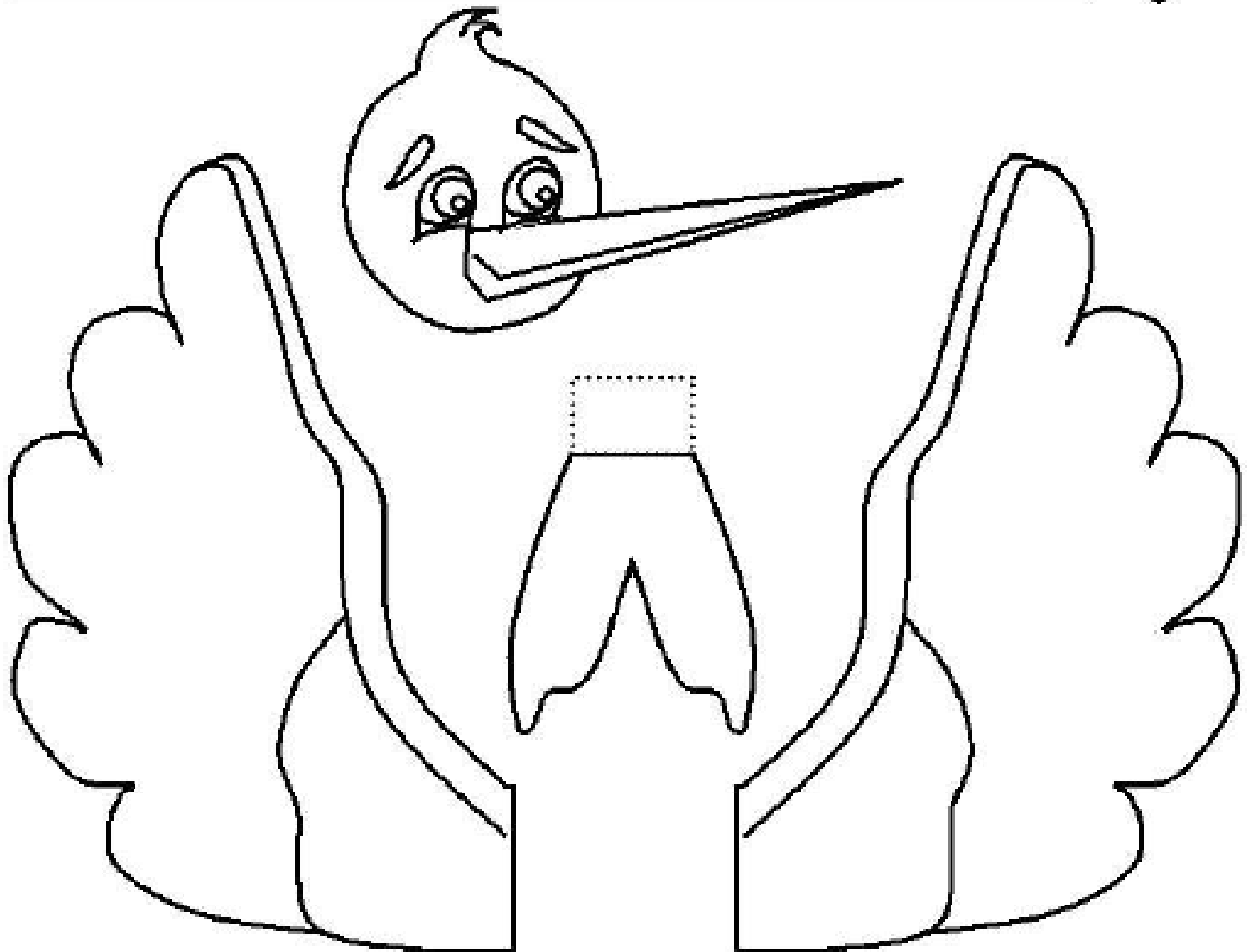
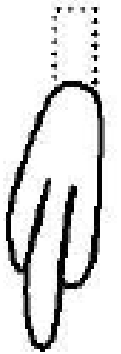
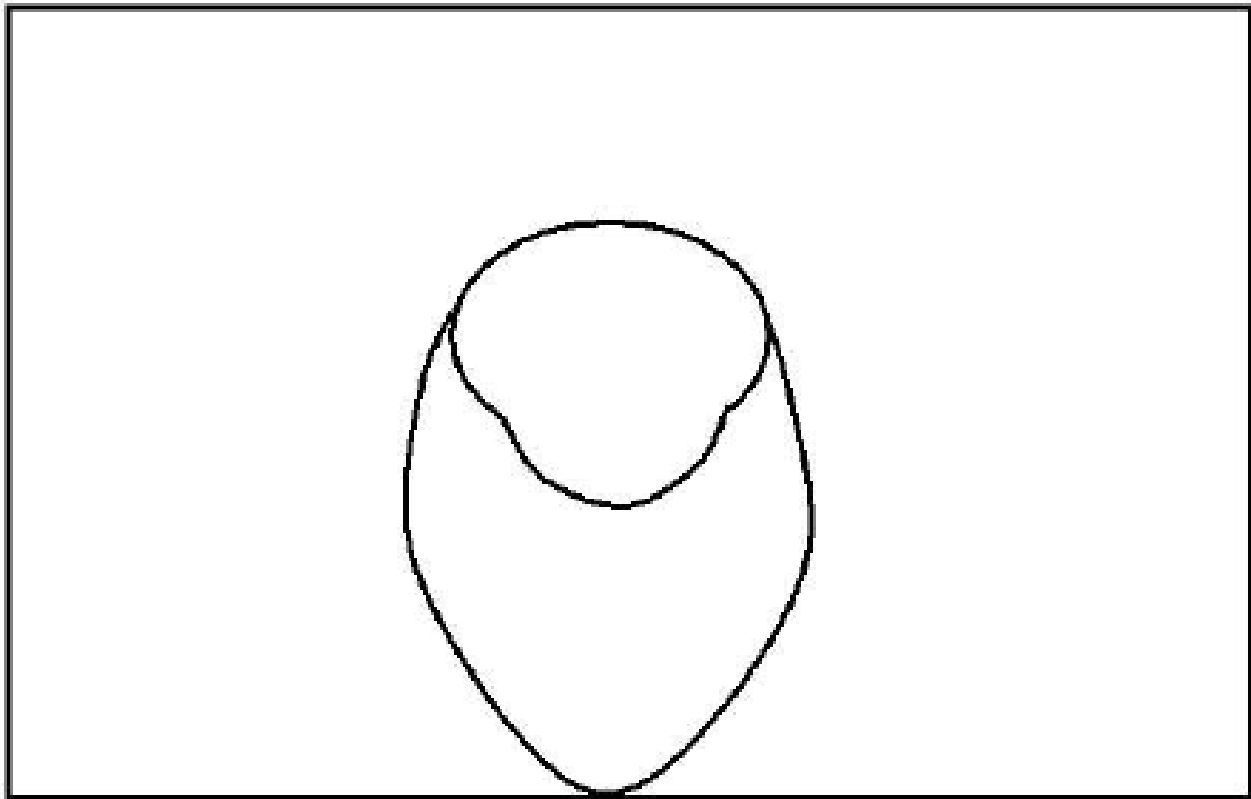
Hummingbird Craft


Needed: One toilet paper tube for each child.

Instructions:

- Print out the template. (See supplement page)
- Color the pieces as appropriate and cut them out. (Hummingbirds are nice and bright: green, blue, red and purple are all great colors to use).
- Glue the large rectangular piece around the toilet paper tube.
- Glue tail onto the back of the toilet paper roll. (Hint: glue it to the inside back and then folded it upward a bit so it will sit flat on the table. It looks nice that way, but be creative.)
- Glue the head onto the front of the toilet paper roll.
- Make it look like the hummingbird is flying by gluing the wings onto the back of the roll.
- Fold the feet and glue the tabs to the inside of the tube.







GOD'S WISDOM



Year 1–Quarter 1 “God the Father”

Quarter Aim: God is not distant or unapproachable; rather, He is a caring Father who loves us deeply and wants the best for our lives.

Lesson 3: God’s Wisdom

Make Wise Choices

KEY PASSAGE: Psalm 119:105, 1 Kings 3. King Solomon asks for wisdom.

SUMMARY:

We all face tough choices in life, and sometimes it’s hard to know the right thing to do.

Thankfully, we can go to God and receive the wisdom we need to make the right choices.

Solomon was the son of King David. He was a good man who loved God. God was pleased with Solomon’s heart, and he offered go give Solomon anything he wanted. Solomon asked for wisdom to make the right choices and be a good king. Because he made that wise request, God made him the wisest man to ever live.

Solomon was so wise, rulers from across the world came to visit him, just to learn from him. They brought him gold and wealth and riches, making him not only the wisest but the wealthiest king on Earth. At the end of his life, though, Solomon wisely saw that these things were nothing compared to God.

When we are faced with tough choices, bring it to God because He wants to help you make the best (wisest) choice.

Object Lesson: Board Game

ITEMS NEEDED: Board game with instructions

Choose a board game the kids probably don’t know, like an old school classic such as Monopoly Jr. or Operation. Have it set up, and ask the kids how they think the game is played.

Explain: Some things in life don’t really require directions. Your moms and dads can probably pull a new appliance out and plug it in without giving it a glance. But when it comes to board games, it’s a little harder. Each game has different pieces - tokens, characters, spinners, dice, cards. Some even have houses, hotels, and characters.

The best place to start, if you’re trying to learn a new game, is to read the directions. They tell you step by step how to set up the game, how to start, how to play, and how it ends. Board games are full of strategy, choices, and chance.

Apply: So is life. And when life presents you with a tough choice, it’s good to know where we can go for instructions. God, our creator, is the source of all wisdom. He made Solomon the wisest ruler in history, and that same wisdom can be ours if we ask for it. We can go to God in prayer, seek the counsel of more mature Christians, and we can go to the Bible, a book that has a verse for everything.

Power Point

Seek God’s wisdom when making choices.

Lie:

God makes mistakes.

Truth:

2 Samuel 22:31,
“God’s way is perfect. The word of the Lord doesn’t have any flaws. ...” (NIRV)





Large Group Game

PEANUT BUTTER RACERS

ITEMS NEEDED:

Two jars peanut butter

Two jars of jelly

Two loaves of bread

Dull knives and spoons

Two blindfolds

INSTRUCTIONS:

This is a game for two teams of two. Set both teams up at separate tables. One teammate will wear a blindfold and assemble the sandwich. The other teammate's job is to talk them through the process

any of the items on the table, even if they -
ble a sandwich wins.

VARIATION:

For younger kids, use a non-sharp spreader for the peanut butter. You may want to eliminate the jelly to make the game easier and quicker.

For older kids, you could make it a beauty contest vs. a timed contest. Whoever makes the prettiest plate of peanut butter and jelly sandwich wins.

WHAT'S THE POINT:

Say: Today we're talking about wisdom and making wise choices, to do that we have to be willing to listen and follow instructions. If we don't, we may end up with a sticky mess on our hands!


Small Group Discussion

Discussion Starters:

- What would you have asked for if you were Solomon?
- How is God's Word like a lamp for our feet and a light for our path?
- How can we ask God for wisdom when we need it?

Say: There's a verse for every question we have because God, in His wisdom, gave us the Bible. The same source of wisdom Solomon met in his dream is available to us here in the Bible. God





God's
Forgiveness
and
Grace



Year 1–Quarter 1 “God the Father”

Quarter Aim: God is not distant or unapproachable; rather, He is a caring Father who loves us deeply and wants the best for our lives.

Lesson 4: God’s Forgiveness & Grace

What Does “Grace” Mean?

*“Our Lord poured out more and more of his **grace** on me. Along with it came faith and love from Christ Jesus.”
(1 Timothy 1:14 NIRV)*

Q: What do you think “grace” means?

For Christians, “grace” is a very special word. You’ve probably heard the word but may not know what it means. Grace means “undeserved favor.” **God’s grace is His undeserved favor abundantly poured out on those who desperately need Him.**

You may know some girls or women named Grace or Gracie. A lot of churches have the word “grace” as part of their name. And, “Amazing Grace” is one of the most well-known songs worldwide. It’s written by a man named John Newton who understood the immensity of God’s grace in his life. (See John Newton’s life story on a supplement page.)

Teach: God is Gracious

Read 1 Samuel 1:1-8 to the group. Choose children to play the parts of Elkanah, Hannah, Peninnah & Eli while you read. After reading through the text, make sure the kids in the group get the following points.

- There was a man named Elkanah who had two wives- Hannah and Peninnah.
- Peninnah had children, but Hannah didn’t.
- Every year Elkanah’s family would go to Shiloh to worship the Lord and sacrifice to Him.
- One year while they were in Shiloh, Hannah got really upset and wept and cried out to the Lord in prayer. In her prayer she promised God that if He would give her a son that she would give him back to God to serve Him.
- Eli, the priest saw her praying and confronted her and Hannah told him what she was praying and Eli prayed for her as well.
- Elkanah and his family went home and soon Hannah became pregnant. When the baby was born, she named him Samuel because she asked the Lord for him.
- When Samuel was still a very young boy (around 2 maybe), Hannah took Samuel back to Shiloh where she offered a sacrifice to God.
- Then, she took Samuel to Eli, the priest, and told him that she asked God for a baby and He gave her Samuel, so she was keeping her promise to God and was giving Samuel back to Him to serve God.

God was **gracious** to Hannah; He heard her prayer and He gave her Samuel. Explain how **gracious** has the root word **grace** in it and that grace can be defined as getting what we don’t deserve and that God is gracious to His people by giving us what we don’t deserve.

Power Point

God forgives us
and gives us
grace.

Lie:

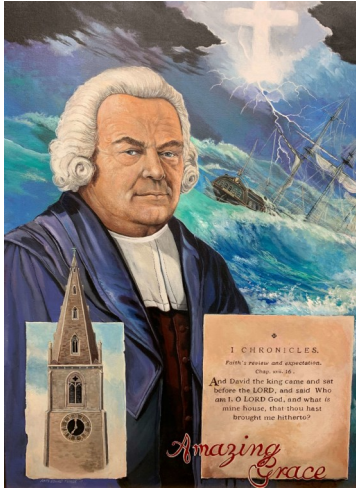
God is mad at me.

Truth:

Psalm 103:8, *The Lord is tender and kind. He is gracious. He is slow to get angry. He is full of love.” (NIRV)*



Life Story of John Newton



John Newton was a man who lived a very interesting life. He was born in **London, England** on **July 24, 1725**. When he was young, his mom passed away, and he started going on sea adventures with his dad. Imagine sailing on big ships across the ocean! As he grew up, John became a sailor in the Royal Navy. But guess what? He also did something not so nice: he worked on ships that traded enslaved people. These ships took people from Africa to the West Indies, where they were treated very poorly. But here's the amazing part: one day, while steering a ship through a scary storm, John felt something special. It was like a light in his heart. He decided to change his ways and follow God. He wrote a beautiful song called "Amazing Grace" to celebrate this transformation. It's a song that many people still sing today!

John Newton didn't stop there. He became a minister and even fought against slavery. He wanted everyone to know that no matter what they've done, **they can find grace and change for the better**. So, remember John Newton and his song when you need a little hope!

Prodigal Son Story

John Newton's story is much like the prodigal son in the Bible. Jesus told the story of a family with 2 sons. The younger son told his dad one day that he wanted to take his share of the family money and go away to see the world rather than stay home and help his dad run the farm. So, he did. But, he was very reckless with his money and spent it all while doing bad things—like John Newton did when he was away from home.

Anyway, this younger son got a job feeding pigs, but even that wasn't enough for him to buy food to take care of himself. He was miserable. So, he decided to go back home and ask his dad to let him be a servant. What do you think his father did? Was he angry with him for leaving in the first place and spending all his money? Or, was he happy to see his young son again? Let's find out.

Read Luke 15:11-24

- Q: Focusing on verse 20, what was the father doing?
- Q: What actions did he take when he saw his boy coming home?
- Q: Did his dad have just a little bit of love for his boy or a lot of love?
- Q: Why did the father celebrate?

Wow! Did you expect that? The prodigal son didn't deserve his father's favor. He had done some bad things. But, his dad was looking for him to come home. That is a picture of God's grace. The Bible says that God's grace is so abundant it's like a cup overflowing.





Object Lesson

Key Verse: Ephesians 2:8,9 (Additional: John 3:16; 2 Tim. 1:9; Rom. 6:23)

Materials Needed: Dollar Bill

(Hold up the dollar bill)

Have you ever seen one of these before? Of course you have! It is a dollar bill. Tell me some ways that you can get one of these dollar bills?

(Let the kids respond. If they don't know you can coach them with earn it, steal it, borrow it, have one given to you, and etc.)

There are many ways that you can get this dollar bill. But let me ask you, who does this dollar bill belong to? That's right it belongs to me. And what can I do with this dollar bill? Anything I want to! I need a helper to assist me. (Choose a kid to help you.)

Does this dollar bill belong to you? (No) Who does it belong to? (You) Would you like to have it? (Yes) Here! It is yours, you don't even have to do anything for it! It is a gift!

God's grace is a lot like that dollar bill. It is something that has great value. But there is nothing that you can do to earn God's grace, favor and forgiveness. In fact, Ephesians 2:8-9 says that it is a gift from God. If we were able to work for it we could brag about it, but God just wants to give it to us for free!

Grace is simply getting something nice that we don't deserve. My helper didn't deserve that dollar bill, but I gave it to him/her anyway. Even though we don't deserve God's grace he offers it to use freely.

Craft: F.R.O.G.G.I.E. Mask

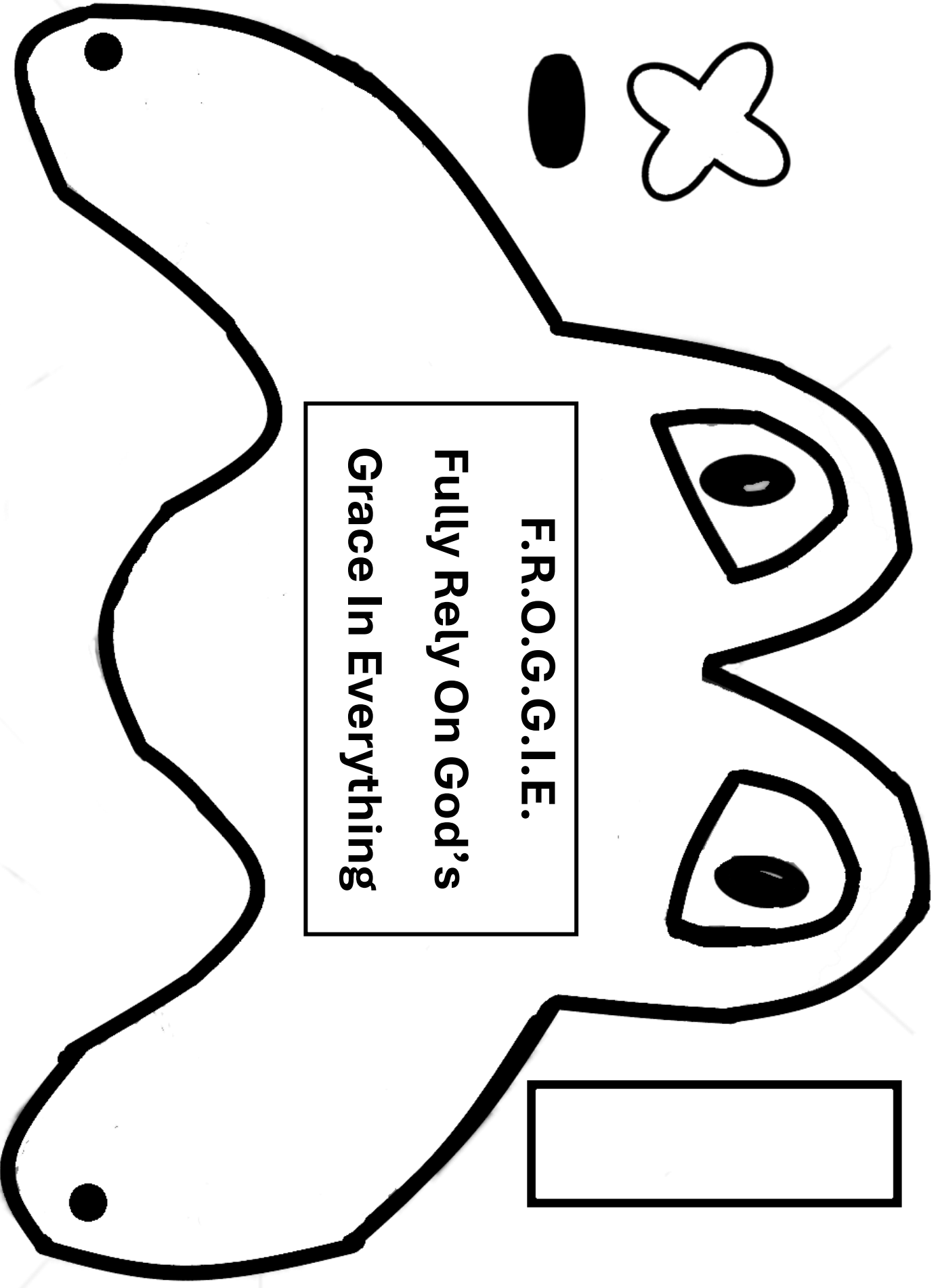


Needed: Copies of template (on supplement page), paper plates, green paint, red construction paper, string (or ribbon or construction paper strips), scissors, black marker.

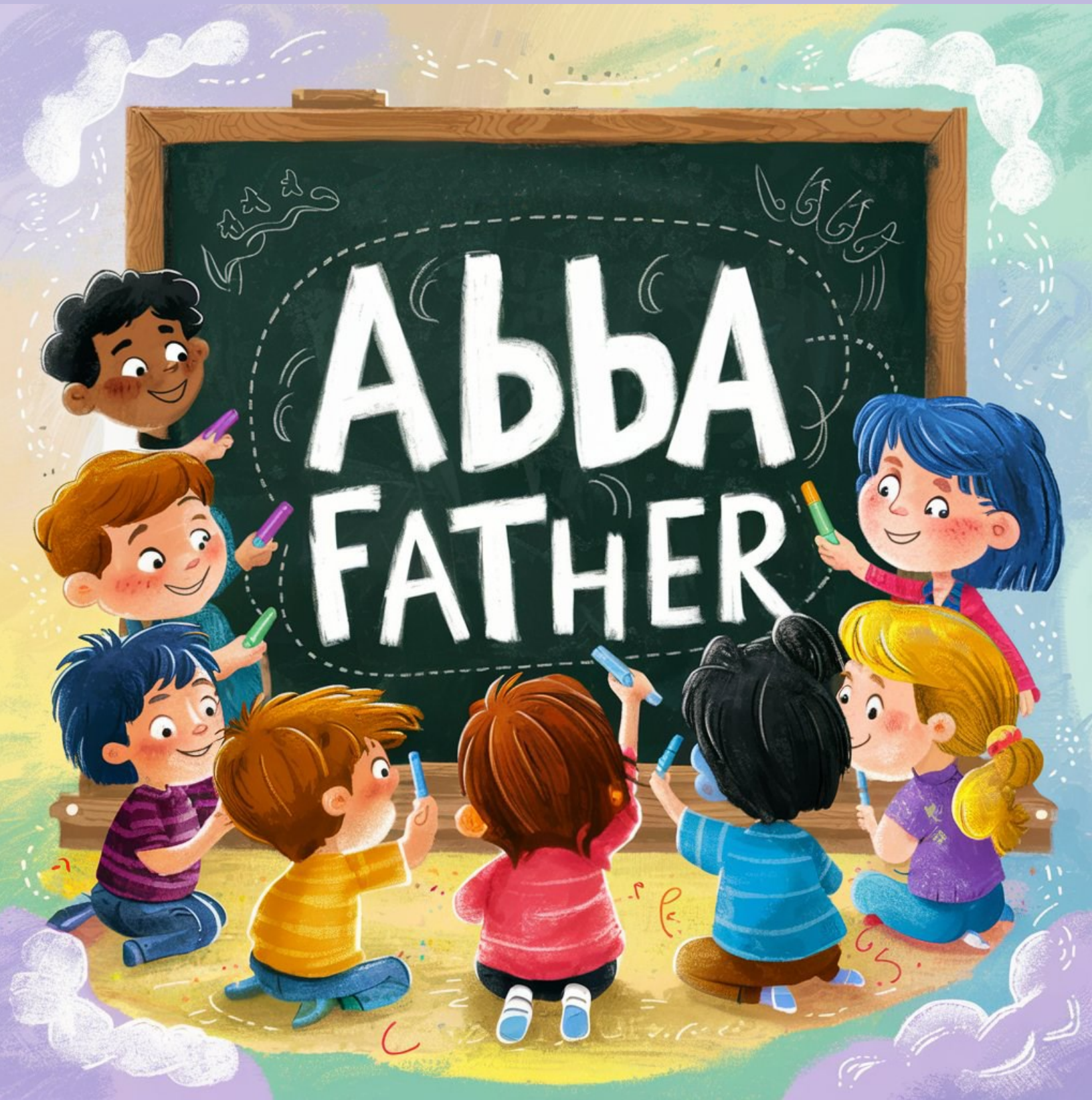
Instructions:

- Cut out the mask template and use it to trace around on the paper plate.
- Cut the mask out of the plate and paint it green. (Do ahead so they are dry.)
- Cut out the eyes, caption label, & bug to glue to the mask.
- Cut out the rectangle shape from red construction paper for the tongue. (roll it up on a pencil)
- Punch holes in the corners of the mask for the string to attach.
- Glue the caption label to the mask.
- Glue the bug to the end of the red tongue.





F.R.O.G.G.I.E.
Fully Rely On God's
Grace In Everything





Year 1—Quarter 1 “God the Father”

Quarter Aim: God is not distant or unapproachable; rather, He is a caring Father who loves us deeply and wants the best for our lives.

Lesson 5: Abba Father

Teach the Passage

Main Idea: God is a loving Father to those who choose to follow Him.

Read Romans 8:14-17. “For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. So you have not received a spirit that makes you fearful slaves. Instead, you received God’s Spirit when he adopted you as his own children. Now we call him, ‘Abba, Father.’ For his Spirit joins with our spirit to affirm that we are God’s children. And since we are his children, we are his heirs. In fact, together with Christ we are heirs of God’s glory. But if we are to share his glory, we must also share his suffering.”

Say: Let’s start by finding God’s name. What is God called in this passage? (Allow a student to answer.) God is called “Abba, Father.” (Write “Abba, Father” on the board.) “Abba” is Aramaic for Father. Aramaic was a language that was spoken at the time of Jesus. God is Father. But God is not everyone’s Father. According to the passage we just read, what special circumstance makes it possible for us to be called God’s children? How do we become a child of God, so we can call him Father? (Allow students to answer.) Verse 14 tells us that everyone who is led by the Spirit of God is called a child of God. The Spirit of God is of course the Holy Spirit, which comes into our hearts when we ask God to forgive us of our sins through his son Jesus, and then we do our best to follow him. So, we are God’s children when we love God.

Apply the Lesson

Ask: What makes someone a good parent? Have your students give you ideas to list on the board. (Be sure these characteristics make it on the list: Care for our needs, compassionate, comforting.)

Say: Now let’s look at three of these that show how Abba, our Heavenly Father, cares for us.

1. Read Matthew 6:31-33 — Abba cares for our needs.
2. Read 2 Corinthians 1:3 — Abba comforts us.
3. Read Psalm 103:13-14 — Abba is compassionate.

Ephesians 1:5 says, “God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure.” It makes God happy for us to be his children!

Power Point

When we love
God, we are
His children.

Lie:

God is too busy to spend time with me.

Truth:

Matthew 28:20, “... And you can be sure that I am always with you, to the very end.” (NIRV)





Object Lesson: Balloon on a String

Title: In God's Hands

Aim: Children will learn that God has set them free and that they should be close to God.

Supply List: Bible, one helium-filled balloon, extra balloons, construction paper, glue, colored pencils, masking tape (to make start and finish lines), straws, scissors

Teaching Plan:

Show the balloon filled with helium that you are holding by a string.

Say: Let's pretend that **you are a balloon**. You are full of life, like the balloon is full of air. You have the freedom to move anywhere in the world simply because you are free. You could go anywhere in the world that you want to go, but you don't because you know it wouldn't be safe. For example, you don't go to the other side of the street without a parent because you know that it would not be safe. You are like a balloon that is free to go your own way. Think about a balloon without a string, it would fly up into the sky and be lost. The balloon needs **its string** to keep it safe and grounded. You need people in your life, like your parents and Sunday school leader, to guide you and keep you safe in life. The string that the balloon is attached to is like the people in your life that you need to keep you safe and close to God. Like the balloon, you are still free to move and do as you please, but they keep you away from danger.

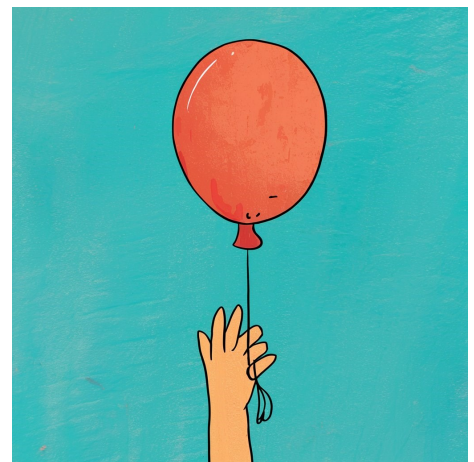
Lastly, we have **the hand** that is holding the string that is holding the balloon. This hand is like God's hand. If the hand lets go of the string, the balloon will be lost. Without God holding us and keeping us where we need to be we would also be lost. The Bible teaches us that God is our strength. We cannot do anything without him.

Craft: Balloon Pictures

Make a picture to go along with the story. Use construction paper to trace each child's hand. Cut out the hand print and paste it to the bottom of another piece of construction paper. Have the kids glue a piece of string to picture that is connected to the hand and a balloon (either not blown up at all, or only blown up a little bit) that has been attached to the top of the page. Write the bible verse at the top of the page and have the kids color the background if you want them to.

Game: Balloon Race

To play this game, divide the class into two teams. Create a starting line and a finish line. This is a relay race. The class must use a straw to blow a balloon across the floor to the finish line, and then back to their team. The first team to finish is the winner.





GOD'S PROTECTION



Year 1—Quarter 1 “God the Father”

Quarter Aim: God is not distant or unapproachable; rather, He is a caring Father who loves us deeply and wants the best for our lives.

Lesson 6: God’s Protection

God Protects Baby Moses



In a faraway land called Egypt, there was a special baby named Moses. His mom and dad loved him very much, but there was a big problem. The mean Pharaoh (the king of Egypt) didn’t like the Hebrew people, and he ordered that all baby boys should be thrown into the mighty Nile River!

Moses’ mom was brave. She made a little basket out of reeds and put baby Moses inside. Imagine a tiny boat made of sticks! She gently placed the basket in the river, hoping someone kind would find him.

Guess what? Pharaoh’s daughter, who was taking a bath in the river, saw the basket. She opened it and found the sweetest baby boy. She named him **Moses**, which means “I pulled him out of the water.”

Moses grew up in the palace, and he became a hero. He helped his people and led them to freedom. God protected him, just like how the basket floated safely on the river.

So, remember this: Even when things seem scary, God protects His people and He can make a way, just like He did for baby Moses!

Pivotal Part of Baby Moses’ Story

The basket floats down the river until it arrives at the home of Pharaoh, the king of Egypt. God caused Pharaoh’s daughter to find him, and she had compassion on him. She decided she wanted this baby kept safe. Conveniently enough, the baby’s sister was nearby, and she offered to help find someone who could nurse the boy until he was old enough to return to Pharaoh. The daughter named him Moses, meaning “out of the water”, because she pulled him out of the water.

Ask: How did God keep Moses safe? Why do you think this is happening?

Remind students that God took care of Moses and had a special plan for him. God also protects us and has a plan for our lives. He will always be with us and keep us safe. Most importantly, He rescues us from sin and death, and will always love us!

Close with prayer, thanking God for protecting and guiding us in all things.

Power Point

God protects
His people and
can make a
way.

Lie:

God doesn’t keep me safe.

Truth:

2 Thess. 3:3, “*But the Lord is faithful. He will strengthen you. He will guard you from the evil one.*”





Apple Seed Object Lesson

God's Protection Object Lesson Script

How many of you guys like apples? Apples are great food because you can do so many different things with them. You can make apple sauce. You can make candy apples. You can make apple pies and apple cakes. You can use them in salads with fruits and vegetables. You can make apple juice and apple cider to drink. Or, you can simply pick up an apple and eat it by itself.



Have you ever accidentally eaten an apple seed? They're usually stuck in the core of the apple, and it's not easy to get to, but sometimes it happens, doesn't it? Well, here's something you might not know: apple seeds are poisonous. Each apple seed has just a little, tiny bit of poison in it. It's not near enough to hurt you. You'd have to eat LOTS of apple seeds to even begin to feel sick. But it's still in there.

You know, sometimes in life, we encounter hard times. Bad things happen, we get sick, we struggle. But just like the apple seed, God promises never to give us more than we can handle. If you accidentally swallow an apple seed, it's not going to hurt you, because it's no more poison than your body can handle. And when hard times come, God promises he will help you through them, because he won't give you any more than you can handle.

Before he was crucified, Jesus said to his disciples, "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." (John 16:33) Let's take a moment to thank God for that promise.

Activity Opener

To get students thinking and ready to learn, consider an activity opener along these lines:

Hide baby Moses: Have one student (or a teacher) hide a baby doll somewhere within the classroom. Other students will race to be the first to find Moses "among the reeds."

Moses basket relay: Divide students into teams and have them race to take turns moving "Moses" back and forth. The catch: each team must wrap up the baby (doll) Moses and tuck it into a basket before carrying it to the other side and back.





Take Home Craft: Copy this page for each child. Have the students color the Nile River scene and baby Moses. Have them cut out the scene and glue it to a paper plate. Then have them cut out baby Moses and glue him to the river scene. Tape a yarn loop to the back to use for wall hanging.

God's Discipline





Year 1—Quarter 1 “God the Father”

Quarter Aim: God is not distant or unapproachable; rather, He is a caring Father who loves us deeply and wants the best for our lives.

Lesson 7: God’s Discipline

Kid’s Sermon

1. Understanding God’s Discipline:

Say: God disciplines us when we sin. Just as parents correct their children’s behavior, God lovingly corrects us when we go astray. It’s not about punishment, but about guiding us back to the right path.

2. Preventing Future Mistakes:

Say: Sometimes God disciplines us to prevent future sin. Imagine parents telling their kids not to play in the street. It’s not because they want to punish them, but to keep them safe. God’s discipline can prevent us from making harmful choices.

3. Learning Through Trials:

Say: God instructs us through the trials we face. Trials and challenges are opportunities for growth. Just as athletes train to improve, God uses difficulties to teach us valuable lessons.

4. Understanding Consequences:

Say: Our actions always have consequences. Discipline isn’t always negative; it includes training, education, and preparation. God’s discipline helps us grow and become better.

Power Point

Jesus comforts us when we mourn.

Lie:

God cannot be trusted.

Truth:

Psalm 119:68, “*You are good, and what you do is good; teach me your decrees.*” (NIV)

God is Good All the Time

Remember that God is good all the time even in the tough times in life. Thank God for the many tough things He **doesn’t** allow into your life.

Q: As you talk to your Father God, are you willing to trust His goodness in the way He chooses to answer your prayer?

Psalm 119:68, “You are good, and what you do is good; teach me your decrees.” (NIV)

But, someone might ask, “What about the tough things that happen to us? Someone gets very sick, loses a job, or has to move far away from family and friends. Is God being good then?” What must be the answer to that question? YES! Why? Because **God is good all the time.**

Truth #1: God is good even in the tough times.

Truth #2: God is good in different ways for each person.

Truth #3: God is good in what He allows or doesn’t allow in our lives. (God blocks out more hard things in our lives than He allows to happen to us.)





Opening Activity

Obstacle Course:

Start out with a little obstacle course. This could be done outside or inside (depending on spacing and materials used), but set up several elements for children to work through: things to jump over, run around or between, or pick up.

On the first run-through, have students complete the obstacles while holding several bulky items, or wearing a big coat/backpack. Once everyone has done it, invite them to try it again, but this time without holding or wearing anything. **Ask:** Which way is easier? Obviously, running without things to hold you back or slow you down. Now, what if we wanted to further improve time on the obstacle course? What would we have to do in order to become more proficient?

Explain that today we are going to talk about hard work, hardship, and discipline. Say: consider Olympic athletes: How do they become better? What do they have to do? If it was hard going through the obstacle course, imagine what these sports stars must do in order to train.

This is not all fun. It takes dedication and discipline. The Bible often compares our work as Christians to this. It is hard work to follow God and to “run the race” He wants us to. But He promises that He will honor us if we stick with Him...

Craft: Make a Medal

Materials Needed: Construction paper, stickers, ribbon, string, scissors, glue, markers

Winners in God’s eyes...using the paper and stickers, have students create a “medal” for something they plan to do excellently as Godly discipline. It might be consistent prayer, verse memorization, or Bible study. If desired, fashion a necklace out of the medal with string or ribbon.

Close with prayer and thank God for loving us enough to discipline us. Ask for endurance in understanding and accepting hard things in order to grow.



Color Page





Prayer
To
God



Year 1—Quarter 1 “God the Father”

Quarter Aim: God is not distant or unapproachable; rather, He is a caring Father who loves us deeply and wants the best for our lives.

Lesson 8: Prayer to God

“Our Father...”

Say: Jesus taught His disciples to pray. He gave them the “Lord’s Prayer” (Matthew 6:9-13)

Today we will learn the prayer Jesus gave us. It has **five** sections:

- 1. THE WHO:** “Dear Father in heaven.” (Your name is holy. May your kingdom reign on Earth just like it is in heaven.)
- 2. THE WHAT:** “Give us this day our daily bread.” (Give us what we need each day)
- 3. THE HOW:** “Forgive us our sins.” (Forgive us and help us forgive others.)
- 4. THE WHEN:** “Lead us not into temptation.” (Don’t let us give in to sin, but take us away from evil.)
- 5’ THE WOW:** “Thine is the kingdom and power and glory forever, amen.”

On Your Hand

Teaching the **Lord’s Prayer** using the fingers of the hand can be a fun and memorable way for children to learn. Here’s a simple method:

Thumb (*Our Father*): Start by pointing to your thumb. This represents the beginning of the prayer, where we address God as our Father in heaven.

Index Finger (*Hallowed be Your Name*): Move to the index finger. This reminds us to honor and respect God’s holy name.

Middle Finger (*Your Kingdom Come*): The middle finger symbolizes God’s kingdom coming to earth. We pray for His reign and rule in our lives and the world.

Ring Finger (*Your Will Be Done*): The ring finger represents God’s will. We ask that His plans and purposes be fulfilled on earth, just as they are in heaven.

Little Finger (*Give Us Our Daily Bread*): The little finger stands for our daily needs. We ask God to provide for us each day, both physically and spiritually.

Folded Hands (*Forgive Us and Lead Us*): Finally, fold your hands together. This signifies asking for forgiveness (as we forgive others) and seeking God’s guidance to avoid temptation and evil.

Power Point

Jesus gave us
the Lord’s
Prayer.

Lie:

God doesn’t listen to me.

Truth:

Psalm 34:17, “*Godly people cry out, and the Lord hears them. He saves them from all of their troubles.*” (NIRV)





Craft: “Prayer Bead Bracelet”

You will need:

- Crayons or markers
- Scissors
- Construction paper or cardstock
- Beads of various types
- Pipe cleaners or ribbon/string



Procedure:

1. Select paper or card stock. Write on the paper (or card) what various bead colors will be reminders of (example: blue=Thank You God, pink=I’m Sorry God, white=Help others God, orange=Help Me God), whether certain people or parts of the Lord’s Prayer.
2. Add verses and captions to the paper (to remember why you made the bracelet!).
3. Use the pipe cleaner or string as a base. String beads along in various colors and styles.
4. Use the final product as a prayer reminder, decoration, and/or bracelet!

Discussion Ideas:

As the kids are making their prayer bracelets, discuss how each aspect of prayer points to Jesus’ work on the cross. Feel free to use your own thoughts here, but one idea would be –

- **praise**– Praise God for being the creator & sustainer of the world and for always remaining faithful to His people,
- **thanksgiving**– Thank God for sending Jesus to die in our place,
- **confession**– admit that we are sinners and confess the sin in our life repenting and turning to Jesus,
- **ask**– ask God to teach you more about Him and His Word and what it means to be a follower of Jesus,
- **others**– pray for those who haven’t heard the good news that they would have a chance to hear about Jesus.



Year 1—Quarter 1 “God the Father”



The Lord's Prayer with Hand Motions

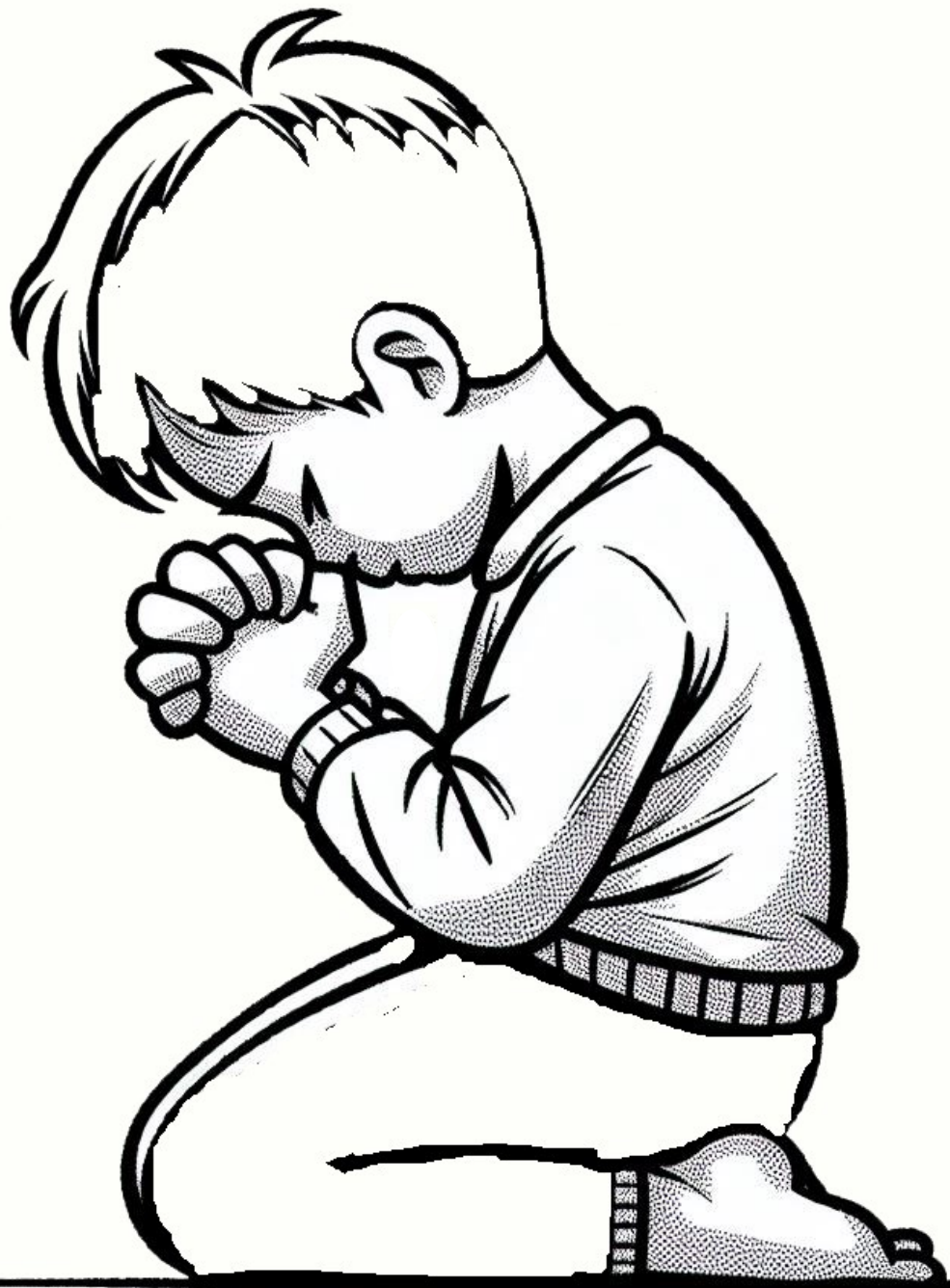
Here are easy-to-follow gestures that correspond to different lines of the Lord's Prayer:

- **Our Father:** Make a circle around your face with your right hand.
- **In heaven:** Point to heaven using your left hand.
- **Hallowed be:** Place both your hands in front of your face, palms facing out.
- **Your name:** Touch your lips with your pointer and middle finger.
- **Your kingdom come:** Beckon with your right hand, as if asking a friend to come with you.
- **Your will be done:** Write in the air using your right hand.
- **On earth:** Make a circle in front of you with your left hand.
- **As it is in heaven:** Point to heaven with your right hand.
- **Give us today:** Cup your hands together in front of your chest.
- **Our daily bread:** Hold an imaginary piece of bread in your left hand and slice it with your right hand.
- **And forgive us our debts:** Lift your empty palms up.
- **As we also have forgiven our debtors:** Flip your hands over, putting the palms down.
- **And lead us not:** Touch under your eyes with your fingers, making an arc outward.
- **Into temptation:** Put your hands over your mouth.
- **But deliver us:** Make your hands into fists and put them at your sides.
- **From the evil one:** Place the back of your right hand in front of your face, as if shielding your eyes.

Idea: Consider making copies of this page to give to your children's leaders and to send home with each child.



Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come, your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
Amen.



Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come, your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
Amen.



God's Promises





Year 1—Quarter 1 “God the Father”

Quarter Aim: God is not distant or unapproachable; rather, He is a caring Father who loves us deeply and wants the best for our lives.

Lesson 9: God’s Promises

God Keeps His Promises

Lesson Aim: Children will see how God made promises and remained faithful to them. They will also acknowledge that we can rely on God to keep His word, and that He will be with us always.

Remind children that unfortunately, we sometimes make mistakes. We don’t always do a great job of keeping our human promises. However, we know that God is faithful to His promises. In the Bible, He continually made commitments called Covenants with His people. He always kept His word, and ultimately gave us Jesus as the great sign that He kept His promises!

In Genesis chapter 9, God promised Noah that He would never flood the Earth again. To remind us of this promise, God created something beautiful: the **rainbow**! When it rains and the sun shines at the same time, we see a colorful arc in the sky. That’s the rainbow! It’s God saying, “I love you, and I’ll keep my promises.” Just as Noah and his family were saved by the **ark**, we are saved by Jesus. So, whenever you see a rainbow, remember God’s love and faithfulness!

God does not casually forget things. It’s likely that the rainbow is more of a positive reminder for *us* than it is for Him. We know, too, that when we see a rainbow, we can remember God’s promises to us to always watch over and care for us.

Intro Activity

Lesson Opening: This lesson refers to promises that God made to His people. Consider starting off with an activity involving commitments that people make

Pledges and promises: Come up with a list of vows or pledges that people recite. This could include things like the Pledge of Allegiance, a scouting oath, or wedding vows. Discuss what it means to say such things, and how important it is to stick with your word.

Alternative: “Don’t drop the Ark” balloon game— One of the representations of God’s covenant that the people of Israel valued highly was the Ark of the Covenant, which held the Ten Commandments. This container was so special that it could not touch the ground, and had to be carried in a very special way. Use a beach ball or balloon as your “ark.” Have children form a circle and work together to try to keep the balloon from touching the ground. For added challenge, spread the circle wider, or make sure students do not move their feet.

Power Point

We can rely on God to keep His word.

Lie:

God breaks His promises.

Truth:

Numbers 23:19,
“*God isn’t a mere man. He can’t lie. He isn’t a human being. He doesn’t change his mind. ...*” (NIRV)





Parent's Food for Thought

Teaching Children to Trust God, Our Promise Keeper:

We start life assuming all people do what they say they'll do, and then childhood involves the slow realization that they don't. That's because everyone makes promises he or she simply cannot keep.

One way to read the whole story of Scripture that connects easily with the world of a child—biblical theology for preschoolers, if you like—is to focus on the promises God makes and keeps throughout his Word. Even as they slowly recalibrate the likelihood of everyone else keeping his or her word all the time, children who hear and read the Bible story in this way can grow in confidence that God does always keep his.

After all, in the Bible, they meet a God who promised an elderly, infertile couple a child and a family as numerous as the stars in the sky—impossible. Then he did it.

They meet a God who promised a people who'd been enslaved for four centuries by the most powerful king in the known world that they'd soon be free and safe—impossible. Then he did it.

They meet a God who promised to destroy the walls of an impregnable fortress city without anyone so much as touching its stones—impossible. Then he did it.

They meet a God who promised to rescue people from the consequences of their sins, to create a people who know him, to give them a good land to inhabit in peace and plenty, to give them the joy—the blessing—of knowing him and living his way in his world, to give them a king to rule them with wisdom and love. More impossible than the birth of Isaac, the exodus from Egypt, or the walls of Jericho falling.

And then, in the coming of Jesus, he did it. By faith, those promises are promises to our children about *their* hearts, lives, and futures.

When in the normal ebb and flow of family life you don't keep your word—whether through sin or circumstances—don't make excuses or explain it away. Own it, repent if you need to, and then use it as an opportunity to tell your kids there's a Father who always keeps his promises. He's never compromised by flaws or constrained by external circumstances.

Parents, when your kids are struggling, point them to a specific promise of God and encourage them to live as though God's promises are true. Because they are. He keeps them, not just across time but in our own lives. I need to learn that as much as my kids do.

(By Carl Laferton, author of "God's Big Promises Bible Storybook.")



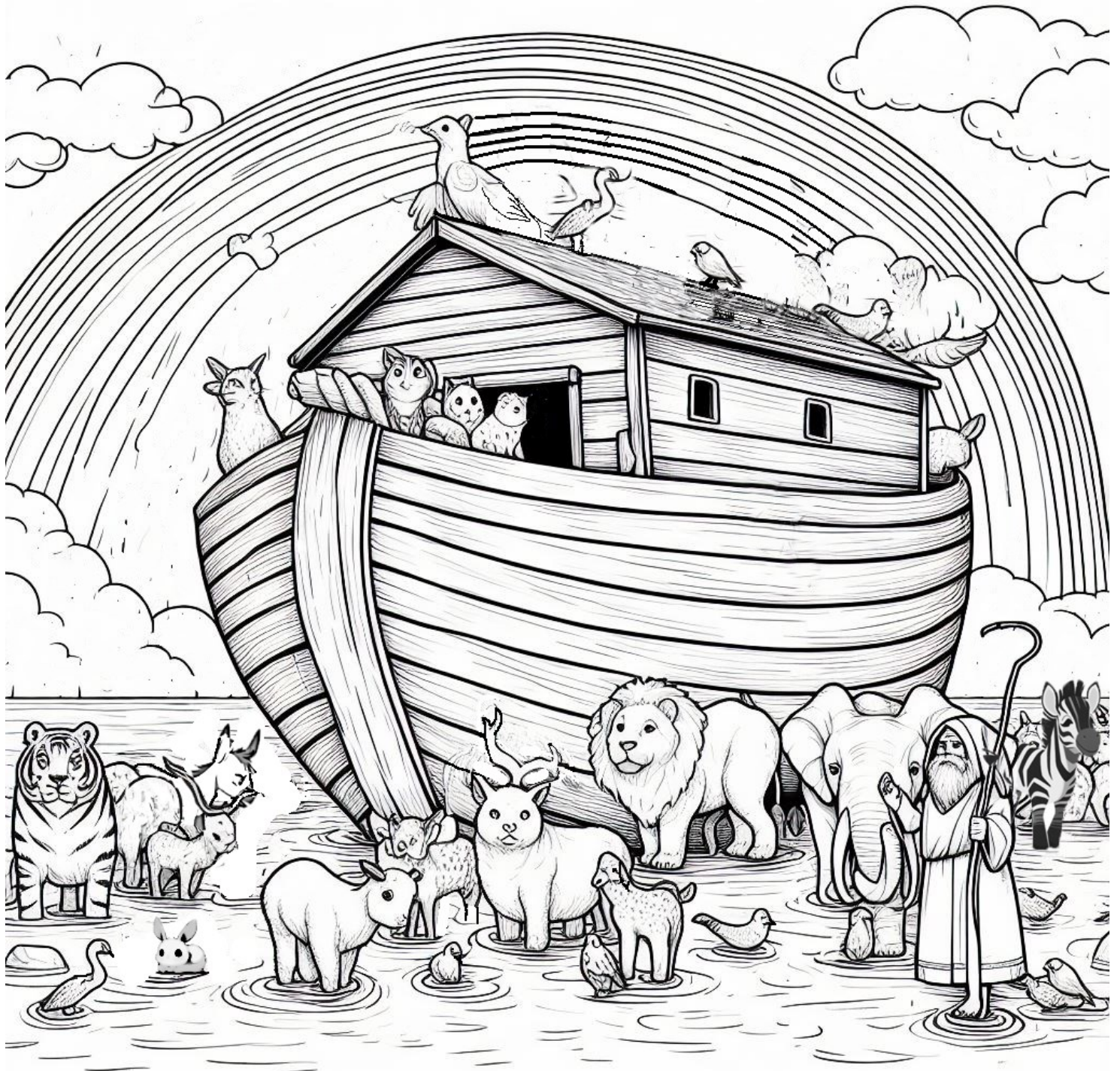


20 Promises of God for Kids

- 1) I will never abandon you (Deuteronomy 31:8)
- 2) I will strengthen you and help you (Isaiah 41:10)
- 3) I will fight your battles for you (Exodus 14:14)
- 4) I will work all things out for your good (Romans 8:28)
- 5) I will give you strength when you feel weak (Isaiah 40:29)
- 6) I will be with you when you go through tough times (Isaiah 43:2)
- 7) I will always love you, my love cannot be shaken (Isaiah 54:10)
- 8) I will help you when you feel brokenhearted (Isaiah 61:1)
- 9) I will always forgive you when you confess your sins (1 John 1:9)
- 10) I will be with you wherever you go (Joshua 1:9)
- 11) I will always listen when you speak to me (1 John 5:15)
- 12) I will not erase your name from the book of life (Revelation 3:5)
- 13) I will deliver you from your troubles (Psalm 34:17)
- 14) I will be your resting place when you are mistreated (Psalm 9:9)
- 15) I will give you rest when you are sad and tired (Matthew 11:28)
- 16) I will take care of you, I know what you need (Matthew 6:32-33)
- 17) I will forgive you and heal you (Psalm 103:3)
- 18) I will let nothing separate you from my love (Romans 8:35)
- 19) I will pick you up when you fall (Psalm 37:24)



God's Rainbow Promise



God's Comfort





Year 1–Quarter 1 “God the Father”

Quarter Aim: God is not distant or unapproachable; rather, He is a caring Father who loves us deeply and wants the best for our lives.

Lesson 10: God’s Comfort

AS YOUR HEAVENLY FATHER, **GOD WILL COMFORT YOU.**

As your Heavenly Father, God will help heal the hurt you are feeling now. Someday you will go and live in Heaven with God, where there is no suffering, sorrow or death. When Jesus comes back to Earth, He will heal all the problems sin has caused in the world. He will make it perfect once again.

God will hear and answer your prayer. Does this mean that nothing bad will ever happen again? No, bad things will always happen in our world. But you can know that God will always be with you. He has promised He will never leave you (Hebrews 13:5).

The Bible also says the Lord is your helper. You don’t need to be afraid (Hebrews 13:6). Trust in God. He will help you get through anything.

God loves you so much He gave you His words in a book called the Bible. There are many passages in the Bible that are helpful when we go through hard times.

You can memorize these verses and say them when you feel sad or afraid. Always remember that God loves you and He wants to help you through this hard time.

- “...I [God] will never leave you.” Hebrews 13:5
- “The Lord [God] is my helper; I will not fear.” Hebrews 13:6
- “[God] alone is my rock and my salvation.” Psalm 62:2
- “The Lord [God] is near to all who call on him.” Psalm 145:18
- “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.” Psalm 46:1

Lesson Introduction

The Holy Spirit, Our Comforter: To begin a discussion with your students about the Holy Spirit, you can first discuss people who serve to help us and keep us safe. You might have pictures to display, as well. This might include police officers, security guards, firefighters, doctors, or nurses. They are helpers set in place to take care of our earthly lives. Jesus gave us a special helper, too!

Explain: that Jesus gave us a special helper to allow us to connect to God. This is called the Holy Spirit, and it helps us in our Christian lives.

Read: John 14:15-21 and say: Jesus promised to always be with us. He has given us a special helper, the Holy Spirit, to take care of our hearts.

Snack: Serve cream puffs or jelly-filled donuts and describe how they are filled with something special, just like the Holy Spirit fills us. You could also serve chocolate milk. Say: if we just let the chocolate syrup sit in the bottom of the glass it doesn’t do much good. But if we STIR it up (like being stirred with God’s love) you get delicious chocolatey goodness in every sip!

Power Point

God will comfort you.

Lie:

God thinks I’m not good enough.

Truth:

Psalm 139:14, How you made me is amazing and wonderful. I praise you for that.” (NIRV)





Small Group Activity

What worries you?

Provide paper and pencil for each child. Say: What are some of the things you are worried about right now? Write them on the paper.

Discuss: Sometimes you might just feel sad and want to cry. And sometimes crying makes you feel better. Don't be ashamed. The one true and living God knows how you feel and He understands. He is also sad when terrible things happen. Here are some questions you might have:

Q: Does God know and care about me?

A: Not only does God know you, He loves you no matter what your thoughts and feelings are. In the Bible God says He loves you with a love that lasts forever (Jeremiah 31:3).

Q: Why do so many bad things happen in the world?

A: Sin brings many bad things into the world but God is still in charge. He decides what He will and will not allow to happen.

Q: Why did God allow this to happen?

A: God is still in control even though it might not seem like He is. You may never understand why God let this happen. But you can know that while you are hurting, He is hurting too. When God allows something like this to happen, He wants to go through it with you.

Q: How can I get through this terrible time?

A: No matter what happens, God can help you get through it. If you become His child, He will take care of you as part of His family. God is not like earthly fathers—He is perfect. He wants to be your loving Heavenly Father and comfort you during this difficult time.

How Can You Become Part of God's Family?

God understands the terrible things you're going through because He has also suffered. He watched as men took His Son and nailed Him to a cross. Jesus suffered too. He bled and died a horrible death. God knew this was the only way your sin could be forgiven.

The Bible tells us that anyone who receives Jesus, believing on His name, becomes God's child (John 1:12). To believe on Jesus is to trust completely that He died for you so you can be forgiven. If you trust Jesus as the only one who can save you from your sin, God will change you and make you His own child.

Do you believe on Jesus?

You can use words like these to tell God:

Dear God, I know I have sinned and I'm sorry.

I believe that Jesus is Your Son, who died for me and came alive again.

I receive Jesus as my Savior.

Thank you for making me Your child! In Jesus' name. Amen.



God sends the Holy Spirit.

Acts 2:1-13







Year 1–Quarter 1 “God the Father”

Quarter Aim: God is not distant or unapproachable; rather, He is a caring Father who loves us deeply and wants the best for our lives.

Lesson 11: God’s Plan

Live for God

Ask: How do you think that our lives will be different if we live for God? (Allow students to respond.) If we are living for God, God will receive glory through our lives. The reason for our existence is that through us God would be glorified. This can only happen if we are living for God.

Let’s look at **1 Peter 5:10** “And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast.” Life is hard and living for God doesn’t make it any easier. But no matter how difficult life, we know that God is there to watch out for us. Even when bad things happen to us He is still in control. When the time is right He will make us strong again.

When we live for God we will start to see our lives differently. We will see life through the eyes of Jesus who saved us. It’s like the more we try to live for Christ the more we will want to live for Christ and not ourselves. (John 3:21)

When we are done with this life, we get to go to Heaven and live with our God. The Earth is not meant to last forever, but Heaven is. Heaven cannot be shaken. Someday we will get to live there. It is a wonderful thing to look forward to. (Hebrews 12: 28-29)

Review Questions

1. Why should we live our lives for God? (*Because He is our Creator and Savior. Because He will make all things work out for the good of everyone.*)
2. Why is living for God so hard? (*Living for God is hard because we are selfish and just want to live for ourselves.*)
3. What things does a person do when they are trying to live for God? (*Have respect for those around you, love workers who are above you, live in peace with others, warn those who are idle, encourage the timid, help the weak, be patient, do not seek retaliation, be joyful, pray continuously, give thanks always, be wary of evil and avoid it at all costs.*)
4. According to *Hebrews 12:28* what kind of kingdom are we going to inherit? (*A kingdom that will not be shaken.*)
5. Who is always in control of our lives? (*God*)

Power Point

God has a plan
for our lives.

Lie:

God doesn’t know
much about me.

Truth:

Psalm 139:1, “*Lord, you have seen what is in my heart. You know all about me.*”





Small Group Activity

Recipe Cards:

Copy on cardstock enough “God’s recipe for me” cards for your class. (See template on supplement page) Provide pencils.

Say: Write on your recipe card 3 of your physical characteristics (brown hair, blue eyes, freckles) and 3 of your personality characteristics (a good sense of humor, you love your family, you love reading)

Discuss: God made each of you for a special purpose and reason.

Q: Is there anything you can hide from God?

Q: Is there anything God doesn’t know about you?

Remind them that God is on their side and He made them exactly how He wanted them. Keep praying that God will help them grow and know Him more.

Object Lesson: Roadmap

Hold up a paper roadmap. Ask: Have you ever come across one of these at your home? Years ago people didn’t have GPS or smart phones to help them find their way from place to place.

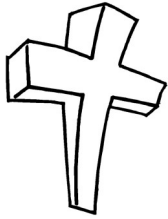


Imagine your family is going on vacation to Disneyland. You would need an interstate map to find their way to Los Angeles. Then, they would need an LA street map to find their hotel. When you got to Disneyland, you would need a map of Disneyland to find all the rides. It was easy to get lost.

Now all those maps are obsolete because we have smart phones and GPS.

Because we have God and His Word, He can tell us where we need to go in life. God knows where we are and if we get off the path, He knows how to help us find our way back. God has a direction and a plan for our life and all it takes is a willing heart to follow His lead.

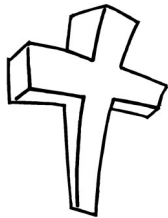




God's recipe for me!

Name: _____

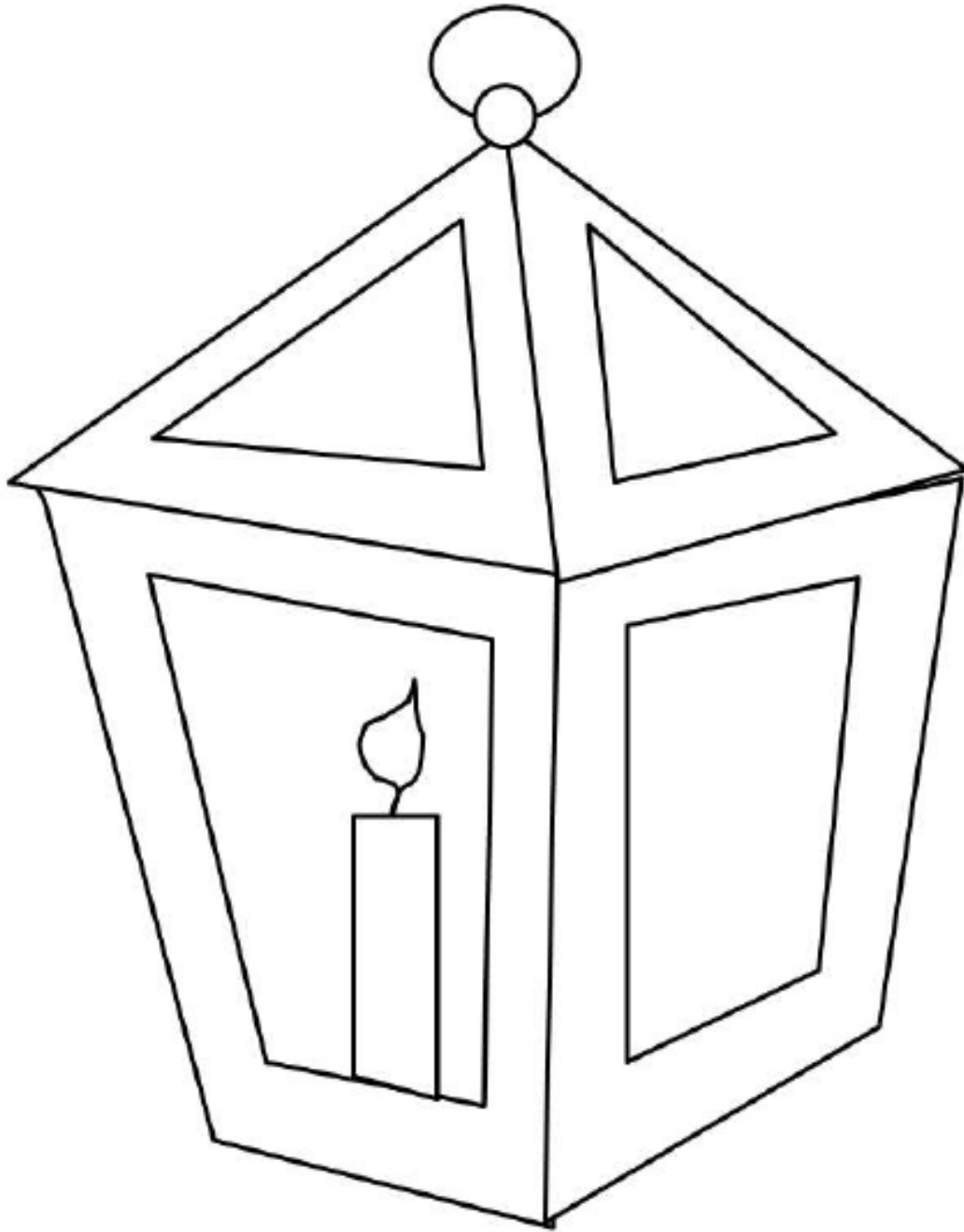
Ingredients:



God's recipe for me!

Name: _____

Ingredients:



**Jesus said
you are the light of the world.
(Matthew 5:14)**





Year 1–Quarter 1 “God the Father”

Quarter Aim: God is not distant or unapproachable; rather, He is a caring Father who loves us deeply and wants the best for our lives.

Lesson 12: God’s Joy

God Has Joy-God Gives Joy

1. When you hear the word “joy,” what comes to mind?

“Good happenings” when everything is going right. (Have money, healthy, successful.)

2. Read 1 Timothy 1:11, How does Paul describe God? (“...gospel of the blessed [happy] God...”) Our God is a joyful God.

Jesus taught that our Father God was like the father of the prodigal son when he returned home. Do you remember how that father acted? He was happy to see his son, filled with love, running toward him, hugging and kissing him. He called for a great celebration. That’s joy. Luke 15:7, 10 says that God has joy whenever anyone comes to Him to have his or her sins forgiven. The Bible describes lots of rejoicing in heaven at that time

Zephaniah 3:17 says, “The Lord your God is with you, The Mighty Warrior who saves. He will take great delight in you; in His love He will no longer rebuke you, but will rejoice over you with singing.” (NIV)

Have you ever thought about God rejoicing over you through singing? Joy is something that God HAS, but it also something God GIVES.

Joy=Deep Inner Gladness

Joy is a deep inner gladness, even if life is hard.

Question: How can joy make us strong?

Imagine you have this deep inner gladness inside you. Even when things outside seem tough or sad, this gladness stays strong. It’s like having a secret smile that makes you feel better, even when life is hard.

Now, why does this inner gladness make you strong? Well, think of it like this: When you know this gladness is with you, it gives you courage. It’s having a God-given power! You can face difficult times and still feel strong because of this joy.

God has this special gladness too. When He shares it with us, it makes us even stronger. So, remember, this hidden joy on the inside helps us be brave and face anything!

This kind of joy that I am describing is supernatural. It is part of the character of God and comes to us only from a relationship with Him through knowing Jesus Christ.

Power Point

Our God is a joyful God.

Lie:

God is weak.

Truth:

Nehemiah 8:10,
“The joy of the Lord makes you strong.” (NIRV)





Small Group Discussion

Q: Do you remember what God said about His creation at the end of each of the creation days? (Genesis chapter 1) He said it was good. After day 6, He said it was very good.

God wasn't only giving His approval, but also revealing His pleasure. The Father God has joy in what His hands have made, especially His creatures. That includes you. You are one of His creatures.

Ask: How does that make you feel? Does that make you want to smile inside to think that God finds pleasure in you?

Read: John 15:11. What does Jesus want for those who trust in Him?

Jesus, Who was God, had God's joy **in** Him. And, He promised to give His joy to His disciples so that it would be **in** them also. Jesus didn't promise this to just those who knew Him when He was on Earth, but to all who follow Him.

Apply the Lesson

Serve God with Delight

The joy of the Lord is God's joy. He has it, and when He gives it to His people, it makes them strong. God's joy in us gives us the courage to face tough times. **God's joy finds great pleasure in His creation and His creatures, especially people who trust in Him.** His joy in us makes us strong.

Having God's joy in us, we should delight in the things that God delights in. We can ask ourselves: "What pleases God, what gives Him joy?" How would you answer that?

When you have His joy, then you should take pleasure or delight in those same things. When you have the joy of the Lord, you rejoice in justice. You find pleasure in God and knowing Him, not in personal and selfish pleasures. You also find delight in studying His Word the Bible, in doing what pleases Him, and in praising God.

Some people think that when you are a Christian, you give up anything that gives you pleasure. That is not what the Bible says. It is not wrong for a Christian to have pleasure or to seek pleasure; it is only wrong to seek pleasure in the things that are selfish.

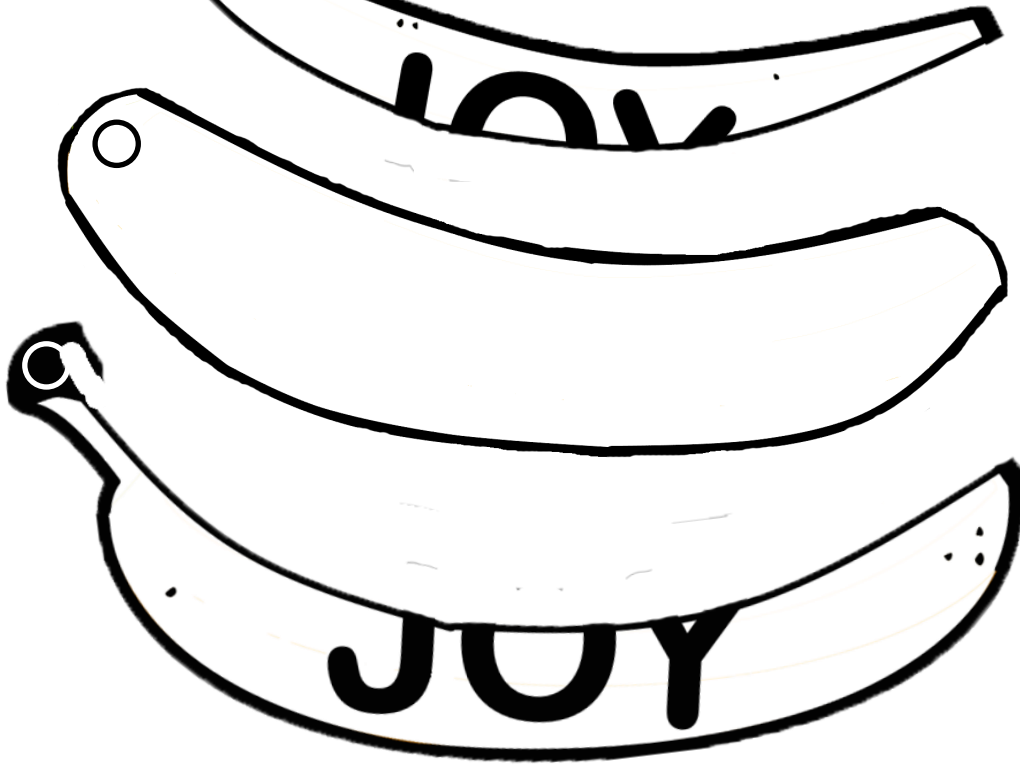
Christians filled with God's joy should find many reasons to laugh and delight in life. We can serve God with delight. We can praise God and sing worship songs with delight. We can love our families and friends with delight.

And, our joy will be even greater in heaven when we are with Jesus and can have the delight of seeing Him with our own eyes.





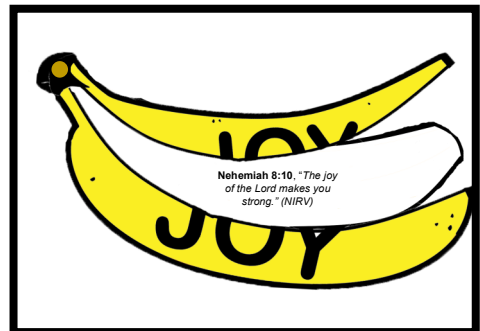
Joy Banana Craft



Nehemiah 8:10, *"The joy of the Lord makes you strong."* (NIRV)

Instructions:

1. Copy this page on white cardstock for each child in your class.
2. Let the children color and decorate their craft.
3. Have them cut out the pieces including the Bible verse. (Help younger children)
4. Glue or tape the Bible verse to the inner banana.
5. Punch small holes in each of the pieces.
6. Attach all pieces together with the paper brad.
7. Have children write their names on the back.



Reflect God's Love





Year 1—Quarter 1 “God the Father”

Quarter Aim: God is not distant or unapproachable; rather, He is a caring Father who loves us deeply and wants the best for our lives.

Lesson 13: Reflect God’s Love

Show Love to Others

God loves His people. He loved them so much that he sent His only Son to die on the cross to save His people from their sins. He didn’t just say that he loved Christians, He showed His love for believers. “God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” (Romans 5:8)

God shows us love, but **He also tells us to show love to others.**

“Love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.” (John 13:34) and “Love your enemies.” (Matthew 5:44) When we show love to others, we are mirroring Christ.

Objects needed: Strong flashlight and mirror.

Use the mirror to reflect the light onto the children (not their eyes). Talk about how we are to reflect God’s love to others.

Ask: Can you think of ways you can show love:

1. To God?
2. To family and friends?
3. To those who treat us badly?

Dig Deeper: Faith in Action

Our feet—firmly planted in two kingdoms. We live here on Earth, like in a big neighborhood. But guess what? We’re also special messengers of the Heavenly Kingdom. We have a God-given job to do!

Our eyes—That see the good in other people. Sometimes people act in ways that seem unkind. But guess what? They’re not really bad. They’re just a bit lost, like taking a wrong turn on a treasure hunt. We can be kind to them and show them the right path.

Our hearts—Guided by the Lord to care about everyone. The Lord is our wise guide. He helps us find the right path. We’re like explorers, looking for the Savior of the world. When we live in a way that shows God’s love and truth, it’s like shining a bright light for everyone to see.

Some people may not agree with us. They might say “no” to God, but we can still love them. Our hearts can be like shining a bright light, showing kindness and understanding for everyone to see.

Power Point

God tells us to show love to others.

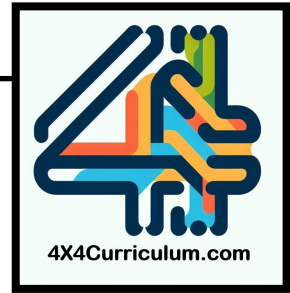
Lie:

I can’t love others as Jesus loves them.

Truth:

Romans 5:5, “And hope will never bring us shame. That’s because God’s love has been poured into our hearts. This happened through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.” (NIRV)





Group Game

Love Charades:

TOPICS: Humility, Love, Service

MATERIALS: Index cards (10) with prompts, Timer, Whiteboard

PREPARATION:

Write prompts on each index card (each prompt should be an example of how the children can show God's love to others). If desired, you may use some or all of the following prompts:

1. Pray for a friend.
2. Sweep the floor.
3. Feed the hungry.
4. Give money to the poor.
5. Write thank-you letters.
6. Hug someone.
7. Read the Bible to someone.
8. Hold the door open.
9. Set the table for dinner.
10. Rake your neighbor's leaves.



WHAT YOU WILL SAY:

Split the children into **two groups**. Explain to the class that this game involves acting out the clues on the cards to their teams (one at a time) without making any sounds. Tell the children that each clue is an example of a loving action. Each person will have one minute to act out his or her chosen card. However, the other team will receive a chance to guess the clue if the actor's team is unsuccessful. Each correctly guessed clue receives fifty points. Allow each child to have at least one turn acting out a clue.

Conclude by emphasizing that showing God's love to others is extremely important if we want them to have a relationship with Jesus Christ. Serving others in love isn't necessarily difficult, but we must ask God to help us become more humble, kind-hearted, and sacrificial so others will be drawn to Him through our actions.

Craft Idea

Friendship Bouquet:

A "friendship bouquet" uses paper elements to craft flowers to give as a caring display.

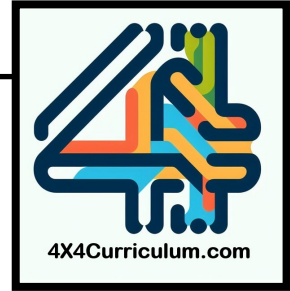
You will need: Scissors, Glue or tape, Paper or cardstock, Markers or crayons, Verse caption or extra decoration (optional), Cupcake liners, Popsicle sticks and/or pipe cleaners, Stickers, glitter, or other extra decorations.

Procedure:

1. Choose what materials to use for your flowers (or select a variety). Cut shapes out of paper and liners accordingly.
2. Decorate your paper flowers with colors, words, and decorations.
3. Attach flowers to popsicle sticks or pipe cleaners for "stems."
4. Decorate a large piece of paper as a holder or "vase" for the bouquet. Use stickers, verses, and other decorations. Alternately, use a toilet paper tube, can, jar or bottle for the vase.
5. Fold and tape your flower holder. Place "flowers" inside and give to a friend or family member as a gift!

Caption Ideas: "What Does Love Look Like?" or "Here's How I Show Love...A Bouquet for You!" or Bible verse.





Bible Discussion

Read: 1 Corinthians 13:4-7)

We know we know ways to love others. Like being kind to them, or forgiving them. But that doesn't tell us everything about love.

Who are supposed to love? And how much? I think we need to look again. {read John 15:12}

Wow, so we learned two things there. Can anyone tell me what they were?

1. God commands us to love each other. And by each other, He means *everyone*.
2. God commands us to love *exactly* like He loves.

That's pretty big, don't you think? I mean, is that even possible?!?

Truthfully the answer is no. We all mess up, but God is pure and never makes any mistakes. But, that doesn't mean we shouldn't be trying. This is what God asks us to do.

So let's try this out. I am going to need a bunch of volunteers today, so I hope you are ready

Volunteer #1: You are getting ready to go to a birthday party but your parents forgot and now you are going to be really late. What would you do or say?

Volunteer #2: You see a new kid at school that no one will talk to or play with.
What would you say or do?

Volunteer #3: You have awards at school and your best friend wins tons of awards, while you get none. What would you do?

Volunteer #4: What if YOU were the one getting all of those awards while your best friend got none?

Volunteer #5: What would you do if you found out that someone in school had an Embarrassing secret?

Volunteer #6: What would you do if you got a HUGE candy bar and your brother/sister asked if you would share?

Volunteer #7: What would you do if someone pushed you?

Volunteer #8: If someone stole your bike and then broke it, would you forgive them?



