

Living in God's Family • Master Plan

UNIT 1 Welcome to God's Family

UNIT 2 God Protects Us

Lesson Number and Title	   Bible Truth	   Lesson Focus	   Memory Minute
1 <i>God Sends His Son, Jesus</i>	God sent his Son, Jesus, to die for all our sins so we could be part of God's family. (Luke 2)	To praise God for sending Jesus to be our Savior.	How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! 1 John 3:1a
2 <i>Jesus Explains Salvation</i>	God draws people to himself, giving them faith to trust in his Son, Jesus, for forgiveness of sins. (John 3; Genesis 3; Matthew 19)	God loves us and saves us from our sins.	Review 1 John 3:1a.
3 <i>Jesus Cares for His People</i>	Jesus cares for God's people, and they follow him in love and obedience. (John 10)	Follow Jesus, and thank him for his loving care.	This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son. 1 John 4:10a
4 <i>Jesus Promises the Holy Spirit</i>	The Holy Spirit helps God's children remember and obey the words of Jesus. (John 14)	God wants his children to depend on the Holy Spirit.	The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace. Galatians 5:22a
5 <i>Jesus Says, "Pray Like This"</i>	Through prayer, God's children may praise him, ask for forgiveness, and ask for the things they need. (Matthew 6; Luke 11)	God wants his children to pray to him.	Come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. Jeremiah 29:12b
6 <i>Jesus Says, "Love God Best"</i>	God's children are to love him above all else. (Mark 10; Luke 21)	God wants us to love him more than any of his gifts to us.	Love the Lord your God with all your heart. Matthew 22:37a
7 <i>Jesus Says, "Love One Another"</i>	God's children show their love for him by loving others. (1 John 3-4; John 13)	Jesus tells us to show love for God by loving others.	Love one another, for love comes from God. 1 John 4:7a
8 <i>Jesus Says, "Love Your Enemies"</i>	Jesus taught his followers to love their enemies and to pray for them. (Matthew 5)	Love those who don't love God and don't love you.	Review memory work: 1 John 3:1a Jeremiah 29:12b 1 John 4:10a Matthew 22:37a Galatians 5:22a Matthew 22:37a Galatians 5:22a
9 <i>Jesus Says, "Ask God to Forgive You"</i>	God wants his children to continually turn away from sin and seek forgiveness through Jesus the Savior. (Luke 11, 15)	When we confess our sins, we can trust God to forgive us.	If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins. 1 John 1:9a
10 <i>Jesus Says, "Forgive Others"</i>	Jesus taught his disciples to forgive others, just as God has forgiven them. (Matthew 5, 6, 18)	Since God forgives us, we must forgive one another.	Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. Matthew 6:12 (KJV)
11 <i>Jesus Says, "Serve Others"</i>	Jesus humbly serves his followers by washing their feet. (Mark 9, 10; John 13)	Jesus shows us how to humbly serve others.	Review all memory work: 1 John 3:1a Matthew 22:37a 1 John 4:10a 1 John 4:7a Galatians 5:22a 1 John 1:9a Jeremiah 29:12b Matthew 6:12 (KJV)
12 <i>Jesus Says, "Obey God's Word"</i>	God's people must act on God's Word. (Matthew 7; Luke 6)	Wise children listen to God's Word and do what it says.	Therefore every one who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like the wise man who built his house on the rock. Matthew 7:24
13 <i>God Makes Us More Like Jesus</i>	God's children are known by their actions. (Matthew 7; Luke 6; Matthew 28)	God makes his children more and more like Jesus as they grow in trusting and obeying him.	Review all: 1 John 3:1a Matthew 22:37a 1 John 4:10a 1 John 4:7a Galatians 5:22a 1 John 1:9a Jeremiah 29:12b Matthew 6:12 (KJV) Matthew 7:24

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Password: PraiseJesus

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- Lesson 4: <https://vimeo.com/468597626>
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- Lesson 12: <https://vimeo.com/468626996>
- Lesson 13: <https://vimeo.com/468659070>

SONG LYRIC VIDEOS

- How Great Is the Love of the Father: <https://vimeo.com/467781115>
- Silent Night! Holy Night!: <https://vimeo.com/467782223>
- Away in a Manger: <https://vimeo.com/467784279>



Lesson One

God Sends His Son, Jesus

Heart Preparation

The birth of Jesus is one of the most familiar stories in all the world. Sadly, for many, it has become nothing more than a sentimental part of a secular celebration, a manger scene on the coffee table, perhaps some plastic figures and animals in front of a church. But for God's people the *true* and *only* Christmas story, found in God's Word, is the best story of all—that God sent his Son, Jesus, to save us.

Long before Jesus came, God promised to send a Savior. He kept that promise when Jesus came to earth as a little baby. In Matthew's account, he is identified as *Immanuel*, which means "God with us." (Matthew 1:23) In Mark, he is called *Christ*, "the Anointed One" or "Messiah"—the One whom God sent to establish his kingdom. Luke identifies Jesus as "Son of the Most High." (Luke 1:32) And John tells us that *the Word* came, a term that points to Jesus as the eternal One who fully reveals God. John goes on to say "The Word was God," which says that Jesus has the nature of God, that is, Jesus has all the essential qualities of the Godhead.

How wonderful that the great God of heaven gave his people such a special gift! Because of God's amazing grace and love, he sent Jesus "as an atoning sacrifice for our sins." (1 John 4:10) Through him we have forgiveness and new life in Christ.

When Jesus was born, a crowd of angels burst into praise, shepherds saw the baby and rejoiced, and Mary treasured the wonder of it all. Our hearts, too, are full of gladness when we think that Jesus came to save us and make us part of God's family.

Teach your children about God's great love in sending Jesus, pray that each young life will trust the Savior, and lead your little ones to respond to God's gift in praise and adoration. May the Holy Spirit tenderly write the story of God's love on your heart and the hearts of your children.

Bible Background

The Reformation Study Bible expounds on several titles for Jesus: "Jesus is called 'Savior' only twice in the four Gospels (cf. Luke 2:11, John 4:42). 'Christ' means 'Messiah,' while 'Lord' is regularly used in the Septuagint (the Greek translation of the Old Testament) for God's own name, conventionally translated with small capitals ('LORD'). The most outstanding terms are used for the new Baby." (p. 1606, NKJV)



Bible Truth

God sent his Son, Jesus, to die for all our sins so we could be part of God's family.

Scripture

Luke 2:1–20



Lesson Focus

Praise God for sending Jesus to be our Savior.

Goals for the Children

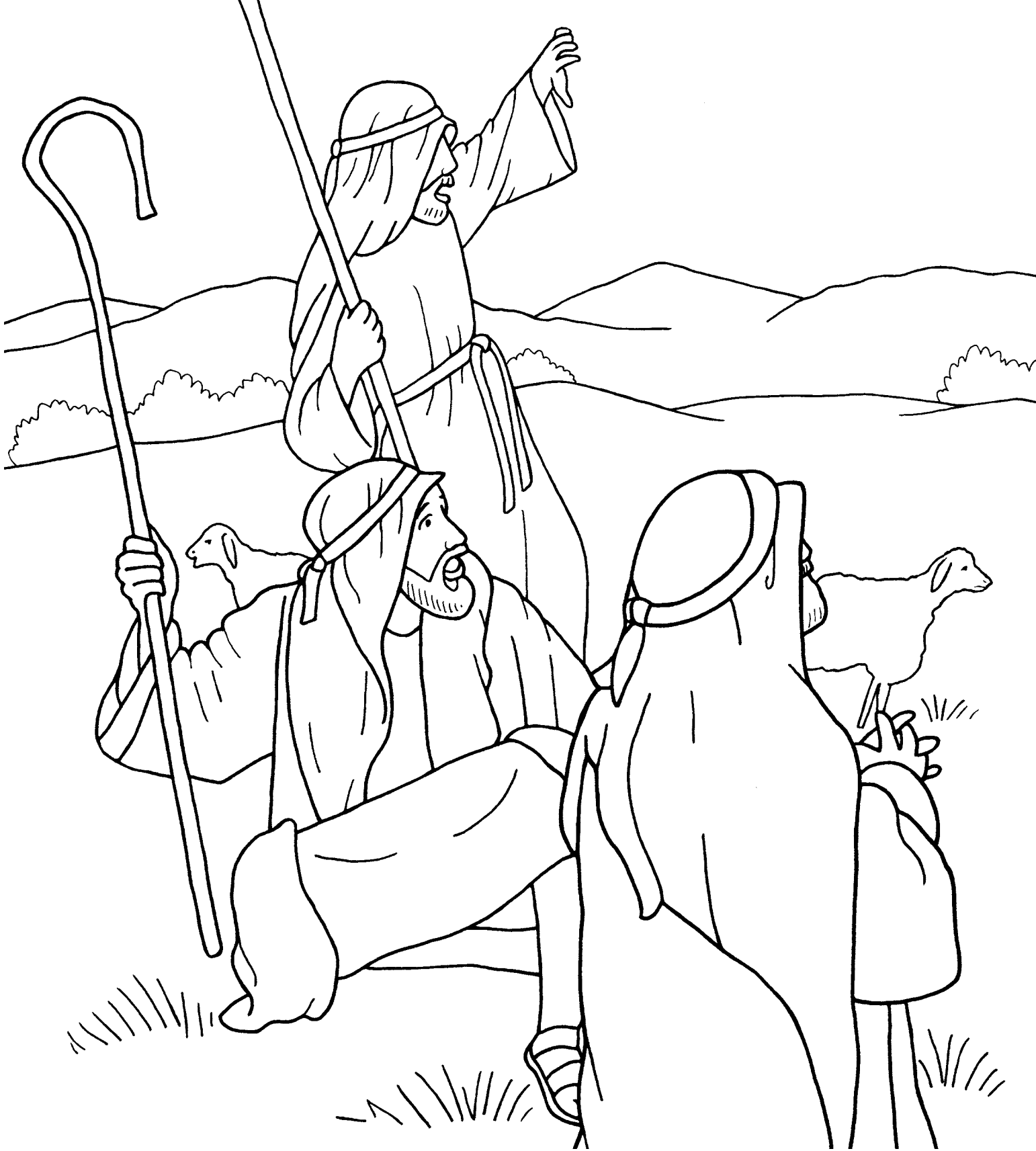
- Tell why Jesus came.
- Praise God for the gift of his Son.
- Plan to share the good news of the coming of Jesus.



Memory Minute

How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God!

1 John 3:1a



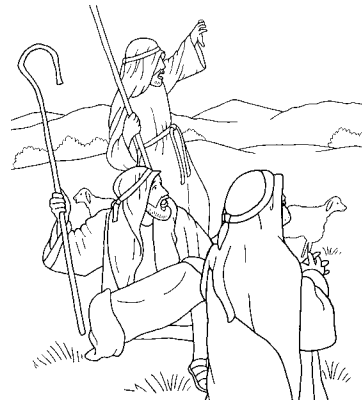
**The shepherds heard the
good news of Jesus' birth.**

Luke 2:1-20



The shepherds heard the good news of Jesus' birth.

Luke 2:1–20



☆Let's Talk and Wonder

ASK Why do you think God sent his Son, Jesus?

SAY God sent his own Son, Jesus, to be our Savior. When Jesus was born, angels praised God and shepherds ran to see the baby. Then they went off to spread the good news about the Savior, Christ the Lord.

ASK Why did Jesus die on the cross?

SAY Jesus came to die for all our sins. He took the punishment that we deserve so that we could be forgiven. All who trust Jesus for forgiveness of sins are part of God's family.

SAY I wonder what we can say and do to praise God for sending his Son, Jesus, to be our Savior . . .

☆Let's Sing and Do

Sit in a circle and sing this active song to the tune *Did You Ever See a Lassie?*

1 God sent his Son, the Savior,
The Savior, the Savior.
God sent his Son, the Savior,
Praise God for his Son! (*clap*)

2 Jesus died to save me,
To save me, to save me,
Jesus died to save me,
God loves me so! (*hug self*)

3 We're part of God's family,
God's family, God's family
We're part of God's family,
His children we are! (*hold hands*)

4 Let's spread the good news,
The good news, the good news.
Let's spread the good news,
The Savior has come! (*raise arms*)

☆Let's Remember

Play this riddle-review game to help children remember God's people and promises. Say each riddle slowly. Provide more clues, if needed.

- I'm thinking about the first people God made and how he promised them a Savior through the family of their new son, Seth. (*Adam and Eve*)
- I'm thinking about a family God promised to save from a flood. (*Noah and his family*)
- I'm thinking of a man God promised would become a great nation. (*Abraham*)
- I'm thinking of a good king through whom God would send the promised Savior one day. (*David*)
- I'm thinking of someone who is the promised Savior. (*Jesus, God's Son*)



Lesson Two

Jesus Explains Salvation

Heart Preparation

Jesus came to be our Savior, and he came to be our *Teacher* as well. When Nicodemus secretly visited Jesus, he came to be taught by the One sent by God the Father. But even before Nicodemus could ask how to become part of God’s family and so inherit eternal life, Jesus declared, “No one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again.” (John 3:3) Then Jesus went on to explain that the Holy Spirit works in a sinner’s heart, giving faith and the gift of new life.

Like Nicodemus, young children and infants are examples of a sinner’s total helplessness to do anything to save himself. When parents brought their little ones to Jesus to be blessed, he said, “The kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.” (Matthew 19:14b) Here, Jesus was not referring to some innate quality in the child, such as simple trust. Rather, he was speaking of just the opposite. Jesus wanted his hearers to understand that the kingdom of heaven belongs to utterly helpless ones—even infants—and that it is by his grace, and not through any accomplishment of our own, that he chooses and saves us.

As you talk about living in God’s family, pray that the Holy Spirit will give your children faith to trust in Jesus. Ask God to help you explain clearly what it means to be a child of God, and what it means to grow in God’s family.

Pray that your precious children may sense the wonder of his love and forgiveness, trust in Jesus to save them from sin, and gladly receive all that God offers them.

Bible Background

Nicodemus (nick-uh-DEE-mus) means “conqueror (master) of the people.” He was an important Jewish ruler and teacher. One night he came to talk to Jesus, and Jesus taught him about spiritual life. Later, Nicodemus helped Joseph of Arimathea bury Jesus. (John 3:1–21; 7:44–53; 19:38–42)

Lynn Waller, *International Bible Children’s Dictionary*



Bible Truth

God draws people to himself, giving them faith to trust in his Son, Jesus, for forgiveness of sins.

Scripture

*John 3:1–21; Genesis 3;
Matthew 19:13–15*



Lesson Focus

God loves us and saves us from our sins.

Goals for the Children

- Learn that Jesus said “you must be born again.”
- Start learning how much God loves them.
- Sing “How Great Is the Love of the Father.”



Memory Minute

How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God!

1 John 3:1a



Nicodemus visited Jesus at night.

John 3:1-21



Nicodemus visited Jesus at night.

John 3:1–21



☆Let's Talk

ASK *What do you see in the picture?*

SAY Nicodemus, an important leader of the Jews, went to visit Jesus at night to learn more about him. Jesus told him that no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born again. Jesus explained to Nicodemus that he was not talking about being born as a tiny baby. He was talking about something different.

ASK *What does it mean to be born again?*

SAY Jesus explained that God loves us and sent his Son, Jesus, to die on the cross for our sins. God calls us to turn away from our sin and trust the Savior. The Holy Spirit works in our hearts, giving us faith in Jesus for forgiveness of sins and the gift of new life. That is what it means to be born again.

SAY What good news for Nicodemus and for us! Jesus loves us, saves us, and calls us his children!

☆Let's Rhyme and Pretend

Let the children pretend to be Nicodemus visiting Jesus at night. As you say the rhyme, have them copy your actions.

Nicodemus tiptoes through town at night, (*tiptoe in place*)

He visits Jesus—what a grand sight! (*stand still, bow low to the ground*)

Nicodemus listens to all he hears, (*sit down, cup face in hands*)

He's quite puzzled, but knows Jesus cares! (*raise hands, palms up, shrug*)


Jesus tells him, "You must be born again," (*cross hands over heart*)

The Savior came to give new life to sinful men! (*form cross with both arms*)

Nicodemus is glad for what Jesus said, (*nod head, wide grin*)

Now it's time to go home and go to bed! (*wave, turn around, tiptoe in place*)

☆Let's Sing and Pray

Sing the first verse of "How Great Is the Love of the Father."  **Preschool Vol. 2 CD**
Then pray this prayer.

Dear Father, thank you for loving me. Thank you for saving me through your Son, Jesus. Thank you for making me your child. In Jesus' name, Amen.



Lesson Three

Jesus Cares for His People

Heart Preparation

Last week, the children learned that God enables us to be part of his family and gives us faith to trust in Jesus for forgiveness of sins. This week, they will discover that Jesus gently leads and cares for God's children, just as a good shepherd cares for his sheep.

Jesus calls God's sheep by name, leads and protects them, even giving his life for their salvation. All of this is possible because the Father, in his sovereign love and grace, chose them to be his own and placed them in his Son's care.

Yes, the "good shepherd" (John 10:11) knows his own. He speaks and they listen, following his leading in trustful obedience.

Jesus, our Shepherd, showed his love, not merely by laying down his life for us, but by risking his life to the point of death when our lives were threatened by sin, wrath, etc. The point of the contrast between Jesus and the hired hand is that simply dying is not proof of love, but dying to save the life of the sheep is. Pray that God will give you and your children the desire and opportunity to respond to his loving voice with trust and faithful obedience.

Bible Background

In Bible lands, shepherds were familiar figures. They spent much of their time caring for their animals. In the Old Testament, God is often portrayed as the Shepherd of Israel, who watches over and tends his flock. Jesus gives his life for and leads God's chosen flock scattered throughout the world (John 10:16; Galatians 3:28).

In Hebrews 13:20 the Lord Jesus is described as "that great Shepherd of the sheep" in a wonderful benediction:

May the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.



Bible Truth

Jesus cares for God's people, and they follow him in love and obedience.

Scripture

John 10:1–18



Lesson Focus

Follow Jesus and thank him for his loving care.

Goals for the Children

- Explain how a shepherd cares for his sheep.
- Thank Jesus for dying for our sins.
- Praise Jesus for his loving care.
- Obey Jesus' commands.



Memory Minute

This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son.
1 John 4:10a



Jesus cares for his people like a shepherd cares for his sheep.

John 10:1-18



Jesus cares for his people like a shepherd cares for his sheep.

John 10:1-18



☆ Let's Talk

ASK *What do you see in the picture? How do you think a good shepherd takes care of his sheep?*

SAY A good shepherd gives his sheep food, clean water, and rest. He brings back young lambs that wander off and protects the flock from wild animals. He leads them to the sheep pen at night, where they are safe from harm.

ASK Jesus said that God's children are like sheep and he is their shepherd. *How is Jesus like a shepherd and how are we like his sheep?*

SAY Just as a loving shepherd looks after his sheep, so Jesus takes care of God's people. Jesus gives them everything they need to live, and they listen to his voice and trust and obey him.

SAY Nothing can take us away from Jesus. He died on the cross to save us from our sins, he watches over us each day, and one day we will live with him forever. The Lord Jesus, our good Shepherd, is the best shepherd of all. He takes wonderful care of God's family!

☆ Let's Do an Active Rhyme

Act out the words in italic. Have the children repeat each line after you and imitate your actions.

Five little sheep sit by the sheep pen door,
One goes in and now there are *four*.
Four little sheep hop around a tree,
One skips away and now there are *three*.
Three little sheep bleat "Baa" and "Boo,"
One hides behind the shepherd and now there are *two*.
Two little sheep leaping in the sun,
One gets a drink and now there is *one*.
One sad little sheep is not having fun,
He *runs off* to the shepherd and now there are *none!*

☆ Let's Pray

Dear God, thank you that Jesus is our good Shepherd. Thank you that he died for our sins and that he takes good care of us. Please help us to trust and obey him. In Jesus' name, Amen.



Lesson Four

Jesus Promises the Holy Spirit

Heart Preparation & Bible Background

The Bible teaches that God is one God in three Persons—God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. All three share the same nature, and God is all three Persons at the same time!

If the mystery of the Trinity is impossible for us to fully grasp, how can we present it to young, concrete thinkers? For starters, you do not have to teach them everything the Bible says all at once. Teach little ones a few basic Bible truths about God and restate them often. As they grow, more will be added to this foundation to help young believers develop in their understanding of God and what it means to be his child and grow in his family.

This lesson is about God the Holy Spirit, and you want your children to begin to take hold of important truths about him and what he does in their lives.

Teach them that Jesus promised his disciples that one day the Spirit would come. And after Jesus returned to heaven, God the Holy Spirit came to earth. He came to change the hearts of people, help them trust in Jesus as Savior, make them obedient and courageous, lead them, comfort them, and teach them how to be in the family of God, growing stronger day by day.

Emphasize to your impressionable children that we cannot believe in Jesus and obey him in our own power. It is the Holy Spirit who gives us new hearts and makes us love and praise God as we should. And even though we cannot see him, the Spirit is right there with each member of God's family, speaking to each heart, transforming each life.

Pray that the Holy Spirit will guide you as you talk to your children, help you to love them, and be responsive to their needs. Thank God for sending his Spirit, and pray that each child will receive him and depend on him.



Bible Truth

The Holy Spirit helps God's children remember and obey the words of Jesus.

Scripture

John 14



Lesson Focus

God wants his children to depend on the Holy Spirit.

Goals for the Children

- Name at least one way that the Holy Spirit helps God's children.
- Begin to learn the fruit of the Spirit.
- Ask for the Holy Spirit's help.



Memory Minute

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace.
Galatians 5:22a



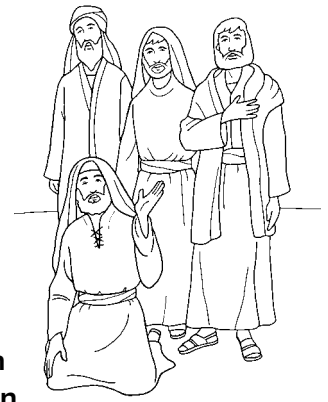
The disciples listened as Jesus told them about the Holy Spirit.

John 14



The disciples listened as Jesus told them about the Holy Spirit.

John 14



☆Let's Talk

- SAY** One night, Jesus told his disciples that he was going to leave them soon and go back to his Father. He was going to prepare a home in heaven so that one day all God's family could be with him forever.
- ASK** Look at the picture. *What do you think the disciples might have said when Jesus told them he was going back to his Father in heaven?*
- SAY** They might have said, "What will happen to us when Jesus leaves? Who will teach us about God? Who will help us trust and obey? Who will comfort us when we are sad or afraid?"
- ASK** Jesus told his disciples not to be afraid. He said God would send the Holy Spirit. *What would the Holy Spirit do?*
- SAY** After Jesus left, the Holy Spirit would come to live in God's people. The Holy Spirit would be their helper and he would be with them always.
- ASK** *How does the Holy Spirit help God's children?*
- SAY** The Holy Spirit is God. We cannot see him, but he lives within each person in God's family and gives us the power we need to live for Jesus. He teaches us when we hear God's Word. The Holy Spirit comforts us and makes us strong. He helps us remember God's Word and helps us obey.

☆Let's Sew

- 1 Cut out **large red hearts**, one for each child. Paste each heart on **cardboard**. Use a **hole puncher** to punch holes an inch or two apart around the edge of each heart. At one hole, tie a piece of colorful **yarn** for sewing. Add **tape** around the other end to make for easier threading. Show the children how to thread the yarn in and out of the holes.
- 2 As they work, remind children that the Holy Spirit came to change the hearts of people, help them trust in Jesus as Savior, and help them grow in trusting and obeying God.

☆Let's Pray

Gather in a circle. Lead children in saying this prayer.

Dear God, thank you for giving your Spirit to each of your children. Thank you that he changes our hearts. Thank you that he helps us grow in trusting and obeying you. In Jesus' name, Amen.



Lesson Five

Jesus Says, “Pray Like This”

Heart Preparation

Prayer is part of our covenant relationship with God. He has reached out to his people, and made a way for us to draw close to our loving Father, delighting in his nearness.

While he was on earth, Jesus not only taught his disciples how to pray, he showed them what it meant to communicate with his Father in heaven. He sought God’s fellowship early in the morning, he prayed late at night, sometimes spending long hours with him. No wonder, then, as the disciples watched Jesus model prayer, they asked him to teach them how to pray.

Yes, as God’s children, we need to learn how to come before him. We are his sons and daughters and he invites us to approach him as trusting children. He listens to what we say, and he desires that we hear what he says as he speaks to us through his Word.

Our loving heavenly Father wants us to confess our sins and ask him to meet our needs. He wants us to put the kingdom of God first in our hearts and minds. He wants us to pray for deliverance from Satan. He wants us to pray in Jesus’ name.

Teaching young children about prayer is teaching them to trust God and depend on him. It is teaching them to ask for what they need and pray for the needs of others. It is teaching them to thank and praise him for being God, for loving them and for sending Jesus to save them from their sins.

Together, you can thank God for his goodness in listening to the prayers of his people, and for his ability to answer and do his perfect will.

Bible Background

Notes on prayer in *The Reformation Study Bible* state: “We may pray to God with fervent persistence when we bring our needs to Him and know that He will answer our prayers. But God knows what is best in a way that we do not, and He may deny our specific requests. If He denies us, it is because He has something better for us, as when Christ refused to heal Paul’s thorn in the flesh (2 Cor. 12:7–9). To say, ‘Your will be done,’ surrendering our own preference to the Father’s wisdom, as Jesus did in Gethsemane is an explicit way of expressing faith in the goodness of what God has planned.” (p. 1627)



Bible Truth

Through prayer, God’s children may praise him, ask for forgiveness and ask for the things they need.

Scripture

Matthew 6:9–14

Luke 11:1–13



Lesson Focus

God wants his children to pray to him.

Goals for the Children

- Name three things that Jesus taught his disciples about praying.
- Sing songs of praise.
- Learn to say sentence prayers.



Memory Minute

Come and pray to me, and I will listen to you.
Jeremiah 29:12b



**The disciples asked Jesus to
teach them how to pray.**

Luke 11:1-4; Matthew 6:9-14



The disciples asked Jesus to teach them how to pray.

Luke 11:1–4; Matthew 6:9–14



☆Let's Talk and Wonder

SAY When Jesus lived on earth, he often went off by himself and prayed to his Father in heaven. The disciples noticed and asked Jesus to teach them to pray.

ASK *Why did they ask Jesus to teach them to pray?*

SAY The disciples wanted to know what kinds of things to pray to God, who was their Father in heaven, too.

ASK *What are some things Jesus taught in the prayer he gave his followers, known as the Lord's Prayer?*

SAY Jesus taught that when we pray we should praise God, ask for forgiveness, and ask for the things we need. God is pleased when his children come before him and tell him all the things that concern us, ask for his help, and praise and thank him.

☆Let's Listen

Slowly say or read the Lord's Prayer, found in Matthew 6:9–14, as the children listen.

☆Let's Sing

Sing "Part of the Family of God." Add this verse.



Preschool Vol. 2 CD
Songbook, p. 15

I'll thank my great Savior each day,
I'll share from my heart when I pray.
My Father above has shown me his love.
I'll thank my great Savior each day!

☆Let's Make and Pray

Print the following prayer on a large sheet of **poster board**. Hand out **crayons** so the children may draw pictures of themselves praying to God. Then read the prayer aloud.

Dear Father, we praise you.
Thank you for sending Jesus to be our Savior. Please forgive our sins.
Please take care of all your children. Help us to trust and obey you.
We praise you for your kindness and love. Thank you for listening to us.
We pray in Jesus' name, Amen.



Lesson Six

Jesus Says, “Love God Best”

Heart Preparation

God wants us to put him first. He wants us to forsake *anything* that keeps us from loving him wholeheartedly.

But the rich young man was not prepared to do that when Jesus said, “Follow me.” He wanted to hear that he could earn righteousness to merit entrance into God’s kingdom. He was not ready for a change of heart and God’s gift of salvation.

True, the rich young man had not murdered anyone, or dishonored his parents. He *thought* he had kept the law since he was a boy. But Jesus put his finger on the man’s problem: his love of and trust in his wealth, violating the first and tenth commandment.

Even when faced with the truth, the man was not repentant; he loved and trusted in his riches above everything else. Sadly, he walked away from Jesus, turning his back on the eternal riches of God’s kingdom.

What are the things we treasure most? In the early years, a favorite pet, toy or video game may be most important. Later, toys give way to friendships, the right clothes and cars, the *right* neighborhood, job and so much more. But we must learn—and not forget—that everything we have comes from our heavenly Father, and we are free to use our belongings for God’s *glory* instead of greedily grasping for ourselves and trusting in what will inevitably pass away.

Ask God to help you learn and teach your children that the things we treasure more than God must go. Indeed, we must not love and trust *anything* above God or give anything the place God has. Pray that the Holy Spirit will help you and your children to have trusting, responsive hearts—like the poor widow who gave God all she had. (Luke 21:1–3)

Bible Background

Use of the term *eternal life* primarily refers to the *quality* of life, that is, the life of blessedness. Only secondarily does it refer to the unending *quantity* of life. When the rich young man asked Jesus what he must do to have eternal life, he was asking what he must do to have the life that only God can give, an unending life of blessedness with God himself.



Bible Truth

God’s children are to love him above all else.

Scripture

Mark 10:17–27

Luke 21:1–3



Lesson Focus

God wants us to love him more than any of his gifts to us.

Goals for the Children

- Tell what kept the rich young man from becoming part of God’s family.
- Tell how the poor widow showed her love for God.
- Show love for God by sharing things God has given them.



Memory Minute

Love the Lord your God with all your heart.

Matthew 22:37a



The rich young man and poor widow

Matthew 19:16–30; Luke 21:1–3

The rich young man and poor widow

Matthew 19:16–30; Luke 21:1–3 (Mark 10:17–27; Exodus 20:3)



☆Let's Talk

ASK Who do you see in the picture?

SAY A rich young man went to see Jesus. But he was not ready to follow him. The man loved the things God had given him more than he loved Jesus, and he loved himself more than others. Sadly, he walked away from Jesus.

SAY After Jesus spoke to him, I wonder if the rich young man realized that he didn't really love or trust God . . .

SAY Another time, a poor widow put two small coins in the money box at the temple. It was not very much, but it was all she had to offer God. Jesus saw what she did and said she gave more than anyone else because she gave everything. The poor widow showed that she loved God more than the things he had given her. Jesus wants his children to love him more than any of his gifts to us. He wants us to love him best!

☆Let's Feel and Share

- 1 Gather the following objects: **apple, package of cookies, coins, board game, book, crayon box, ball**. Secretly place one of the objects inside a **bag**. Have a child put his hand inside the bag, feel the object, and guess what it is without looking. When the correct guess is given, remove the object from the bag. Talk about ways to share it with others.
- 2 Continue with the remaining objects. Make sure everyone has a turn. Point out that Jesus wants us to love him first and best. He wants us to trust him to give us what we need, and he wants us to share what we have with others.
- 3 Afterward, share the cookies as a snack. (Be aware of allergies.)

☆Let's Sing and Pray

Sing this prayer to the tune *The Farmer in the Dell*.

 **45** *Preschool*
Vol. 2 CD

Thank you for saving me,
Your child I'll always be.
Help me love you most of all,
Dear God, on you I'll call.

Conclude the prayer by saying **In Jesus' name, Amen.**



Lesson Seven

Jesus Says, “Love One Another”

Heart Preparation & Bible Background

Growing in God’s family means growing in love. In the Ten Commandments, God told his covenant people to love him wholeheartedly and to love their neighbors as themselves. In his teaching, Jesus emphasized the importance of these commands (Mt. 22:37–39), and he taught his disciples to “Love one another,” a command born out of his great love for them (John 13:34–35).

In his letter to believers, the apostle John wrote that because of God’s great love for us, he sent his Son to be our Savior. Now God calls us his children and tells us to show love for others in the family of God if we truly love him (1 John 4:7–11).

Loving others, though, is costly and hard. It is more than a card, a bunch of flowers or a simple “I love you.” It means sacrifice, putting others first and going the extra mile. It means considering the needs and feelings of one another and doing something about it.

Loving God’s way is only possible through the power of Christ in our lives. God showed his love by sending his Son. When we put our trust in Christ, our union with him gives us resources to deal with the selfishness in our hearts and to show his love to others.

Your young children are beginning to learn what it means to play in groups, share and cooperate. This is a wonderful time to teach them that God loves them and tells them to love other people. Teach them to trust God to help them be kind and helpful, to share and give of themselves, to obey his Word.

As you respond to your heavenly Father’s great love for you, may you model his love to your children. Show them how much you care for them, and teach them to love one another, just as they love God.



Bible Truth

God’s children show their love for him by loving others.

Scripture

1 John 3–4; John 13:34



Lesson Focus

Jesus tells us to show love for God by loving others.

Goals for the Children

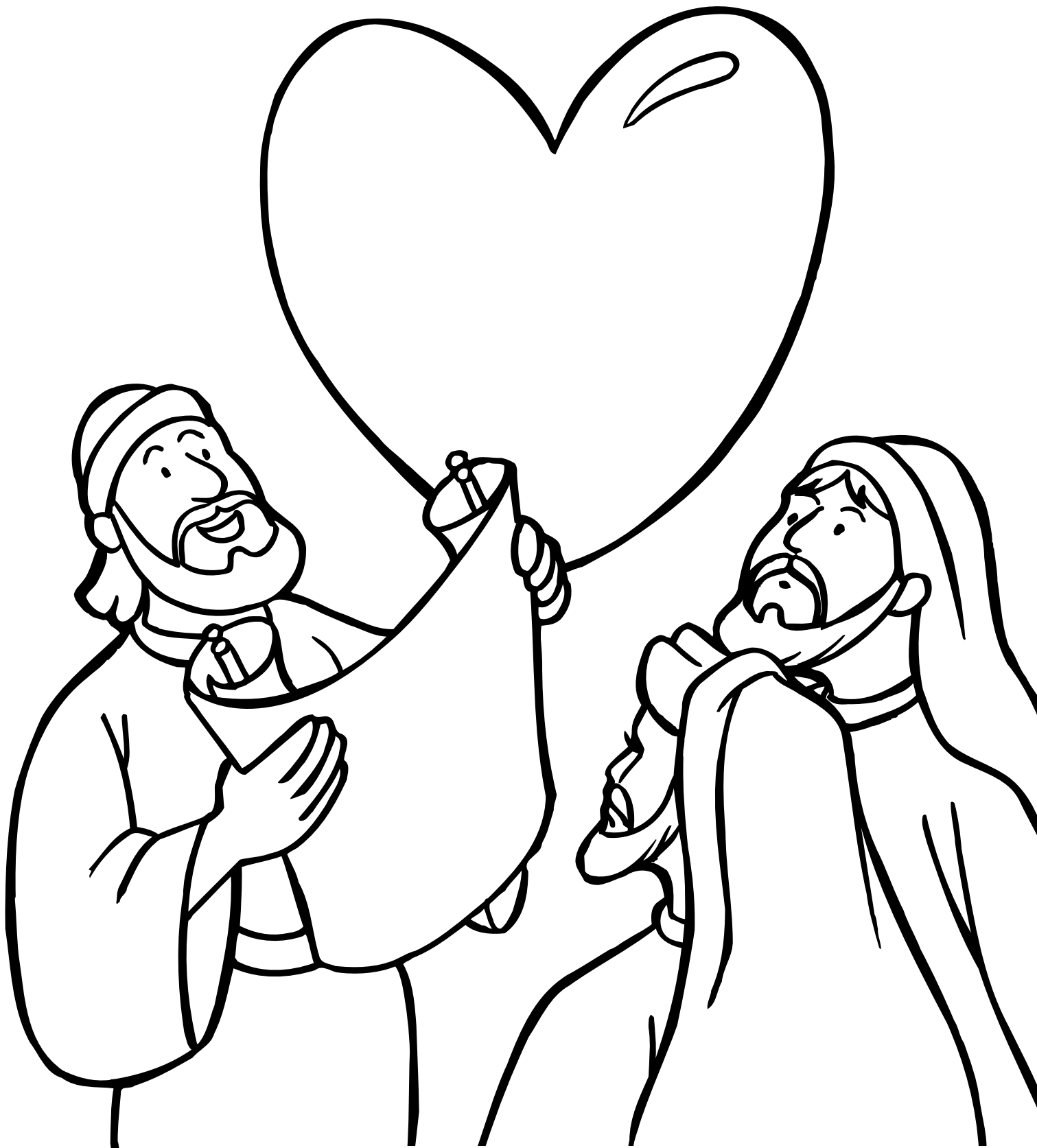
- Tell how God showed his love by sending Jesus.
- Name ways to show love to others.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to help us show love in words and actions.



Memory Minute

Love one another, for love comes from God.

1 John 4:7a



**John wrote a letter to the church
that said, "Love one another."**

1 John 3-4



John wrote a letter to the church that said, "Love one another."

1 John 3–4



☆Let's Talk and Wonder

SAY Long ago, a disciple of Jesus named John wrote a letter to the people in God's family. This letter is in the Bible. We call it First John. The Holy Spirit guided John so he could write what God wanted his people to know and obey. When the letter arrived, God's people listened as John's letter was read to them.

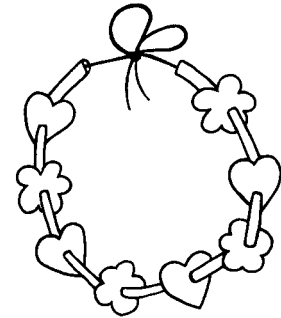
ASK *What do you think the letter said?*

SAY In the letter, we learn that God showed his love for us by sending his Son, Jesus, to die on the cross for our sins and be our Savior. All those who trust in Jesus are part of God's family. We show love for God by obeying the command of Jesus to love one another.


SAY I wonder what we can do and say to show that we love others . . .

☆Let's Make

- 1 Make leis. Gather the following: **shoelaces or yarn, small paper hearts, paper flowers, and straws cut in 1-inch pieces.** Use a hole puncher to punch holes in the middle of the hearts and flowers.
- 2 Give each child a shoelace and tie a knot at one end. Demonstrate how to thread the paper hearts, flowers, and straws onto the shoelace to make a lei. While working, talk about different things we can do and say to show God's love to others. To complete each lei, tie the ends of the shoelace together.
- 3 Invite children to try on the leis they made. Encourage them to give them away to show love to someone who needs cheering up. Or you may arrange a group visit to a local nursing home where children can visit residents and give away their leis.



☆Let's Sing

Sing "O, How I Love Jesus." Then sing these additional verses.  **Preschool Vol. 2 CD**
Songbook, p. 17

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 Serve one another,
Serve one another,
Serve one another,
To show that we love the Lord! | 2 Love one another,
Love one another,
Love one another,
Jesus says to God's family! |
|---|---|



Lesson Eight

Jesus Says, “Love Your Enemies”

Heart Preparation & Bible Background

The bully next door and that mean girl who shares the same worktable at school are living proof that even little children must cope with enemies. How should we teach our children to deal with those who stand against them? How should God’s people treat those who don’t love God or his people?

In his Sermon on the Mount, Jesus taught how we must respond to our enemies, what we must do from the heart. He said, “Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.” (Matthew 5:44) Those in the kingdom of God are told to forgive others and love the unlovable.

As God’s children, we are to imitate our heavenly Father who “causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good.” (Matthew 5:45) We are to love our enemies, recognizing the fact that God loved us while we were still his enemies, lost in sin.

We cannot do what God commands in our own strength. As we experience the love of Jesus and his forgiveness in our own lives and as the power of the Holy Spirit enables, we can love the way Jesus taught.

As you read Matthew 5:43–48, your thoughts may be drawn to people at work, in your neighborhood or even in your church who have dealt unkindly with you. You may have to face bitterness in your heart towards those who have deliberately hurt you.

Face up to the enemies in your life and do what Jesus did. Pray for them and ask God to forgive them (Luke 23:33–34). Ask God to put his love for them in your heart. Pray for your children, too, to have loving, forgiving hearts enabled by the Holy Spirit.



Bible Truth

Jesus taught his followers to love their enemies and to pray for them.

Scripture

Matthew 5:43–48



Lesson Focus

Love those who don’t love God and who don’t love you.

Goals for the Children

- Explain that Jesus teaches them to love their enemies.
- Ask God to help them forgive others and show kindness.
- Plan ways to show love when people hurt them.



Memory Minute

Review memory work:

*1 John 3:1a
1 John 4:10a
Galatians 5:22a
Jeremiah 29:12b
Matthew 22:37a*



Love your enemies and pray for them.

Matthew 5:43–48



Love your enemies and pray for them.

Matthew 5:43–48



☆Let's Talk and Wonder

SAY A large crowd of people gathered on the mountainside to see and hear Jesus. The disciples sat beside Jesus. They listened carefully as he taught them how God's people should live. He told them to love and pray for their enemies.

ASK *What did Jesus mean when he said that God's people should love and pray for their enemies?*

SAY Jesus was telling his followers to love everyone—even people who don't love God and don't love them back. He was telling his followers to pray for those who hate them.

SAY I wonder what the disciples thought when they heard what Jesus said . . .

SAY The disciples and all God's children were once God's enemies. But God loved them and sent his Son to be their Savior. Now God's people are no longer God's enemies. We are children of God and are commanded to love the way God loves. That means loving those who don't love Jesus and who don't love us. We need God's help to forgive our enemies, pray for them, and show kindness to them!

☆Let's Play

Play this active game to remind children that Jesus wants us to show that we love our enemies by what we say and do. Sit in a circle. Give a **red, green, or blue paper strip** to each child. Tell the children to listen as you call out a color, give a command, and do an action. Each child holding a paper strip of the color you named stands up, repeats the command, and imitates your action. Have everyone sit down. Then move on to the next color, command, and action. Play until all commands have been given.

Red I'll pray for those who are mean to me. *(fold hands in prayer)*

Green I'll walk away when a bully tries to pick a fight. *(turn around, walk away)*

Blue I'll say "Hi" to someone who ignores me. *(high-five someone)*

Red I'll share my toys with those who won't share with me. *(hold out hands, palms facing up)*

Green I'll smile at those who make fun of me. *(draw a smile on your face with your fingers)*

Blue I'll forgive my enemy. *(form a cross with both arms)*

☆Let's Pray

Dear God, we pray for our enemies. Help us to love and forgive them, just as you do. In Jesus' name, Amen.



Lesson Nine

Jesus Says, “Ask God to Forgive You”

Heart Preparation

It comes naturally to us to focus on the wrongs we suffer instead of on the wrongs we commit. However, God wants his children to have tender hearts concerning our sinfulness, so that we will repent and ask for forgiveness through Jesus.

Even as the Holy Spirit convicts us of our sin and initially leads us to Jesus for forgiveness, so he continues to instruct us, guiding us to a more obedient life as we mature as God’s children. When we repent and confess our sins, God is quick to forgive. He loves us and wants us to grow in trust and obedience.

Spend some time this week examining your own heart and life. Ask God to reveal any sin, resentment, unforgiveness or disobedience. Confess these things to God, admitting that you are wrong, and then be assured of God’s character—that he is faithful and just and will forgive your sins. Allow God to first apply these lessons in your own life. This the best preparation for talking with your children about these things. Read Luke 11:4 and 15:11–24.

Pray that your children will recognize their own wrongdoing and their continuing need for forgiveness as they grow in God’s family. Pray that they will know that their loving heavenly Father does not stop loving his children when they sin: He leads them to be sorry and he promises to forgive; he listens when they confess and he welcomes them back with open arms.

Bible Background

The Parable of the Lost Son in Luke demonstrates God’s love to sinners in contrast with the Pharisees, who failed to understand God’s mercy and forgiveness. In this lesson, however, the story is used to illustrate a Christian’s sin and asking for forgiveness. The focus is on the father and the younger son, highlighting God’s compassion and joy at the repentance of sinners.



Bible Truth

God wants his children to continually turn away from sin and seek forgiveness through Jesus the Savior.

Scripture

Luke 11:4; 15:11–24



Lesson Focus

When we confess our sins, we can trust God to forgive us.

Goals for the Children

- Know that Jesus teaches that God forgives his sinful children.
- Learn 1 John 1:9a.
- Confess their sins and ask God for forgiveness.



Memory Minute

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins.

1 John 1:9a



**The prodigal son who ran away
came home to his father.**

Luke 15:11-24



The prodigal son who ran away came home to his father.

Luke 15:11-24



☆Let's Talk

SAY Jesus told the story of a man who had two sons. The younger son left home and wasted his share of the family money on wild living. One day when he had nothing left, he said, "I'll go home to my father. I have sinned against God and against my father. I don't deserve to be treated as a son."

ASK *What do you think the father did when his son returned?*

SAY The father ran to meet his son. He hugged and kissed him and gladly forgave him. The father planned a grand dinner to celebrate his son's return home.

ASK *Why did Jesus tell this story?*

SAY Jesus wanted his followers to understand that God is like the father in the story. Our loving heavenly Father forgives his children because Jesus died for our sins. Those who trust in Jesus as Savior can always go to God the Father for forgiveness. He forgives all our sin and makes our hearts clean!

☆Let's Listen and Show

1 Gather a quilt, a Bible, and **objects** listed in bold below.

<i>property</i>	money	<i>ring</i>	plastic ring
<i>pigs</i>	toy pigs	<i>shoes</i>	sandals
<i> pods</i>	seedpods	<i>calf</i>	picture of a young cow
<i>robe</i>	bathrobe	<i>eat</i>	play food set

2 Sit in a circle on the quilt. Hand an object to each child. Then read aloud the parable found in Luke 15:11-24. Tell the children to listen carefully. As you read, emphasize the key words in italic above that match the objects. Each time you emphasize a word, the child with the matching object will put it in the center of the circle. Afterward, let the children pick up the objects and retell the story.

☆Let's Sing and Pray

Sing "I Am Trusting You, Lord Jesus." Then lead the children in saying this prayer.



Preschool Vol. 2 CD
Songbook, p. 17

Dear heavenly Father, please forgive us when we disobey you. Thank you that you forgive us because Jesus died for our sins. Help us to grow in trusting and obeying you. In Jesus' name, Amen.



Lesson Ten

Jesus Says, “Forgive Others”

Heart Preparation

God’s Word teaches that we must be peacemakers and we must forgive others. Retaliation, getting even, or even a “live and let live” attitude should have no place in the life and heart of the growing believer.

Jesus taught that those who pursue peace making and reconciliation even when they have suffered wrong are truly blessed. As they forgive, God’s children model the mercy and love that their heavenly Father has extended to them.

Your young children are just beginning to understand what it means to forgive. Help them learn that forgiving others means that we treat those who sin against us kindly and fairly, and that we continue to love them. Teach them to say words that extend mercy, and pray that God will help them mean it when they say, “I forgive you.”

Remind them that just as God has forgiven their sins in Christ Jesus, so he wants his children to forgive others who sin against them. Our heavenly Father tells us to pursue faith, love, peace and to be kind to everyone. (2 Timothy 2:22, 24)

May your example truly show each child what it means to be a peacemaker, and pray that God would help them learn to forgive from the heart.

Bible Background

With young children, we just want to teach the general principle of forgiving others who sin against us as God forgives us. But remember, there is also the issue of repentance. God forgives those who repent, and then there is reconciliation. Receiving God’s forgiveness changes our heart response towards others. God’s Word teaches that receiving and giving forgiveness cannot be separated. God wants us to develop a forgiving attitude towards others, even when they sin against us repeatedly. (Luke 17:3–4)



Bible Truth

Jesus taught his disciples to forgive others, just as God has forgiven them.

Scripture

*Matthew 5:9–12; 6:12;
18:21–35*



Lesson Focus

Since God forgives us, we must forgive one another.

Goals for the Children

- Talk about being hurt or angry.
- Learn what it means to forgive others.
- Plan ways to forgive in word and deed.



Memory Minute

*Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
Matthew 6:12 (KJV)*



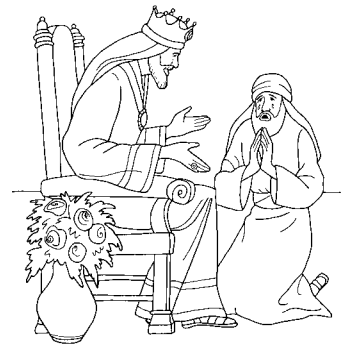
The king forgave his servant who owed him a lot of money.

Matthew 18:21–35



The king forgave his servant who owed him a lot of money.

Matthew 18:21–35



☆Let's Talk

ASK Jesus told a story about a king whose servant owed him a lot of money. *What do you see in the picture?*

SAY The servant went to the king and told him he was sorry he could not pay it back right away. The king forgave the servant. He told the servant he didn't have to pay what he owed and let him go. The servant left the king and visited a man who owed him a little money.

ASK *What do you think the servant did to the man?*

SAY The servant demanded his money. When the man couldn't pay, the servant did not forgive him. He threw the man in jail. When the king heard what the servant did, he called him in. "You wicked servant," the king said. "You should have forgiven the man, just as I forgave you!" Then the king sent the servant to jail.

ASK *Why do you think Jesus told this story?*

SAY Jesus told this story to teach God's people that they should forgive others from the heart, just as Jesus has forgiven them.

☆Let's Trace

Print the word **Forgive** in dotted lines on a sheet of **paper**. Make **photocopies** and let children use a **crayon, marker, or pencil** to trace the letters. As children work, talk about ways to show forgiveness to others.

☆Let's Act

Set out a **toy crown, bathrobes, and sandals** to be used as props as you review the story Jesus told about forgiveness. Let children put on costumes and act out the parts of the king, the servant, and the man thrown in jail as you retell the story.

☆Let's Sing a Prayer

Sing this prayer to the tune "Part of the Family of God."



Forgive one another each day,
Dear God, please help us, we pray.
You've forgiven our wrong; to you we belong!
Forgive one another each day!

Conclude by saying In Jesus' name, Amen.



Lesson Eleven

Jesus Says, “Serve Others”

Heart Preparation & Bible Background

Jesus calls us, by word and deed, to be willing to humble ourselves and serve others. He tells us to forsake power and position and embrace meekness of spirit. He wants us to follow his example, roll up our sleeves and be prepared to do menial tasks for one another.

The disciples argued among themselves over their own rank and status, and James and John asked for positions of prestige in the kingdom of God. But Jesus patiently pointed out that the true nature of greatness lies in servanthood. “If anyone wants to be first,” Jesus said, “he must be the very last, and the servant of all.” (Mark 9:35) And in his own life on earth, Jesus gave testimony to this precept.

Jesus is our *Model*: his attitude of humility is an example for us (Philippians 2:5–7). He is our *Motivator*: his love for us prompts us to show love to others (1 John 3:16). He is also our *Mediator*: he freed us to serve God and others by establishing a new covenant in his blood and reconciling us to God (Hebrews 9:14–15). The Holy Spirit enables us to do what Jesus commands by giving us grace to live as servants in his kingdom.

Your young children are gaining independence and want to have tasks to perform. They are also beginning to understand that they are part of the church family. Use this opportunity to show them and teach them what it means to follow Christ’s example and serve others in God’s family.

Pray that God will give you and your children humble, responsive hearts. Ask him to enable you to reach out in service, ready to do the lowliest tasks for the sake of God’s kingdom.



Bible Truth

Jesus humbly serves his followers by washing their feet.

Scripture

Mark 9:33–35

Mark 10:35–45

John 13:1–17



Lesson Focus

Jesus shows us how to humbly serve others.

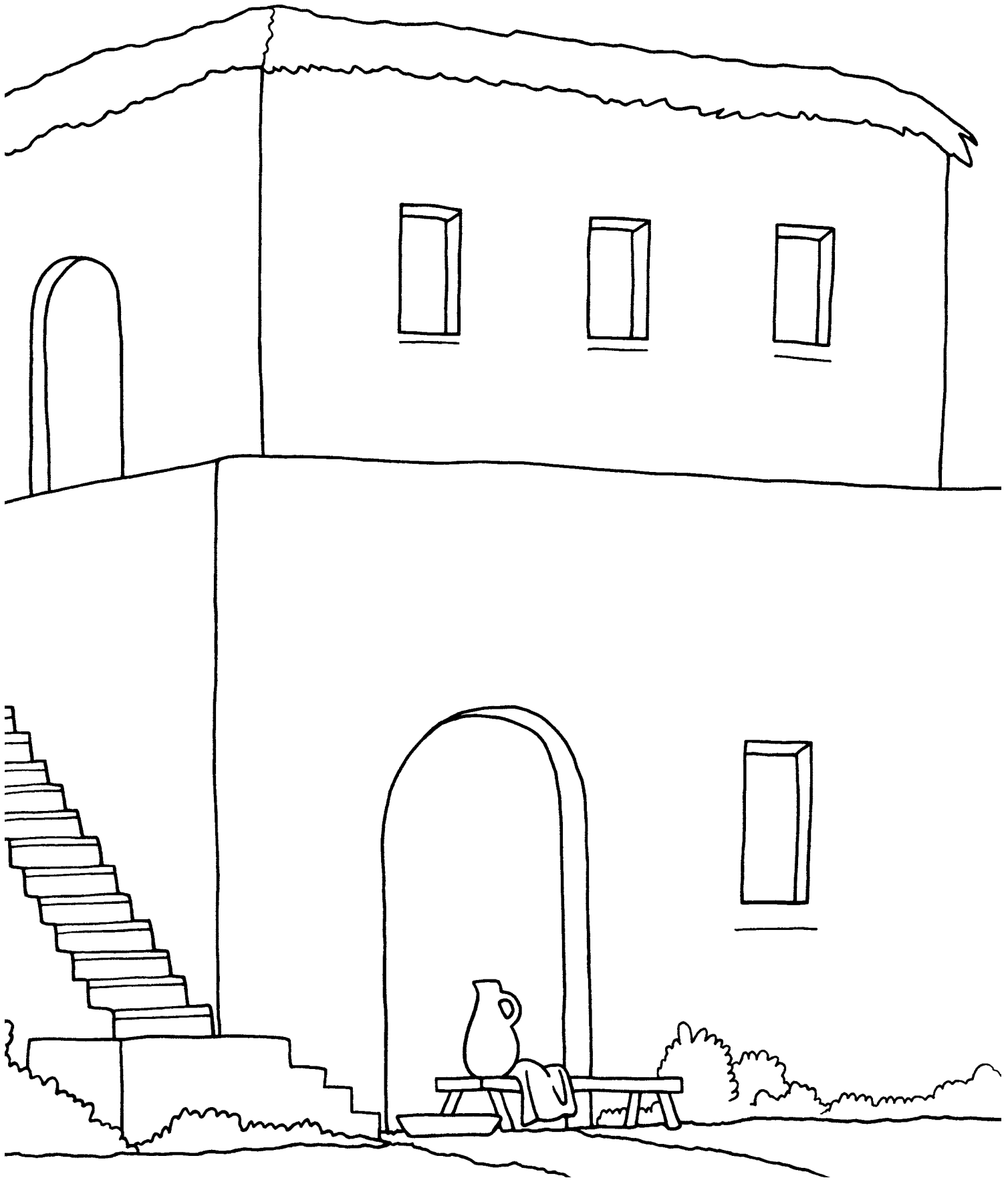
Goals for the Children

- State that serving others is a way to show love for God.
- Play a game to illustrate serving.
- Plan ways to serve others.



Memory Minute

Review memory work



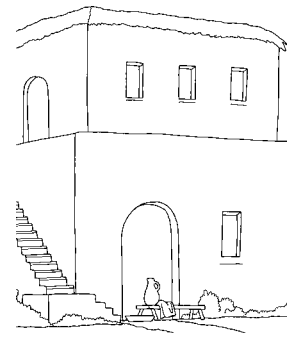
Jesus washed the disciples' feet.

John 13:1-17



Jesus washed the disciples' feet.

John 13:1-17



☆Let's Talk

SAY Jesus and his disciples went to a house to celebrate the Passover meal. When they arrived, there was a basin, a pitcher of water, and a towel at the door.

ASK *Why were these things at the door?*

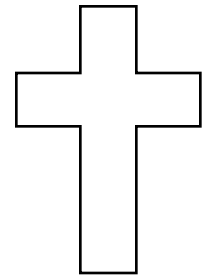
SAY In the time of Jesus, when someone entered a home, water was provided for washing dusty feet. Usually, a servant washed the feet of arriving guests. When Jesus and his disciples arrived, there was no servant to do the work of washing feet.

ASK *What do you think Jesus did?*

SAY Jesus himself washed and dried his disciples' dusty feet. The men were surprised that their Lord would do the work of a servant. Jesus wanted to show them how to serve and he told them they should follow his example. Being great in God's family means humbly helping and serving others.

☆Let's Make and Explore

- 1 Draw the outline of a cross on a large sheet of **poster board**. Let the children color the cross with **brown crayons**. Then **glue** several **brown craft foam pieces** to the cross to make it stand out and appear wooden.
- 2 Tell the children that the greatest way Jesus served his people was coming to earth to be our Savior. Jesus, the Son of God, died on a cross to save us. Since Jesus served us by saving us from our sins, we can be glad to humbly serve one another.
- 3 Explore everyday ways that your children can serve and help others.



☆Let's Rhyme and Show

Stand in a circle. Take turns showing serving actions as you say this rhyme together.

Serving, serving,
Everybody, everywhere.
Serving, serving,
Everybody do your share!

For example, children can show emptying the trash can, scrubbing the sink, sweeping the floor, cleaning the litter box, and so on. Say the rhyme several times so every child has an opportunity to act out one way to serve.



Lesson Twelve

Jesus Says, “Obey God’s Word”

Heart Preparation & Bible Background

This week, the children will learn what it means to become wise in God’s family. They will hear Jesus’ parable about the Wise and Foolish Builders and learn that Jesus wants his followers to hear *and* obey his words.

As you talk about the Scripture passages, tell your children that wisdom comes from God. Wisdom means knowing what’s right from wrong and doing what’s right. Being wise means not only listening to what God says, but also believing and then acting on what we hear from his Word. The letter of James puts it in clear terms: “Do not merely listen to the word. . . . Do what it says.” (1:22)

Scripture faithfully records what Jesus said about growing in God’s family. This quarter, your children have heard what Jesus taught about trusting God for forgiveness of sins, loving God best, loving and serving others, forgiving others, and depending on the Holy Spirit to help us trust and obey God.

Knowing what God says is extremely important. We must ask the Spirit to dig down deep in our hearts and lives and lay the Word of God there. And we must depend on the Spirit to help us live our lives in obedience to the Word of God.

Tell your children to be wise by believing and doing what Jesus commands. Encourage them to put their knowledge into practice. Look for opportunities to nourish the growth you see.

Make sure you are spending time in prayer, Bible study and worship, thanking God for the treasures of his wisdom and asking him to make you wise.



Bible Truth

God’s people must act on God’s Word.

Scripture

Matthew 7:24–27

Luke 6:47–49



Lesson Focus

Wise children listen to God’s Word and do what it says.

Goals for the Children

- Listen to the reading of God’s Word.
- Memorize Matthew 7:24.
- Choose to obey what Jesus says every day.



Memory Minute

Therefore every one who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.
Matthew 7:24

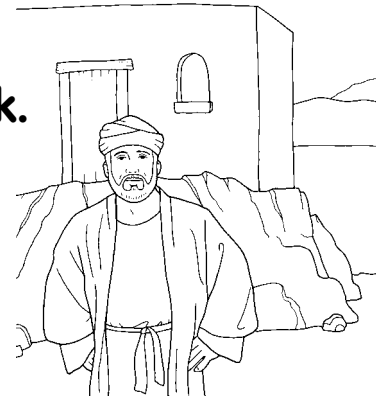


The wise man built his house on a rock.

Matthew 7:24–27

The wise man built his house on a rock.

Matthew 7:24–27



☆Let's Talk

ASK Look at the picture. *What do you see?*

SAY Jesus told a story about a wise man and a foolish man. The wise man built his house on solid rock. When a storm came, it rained hard and the winds blew and beat against the house. But the house did not fall. It stood strong and safe because it was built on rock.

ASK *What do you think the foolish man did?*

SAY The foolish man built his house on sand. Soon a storm came and rain poured down. The water washed the sand away and the winds blew against the house. The house fell with a loud crash!

ASK *Why did Jesus tell his followers this story?*

SAY Jesus said that everyone who hears his words and puts them into practice is like a wise man who builds his house on a rock. We have the Bible to tell us how Jesus wants his children to live. If we know what Jesus says and we do it, we are like the wise man. But if we know what Jesus says and decide not to believe and obey him, we are like the foolish man instead. God wants us to trust him and obey his Word every day!

☆Let's Play

- 1 This game is a variation of *Red Light, Green Light*. You will be the leader and stand at one end of the room, holding your **Bible**. Have children stand on the opposite side of the room. Hold up your Bible, say "**Obey God's Word,**" and turn your back to the group. While your back is turned, children will walk toward you. When you turn and face them, they must stop. If you see anyone still moving, that child must go back to the starting point.
- 2 The child who reaches you first tells something Jesus said or did that we should remember and put into practice, or names a favorite Bible story. He or she also gets to be the leader for the next round!

☆Let's Pray

Invite children to bow their heads and close their eyes. Lead them in saying this prayer.

Dear God, thank you for your Word. Help me to become wise by hearing and obeying your Word. In Jesus' name, Amen.



Lesson Thirteen

God Makes Us More Like Jesus

Heart Preparation & Bible Background

Earlier this quarter, the children learned that only God causes good “fruit” to grow in the hearts of his people. This lesson continues the theme of fruitfulness and dependency on our heavenly Father.

In John 15, Jesus calls himself “the true vine.” His followers are branches that abide in him in trust and obedience, and the result in their lives is the abundance of good fruit God desires.

Remind your children that God draws us to himself, forgiving our sins and making us children of God. He cares for his own, sending the Holy Spirit to help us grow by applying the teachings of Jesus to our lives.

Just as a grapevine produces grapes and you can count on a healthy fig tree to yield figs in abundance, so you can see good fruit in the life of someone who is growing in the family of God. As the Holy Spirit makes them more like Christ, God’s children love others because God himself is love. God’s children forgive others out of gratitude that God has forgiven them. They serve others because Jesus Christ became a servant for their sakes. God’s children tell others about Jesus, just as Jesus preached to his disciples while he was on earth. And they pray and trust God for help because Jesus taught them to do so, and the Holy Spirit enables them.

In this final lesson of the quarter, help your children understand that only God can make them more like Jesus. As they trust and obey Jesus, they will grow more and more like him . . . bearing good fruit in the family of God.



Bible Truth

God’s children are known by their actions.

Scripture

Matthew 7:16–20

Luke 6:43–45

Matthew 28:19



Lesson Focus

God makes his children more and more like Jesus as they grow in trusting and obeying him.

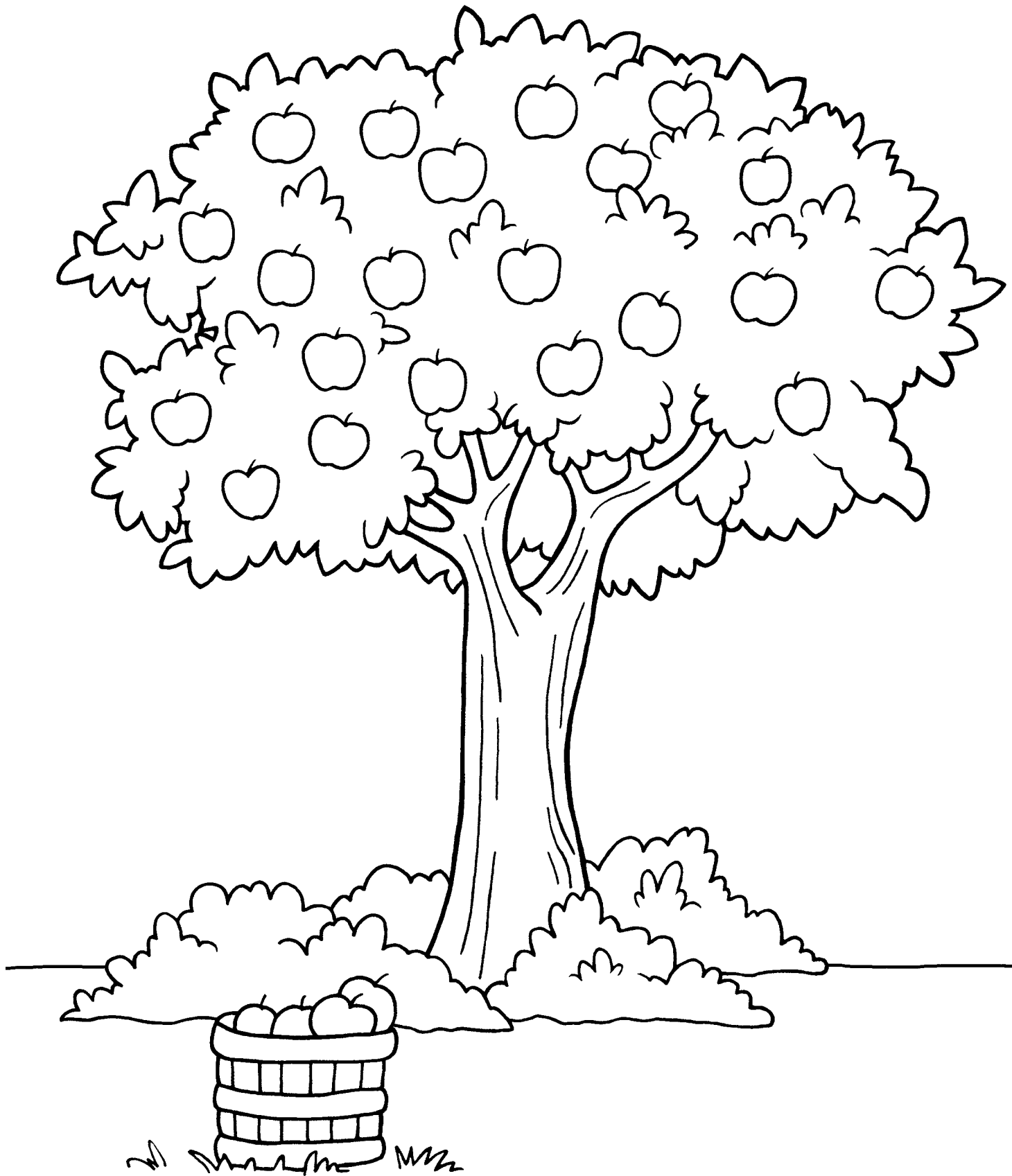
Goals for the Children

- Remember what Jesus taught about living in God’s family.
- Tell what it means to act like children of God.
- Pray that the Holy Spirit would help them grow in trust and obedience.



Memory Minute

Review memory work



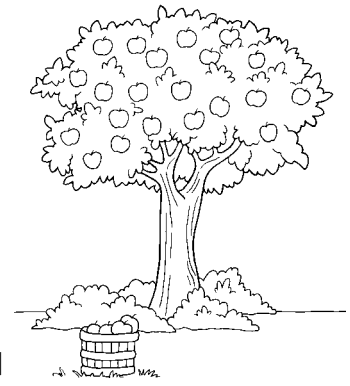
**Good trees bear good fruit.
Bad trees bear bad fruit.**

Matthew 7:16–20



**Good trees bear good fruit.
Bad trees bear bad fruit.**

Matthew 7:16–20



☆Let's Talk and Wonder

SAY One day, Jesus told his disciples about a tree and its fruit. Good trees give good fruit. Bad trees make bad fruit. Looking at the fruit tells you what kind of tree it came from. A fruit tree always makes the same kind of fruit.

ASK Look at the picture. *What do you see?*

SAY An apple tree always bears apples.

ASK *Why do you think Jesus told his disciples about trees and fruit?*

SAY Just like good fruit from a good tree, God's children say and do good things because they belong to their heavenly Father, who is perfectly good. God's children need to depend on him to help them trust Jesus and obey his teachings. We need God the Holy Spirit to make good fruit grow in our hearts!

SAY I wonder what others think when they see that we are trusting and obeying Jesus . . .

SAY When we say and do things that please God, we show others the love of Jesus. We show that God is helping us grow more and more like Jesus!

☆Let's Make

- 1 Print *God makes us more like Jesus* in the middle of a large sheet of poster board. Bring in pictures of a variety of good fruit. Let children glue the pictures around the caption.
- 2 Talk about ways God makes us more like Jesus. Under each fruit, print one way we can be "fruitful" members of God's family. For example, under a strawberry you might print, "God helps me love others"; under a banana, "God helps me to be kind"; and so on.

☆Let's Sing

Sing this active rhyme to the tune *The Farmer in the Dell*.



My Father makes me grow, (*crouch down, then stand up tall*)

Like Jesus every day. (*point up*)

I'll say and do what pleases him, (*cup hands around mouth, cross hands over heart*)

I'll trust him and obey! (*fold hands in prayer, then open them to make a Bible*)