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FALL SUNDAY SCHOOL

GRADES 3 & 4

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Relational
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The future of Sunday school + family ministry is NOW.

No doubt about it, the world is changing. Families used to go to church every week. Kids used to have longer attention spans. Teachers used to have more time to prepare. And didn't our budgets used to be bigger?

Even the Sunday school Bible curriculum you used just a couple of years ago is already out of date. But there's one thing that's never changed: the need to grow families closer to Jesus.

That's why we created FaithWeaver NOW®, and it's different from anything you've ever seen before!

It combines Sunday school with family ministry.
Sure, you've seen Sunday school aimed at families. But FaithWeaver NOW actually hits the target by having everyone in the family learning about the same Scripture each week.

It's simpler and easier.
Sometimes change is a wonderful thing. Gone are the days when you needed to spend hours preparing your lessons and hunting for supplies. FaithWeaver NOW will have you and your team ready to go in a snap.

It's made for NOW.
Life is complicated and full of distractions. FaithWeaver NOW keeps faith on track through even the most frenzied lifestyles.

What makes FaithWeaver NOW the perfect curriculum for TODAY's church?

- Families learn the same Bible passage in age-appropriate ways.
- Kids don't just hear the Word. They experience it.
- Simple and easy lessons fit even the busiest lives.
- Kids see God in their everyday world.
- The Scope & Sequence goes through the Bible every three years.
- You can customize it however you like, with both print and digital versions.

Plus, FaithWeaver NOW stays up to date. New content, new tools, new mobile apps, and more every year—all to keep the Bible fresh, relevant, and effective.

Create a vibrant family ministry that's new…that's wow…that's NOW. FaithWeaver NOW gives you a fresh strategy for being more successful than ever in bringing families closer to Jesus.

Thom Schultz Joani Schultz

Thom and Joani Schultz
Chairman and Chief Creative Officer
Group Publishing, Inc.

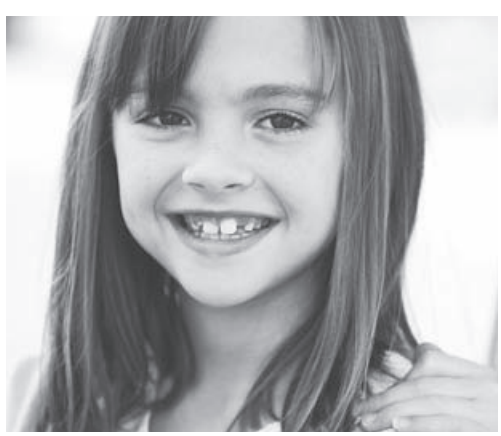
God Creates the World

Genesis 1:1–2:3

Eight- and nine-year-olds are at a stage of development where they can begin to understand and use new knowledge. They're fond of simple science experiments that demonstrate different principles of God's amazing world. Third- and fourth-graders can be guided to the joy in understanding that God created our world with us in mind. They can also begin to understand that they have a responsibility in taking care of what God's made.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started	**Human Sculptures** *(about 5 min.)* Play a game to create human sculptures.		
	Genesis 1:1 *(about 5 min.)* Learn today's Key Verse and sing a song.	Bible, CD player, copies of the lyrics page (at the end of this lesson) **Teacher Pack:** CD	
2 Bible Exploration	**In the Beginning** *(about 35 min.)* Plan ways to artistically represent the days of Creation.	Bibles, CD player, several pairs of scissors, paper, colored construction paper, pens, washable markers, tape, stapler, 6 poster boards **Teacher Pack:** CD, Bible Timeline, creation stencils	

Bold text *within the lesson is spoken text.*



▶Bible Point
God made the world.

Key Verse
"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Genesis 1:1).

Weaving Faith Into Life
Children will thank God for his wonderful creation and discover ways to care for it.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
3 Weaving Faith Into Life	**Thank-You Notes** *(about 15 min.)* Sing a song, and write notes to God to thank him for our world.	Bible, Bible Truth Sleuth, CD player, pens, copies of the lyrics page (at the end of this lesson) **Teacher Pack:** CD	Tear out the Lesson 1 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book.
4 Lasting Impressions	**Daily Challenges** *(about 5 min.)* Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	Bible Truth Sleuth, pens	
	Weaving Faith at Home *(about 2 min.)* Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.	Bible Truth Sleuth	Tear out the letter to parents from the back of each Bible Truth Sleuth student book.

Bold text *within the lesson is spoken text.*

God Creates the World

Genesis 1:1–2:3

BIBLE BACKGROUND FOR LEADERS

God's Beginnings With Humans

The book of Genesis gives us the beginnings. Not the beginning of God; God has existed eternally. Nor is it just the beginning of our world. It's the beginnings of God's working with humans. In fact, "beginning" is the meaning of the Greek word from which the name *Genesis* came. What better place to start a new season than at the beginning!

Elohim is the Hebrew name used for God in Genesis 1:1. It's interesting that the name is plural, but the verb *created* is singular. Even though God exists in three persons, the action of creating the universe was unified.

God's Creation Was Good

Genesis 1:1–2:3 describes a vast variety of things God created, but the focus isn't so much on the creation as it is on the Creator. Nine times in this passage we read "God said" and then some variation of "and it was so." God spoke our universe, our planet, and humankind into existence. And what God did was good.

The word translated "good" here is a common Hebrew word that, like our word *good*, can have several meanings. Here, it likely has no moral connotation but means "just as it should be." God looked at what he had done and knew it was right.

After Creating, God Rested

God was creating a bountiful, beautiful home for the treasured beings that he created last. Notice that God created many of each thing: not just one tree, but "seed-bearing plants and trees…according to their various kinds"; not just one star, but "lights in the expanse of the sky"; not just one fish, but "every living and moving thing with which the water teems." God prepared a marvelous earth for his crowning creation to enjoy. And then God created humans. We're a vital part of everything good that God made.

When God finished creating the heavens and the earth "in all their vast array," he rested. Why? God wasn't tired. God didn't need to rest. No, God rested as a signal that Creation was complete. The seventh day became a holy day—a day to reflect on the wonder of what God had done, a day to smile and to know that it was good.

The Jesus Connection

God's creation is inspiring, and the gift of his Son is lifesaving. Thank God for the beauty of life in nature and in our hearts through a relationship with Jesus! Show love for God's creation during the lesson this week, and help others see that the Creator has given them new life through Jesus as well.

What in nature amazes you? Oceans of beautifully colored fish? Massive forests? Take some time to appreciate the creativity of God's design, and consider how God has designed your life, too. You can write your prayer here.

1 GETTING STARTED

Human Sculptures

What You'll Do

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went. Have kids form trios.

Say: **Today you're all going to be sculptors. But instead of using clay or bronze, you're going to make human sculptures! I'll whisper an object from God's amazing world, and your trio will work together to form a human sculpture of that object. Each person in your trio must be part of the sculpture. I'll give you a few moments to think about how to form your object, and then the rest of the group will try to guess what your object is.**

Go around the room and whisper the name of an object to each trio. Suggest objects such as flowers, birds, and trees.

After trios have presented their sculptures, lead the group in a round of applause.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What was the hardest part of creating your sculptures?**
- **What did you like about being creative in using only your bodies to sculpt an object?**
- **How have you shown that you're a creative person?**

Say: **You did a great job thinking of ways to use your bodies to sculpt other objects. That takes a lot of creativity! God was very creative, too, when ▶ GOD MADE THE WORLD. Our Key Verse is about what God did in the beginning. Let's learn today's Key Verse, Genesis 1:1, and sing a song about it.**

Genesis 1:1
Supplies

Bible
CD player
copies of the lyrics page (at the end of this lesson)
Teacher Pack
CD: "Genesis 1:1" (track 2)

Genesis 1:1

What You'll Do

Ask a willing child to read aloud the Key Verse, Genesis 1:1: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."

Lead kids in repeating the Key Verse with you. Then pass out copies of the lyrics and play "Genesis 1:1" (track 2 on the CD). Sing along with the kids.

Genesis 1:1:
It's a whole lotta fun,
'Cause that's where it all started,
Before the Red Sea parted,
Before God told Noah
To build a big boat,
Way before Joshua
Marched around Jericho.

(Chorus)
In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. Yeah!
In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. Yeah!

Genesis 1:1:
It's a whole lotta fun,
'Cause that's where it all started,
Before the Red Sea parted,
Before God told Abraham
He'd be the father of nations,
Way before Jesus
Came to redeem us.

(Sing chorus.)

Genesis 1:1:
It's a whole lotta fun,
'Cause that's where it all started,
Before the Red Sea parted.
Before God told David
That he could slay a giant,
Way before me
And everything I see. Yeah!

(Sing chorus 2x.)

Genesis 1:1.
Genesis 1:1.
Genesis 1:1.
Genesis 1:1.

"Genesis 1:1" by Jay Stocker. © 2005 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.

After the song, lead kids in shouting out the Key Verse together one more time: **"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Genesis 1:1).**

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What do you imagine when you think about God creating the heavens and the earth?**
- **What are some things you've made at home or school?**
- **What's your favorite thing to make?**

Say: **There are lots of things we enjoy creating, and God enjoyed creating the world around us. Let's find out how ▶ GOD MADE THE WORLD—including us!**

2 BIBLE **EXPLORATION**

In the Beginning

In the Beginning
Supplies

Bibles
CD player
several pairs of scissors
paper
colored construction paper
pens
washable markers
tape
staplers
6 poster boards
Teacher Pack
Bible Timeline
CD: "Genesis 1:1" (track 2), "This Is My Father's World" (track 3)
creation stencils

What You'll Do

Show kids the "Creation" picture on the Bible Timeline.

Say: **Well, here we are. Right at the dawn of time when God made the world. Since we're talking about the creation of our world, let's do a little creating ourselves!**

Have kids form six groups, and have groups number off from one to six. Give each group a Bible, and have groups spread out around the room. Assign groups the following Bible passages:

- Group 1: Genesis 1:1-5
- Group 2: Genesis 1:6-8
- Group 3: Genesis 1:9-13
- Group 4: Genesis 1:14-19
- Group 5: Genesis 1:20-23
- Group 6: Genesis 1:24-27

Ask for a willing child in each group to read aloud the Bible passage for the whole group to hear. Allow time.

Say: **Since today's lesson is all about Creation, we're going to create a mural that shows the first six days of Creation. In your group, decide together what you'd like to create or draw on a poster board to show what happened during the day of Creation you read about in your Bible passage. For example, if you're in Group 5, you might make oceans, sea creatures, sky, clouds, and birds.**

As you plan your poster boards, you can draw or write your notes on paper and decide how everyone in your group will contribute to the project. You'll have stencils, markers, scissors, colored construction paper, tape, and a stapler to use for creating your posters. I'll give you 15 minutes to make your posters, so you can make them pretty elaborate. Then each group will have two minutes to share with everyone.

As kids are working, play "Genesis 1:1" (track 2 on the CD) and "This Is My Father's World" (track 3 on the CD). Circulate among groups to offer assistance as needed and to encourage everyone to participate.

After 10 minutes, tell groups they'll have a few more minutes to wrap up their creations. Then call time, and have kids put away the art supplies and return the creation stencils to the Teacher Pack. Say: **Now each group will have two minutes to share about your poster and tape it to the wall. Tell about what you included on your poster and why. We'll go in order from Group One to Group Six.**

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion as they admire their creations on the poster boards.

Ask:

- **What do you think about what God accomplished on each day of Creation?**
- **What's different about the way you created your posters and the way God created the world?**
- **What are your favorite things from the days of Creation? Why?**
- **Tell about what you like to do to enjoy the world God created.**

Say: **The Bible tells us that ▶ GOD MADE THE WORLD and that everything he created was good. We all have favorite parts of God's creation, but everything he created is important and we can thank God for his creation. Let's think about the things we're glad God created.**

3 WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

Thank-You Notes

What You'll Do

Have kids sit in a circle.

Say: **We're going to start with a game to say thanks to God for the amazing things he created for our world. We'll try to name as many things as we can in one minute. I'll start, and then we'll move to the right around the circle and shout the thing we're thankful for when it's our turn. I think we can name a lot in one minute. I'll give you a little time to think about what things you'd like to shout.** Allow time. **Ready?** Start the game with a creation you're thankful for.

Say: **God created so many awesome things for us to enjoy! Today we've learned how ▶ GOD MADE THE WORLD.**

Thank-You Notes
Supplies

Bible
Bible Truth Sleuth
CD player
pens
copies of the lyrics page (at the end of this lesson)

Teacher Pack
CD: "This Is My Father's World" (track 3)

Thank-You Notes
Easy Prep

Tear out Lesson 1 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book.

The Bible tells us that God made the world in six days. But we can't forget about what God did after that—it's important, too! Ask for a willing child to read aloud Genesis 2:1-3. Say: **Talk to a partner about these questions.**

Ask:

- **What surprises you about *God* taking a rest after his hard work?**
- **Tell about a time you worked really hard.**
- **What do you like about resting after you've worked really hard?**
- **What do you think it means that God made the seventh day holy?**

Say: **God created this wonderful world for us to enjoy. After God finished creating, he rested and said everything was good. God set apart a day each week for us to rest, too, and to think about him and all the good things he's made for us. Let's sing a song to thank God for all he made.**

Pass out copies of the lyrics, and play "This Is My Father's World" (track 3 on the CD). Sing along with the kids.

This is my Father's world,
And to my list'ning ears
All nature sings,
And round me rings
The music of the spheres.
This is my Father's world.
I rest me in the thought
Of rocks and trees,
Of skies and seas—
His hand the wonders wrought.

(Repeat from the beginning.)

"This Is My Father's World" by Maltbie D. Babcock and Franklin L. Sheppard.

Say: **Let's take a few minutes to think about God and say "thank you" to him for his creation. Look at the mural we made. The posters we made represent just a tiny part of the amazing things God's created.** Distribute pens and today's Bible Truth Sleuth pages, and have kids find the "Thank You!" section. Say: **On your page, write a personal thank-you note to God.** Give kids a few minutes to complete their notes. Then have kids form a circle.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **Tell about what you wrote on your thank-you note to God.**
- **What are some ways you've expressed your thanks for God's world or shown how much you enjoy the things he made?**

Say: **God loves us. It's that simple. ▶ GOD MADE THE WORLD and all the good things in it because he loves us and wants us to enjoy and appreciate what he's made. Keep your thank-you notes by your bed this week as a reminder to thank God each day for your favorite things in his creation.**

4 LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

Daily Challenges Supplies

Bible Truth Sleuth pens

What You'll Do

Say: **Let's think this week about how ▶ GOD MADE THE WORLD and how we can thank God for everything he made. One way we can thank God is to do our part to take care of the world. That's your Daily Challenge this week. You can choose several things you can do to take care of God's wonderful creation.**

Have kids find the "Earth Patrol" section on their Bible Truth Sleuth page. Ask them to mark what they choose to do this week and discuss their choices with a partner.

Be sure to commit to specific challenges as well, and tell kids what you've decided to do. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.

Talk With Kids

Ask:

- **What's a practical way you're going to do your Daily Challenge? Share a time, a place, or other ideas.** Allow time.

Say: **▶ GOD MADE THE WORLD, and we can show God how thankful we are by taking care of all he's given us as we follow through on our Daily Challenges this week.**

Weaving Faith at Home
Supplies

Bible Truth Sleuth

Weaving Faith at Home
Easy Prep

Tear out the letter to parents from the back of each Bible Truth Sleuth student book.

Weaving Faith at Home

Send the letter to parents home with your kids or give it to parents when they pick up their children. This is a great way to show families they're important to your church and to support their role as spiritual leaders to their children.

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the commitment they made to caring for the world God created and what they learned about how ▶ **GOD MADE THE WORLD.** Kids can also do the activities in the "HomeConnect" section of their Bible Truth Sleuth pages with their families.

Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church's families. Available at group.com/digital.

Take a couple of minutes to pray with your kids, inviting them to thank God for making the world a wonderful place to live.

Lyrics

Genesis 1:1

Genesis 1:1:
It's a whole lotta fun,
'Cause that's where it all started,
Before the Red Sea parted,
Before God told Noah
To build a big boat,
Way before Joshua
Marched around Jericho.

(Chorus)
In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. Yeah!
In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. Yeah!

Genesis 1:1:
It's a whole lotta fun,
'Cause that's where it all started,
Before the Red Sea parted,
Before God told Abraham
He'd be the father of nations,
Way before Jesus
Came to redeem us.

(Sing chorus.)

Genesis 1:1:
It's a whole lotta fun,
'Cause that's where it all started,
Before the Red Sea parted.
Before God told David
That he could slay a giant,
Way before me
And everything I see. Yeah!

(Sing chorus 2x.)

Genesis 1:1.
Genesis 1:1.
Genesis 1:1.
Genesis 1:1.

"Genesis 1:1" by Jay Stocker. © 2005 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.

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Lyrics

This Is My Father's World

This is my Father's world,
And to my list'ning ears
All nature sings,
And round me rings
The music of the spheres.
This is my Father's world.
I rest me in the thought
Of rocks and trees,
Of skies and seas—
His hand the wonders wrought.

(Repeat from the beginning.)

"This Is My Father's World" by Maltbie D. Babcock and Franklin L. Sheppard.

! OK TO COPY

God Creates Adam and Eve

Genesis 2:4-22

Third-and fourth-graders love to learn new things. They're thirsty for interesting facts. This is a great time to help them understand how great a miracle God's creation of humans was (and is). Use this lesson to help kids discover and thank God for the unique way he created them and consider how they can use their unique abilities to serve God.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started	**User-Friendly** *(about 10 min.)* Guess the uses of various objects, and discuss why God made them.	Bibles, scrap paper, pens, paper	
2 Bible Exploration	**A Day in the Garden** *(about 15 min.)* Use clay and paper to act out the creation of humans and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.	CD player, tape, 1 half sheet of green construction paper and 3 ounces of modeling clay per child **Teacher Pack:** CD	
	Garden of Eden Gazette *(about 10 min.)* Write want ads for Adam and Eve.	1 Bible, 1 index card, and 1 pen per child; tape **Teacher Pack:** "Garden of Eden Gazette" poster	

Bold text *within the lesson is spoken text.*

▶Bible Point

God made us.

Key Verse

"I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made" (Psalm 139:14).

Weaving Faith Into Life

Kids will thank God for making them special and consider how to serve God using their unique talents and abilities.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
3 Weaving Faith Into Life	**God Wants You!** *(about 10 min.)* Write want ads for themselves.	Bible Truth Sleuth, pens	Tear out the Lesson 2 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book.
	Wheel of Faith *(about 15 min.)* Make picture wheels that show how valuable they are to God.	Bibles, Bible Truth Sleuth, CD player, several pairs of scissors, washable markers, pens, one 8½x11 sheet of card stock for every 2 kids, 1 paper fastener per child **Teacher Pack:** CD	Copy the "Wheel of Faith" handout onto card stock. Cut apart the 2 circles, and give each child 1 circle to cut out.
4 Lasting Impressions	**Daily Challenges** *(about 5 min.)* Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	Bible Truth Sleuth	
	Weaving Faith at Home *(about 2 min.)* Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.		

Bold text *within the lesson is spoken text.*

God Creates Adam and Eve

Genesis 2:4-22

BIBLE BACKGROUND FOR LEADERS

God Creates Humans

God communicates through the Bible to give us a spiritual message—to tell us of his love and his plan for us. Because of this focus, we can't always expect everything we read in the Bible to fall in strict chronological order.

Some scholars see problems in the differences between the accounts of the creation of humans in Genesis 1 and Genesis 2. Others, however, see the account in Chapter 2 as an elaboration of Chapter 1. But notice the emphasis in both accounts: God did it. The emphasis in this account is not upon the creation, but upon the Creator.

God Creates Adam

In Genesis 2:7 we see a bit of the "how" of Adam's creation. It's interesting to note that humans were the first of creation not simply spoken into being. God personally formed Adam out of the earth. And then one more difference appears: God breathed life into Adam, and he became a living being. Many here translate *being* as *soul*. No other creature was given that designation. Genesis 1:27 tells us that humans were created in God's image. And after the creation of humans, God announced that his creation was not only "good," it was "very good" (Genesis 1:31).

God Creates Eve

Adam's need for a mate didn't come as a surprise to God. The parade of animals for Adam to name had a purpose beyond the naming: It pointed out to Adam that he was alone, that he didn't have a mate like him—someone who could share his life. After helping Adam come to this realization, God created woman.

Adam and Eve Become One

Many appropriate conclusions have been drawn from Eve's being created from Adam's rib—from his side—such as the intent that the two work side by side, that they be equal to each other in standing before God, and that they become "one flesh" in the bond of marriage. However, Adam lost a rib to make Eve. Without her, he was incomplete. And without Adam, Eve wouldn't have existed. Together, man and woman became a whole being, able to stand together and support each other against the forces that oppose them—just as God had planned from the start.

The Jesus Connection

God made us his very special creation, and because God is good, he gave us Jesus to show us the way to live for God's glory. Take a moment to thank God for the individuals in your ministry and for the unique and beautiful way he created them. You can ask God to help you show them how important they are and write your prayer here.

User-Friendly
Supplies

Bibles
scrap paper
pens
paper

1 GETTING **STARTED**

User-Friendly

What You'll Do

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went. Then have kids form pairs. Give each pair a pen and a sheet of paper, and place the scrap paper where pairs can access it.

Say: **Draw on the pieces of scrap paper one common object—a thing you use every day, and one uncommon object—a thing you don't use very often. Then take five minutes to brainstorm with your partner about why the objects you drew were made. For each object, write down on your sheet of paper as many uses as you can think of. Ready? Go!**

After five minutes, call time. Have pairs take turns presenting the uses for each object they drew. Invite kids to share how they came up with their answers.

Say: **Each of these objects, whether common or uncommon, was made for a reason. That means the use of each object was important to its maker.**

Give each pair a Bible, and help kids find today's Key Verse, Psalm 139:14.

Have kids read the verse with you: **"I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made" (Psalm 139:14).**

Talk With Kids

Have pairs discuss the following questions. After each question, have pairs share their answers with the rest of the group.

Ask:

- **What do you think the words "fearfully and wonderfully made" mean?**
- **What do you think about the way God made us "wonderfully?"**

Lead all the kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **Why do you think a maker thinks about the use of an object before it's made?**
- **What are some important things humans do?**
- **What do you think those things tell us about what God had in mind when he made us?**

Say: **Just as the makers of the objects you drew designed those objects for specific reasons, God made each of us for a reason. ▶ GOD MADE US in a special and unique way. We're all important to God. That's amazing! Let's find out more about God designing each of us to be special.**

2 BIBLE EXPLORATION

A Day in the Garden

What You'll Do

Gather kids around one or more tables. Give each child enough clay to make a good-sized gingerbread-type figure.

Say: **I'm going to play a reading from the Bible, and then we'll do some sculpting.**

Play "Adam and Eve, Part 1" (track 4 on the CD), pausing the CD when instructed.

Say: **God formed the first man from the dust of the earth and named him Adam. He was a totally new creation. Use your clay to form the figure of a totally new creation.** Give kids a few minutes to make their clay figures. Say: **Turn to a partner to discuss these questions. After each question, I'll ask pairs to share their answers.**

Ask:

- **What's different about your creation and the way God made Adam?**
- **What do you like about your creation?**

After kids discuss the questions and share responses, say: **Let's see what kind of home God created for Adam.** Play "Adam and Eve, Part 2" (track 5 on the CD), pausing the CD when instructed. Then give each child a half sheet of green construction paper.

Say: **Tear your paper into the rough shape of a leaf. Then fold back one end of the leaf, and come up and tape the leaf to the wall. We'll form a tree with all of our leaves. This tree will represent the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.**

Let kids tape their leaves onto the wall.

Say: **Now discuss these questions with your partner. Be ready to share your discoveries with the rest of the group.** Allow willing pairs to share after each question.

Ask:

- **What do you think the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was all about?**
- **Why do you think God even made a tree in the Garden of Eden that Adam wasn't allowed to eat from? Explain whether or not you think that was fair.**

A Day in the Garden
Supplies

CD player
tape
1 half sheet of green construction paper and 3 ounces of modeling clay per child
Teacher Pack
CD: "Adam and Eve, Parts 1-3" (tracks 4-6)

Say: **No one knows for sure why God made the tree of the knowledge of good and evil or why God told the man not to eat from it. Many people believe that God used the tree as a test of the man's obedience to God, to see if he would listen to and obey God. Let's find out what happened next for Adam in the Garden of Eden.**

Play "Adam and Eve, Part 3" (track 6 on the CD).

Say: **God took one of the man's ribs and used it to form a woman. Divide your clay to form another figure.** After kids have finished, collect the clay.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **Adam named all the animals. What's an animal you'd like to give a new name to, and why?**
- **What do you think about God giving Adam a girl for a helper? What are some things boys often do better than girls? What things do girls often do better?**
- **Tell about a time you had a task or a chore that you couldn't do on your own.**

Say: **God made Adam and Eve in unique ways to do unique things. Together, they could accomplish the job God had for them better than they could alone. God made Adam and Eve for a special purpose and ▶ GOD MADE US for a special purpose, too.**

Garden of Eden Gazette

Garden of Eden Gazette
Supplies

Bibles
index cards
pens
tape
Teacher Pack
"Garden of Eden Gazette" poster

What You'll Do

Give each child an index card, a pen, and a Bible. Tape the "Garden of Eden Gazette" poster to a wall where all the kids can see it, and have kids number off by twos.

Say: **God decided that Adam needed a helper. Sometimes when people need help, they'll place a "help wanted" advertisement in the newspaper. Let's make our own help-wanted ads right now.** Point to the "Garden of Eden Gazette" poster. **Let's pretend this is the world's very first newspaper. Notice the "Help Wanted" section.**

Ones, pretend you're looking for the first man to put in the beautiful Garden of Eden and write want ads for Adam. Twos, you'll write want ads for Eve. Pretend you're Adam and you're looking for a helper. Both groups can look in their Bibles at Genesis 1:26-31 and 2:15-23 for ideas of what responsibilities Adam or Eve might have. What are a few things you could put in Adam's help wanted ad for Eve? Allow kids to share ideas. **What are a few things you could put in the help wanted ad looking for the first man for the garden?** Allow kids to share ideas, and help as needed. **You've got the idea! You'll have five minutes to write your ads.**

Circulate among groups to offer encouragement and help as needed. After five minutes, call time. Let each child read his or her want ad and tape his or her card to the poster.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **Why did you choose to write the things you did for each ad?**
- **What differences do you see between the ad for Adam and the ad for Eve?**
- **Why was it important for Adam and Eve to have different abilities or jobs?**

Say: **God knew exactly what he was doing when he made the first man and woman. He had a plan for their lives, and he made them for a reason. God gave them the strengths and characteristics they needed to do what God designed them to do. ▶ GOD MADE US with a special plan in mind, too. Now it's time to think about why God made you!**

3 WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

God Wants You!

What You'll Do

Distribute pens and today's Bible Truth Sleuth pages, and have kids find the "Help Wanted!" section.

Say: **God made Adam and Eve for a reason, and he made you for a reason, too. Think for a minute about what reasons God may've had for making you—the kinds of jobs he might want you to do. Think about your strengths and talents and the things you like to do. Then write a want ad for yourself from God, detailing those strengths and talents God gave you.** Give kids about five minutes to write.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What did you write on the "help wanted" ad about yourself?**
- **What do you think about the strengths and talents God gave you?**
- **How do those things make you unique?**
- **What do you like to do to use your talents and strengths?**

Say: **God had a reason for making you, just as he did for Adam and Eve. You may not know exactly what that reason is yet, but you can be sure God knew what he was doing when he made you. He didn't mess up! This next activity will help you remember this week that ▶ GOD MADE US special.**

God Wants You!
Supplies

Bible Truth Sleuth pens

God Wants You!
Easy Prep

Tear out the Lesson 2 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book.

Wheel of Faith
Supplies

Bibles
Bible Truth Sleuth
CD player
several pairs of scissors
washable markers
pens
one 8½x11 sheet of card stock for every 2 kids
1 paper fastener per child

Teacher Pack
CD: "This Is My Father's World" (track 3), "Genesis 1:1" (track 2)

Wheel of Faith
Easy Prep

Copy the "Wheel of Faith" handout onto card stock, and give each child 1 circle to cut out.

Wheel of Faith

What You'll Do

Give each child a pen and one of the "Wheel of Faith" card-stock circles, and have scissors available. Have kids find the "Wheel of Faith" section on their Bible Truth Sleuth pages. Say: **Cut out the Wheel of Faith, and then cut out the card-stock circle.**

After kids have cut out their circles, have them cut the gray pie-shaped wedge from their card-stock circles. Use the photos included here.

Say: **You'll each be making a Wheel of Faith to help you remember that ▶ GOD MADE US special. On the card-stock circle with the pie-shaped wedge cut out of it, write the Key Verse using your name on your card stock. For example, I could write "**[Your name] **praises God because** [he/she] **is fearfully and wonderfully made" (Psalm 139:14).** Show kids how to find Psalm 139:14 in the their Bibles as a reference, and help kids as needed as they write the verse on their circles.

Say: **Now think about the want ad you wrote for yourself. On your multicolored circle, draw a picture in each section that represents a way you can serve God with one of your strengths or talents. For example, you could draw yourself helping a family member, playing an instrument in church, or leading your family in a prayer.**

While kids work, play "This Is My Father's World" (track 3 on the CD) and "Genesis 1:1" (track 2 on the CD). When kids have finished drawing, show them how to carefully poke a paper fastener through the center of both circles, attaching the card-stock circle with the Key Verse on top of the circle with the drawings.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What do the things you drew on your Wheel of Faith tell you about the way God made you?**
- **What's your favorite thing on your wheel, and why?**
- **What will you do this week to use your talents for God?**

Say: **Take your Wheel of Faith home, and keep it in your room to remind you that ▶ GOD MADE US—and God made you special. That's why you can serve God in a special way! You can also read the verses on the back and think about the questions as you read.**

4 LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

Daily Challenges Supplies

Bible Truth Sleuth

What You'll Do

Say: **You can thank God this week for making you special, and you can serve God with the strengths he gave you. Remember that ▶ GOD MADE US with special plans in mind and when you serve God with the strengths he gave you, you can live the plans God has for your life. That's exciting!**

Have kids find this week's Daily Challenges on their Bible Truth Sleuth pages and choose one to do this week. They can choose one or more of these three options:

- **Make a sign that shows one unique quality God made in you.**
- **Write a thank-you note to God for making you so special.**
- **Spin the Wheel of Faith to serve God using one of your unique talents and abilities.**

Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell kids what you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.

Talk With Kids

Ask:

- **What's a practical way you're going to do your Daily Challenge? Share a time, a place, or other ideas.** Allow time.

Say: **Let's remember this week as we follow through on our Daily Challenges that ▶ GOD MADE US unique. When we serve him using our talents and special abilities, we show God we're thankful for the way he made us.**

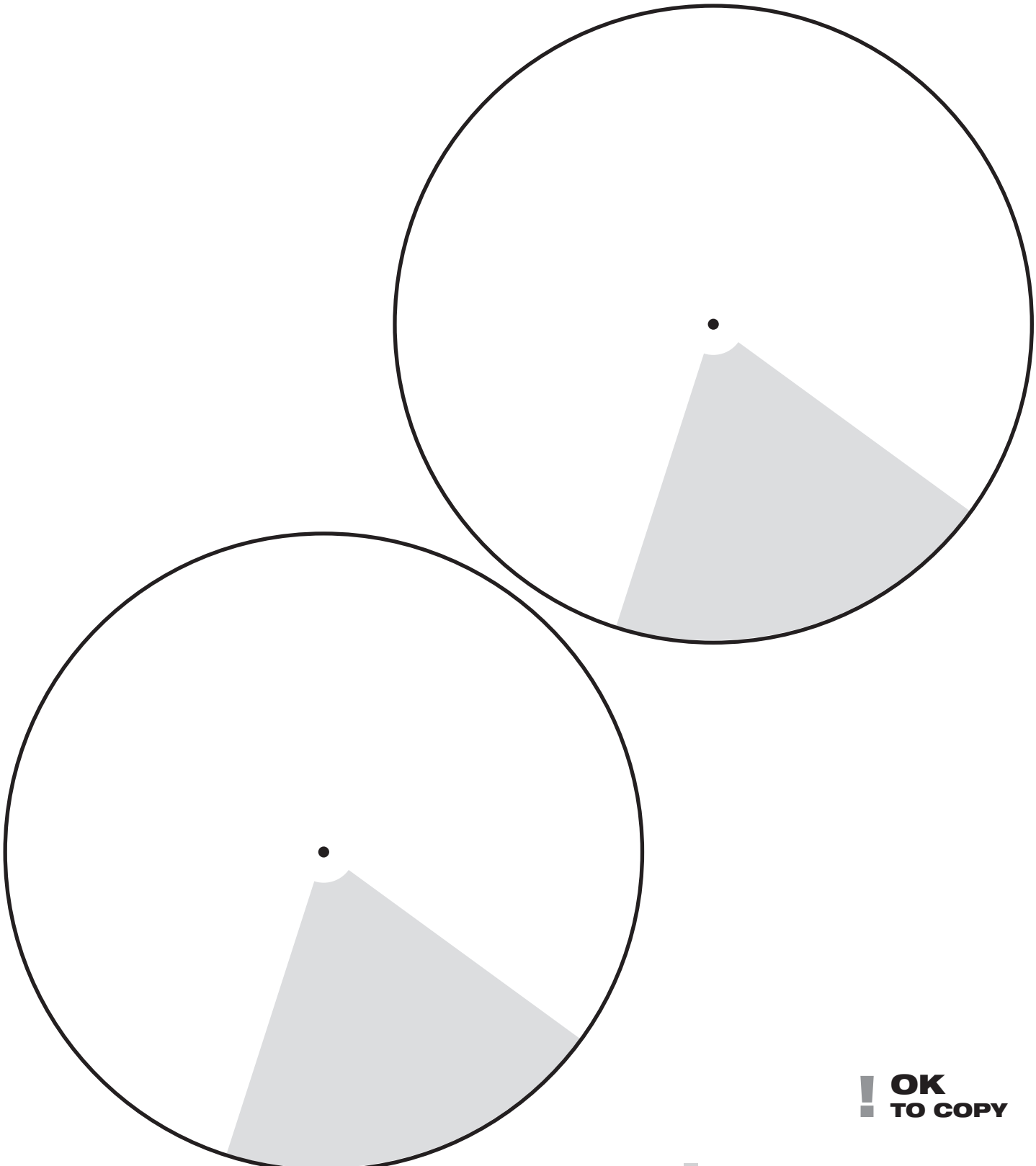
Weaving Faith at Home

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about how ▶ **GOD MADE US.** Kids can also do the activities in the "HomeConnect" section of their Bible Truth Sleuth pages with their families.

Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church's families. Available at group.com/digital.

Take a couple of minutes to pray with your kids, thanking God for a special quality you see in each child.

Wheel of Faith



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Adam and Eve Sin

Genesis 3

Third-and fourth-graders have a broadening, yet often unclear, understanding of right and wrong. They may choose to follow rules because conforming to socially acceptable practices is important to them. They may choose to disobey because of social pressures, too. Use this lesson to stress the scriptural basis for the wrongfulness of sin and explore God's solution.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started	**Separation Anxiety** *(about 10 min.)* Learn how sin separates us from God.	Bible	
2 Bible Exploration	**The Serpent Speaks** *(about 30 min.)* Experience a drama from Genesis 3 about Eve and the serpent.	Bibles, Bible Truth Sleuth, CD player, one 1x4-inch construction-paper strip per child, pens, tape, washable markers **Teacher Pack:** Bible Timeline, CD	Tear out the Lesson 3 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book.

Bold text *within the lesson is spoken text.*

▶Bible Point
God doesn't want us to sin.

Key Verse
"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23).

Weaving Faith Into Life
Children will understand we all sin and that a relationship with Jesus bridges the gap sin creates between us and God.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
3 Weaving Faith Into Life	**Bridging the Gap** *(about 20 min.)* Make bridges as reminders that Jesus is the way back to God.	Bibles, Bible Truth Sleuth, CD player, 3 index cards per child, tape, markers, several pairs of scissors **Teacher Pack:** CD	
4 Lasting Impressions	**Daily Challenges** *(about 5 min.)* Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	Bible Truth Sleuth	
	Weaving Faith at Home *(about 2 min.)* Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.		

Bold text *within the lesson is spoken text.*

Adam and Eve Sin

Genesis 3

BIBLE BACKGROUND FOR LEADERS

Adam and Eve Choose to Disobey God

The first thing we read about is the crafty serpent used by Satan to deceive the first humans. The serpent's first question demonstrated his craftiness. He must've known what God had really commanded about the fruit of a particular tree in the Garden of Eden, but asking the question made Eve begin to reconsider. The serpent, knowing he'd made Eve question God, proceeded to take his deception further, suggesting that God didn't have Eve's best interests in mind. Eve took the bait and ate the fruit—and Adam ate after her.

Adam and Eve "Hide" From God

As always, temptation promised more than the sin delivered. Adam and Eve didn't become "like God," but instead faced the reality that they'd disobeyed God. Suddenly their nakedness, which had been natural when all was good, seemed wrong. They decided to hide from God.

God was angry. The beings he had created and provided for so bountifully had turned against him. They'd refused to trust him. But God came looking for them, knowing well what had happened. Here God showed his character and established an important pattern: When people sin and turn against God, God seeks them out and draws them to himself. God loves his people—no matter what.

Adam and Eve Leave the Garden

God's constant love for us doesn't mean we can avoid the consequences of sin. The rest of this passage relates the consequences of Adam and Eve's sin, which from that point on fell upon all humanity. However, the banishing of Adam and Eve from the garden wasn't so much for punishment as for their protection. Now that they'd sinned, sin would be part of them as long as they lived. Should they eat of the tree of life in the garden, they would live forever under the power of sin. Only physical death could save them from such a life. And God had a plan to save them from spiritual death, a plan that likely is hinted at in Genesis 3:15: Jesus would come and experience death, but he would defeat Satan forever!

The Jesus Connection

When have you battled with sin, and what was the outcome? God seeks us and loves us even when we betray him, and he gives us forgiveness and eternal life through Jesus' sacrifice. God has given us an example to follow and a source of strength and support—in Jesus. Jesus can help us be faithful to God. Ask Jesus to help you resist sin and faithfully follow God's laws. You can write your prayer here.

Separation Anxiety Supplies

Bible

1 GETTING STARTED

Separation Anxiety

What You'll Do

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went. Place a Bible on a chair against a wall. Then tell kids to stand shoulder to shoulder near the chair, facing the Bible.

Say: **People were created to have a close relationship with God. This Bible represents God, so you're standing very close to God right now.**

▶ **GOD DOESN'T WANT US TO SIN, but all humans do and it moves us away from God. Let's take one giant step backward.** Have kids take a step away from the Bible. **Now let's talk about some things humans might do that are sins. Raise your hand to share a sin that you think can move us away from God, and we'll take another step away from the Bible for each one.** If kids need help, suggest things such as disobeying parents, telling lies, saying angry or hurtful words, and being mean to others.

Say: **Look at how far away from God our sins can take us! Sit down where you are.** Pause. **Now turn to the person sitting closest to you. Answer the following questions with your partner, and be ready to share your answers with the rest of the group after each question.**

Ask:

- **What did this activity show us about sin?**
- **Why do you think God doesn't want us to sin?**

Say: **When we sin, we're actually taking steps away from God. And we all do it—we all sin. Let's see what our Key Verse, Romans 3:23, has to say about it.** Open your Bible to Romans 3:23 and show kids the words. **Repeat the verse after me: "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23).**

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What do you think it means to "fall short of the glory of God"?**
- **Why does sin make us fall short?**
- **Is there a way to get back to God after we've sinned? Talk about that.**

Say: **Just as the Bible never moved in our activity, God never moves. His love is constant, and he always wants us to come back to him. ▶ GOD DOESN'T WANT US TO SIN, but when we do God still loves us. In the Bible today, we'll learn about**

the first time Adam and Eve sinned. God could've destroyed Adam and Eve when they disobeyed. Instead, he took care of them. Let's find out more.

2 BIBLE EXPLORATION

The Serpent Speaks

What You'll Do

Point to the "Creation" picture on the Bible Timeline.

Say: **Adam and Eve were among God's first creations, way back at the beginning of time. When God created Adam and Eve everything was going great in the world—in fact, it was perfect. The Garden of Eden where Adam and Eve lived was beautiful and they had plenty to eat. God told Adam and Eve they could eat from any tree in the garden except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. We're going to listen in on what happened next. Let's join Eve. She's just about to have a conversation with a snake!**

Have kids form trios to listen to the CD. Play "The Serpent Speaks, Part 1" (track 7 on the CD), pausing the CD when instructed. Then have kids discuss the following questions in their trios and share their answers with the rest of the group.

Ask:

- **What did you notice about the way the snake made eating from the tree sound so good?**
- **Tell about a time someone tried to talk you into disobeying.**

Say: **The snake is tempting Eve to sin, or disobey God. If she eats the fruit, she'll be giving in to that temptation and sinning.**

Have trios discuss these questions and then share their answers with the rest of the group.

Ask:

- **What are things that tempt you to disobey?**
- **What makes those things so tempting?**

Say: **We're all tempted every day, just as Eve was tempted in the garden. Let's work together to make a paper snake as a reminder that we all face temptation.**

Give each trio a washable marker and three construction paper strips, and have tape available. Say: **Write on each strip one temptation that kids your age can struggle with at home, school, or anywhere you go.** Allow time for kids write. **Now form loops with your strips, linking each loop through another, and tape the loops together to form a paper chain. Make sure the words face out so you can still read them.**

The Serpent Speaks
Supplies

Bibles
Bible Truth Sleuth
CD player
one 1x4-inch construction-paper strip per child
pens
tape
washable markers
Teacher Pack
Bible Timeline
CD: "The Serpent Speaks, Parts 1-3" (tracks 7-9)

The Serpent Speaks
Easy Prep

Tear out the Lesson 3 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book.

Have trios each read for the group what's written on their links. Say: **Now your groups can join chains together to make one long "snake." Work together to drape the snake over a chair like he's on the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.** Allow time, and then have kids sit in their trios facing the snake.

Point to the paper chain snake and say: **The things you wrote down are some of the things that can tempt us, just as the sneaky snake tempted Eve. Let's see what happened next.** Play "The Serpent Speaks, Part 2" (track 8 on the CD), pausing the CD when instructed.

Distribute pens and today's Bible Truth Sleuth pages. Have kids find the "What Do You Think?" section. Say: **Write your answers to the questions on the page using the lines below each question. When you're done writing, discuss your answers with your trio.** Allow time. Then invite trios to share their discussions with the rest of the group.

Say: **God could've made it impossible for Adam and Eve to eat from that tree. Instead, God told them not to eat the fruit, and he told them what would happen if they disobeyed. But God still gave them a choice. God gives us the same freedom to choose whether to obey or not. Let's find out what Eve chose to do.**

Play "The Serpent Speaks, Part 3" (track 9 on the CD).

Say: **When Adam and Eve chose to eat the fruit from the tree, they chose to sin.**

Have trios discuss the following questions. After each question, let trios share their answers with the rest of the group.

Ask:

- **What do you think about the way Adam and Eve gave in to temptation?**
- **What makes it easy or difficult to choose not to sin when you feel tempted?**
- **What do you think Adam and Eve deserved for choosing to sin?**

Say: **Adam and Eve realized they'd sinned, and they hid. They were afraid of what God would do. Let's find out what God actually did.**

Give each trio a Bible. Say: **Your trio will read a section from Genesis 3:14-24 and then summarize the section for the rest of the group.** Give each trio one of the following sets of verses to read. It's okay to repeat, but make sure every set of verses is covered: Genesis 3:14-15; Genesis 3:16; Genesis 3:17-19; Genesis 3:20-24. Then have trios sum up the punishment given out in their passage.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **Who do you think deserved the harsher punishment? Explain.**
- **Who do you think *got* the harsher punishment? Explain.**
- **In what ways did God show love to Adam and Eve despite their sin?**

- **Explain whether you think God's response to Adam and Eve's sin was a light punishment, just right, or too harsh.**

Say: ▶ **GOD DOESN'T WANT US TO SIN, because sin cuts off our relationship with him. Adam and Eve's sin meant they had to leave the nice garden God had made for them. God wants to have a relationship with each one of us, so he sent Jesus to bridge the gap sin puts between us and God. Let's find out more about how a relationship with Jesus can bring us close to God again.**

3 WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

Bridging the Gap

Bridging the Gap Supplies

Bibles
Bible Truth Sleuth
CD player
3 index cards per child
tape
markers
several pairs of scissors
Teacher Pack
CD: "Your Word in My Heart" (Psalm 119:11) (track 10)

What You'll Do

Have kids form pairs, and give each pair a Bible. Invite one child in each pair to read aloud Romans 5:19.

Ask:

- **What do you think this verse means?**

Say: **When we read in the verse about the disobedience of one man, we're reading about Adam. When we read about the obedience of another man, we're reading about Jesus. So we could actually read the verse this way: "For just as through the disobedience of Adam the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of Jesus the many will be made righteous." Turn to your partner and talk about who you think "the many" are.** Allow time, and then invite willing kids to share their answers. **Because of Adam and Eve and our own weakness in temptation, we all do wrong even though ▶ GOD DOESN'T WANT US TO SIN. Because of Jesus, we can have our relationship with God again.** Invite the other child in each pair to read aloud John 3:16-17.

Ask:

- **What do you think of God's plan to save us from sin through his Son, Jesus?**

Say: **When we believe in Jesus and have a relationship with him, we'll be forgiven for our sins. Then we can be close to God again. It's as though Jesus is our bridge back to God. Without Jesus, we wouldn't be able to get back to God. Let's make bridges to remind us that Jesus is our way back to God.**

Give each pair a marker and scissors, and give each child three index cards. Have tape available for kids to share.

Say: **You can use two of the index cards to make the bridge supports and the other card to make the crosspiece.** Show kids how to roll each index card around a marker to make a tube, and then show them how to tape together the long edges of each tube. As kids work, play "Your Word in My Heart" (Psalm 119:11) (track 10 on the CD).

Next, show kids how to flatten each taped tube to form a rough 3-D rectangular shape. On two of the rectangles, show kids how to snip four equal cuts about one-half inch on all four corners, both top and bottom. Have kids fold back the edges where the cuts are. These are the bridge supports. Then show kids how to stand the two bridge supports next to each other and place the third rectangle across the tops of the supports to form the crosspiece. Have kids tape the crosspiece in place, and then direct kids to their Bible Truth Sleuth pages.

Say: **Carefully cut out the rectangular "Bridging the Gap" statements at the bottom of your Bible Truth Sleuth page to attach to your bridges. Statement #1 should be attached to the left support, #2 to the right support, and #3 to the crosspiece.**

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **Why is Jesus the only way for us to get close to God again?**
- **What are ways you can show Jesus you're thankful he's the bridge back to God?**

Say: **Remember that ▶ GOD DOESN'T WANT US TO SIN, but when we mess up and disobey God—like Adam and Eve did—we can be forgiven. Put your bridge near your bed to remind you that because of Jesus and his love, we have a way back to God.**

4 LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

What You'll Do

Say: **We learned today that ▶ GOD DOESN'T WANT US TO SIN. Our Key Verse tells us that we all fall short of the glory of God—because of sin. God solved the sin problem by sending his Son, Jesus, to help us get close to God again.**

Have kids find this week's Daily Challenges on their Bible Truth Sleuth pages and choose one to do this week. They can choose one or more of these three options:

- **Make a list of sins you commit this week. Write in pencil! At the end of the week, ask God to forgive you and help you do the right thing. Then erase your sin list.**
- **Even if you feel that telling a lie would save you trouble, tell the truth anyway.**
- **When you make a mistake and sin, as all humans do, ask God for forgiveness and ask him to help you make a better choice next time.**

Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell kids what you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.

Talk With Kids

Ask:

- **What's a practical way you're going to do your Daily Challenge? Share a time, a place, or other ideas.** Allow time.

Say: **Let's remember that just as God didn't want Adam and Eve to sin, ▶ GOD DOESN'T WANT US TO SIN. As we follow through on our Daily Challenges this week, we'll be obeying God.**

Weaving Faith at Home

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about why ▶ **GOD DOESN'T WANT US TO SIN.** Kids can also do the activities in the "HomeConnect" section of their Bible Truth Sleuth pages with their families.

Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church's families. Available at group.com/digital.

Have kids form trios and pray together, thanking God for sending his Son, Jesus, and asking for help in making choices to stay away from sin in areas they struggle with.

Daily Challenges
Supplies

Bible Truth Sleuth

Cain Kills Abel

Genesis 4:1-16

Third-and fourth-graders are in a time of budding independence. They'll start participating in sleepovers, overnight camps, and other activities that pull them out of the family sphere and into the influence of others. But kids this age will still have a strong tie to their families and can easily grasp the importance of loving their family members. Use this lesson to help kids discover that loving their families is something God wants them to do, always.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started	**Damage Control** *(about 15 min.)* Learn the Key Verse, and apply it to life.	Bibles, CD player, copies of the lyrics page (at the end of this lesson), paper, pens **Teacher Pack:** CD	
2 Bible Exploration	**Interview With God's First Family** *(about 30 min.)* Create interview questions for the first family.	Bibles, Bible Truth Sleuth, CD player, pens, paper **Teacher Pack:** CD	Tear out the Lesson 4 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book.

Bold text *within the lesson is spoken text.*

▶Bible Point
God wants us to love our families.

Key Verse
"Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves" (Romans 12:10).

Weaving Faith Into Life
Kids will actively find ways to love their families.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
3 Weaving Faith Into Life	**Don't Do as Cain Did** *(about 15 min.)* Make a reminder of what they learned from the Bible.	paper, washable markers or crayons	
4 Lasting Impressions	**Daily Challenges** *(about 5 min.)* Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	Bible Truth Sleuth	
	Weaving Faith at Home *(about 2 min.)* Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.	Comic strips from the "Don't Do as Cain Did" activity	

Bold text *within the lesson is spoken text.*

Cain Kills Abel

Genesis 4:1-16

BIBLE BACKGROUND FOR LEADERS

Brothers Cain and Abel

Cain and Abel, the first two humans born on earth, chose different occupations. This early in human history, we see that God created people to be different—to have different interests and skills.

Cain Grows Jealous of Abel

Abel's sacrifice to God came from true gratitude for what God had done for him; Cain's apparently came from a feeling of obligation to maintain God's favor. Abel offered the best he had; Cain offered simply a sampling of his fruits. It's likely that God accepted or rejected their sacrifices based on the attitude of the giver's heart. God wants our best and wants our hearts to be right.

God to Cain: Be Careful What You Do

God knew Cain was at a dangerous junction. In Genesis 4:7, God's message to Cain was a loving warning—be careful what you do; sin can get the best of you. Unfortunately, Cain's jealousy got the best of him. The evil started by Adam and Eve continued. Cain proceeded with his planned deception and murdered his younger brother, Abel.

God Is Merciful to Cain

God didn't question Cain after the murder to gain information. God was offering him a chance to admit his sin and repent. As with Adam and Eve, Cain's sin in killing Abel was followed by a second sin: trying to hide the sin from God. God's second question to Cain was one of accusation, encouraging Cain to consider what he had done.

When God pronounced judgment upon Cain for his sin, Cain finally came to his senses and realized that separation from God would mean his own death. As with Adam and Eve, God was merciful, providing protection for Cain even though he didn't deserve it.

Jealousy and sin ripped apart the family of Adam and Eve. Yet this was the family through whom God worked to populate the earth. God must've known from the beginning what a sinful bunch these humans would be, yet he loved them just the same. And that's a very comforting message for us today.

The Jesus Connection

God has taught us about love through Jesus' life and through our own families. And he'll help us love family members the way Jesus loves us: mercifully and unconditionally. How has God taught you about love through your family? Take some time to write a prayer for each member of your immediate family, expressing how God has loved you through them and expressing your love for them. You can also pray for the families in your ministry. You can write your prayer here.

Damage Control
Supplies

Bibles
CD player
copies of the lyrics page (at the end of this lesson)
paper
pens
Teacher Pack
CD: "Brotherly Love" (Romans 12:10) (track 12)

1 GETTING **STARTED**

Damage Control

What You'll Do

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went. Have kids form pairs, and give each pair a sheet of paper and a pen.

Say: **We're going to talk about things that make us angry and jealous within our families. With your partner, come up with a situation that would make someone angry at a family member or jealous of something a family member has or does. Write that situation on your paper.** Give pairs about three minutes to work. Then have pairs tell everyone the situations they came up with.

Say: ▶ **GOD WANTS US TO LOVE OUR FAMILIES, because God knows what can happen if we don't. That's why today's Key Verse, Romans 12:10, is so important.** Hand out Bibles, and have kids look up Romans 12:10 and read it aloud in their pairs. Then lead kids in reading the verse as a group: **"Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves" (Romans 12:10).**

Today we have a special song, written just for this verse. Let's learn and sing it.

Pass out copies of the lyrics, and play "Brotherly Love" (Romans 12:10) (track 12 on the CD). Sing along with the kids.

Yeah, yeah,
Yeah, yeah,
Yeah, yeah,
Yeah.

Be devoted to one another
In brotherly love, in brotherly love.
Be devoted to one another
In brotherly love, in brotherly love.

Your love must be real;
It must be sincere.
Honor one another above yourselves.

Be devoted to one another
In brotherly love, in brotherly love.
(Repeat 4x.)

"Brotherly Love" (Romans 12:10) by Jay Stocker. © 2004 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.

When the song ends, have kids trade the situations they wrote about earlier with another pair, making sure each pair gets a different situation. Say: **Now let's talk about ways to control angry and jealous emotions. Think about the words to the Key Verse we just learned. Read the new situation with your partner, and tell each other one way to follow the advice of the Key Verse in that particular situation.** Give pairs time to read and discuss.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What do you think it means to be devoted to your family?**
- **What are some ways family members show how important they are to each other?**
- **What examples did you come up with to apply the Key Verse to your situation?**
- **What makes it easy or difficult to follow what the Key Verse says when you're angry or upset?**

Say: **There are no perfect families. Every family has tough times. People get mad at or jealous of one another. But ▶ GOD WANTS US TO LOVE OUR FAMILIES, and we can do that by obeying our Key Verse even when it's difficult. Let's say our Key Verse together one more time.** Lead kids in saying the verse with you: **"Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves" (Romans 12:10). Let's learn about the first family God created and how well they did with loving each other.**

2 BIBLE EXPLORATION

Interview With God's First Family

What You'll Do

Have kids form trios. Distribute today's Bible Truth Sleuth pages, and give each group at least one Bible, pens, and several sheets of paper. Have kids find the "Interview With God's First Family" section on their Bible Truth Sleuth pages.

Say: **Let's pretend that we get to interview Adam and Eve's family. Each group will create interview questions you'd like to ask after reading each section of the Bible passage. Each section can be found on your Bible Truth Sleuth page, and you can write your questions on the lines below the section that tells you which verses to read.**

You'll have 20 minutes to read all the sections and come up with your interview questions, so spend about three minutes on each section. Later, you'll share your questions with the entire group. Encourage kids to refer to their Bibles for details

Interview With God's First Family
Supplies

Bibles
Bible Truth Sleuth
CD player
pens
paper
Teacher Pack
CD: "Newsroom Noise" (track 11)

Interview With God's
Easy Prep

Tear out the Lesson 4 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book.

about each section of the Bible passage. Circulate among groups to offer help as needed. Encourage kids in each group to work as a real news team to create interviews like those seen on television news programs.

Play "Newsroom Noise" (track 11 on the CD) six times as kids work. After 20 minutes, call time. Read the headline from each section of the Bible Truth Sleuth page, and allow a few groups to share some of their best interview questions for that section. After all groups have presented their best questions for each section, lead everyone in a huge round of applause for putting together excellent interviews.

Say: **The world's first family certainly had problems with anger and jealousy! And our interview questions are great for trying to better understand why the first family acted the way they did. It's too bad we can't go back in time and ask Adam, Eve, Cain, and Abel these questions!**

Talk With Kids

Say: **In your trios, discuss the following questions. After each question, I'll invite you to share your discoveries.**

Ask:

- **What do you think about Abel's sacrifice to God compared with Cain's?**
- **What do you think of Cain's actions?**

Say: **The Bible doesn't tell us why God liked Abel's offering more than Cain's. The Bible *does* say that Abel brought his best portion to God. There must have been something wrong with Cain's attitude when he brought his offering to God. Maybe Cain didn't offer his best. No matter the details, God had warned Cain and told him how to do better.**

Lead all the kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What are some things Cain could've done to love his family instead of hurting them?**
- **What can you do to follow God when you feel angry or jealous of a family member?**
- **What are good things that happen when we love our families?**

Say: **Anger and jealousy tore apart Cain's family, and it can tear apart families today. God warned Cain that his anger was getting out of control, and God gave him a chance to change his ways. We have the same chance, and we can choose to do what God wants us to do. ▶ GOD WANTS US TO LOVE OUR FAMILIES. Let's make a reminder of what we've learned today to help us not repeat Cain's mistakes.**

3 WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

Don't Do as Cain Did

What You'll Do

Say: **We can learn from Cain's hard lesson without having to go through the situation he did. ▶ GOD WANTS US TO LOVE OUR FAMILIES and not hurt them the way Cain did. Let's work together to create a reminder of that lesson.**

Set out paper and markers or crayons. Say: **You'll have 10 minutes to create a comic strip showing how you can handle a situation that caused anger or jealousy in your family. Think of ways you can choose to act differently than Cain did.** Help kids as needed. After kids finish, invite willing kids to share their comic strip with the rest of the group.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What have you done in the past when something's caused anger or jealousy in your family?**
- **What do you want to do differently after hearing about the way jealousy tore apart Cain's family?**

Say: **It's good to want to act differently than Cain and learn from how he treated his family. ▶ GOD WANTS US TO LOVE OUR FAMILIES. When you learn from Cain's mistakes, your past mistakes, and the mistakes of others, you'll find the best ways to love your family.**

Don't Do as Cain Did
Supplies

paper
washable markers or crayons

4 LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

What You'll Do

Say: **God gave us our families, and ▶ GOD WANTS US TO LOVE OUR FAMILIES. When we do, we're not only loving our family members, but we're showing God love, too. Look at the Daily Challenges on your Bible Truth Sleuth pages, and choose how you can love your family this week. You can choose one or more of these three options:**

Daily Challenges
Supplies

Bible Truth Sleuth

- **I'll share my _____—something I don't usually share—with a family member.**
- **I'll let a family member be first at anything he or she wants this week.**
- **I'll do something nice for a family member. That nice thing will be _____.**

Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell kids what you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.

Talk With Kids

Ask:

- **What's a practical way you're going to do your Daily Challenge? Share a time, a place, or other ideas.** Allow time.

Say: **Cain was everything *but* loving to his brother. ▶ GOD WANTS US TO LOVE OUR FAMILIES, and when we follow through on our Daily Challenges this week, we'll be doing exactly that.**

Weaving Faith at Home
Supplies

Comic strips from the "Don't Do as Cain Did" activity

Weaving Faith at Home

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about how ▶ **GOD WANTS US TO LOVE OUR FAMILIES.** Kids can also do the activities in the "HomeConnect" section of their Bible Truth Sleuth pages with their families.

Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church's families. Available at group.com/digital.

Have kids exchange comic strips with a partner and silently pray for the situation in their partner's drawing. Then pray aloud: **God, we need your help to love our families the way you'd like us to love them. Please help us remember to always love our family members, even when it's difficult. In Jesus' name, amen.**

Lyrics

Brotherly Love (Romans 12:10)

Yeah, yeah,
Yeah, yeah,
Yeah, yeah,
Yeah.

Be devoted to one another
In brotherly love, in brotherly love.
Be devoted to one another
In brotherly love, in brotherly love.

Your love must be real;
It must be sincere.
Honor one another above yourselves.

Be devoted to one another
In brotherly love, in brotherly love.
(Repeat 4x.)

"Brotherly Love" (Romans 12:10) by Jay Stocker. © 2004 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.

! OK TO COPY

Noah Builds the Ark

Genesis 6:5-22

Third-and fourth-graders are the gatekeepers of the rules. They're keenly aware of who's obeying and who isn't. A child this age may also see obedience as a way to keep the social fabric of his or her world together, even to the point of policing peers. Use this lesson to affirm kids' desire to obey, but remind them that kindness to others, as well as obedience, pleases God.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started	**Instant Arks** *(about 15 min.)* Obey a series of instructions to make parts of a picture.	washable markers, large poster board, ruler, scissors, tape **Teacher Pack:** "Instant Ark" cards	Cut apart the "Instant Ark" cards. Hang the poster board on a smooth wall.
2 Bible Exploration	**All Aboard!** *(about 25 min.)* Study God's instructions to Noah, and make plans for how to obey.	Bibles, pens, paper, washable markers, tape, scissors, brown paper grocery bag, cardboard shoebox, craft sticks, 1 copy of each of 4 signs (at the end of this lesson) **Teacher Pack:** "Noah's Ark" poster, Bible Timeline	Set up the following stations in different parts of the room, each with a Bible, pens, paper, markers, and the additional items listed below: • Station 1: "How Big Was It?" sign • Station 2: "Shopping List" sign • Station 3: "Shipyards" sign, tape, craft sticks, scissors, cardboard shoe box, brown paper grocery bag • Station 4: "The Floating Zoo" sign

Bold text *within the lesson is spoken text.*

▶Bible Point
God wants us to obey.

Key Verse
"We must obey God rather than men!" (Acts 5:29).

Weaving Faith Into Life
Children will create a plan of obedience.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
3 Weaving Faith Into Life	**Navigational Chart** *(about 20 min.)* Think of ways to help them obey God.	Bible Truth Sleuth, pens	Tear out the Lesson 5 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book.
4 Lasting Impressions	**Daily Challenges** *(about 5 min.)* Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	Bible Truth Sleuth	
	Weaving Faith at Home *(about 2 min.)* Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.	Map from the "Navigational Chart" activity	

Bold text *within the lesson is spoken text.*

Noah Builds the Ark

Genesis 6:5-22

BIBLE BACKGROUND FOR LEADERS

A Drastic Solution to a Huge Problem

God's statement in Genesis 6:7 grew out of pain and was a sorrowful acknowledgment that to make things better, most of the earth's population would have to die. The people that God created had so turned against him that he had to start over with the few who remained faithful.

Fortunately, one righteous man still loved God. The word translated "righteous" in verse 9 indicates that Noah sought both to worship and obey God and also to live in fairness with his human neighbors who didn't share his values. Noah was a shining example of goodness in a dark world.

Consider the immensity of the task Noah undertook. The ark was one and a half times the length of a football field, as wide as a high-school basketball court is long, and as tall as a five-story building. There were to be three decks inside and many rooms to house all the different animals. All of this was to be built of a particular kind of wood (which we can't identify precisely) in an arid area where wood likely was not plentiful.

A Unique, Sea-Worthy Vessel

Obviously no one had ever built a floating zoo of that size. Fortunately, God knew what he was doing. Modern shipbuilding experts have confirmed that the dimensions given in the Bible would be ideal to ensure that a large wooden vessel would remain intact and upright while adrift in heavy seas.

In addition to caring for his family, Noah was given the responsibility of housing and feeding two of every kind of animal in the ark (Genesis 6:19, 21). In an amazing miracle, God led all the animals to the ark at just the right time. And the reason there were seven pairs of certain animals was so that Noah would have animals to sacrifice in worship without wiping out a species (Genesis 7:2-3).

We don't know how often Noah was discouraged or if his neighbors and family ridiculed him. But we do know that he "did everything just as God commanded him." And that's a great example of faithful obedience for all of us.

The Jesus Connection

Jesus obeyed God in every turn and detail of his life. When we look to Jesus and follow his example, we're obeying God. What a beautiful way to live!

When has God directed you to do something? It can sometimes seem scary, but it's also exciting because God reveals his faithfulness and strength when we obey him in the things he asks us to do. Take comfort in knowing that when you obey, God will give everything you need to carry out his plans. Ask God what he wants you to do. You can write your prayer here.

Instant Arks
Supplies

washable markers
large poster board
ruler
scissors
tape
Teacher Pack
"Instant Ark" cards

Instant Arks
Easy Prep

Cut apart the "Instant Ark" cards. Hang the poster board on a smooth wall.

1 GETTING **STARTED**

Instant Arks

What You'll Do

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went.

Have kids form six groups, and invite a willing child in each group to be the Artist (he or she won't be allowed to look at the group's instruction card). Then give each group one "Instant Ark" card, making sure the Artist in each group doesn't see the card.

Say: **Each group has a picture on a card that represents your group's directions for creating a picture. We'll go in order of the numbers on the cards and when it's your group's turn, send your Artist up to the poster board to draw. Artists will use a ruler and a marker to draw according to the directions he or she hears from the group.** Pause to allow groups to study their cards and to allow for any questions about the instructions.

Say: **Everyone else in the group, work together to tell your Artist how to draw just the dark black lines you see on your card. Let's start with the group that has card number one.**

If kids have trouble translating the pictures on the cards, use these instructions as a guide:

- **Card 1: Draw a long, horizontal line across the middle of the page.**
- **Card 2: Draw a horizontal line that's centered 10-12 inches below the first line and is half as long as the first line. Connect the top line to the bottom line on each end using lines that curve slightly.**
- **Card 3: Draw a horizontal line that's centered about 3 inches above the first line, and again, about half as long. Draw two vertical lines connecting the ends of this line to the line below it.**
- **Card 4: Draw four vertical lines equally spaced within the top rectangle.**
- **Card 5: Draw a line centered about 3 inches above the top line, and about 2 inches shorter than the top line. Don't connect the ends.**
- **Card 6: Draw a slanted line extending from each end of the top line down just past the top corners of the rectangle.**

Ask:

- **Group Six can see on their card how the drawing is meant to look. What needs to change on our drawing to make it match what you see on the card?**

If the drawing doesn't look quite right, flip the poster board over and allow kids to try once more.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **When you started drawing, what did you think the picture might be?**
- **What made it easy or difficult to obey the instructions?**
- **What makes it easy or difficult to obey instructions at home, at school, or anywhere else?**

Say: **Obeying instructions was important in this activity to be able to draw a picture of the ark—a big boat. In the Bible, Noah had to follow God's instructions exactly to build the ark. God gave Noah clear instructions, while our instructions for drawing the ark were more difficult to understand. Sometimes it's easy to obey God and sometimes it's difficult, but ▶ GOD WANTS US TO OBEY either way. Let's learn more about Noah and why God wanted him to build the ark.**

2 BIBLE EXPLORATION

All Aboard!

What You'll Do

Say: **Today we're going back in time to the days before the giant flood.** Have kids find and point to Noah on the Bible Timeline. Say: **In Noah's time, the world wasn't a very nice place. All the people in the world, except Noah and his family, were evil and it made God sad. God decided to send a flood that would wipe away all living things and basically start over. Because Noah was close to God, God warned him of what was coming and gave him instructions for building an ark. The ark was a massive boat designed to save Noah, his family, and a small portion of the world's animals from the flood water that would cover the entire earth.**

Ask:

- **What do you think of God's plan to give the world a new start?**

Say: **In this activity, you'll have the opportunity to help Noah prepare for the flood. You can choose to work at one of four stations. At Station 1, you'll make a chart to show how big the ark actually was, comparing it with objects we know about today. At Station 2, you'll prepare a shopping list for supplies to be taken onto the ark. At Station 3, you'll build a simple model of the ark. And at Station 4, you'll decide how to care for the animals on the ark.**

Allow kids to each choose one station and move to it. The stations are designed to appeal to different learning styles, and kids will naturally gravitate toward the activity where they'll feel most comfortable. If a station is over- or under-represented, invite willing kids to move to another station.

All Aboard!
Supplies

Bibles
pens
paper
washable markers
tape
scissors
brown paper grocery bag
cardboard shoebox
craft sticks
1 copy of each of 4 signs (at the end of this lesson)

Teacher Pack
"Noah's Ark" poster
Bible Timeline

All Aboard!
Easy Prep

Set up the following stations in different parts of the room, each with a Bible, pens, paper, markers, and the additional items listed below:

- Station 1: "How Big Was It?" sign
- Station 2: "Shopping List" sign
- Station 3: "Shipyards" sign, tape, craft sticks, scissors, cardboard shoe box, brown paper grocery bag
- Station 4: "The Floating Zoo" sign

Say: **At each station, you'll find paper and pens for writing or drawing your plans. Save a piece of paper to make a poster to present to the rest of the group. You'll also find a Bible at each station. Begin by taking turns reading Genesis 6:14-22 to learn more about Noah and the ark. Then discuss how your group will approach your project.**

Make sure everyone in your group is involved. You can use the Bible to check out facts and details. You can also use this "Noah's Ark" poster. Hold up the "Noah's Ark" poster. It has directions to help each group with its assignment. Tape the poster to a wall at kids' eye level. Allow kids up to 15 minutes to work. Remind them of their assignments as needed.

Circulate among groups to offer help and encouragement as needed. Guide kids with these hints:

- At Station 1, kids can draw a picture comparing the size of the ark with a man, a bus, a building, a football field, and so on.
- At Station 2, kids can estimate how much hay and water might be needed to supply all the animals. Or they can discuss what different kinds of food may have been taken aboard.
- At Station 3, kids can build a model of the ark, showing the three decks. Kids could then use tape and craft sticks to make and connect a roof to the body of the ark.
- At Station 4, encourage kids to be creative in thinking of how Noah could've situated the animals. For example: How did Noah keep the birds contained, or didn't he? What kind of watering system could Noah have created? Which animals does it make sense to place next to each other?

After 10 minutes, tell kids to begin wrapping up their projects. After another 5 minutes, have each group make its presentation to the entire group. After each group's presentation, lead everyone in a round of applause.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What was it like to obey the instructions given for your projects? Explain.**
- **Compared with your instructions for your projects, how clear were God's instructions to Noah? Explain.**
- **What do you think might have made Noah's task interesting or boring now that you know more about the ark?**
- **What can you learn from Noah's obedience?**

Say: **Noah knew that he could trust God, so he continued to obey God until his task was complete. He didn't give up on obeying God no matter how hard it might've been. ▶ GOD WANTS US TO OBEY, and we can learn a great lesson from the way Noah obeyed God. You can choose to obey God, even when it isn't easy or when it's hard work.**

3 WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

Navigational Chart

What You'll Do

Have kids form pairs, making sure new partners weren't in the same groups during the last activity.

Say: **Boat captains usually have something called a navigational chart. It's a chart that tells them where to go and where not to go—sort of like a map for the ocean. Let's make charts to help us navigate our lives to obey God. The first thing boat captains must do is figure out what obstacles might be in their way. Let's figure out some obstacles we might run into when we try to obey.**

Distribute pens and today's Bible Truth Sleuth pages, and have kids find the "Navigational Chart." Have each child complete the left side of the chart, titled "Obstacles." Let kids finish writing, and then have them discuss their answers with their partners for a few minutes. Invite willing kids to share their answers.

Say: **Next, captains must figure out possible ways to get around those obstacles. We'll do that for our lives, too. If others create obstacles in our lives, how can we still obey God? Our Key Verse, Acts 5:29, says: "We must obey God rather than men!" (Acts 5:29). Repeat the Key Verse with me.** Lead kids in saying the Key Verse. **Now, work with your partner to think of ways to fill out the right side of the chart, titled "How to Obey."** Give kids a few more minutes to talk and write.

Say: **After captains have made their navigational chart, they use it to create a map that'll help them remember what obstacles to watch for and how to get around them. Let's do that, too! On your Bible Sleuth Truth page, under your chart, you'll see the beginning of a map. Draw pictures to represent the things you listed under "Obstacles." Those are your obstacles to avoid.** Allow time for kids to draw. **Now you can draw a dotted line from Start to Finish, making your way around the obstacles. Along your dotted line, write the Key Verse to show that following God is the way to get around your obstacles.** Allow time.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What discoveries did you make about things that can be obstacles to obeying?**
- **What did you write for things you can say to someone who's trying to get you to do wrong?**
- **Tell about the people you can turn to for help in obeying God.**
- **What else can help you navigate around the obstacles you came up with?**

Navigational Chart
Supplies

Bible Truth Sleuth pens

Navigational Chart
Easy Prep

Tear out the Lesson 5 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book.

Say: **Obeying God means trusting that God knows what's best for you. Noah knew that even though obeying God meant a lot of work, God's directions to build the ark would save him and his family. Unlike people, God will never ask you to obey something that's wrong. ▶ GOD WANTS US TO OBEY him because it's best for us. When we obey God, we chart the best course for our lives.**

4 LASTING **IMPRESSIONS**

Daily Challenges
Supplies

Bible Truth Sleuth

Daily Challenges

What You'll Do

Say: **Let's think about how ▶ GOD WANTS US TO OBEY this week and make a plan of action. Look at the Daily Challenges listed on your Bible Truth Sleuth page, and decide which steps of obedience you'll take for this week. Then discuss it with your partner.**

Kids can choose one or more of these three options:

- **Ask two adults how they've obeyed God in their lives.**
- **Obey your parents the first time they ask you to do something.**
- **Talk to God when it's difficult to obey, and ask for his help.**

Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell kids what you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.

Talk With Kids

Ask:

- **What's a practical way you're going to do your Daily Challenge? Share a time, a place, or other ideas.** Allow time.

Say: **Noah obeyed God by building the ark, and God spared his family in the flood. Let's remember that ▶ GOD WANTS US TO OBEY as we follow through on our Daily Challenges this week.**

Weaving Faith at Home

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about obeying God. Kids can also do the activities in the "HomeConnect" section of their Bible Truth Sleuth pages with their families.

Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church's families. Available at group.com/digital.

Close your time together in prayer, thanking God for being someone we can always trust and asking him to help us obey, just as Noah did. Allow time for kids to pray silently about the obstacles they drew on their maps as they trace their finger on the dotted line they made around the obstacles.

Weaving Faith at Home
Supplies

Map from the "Navigational Chart" activity

How Big Was It?

! OK TO COPY

Shopping List

OK TO COPY

Shipyards

! OK TO COPY

The Floating Zoo

! OK TO COPY

God Floods the Earth

Genesis 7–8; 9:8-16

Many third-and fourth-graders make promises to one another all the time. They promise, "I'll be your best friend" or "I'll invite you to my birthday party." Promises are often disregarded as carelessly as they're made. Sometimes even promises made by parents and other adults are broken, resulting in disappointment and hurt. Use this lesson to help kids discover that God's promises are different. In a world of broken homes and broken promises, kids can find comfort in God—who faithfully keeps his promises.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started	**Promises, Promises** *(about 10 min.)* Learn the difference between promises we make and the promises God makes.	Bibles, 1 index card per child, pens, a permanent marker, medium-size rock	
2 Bible Exploration	**Noah's Photo Album** *(about 35 min.)* Pretend they're photographing Noah's experience on the ark, and draw pictures.	Bibles, Bible Truth Sleuth, CD player, colored pencils **Teacher Pack:** CD	Tear out the Lesson 6 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book.

Bold text *within the lesson is spoken text.*

▶Bible Point
We can count on God's promises.

Key Verse
"The Lord is faithful to all his promises and loving toward all he has made" (Psalm 145:13).

Weaving Faith Into Life
Children will discover what's special about God's promises.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
3 Weaving Faith Into Life	**Rainbow Reminders** *(about 15 min.)* Make journals to keep track of God's faithfulness.	CD player, construction paper in at least 6 colors (several sheets of each color), scissors, pens, stapler **Teacher Pack:** CD	
4 Lasting Impressions	**Daily Challenges** *(about 5 min.)* Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	Bible Truth Sleuth	
	Weaving Faith at Home *(about 2 min.)* Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.		

Bold text *within the lesson is spoken text.*

God Floods the Earth

Genesis 7–8; 9:8-16

BIBLE BACKGROUND FOR LEADERS

God Speaks to Noah—Noah Obeys

Genesis 6 wraps up with Noah obeying "God" (*Elohim*). Chapter 7 begins with "the Lord" (*Yahweh*) speaking to Noah. The use of these two names in these places is noteworthy. The name *Elohim* tends to be used to emphasize God's justice, and the name *Yahweh* most often denotes God's mercy. In Chapter 6, Noah carried out God's orders that showed God's judgment on humankind. In Chapter 7, we see the administration of God's mercy in the salvation of Noah's family and the animals.

The Flood Arrives

When the flood came, it wasn't caused only by rain. We read also that "the springs of the great deep burst forth." Water came shooting upward from under the earth's surface as rain deluged the earth from above. There was so much water that it covered the highest mountains by more than 20 feet! Some scientists believe that this event involved the sliding of continents and the creation of mountain ranges as subterranean plates slid and crashed together.

Noah and His Family Return to Dry Land

Once the rain stopped, it took almost a year for the water to recede sufficiently for Noah and his family to leave the ark. It's interesting that one of the birds Noah had sent out to see if the earth was getting dry returned with an olive leaf. The olive branch has come to symbolize peace. Perhaps in the time of Noah it symbolized a new peace between God and his creation.

Notice that Noah had a method for testing to see if the earth was dry, but God told him when he should leave the ark (Genesis 8:15-17). God was taking care of Noah and his family, just as he had promised.

God Makes a Promise

In Genesis 9:12-16, God again demonstrated his love for Noah. He made another promise, signified by the rainbow. The rainbow will always remind us of God's promise to Noah and the fact that God always keeps his promises!

The Jesus Connection

Everyone—adults included—struggles to keep commitments and promises. As we juggle responsibilities to family, job, spouse, and friends, we often find these commitments conflicting with each other. And to add to the challenge, we live in a world where the character trait of "faithfulness" isn't necessarily valued.

Pray for individuals in your ministry that as they model faithfulness and promise-keeping to others, they also paint a picture of a promise-keeping God. You can write your prayer here.

Promises, Promises
Supplies

Bibles
1 index card per child
pens
a permanent marker
medium-size rock

1 GETTING **STARTED**

Promises, Promises

What You'll Do

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went. Have kids form pairs, and give each pair a pen and two index cards.

Say: **With your partner, write on one index card three things other people have promised you and what they did to keep their promise. Maybe your mom or dad promised to take you to your favorite restaurant and took you there for dinner. Or maybe a friend promised to help you pick up your room after playing and kept that promise. You'll have one minute to write three promises. Go!** Allow time. Invite willing kids to share their answers.

Say: **Now work with your partner to write on your other index card three promises you've seen broken. Maybe a friend promised to invite you over to play and then forgot. You'll have one minute to write. Go!** Invite willing kids to share their answers.

After kids have shared, have them tear the cards into pieces.

Say: **We've all made promises we sometimes can't keep. Broken promises can leave us feeling disappointed and even torn up—like these cards. But God *always* keeps his promises.** Hold up the rock. **This rock is a symbol of the promises God makes.** Have kids name a few promises God makes, and use a permanent marker to write a one-word summary of each one on the rock. Have kids pass the rock and try to tear it apart, like they did the index cards. Have pairs discuss this question, and then invite willing pairs to share their answers with the rest of the group.

Ask:

- **What's different about the promises on the cards** (hold up pieces of the torn cards) **and the promises God makes?** Hold up the rock.

Give each pair a Bible, and then help kids turn to Psalm 145:13. Read the verse aloud first, and then have kids repeat it with you: **"The Lord is faithful to all his promises and loving toward all he has made" (Psalm 145:13).**

Say: **This verse helps us understand that ▶ WE CAN COUNT ON GOD'S PROMISES. They're rock solid.** Hold up the rock again. **We can trust God to do as he says.**

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What do you like about promises that are kept?**
- **What do you *not* like about broken promises?**
- **What makes it difficult or easy to keep the promises you make?**

Say: ▶ **WE CAN COUNT ON GOD'S PROMISES. God's promises never break, similar to the way we can't tear up the rock. Let's find out about a special promise God made to a man named Noah.**

2 BIBLE EXPLORATION

Noah's Photo Album

What You'll Do

Have kids form trios, and give each trio a Bible and several colored pencils. Help kids to turn to Genesis 7 in their Bibles.

Say: **Noah and his family were about to start an amazing journey. Often when people go on trips, they take pictures of their adventure to capture important memories. The photos can go into a photo album after the trip to keep the special memories safe. Today we'll pretend we're with Noah on the ark to take pictures for Noah's photo album.**

Distribute today's Bible Truth Sleuth pages, and have kids find the "Noah's Photo Album" section.

Say: **In your trios, read the directions for the "Noah's Photo Album" activity on your Bible Truth Sleuth page.** Allow time. **After reading the Bible passage for Photo #1, draw what you imagine would be in that photo. You'll have four minutes to read and draw before moving on to Photo #2. I'll play a sound clip for each photo and when it ends, that'll be your cue to move on to the next photo. Ready? All aboard the ark!**

Play "Life on the Ark" (track 13 on the CD) to provide the appropriate sound effects. "Life on the Ark" has six sets of sound effects to go along with the six photo sections on the Bible Truth Sleuth page. You'll be instructed to pause the CD at the end of each set. Give kids the time they need between sets to finish reading, and then play the CD again for the next sound effect.

After kids finish drawing, have them join another group to share pictures and discuss each drawing. Allow five minutes, and then have kids sit in a circle.

Noah's Photo Album
Supplies

Bibles
Bible Truth Sleuth
CD player
colored pencils
Teacher Pack
CD: "Life on the Ark" (track 13)

Noah's Photo Album
Easy Prep

Tear out the Lesson 6 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **Which of the pictures you drew shows the greatest example of having to rely on God? Explain.**
- **Tell about the pictures you drew that can help you remember how God always keeps his promises.**
- **Noah, his family, and the animals had to wait a long time for the flood water to go away as God said it would. What makes it easy or difficult to wait for what's promised to you?**
- **If you were to draw a picture of a time you knew God kept his promises, what would you draw? Tell about it.**

Say: **God promised Noah and his sons that he'd never flood the earth again. As a sign of his promise, God put a rainbow in the sky—and still does to this day! God certainly has kept his promise. Every time you see a rainbow in the sky, remember that ▶ WE CAN COUNT ON GOD'S PROMISES. God will never lie to you. There are lots of reminders of God's promises all around us and it's good to write them down. Let's practice doing that now.**

3 WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

Rainbow Reminders

Rainbow Reminders
Supplies

CD player
construction paper in at least 6 colors (several sheets of each color)
scissors
pens
stapler
Teacher Pack
CD: "All His Promises" (Psalm 145:13b) (track 14)

What You'll Do

Say: **Journals can be very helpful because they remind us of things that have happened. If Noah had kept a journal, he could have looked back at it any time he ever questioned whether God keeps his promises. One look at how God had taken care of him during the flood would've reminded him that ▶ WE CAN COUNT ON GOD'S**

PROMISES. And he would've known for sure that God would keep his promise never to flood the earth again. Let's make something to remind us of God's promises.

You'll be making Rainbow Reminders—journals you get to take home. In your journals, you can write about how God keeps his promises or make notes of any reminders of God's promises that you see.

Demonstrate for kids how to cut six sheets of construction paper and layer the sheets in varying colors and lengths (so the colors of the pages show one behind the other). See the photos for an example. While kids work, play "All His Promises" (Psalm 145:13b) (track 14 on the CD).

Staple the edges of each journal, and have kids cut an arc from the bottom right to the top left of their journals to create a rainbow shape. Play "All His Promises" (Psalm 145:13b) (track 14 on the CD) again while kids finish making their journals.

Say: **On the first page of your journal, write your favorite part about the way God kept his promise to Noah.**

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What did you write about your favorite part of the way God kept his promise to Noah? Why did you pick that part?**
- **What can you do the next time you have a hard time believing that God will keep his promises?**

Say: **Use your Rainbow Reminders to help you remember that ▶ WE CAN COUNT ON GOD'S PROMISES. Keep close watch for how God keeps his promises, and continue to write in your journal about what you see. And every time you see a rainbow, remember the promise God kept to Noah and all of us. Then write a note in your journal to thank God for always keeping his promises.**

4 LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

Daily Challenges Supplies

Bible Truth Sleuth

What You'll Do

Say: **Let's think about ways to remember this week that ▶ WE CAN COUNT ON GOD'S PROMISES.**

Have kids find this week's Daily Challenges on their Bible Truth Sleuth pages and choose one to do this week. They can choose one or more of these three options:

- **Look in the Bible at 2 Samuel 22:31 (God's promises prove true), 2 Corinthians 1:20 (God fulfilled his promises through Jesus), and Hebrews 13:5 (God will never leave you). Write in your journal about which of these promises is most special for you this week, and why.**
- **Write in your Rainbow Reminders journal at least once this week about a promise you see come true.**
- **Talk to God about any promises you've made and ask for help in keeping them.**

Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell kids what you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.

Talk With Kids

Ask:

- **What's a practical way you're going to do your Daily Challenge? Share a time, a place, or other ideas.** Allow time.

Say: **All these years later, God has never flooded the earth since he made his promise to Noah. He kept his promise! Let's thank God that ▶ WE CAN COUNT ON GOD'S PROMISES as we follow through on our Daily Challenges this week.**

Weaving Faith at Home

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about God's promises. Kids can also do the activities in the "HomeConnect" section of their Bible Truth Sleuth pages with their families.

Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church's families. Available at group.com/digital.

Close with prayer. Allow one minute for kids to tell a partner why he or she believes God will keep his promises. After pairs share, have them each raise their arms above their heads and join hands to make a rainbow shape. Then pray aloud: **God, thank you for putting a reminder in the sky to show us we can always count on you to keep your promises.** Invite willing pairs to tell God why they believe he will keep his promises. Close with: **We believe in your promises, God. In Jesus' name, amen.**

People Build a Tower at Babel

Genesis 11:1-9

Third-and fourth-graders have a growing awareness of what others have that they don't. Having a certain type of athletic shoe or a special backpack seems to spell social success. Kids become fixated on what they need to have or do to be socially accepted. While fitting in socially is important during this stage of childhood, use this lesson to help kids discover that God is most important.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started	**The Tallest Tower** *(about 10 min.)* Brag about who was able to build the tallest straw tower.	1 roll of tape and 10 drinking straws per 3 kids, several pairs of scissors	
2 Bible Exploration	**Building Babel** *(about 20 min.)* Build a balloon tower as they hear about the Tower of Babel.	Bibles, several packages of balloons, several rolls of masking tape **Teacher Pack:** Bible Timeline	

Bold text *within the lesson is spoken text.*

▶Bible Point
We put God first.

Key Verse
"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength" (Deuteronomy 6:5).

Weaving Faith Into Life
Kids will discover ways to put God first.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
3 Weaving Faith Into Life	**Puffed Up With Pride** *(about 15 min.)* Talk about ways people focus on themselves.	sticky notes, pens, tape, balloons from previous activity	
	Tower Power *(about 10 min.)* Think of ways to turn their focus back to God.	Bible Truth Sleuth, pens	Tear out the Lesson 7 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book.
4 Lasting Impressions	**Daily Challenges** *(about 5 min.)* Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	Bible Truth Sleuth	
	Weaving Faith at Home *(about 2 min.)* Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.		

Bold text *within the lesson is spoken text.*

People Build a Tower at Babel

Genesis 11:1-9

BIBLE BACKGROUND FOR LEADERS

People Turn Away From God Again

The pattern continues. Just a few generations and likely only 100 to 200 years after the miraculous saving of Noah's family in the ark, the descendants of those ark dwellers turned away from God. After Noah came out of the ark, one of God's commands to him was to "fill the earth" (Genesis 9:1). It appears that God wanted people to spread out across the earth, but some people decided to group together in a city, making a name for themselves and keeping themselves from being scattered. They showed no concern for glorifying or obeying God. And Noah lived to see all of this happen—Genesis 9:28 tells us that Noah lived 350 years after the Flood!

The people's intent in building a tower was not to reach heaven, as some have suggested, but to build something showy that would bring them recognition. People from all around would see the tall tower that seemed to reach into the heavens. Others would marvel at what they had done, and the builders would be proud. In essence, they tried to make themselves look more important than God.

The Tower Was Just the Beginning

If these people were able to do such a self-serving, God-defying thing as to build this tower, what other evil things were next on the horizon? How long would it be before none were left who honored God? Out of concern for keeping people from further evil, God put a stop to what was happening by causing people to speak different languages.

God's Still in Charge

It's interesting to think about how God might have used this incident to differentiate various races. By selectively giving certain individuals the same language, God could have directed which people clustered together, and their gene pools could have resulted in races with very different physical characteristics, such as exist today.

Some ancient reports indicate that an unfinished tower stood—perhaps for centuries—just outside the city of Babylon. God took something that evil people intended as a monument to themselves and turned it into a monument to his power and sovereignty. God wants us all to remember what he's done for us and how much we need him!

The Jesus Connection

In all our decisions and experiences, we need God. God meets our needs through Jesus, who fulfills our greatest needs for mercy, love, and eternal life. Jesus is our everything!

How are you relying on God? Pray and ask God how your experiences can be a testament to his power and sovereignty. You can write your prayer here.

The Tallest Tower
Supplies

1 roll of tape and 10 drinking straws per 3 kids
several pairs of scissors

1 GETTING STARTED

The Tallest Tower

What You'll Do

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went.

Have kids form trios, and give each trio scissors, tape, and 10 straws.

Say: **Your groups will have five minutes to build the tallest tower you can. The group with the tallest tower that stands on its own will win and be awarded "bragging rights," which means you'll get to celebrate your victory in front of everyone. Ready? Go!**

After five minutes, call time. Compare towers, and declare the group with the tallest tower the winner. Encourage members of the winning group to cheer, give one another high fives, and perform a victory dance around the room. Then have everyone sit together.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **Whether or not your group won, explain whether you felt proud of your tower.**
- **Winners, what did you like or not like about bragging in front of everyone else?**
- **What did everyone else think as the winners were celebrating their victory?**
- **Tell about a time someone else bragged in front of you. What was that like for you?**
- **What makes bragging good or bad?**

Say: Today we'll learn about a group of people in the Bible who claimed bragging rights for their accomplishments. We'll see how God reacted to their bragging as we learn why ▶ WE PUT GOD FIRST. Let's find out what happened at the tower of Babel.

2 BIBLE EXPLORATION

Building Babel

What You'll Do

Make sure all kids have a Bible, and say: **We're looking at Genesis 11:1-9 in the Bible today. Let's turn there now.** Help kids find Genesis 11, and invite a willing child to read verse 1.

Say: **The Bible says the whole world had one language. That means people could all understand one another when they spoke. Stand up, go around the room shaking hands, and greet every other person in the room. You might say "Hello," or "How are you?" or "Good morning." Whatever you say, I'm sure you'll all understand one another. Begin greeting!**

After kids have greeted one another, have them sit together again. Invite another willing child to read aloud verse 2.

Say: **The Bible says the people moved eastward and then settled down. So let's move.** Have kids stand up, link arms, and move in a tight bunch to the other side of the room. Have them sit down together again.

Invite two more willing kids to read aloud verses 3 and 4.

Say: **We don't have any bricks and mortar, but we do have some building materials.** Give each child several balloons. **It's tower-building time! Blow up and tie off your balloons to use as balloon bricks. Then roll a piece of masking tape into a loop, sticky side out, and stick a loop of tape on each balloon.**

Help kids with their balloons, as some kids may need help blowing them up and/or tying them off. Then designate a section of a wall as your building site. Say: **Take turns running up to the wall and sticking your balloon bricks onto the wall to build a tower. Build the tower from the floor up, as high as you can reach. Encourage one another as you build, and keep building until all of the balloons have been used.**

When children have finished building the tower, have them stand back, admire their work, and congratulate one another. Then have kids sit down.

Invite another willing child to read aloud verses 5 and 6.

Say: **Turn to a partner, and answer the following questions. After each question, I'll invite pairs to share their answers.**

Building Babel
Supplies

Bibles
several packages of balloons
several rolls of masking tape
Teacher Pack
Bible Timeline

! BALLOON WARNING
To avoid choking hazards, be sure to pick up pieces of any broken balloons promptly. Balloons may contain latex.

Ask:

- **What do you think about the people building a tower that reached into the sky?**
- **What do you think about their reason for doing something so incredible?**
- **What does that tell us about what these people probably thought of themselves?**

Say: **God wasn't really worried that if people could build a tower together, they could do anything. God's concern was that people would *think* they could do anything. This overconfidence could be dangerous for them, because then they wouldn't realize they needed God.**

Ask:

- **What bad things could happen if a person thought he or she could do anything without any help—ever?**

Give partners time to share, and then invite willing pairs to share their ideas.

Say: **The people of Babel had one big problem—they kept thinking they didn't need God and putting themselves first. Other people in the Bible made similar mistakes.** Point to the appropriate place on the Bible Timeline for the following people. **Adam and Eve thought they could be as smart as God. Cain got mad and thought he didn't need to listen to God. The people in Noah's time thought they didn't have to obey God. And now we see these people building the tower and thinking other dangerous thoughts about God—"We can be as good as God. We don't need him anymore."**

Let's keep reading and see what God actually did. Invite another willing child to read aloud verse 7.

Say: **God came down and confused the people's language so they couldn't understand one another anymore. Stand up and greet one another again, but this time speak in a new and different language. If you don't know any foreign words, just make some up!**

Give kids time to greet one another, and then invite another willing child to read aloud verse 8. Then tell kids to scatter around the room and sit down away from everyone else. Read aloud verse 9 yourself.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What do you think about the way God confused the people's language?**
- **What made it difficult to understand what others were trying to say to you when everyone was speaking different languages?**
- **Why do you think confusing the language was or wasn't a good way to help people realize they couldn't do anything without God?**

Say: **In the language of the Bible, the word that means "confused" sounds like the word *Babel*. God confused the people's language and scattered them all over the world to keep them from thinking they didn't need him. Let's look at what things in our own lives might make us forget that ▶ WE PUT GOD FIRST.**

3 WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

Puffed Up With Pride

What You'll Do

Say: **The tower builders of Babel were thinking about how great they were with their huge, strong tower. They weren't thinking about how great God is. That's something we're in danger of, too.**

Distribute sticky notes and pens. Say: **With a partner, think of statements people make that show they're thinking about themselves instead of thinking about how great God is. For example, people say, "I'm smarter than you" or "I'm the best runner in class." Try to think of things you've actually heard or said yourself.** Allow kids a few moments to think. Then have pairs take turns writing the statements on sticky notes and sticking them to the tower's balloons.

When kids have finished writing, say: **Our tower is full of statements that people make when they're not thinking about God.**

Ask:

- **What are things these statements have in common?**

Say: **Many of these statements begin with the word *I*, don't they? When we're focused on ourselves, we're not focused on God. With your partner, think of ways you could turn the "I" statements you wrote into "God" statements. For example, if you wrote, "I'm the best runner in class," you might change that to "God gave me good running skills." Then each pair can share answers with the rest of the group by turning the balloon tower into a ▶ WE PUT GOD FIRST tower.**

Allow kids a few minutes to think and write their answers on new sticky notes. Then let each pair tell how they changed their statements, and have kids remove the old statements and replace them on the balloons with their new statements. If the sticky notes won't stay on the balloons, secure them with tape.

Puffed Up With Pride
Supplies

sticky notes
pens
tape
balloons from previous activity

! BALLOON WARNING
To avoid choking hazards be sure to pick up pieces of any broken balloons promptly. Balloons may contain latex.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What was it like to give God credit for the things that you might feel like bragging about?**
- **What's the difference between bragging and talking about the things God can do?**
- **What can we do this week to put God first by changing what we say and do?**

Say: **It can take some practice, but when we remember that ▶ WE PUT GOD FIRST, it'll change our thoughts and our actions. And we won't forget about God like the people at the tower of Babel did. Let's take a look at our Key Verse and what it says about focusing on God.**

Tower Power
Supplies

Bible Truth Sleuth pens

Tower Power
Easy Prep

Tear out the Lesson 7 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book.

Tower Power

What You'll Do

Distribute pens and today's Bible Truth Sleuth pages. Say: **Our new tower shows how we can change our thinking to stay focused on God. Today's Key Verse, Deuteronomy 6:5, tells us another way to stay focused on God. Find the Key Verse on your Bible Truth Sleuth page, and let's read the verse out loud together.** Lead kids in reading aloud the Key Verse: **"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength" (Deuteronomy 6:5).**

Have kids form three groups, and assign each group a number—one, two, or three.

Say: **Look at the "Loving God" section on your Bible Truth Sleuth page. Find the section that corresponds with your group's number, and then read the instructions with your group and together think of some answers. Write your answers in the space provided. In a few minutes, groups can share their answers.** Allow about five minutes for groups to brainstorm and write.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **One group at a time, tell about what you wrote.** Have kids share slowly so the other groups can write down the ideas.
- **What have you already done to show that you love God with your heart, soul, and strength?**

Say: **▶ WE PUT GOD FIRST to show God we need him. Remembering to love God with all our heart, soul, and strength will help us focus on God rather than on ourselves. Because the people at Babel forgot about God, they probably didn't love God that way and they ended up building the tower only for themselves. Let's decide on some ways we can put God first this week.**

4 LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

What You'll Do

Say: **Let's think about what we can do to make sure ▶ WE PUT GOD FIRST this week.**

As your Daily Challenge this week, choose one thing from each section of the "Loving God" portion of your Bible Truth Sleuth page. You'll choose one way to love God with your heart, one way to love God with your soul, and one way to love God with your strength.

Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell kids what you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.

Talk With Kids

Ask:

- **What's a practical way you're going to do your Daily Challenge? Share a time, a place, or other ideas.** Allow time.

Say: **We've learned a valuable lesson today from the way the people at the tower of Babel forgot about God. Let's avoid their mistakes this week as we follow through on our Daily Challenges. We'll show God we need him when ▶ WE PUT GOD FIRST.**

Weaving Faith at Home

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about putting God first. Kids can also do the activities in the "HomeConnect" section of their Bible Truth Sleuth pages with their families.

Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church's families. Available at group.com/digital.

Take a couple of minutes to pray with your kids, asking God to help everyone remember to put God first. Pray: **God, help us to put you first. We need your help to put you before…** Invite kids to name something that usually takes priority in their lives. **In Jesus' name, amen.**

Daily Challenges
Supplies

Bible Truth Sleuth

Abram Follows God's Direction

Genesis 12:1-8

Third-and fourth-graders are in a time of life where they're discovering not everyone is always trustworthy. Trust becomes fragile for kids this age as friendships can change or end abruptly and social bullying can become more prevalent. But they can find comfort and peace in knowing they're loved by a God who's trustworthy. Third- and fourth-graders can begin to grasp the idea that even if answered prayers look different than they were expecting, God is faithful to all of his promises. Use this lesson to show kids that they can always trust God.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started	**Treasure Hunt** *(about 10 min.)* Search for hidden treasure with help.	various coins, bag of candy, antibacterial gel (optional)	Hide 1 coin for every 3 kids in different places in your room. Make sure the coins will be moderately difficult to find, and remember where you hid them.
2 Bible Exploration	**Trusty Travelers** *(about 20 min.)* Play a game as they read about the way Abram trusted God.	Bibles, paper, washable markers, 4 different coins, tape **Teacher Pack:** "Trusty Traveler Game" poster, "Trusty Traveler" cards, game spinner	Separate the "Trusty Traveler" cards and stack them in numerical order, so that 1 will be the first card drawn.
	Trust Talk *(about 5 min.)* Read and discuss Bible verses about trust.	Bible Truth Sleuth, pens	Tear out the Lesson 8 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book.

Bold text *within the lesson is spoken text.*

▶Bible Point

We can always trust God.

Key Verse

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight" (Proverbs 3:5-6).

Weaving Faith Into Life

Kids will learn that they can trust God through difficult situations.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
3 Weaving Faith Into Life	**A Trusting Tune** *(about 5 min.)* Learn a song based on Proverbs 3:5-6, and experience the need to trust God.	Bibles, CD player, copies of the lyrics page (at the end of this lesson), chairs **Teacher Pack:** CD	
	Map Reminders *(about 20 min.)* Make trust maps.	CD player, 1 brown paper lunch bag per child, several pairs of scissors, washable markers, washable paints, paintbrushes **Teacher Pack:** CD	
4 Lasting Impressions	**Daily Challenges** *(about 5 min.)* Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	Bible Truth Sleuth	
	Weaving Faith at Home *(about 2 min.)* Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.	Maps from the "Map Reminders" activity	

Bold text *within the lesson is spoken text.*

Abram Follows God's Direction

Genesis 12:1-8

BIBLE BACKGROUND FOR LEADERS

Abram Obeys God's Command to Move

"Sell everything you can't carry, leave your friends and extended family, bring your wife and belongings. You'll probably never come back here again, but don't worry about that—I'll show you where to go." This was essentially God's command for Abram.

What trust in God it took for Abram to leave his home and everything familiar, and set out for an unknown destination, having only God's command to go on! Abram also had the worries of keeping intact the things he took with him. In those days, traveling with herds of livestock through unknown territory was treacherous. Besides, Abram was 75 years old! But he trusted and followed God.

Abram's Traveling Companions

What helped Abram on his way was a trusting relationship with God and the promises of blessing that would benefit not only his household but "all the peoples on earth"!

Lot, Abram's nephew, went along but probably not just for companionship or adventure. It was a disgrace in that culture to not have descendants, and Abram realized that he and his wife were getting too old to have children. Abram may have asked Lot to go because Abram had no offspring of his own to take charge if Abram died or became incapacitated.

We're told nothing about the journey, but the trip from Haran to Bethel was approximately 400 miles, much of it over rough desert land. Conflict with local residents was likely a daily occurrence, and the trip probably took a month or more.

God Blesses Abram for Obeying

Abram completed the journey in faith, and then, as described in Genesis 12:7, the Lord appeared to him. God had spoken to Abram earlier, but now God appeared and confirmed the promise he had made to Abram back at Haran: The fertile land before him would one day belong to his descendants. That meant the promises were beginning to come true!

Abram built an altar to honor God through worship. "Calling upon the name of the Lord" meant worshipping him and acknowledging him as God. Abram knew that God had blessed him already and that many more blessings were still to come.

The Jesus Connection

Jesus taught us how to trust in God and proved that God won't let us down. May Jesus' example inspire you to have the courage to trust as Abram did!

Think about an experience that challenged you to trust God. If you knew then what you know now, how would your trust level have been different? With that in mind, pray for each of the individuals in your ministry, asking God to strengthen and inspire them all to trust him. You can write your prayer here.

Treasure Hunt
Supplies

various coins
bag of candy
antibacterial gel
(optional)

ALLERGY ALERT

Treasure Hunt
Easy Prep

Hide1 coin for every 3 kids in different places in your room. Make sure the coins will be moderately difficult to find, and remember where you hid them.

1 GETTING **STARTED**

Treasure Hunt

What You'll Do

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went. Have kids form trios.

Say: **We're going to start our day with a treasure hunt! Your trios must stay together as you search for a coin hidden somewhere in the room. There are enough coins for each team to find one. To begin, stand in a single file line in your trio, holding on to the shoulders of the person in front. The first person in each line is the Leader. The other two people are the Hunters. I'll whisper to the group Leaders whether or not your team is getting close to a treasure. If you're close or moving toward it I'll whisper "hot," and if you're not close or are moving away from it I'll whisper "cold." Then it'll be up to the Leader to guide the rest of the group according to what I whisper. But the Leader must keep his or her eyes closed as the Hunters direct him or her around obstacles. Ready? Start hunting!**

When a group finds a coin, say: **Congratulations! You've found the treasure.** Then reveal the bag of candy, and allow each child in that trio to take a piece. Have kids clean their hands before eating. After all the groups have found a coin and received candy, gather kids together.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **Hunters, in what ways did you have to trust your Leader?**
- **Leaders, in what ways did you have to trust your Hunters?**
- **Tell about some people you trust to lead you to good choices.**

Say: **Sometimes it's hard to trust someone if we don't know where we're going or what's going to happen. But that's the point of trust. Today we're going to hear about a man who trusted God's direction, even though he didn't know where God would lead him. And we'll discover why ▶ WE CAN ALWAYS TRUST GOD. Let's find out what happened.**

2 BIBLE EXPLORATION

Trusty Travelers

What You'll Do

Have kids form four groups. (A group can be one person, if needed.) Have groups sit together in a circle around the "Trusty Traveler Game" poster on the floor. Place the cards in a pile facedown (with the words not showing) next to the poster. Set out the other supplies nearby.

Say: **Today we're going to hear about a man in the Bible named Abram. As we play this game, we'll see how Abram trusted God and how God directed Abram's journey. As we travel along with Abram, you'll need to listen carefully to the directions. I've set out supplies that you'll need along the way. With your group, choose a coin to be your game piece and study it so you'll remember which one is yours.** Allow time.

Next, take turns spinning the game spinner to see which group will begin play. The first group to have the spinner point to red will go first. Allow time. **As you play, move to the next space on the poster that corresponds to the color the arrow points to when you spin the game spinner.**

Have the starting group spin the game spinner, move to the appropriate space, choose a card, read it aloud, and follow the directions on the card. Each group will follow the same procedure. If a group lands on a space with directions on it, have the group follow those directions instead of picking a card. They'll be able to pick a card on their next turn. When they get to a fork, they'll follow the straight arrow unless they land on the space at the fork. If they land on the space at the fork, they'll go left. Play until all the cards have been read. Throughout the game, encourage kids within each group to take turns moving their coin, reading aloud, and so on.

When the first group arrives at the finish line, lead kids in a round of applause for everyone. Invite kids to help you collect the game pieces and tape the "Trusty Traveler Game" poster to the wall as a visual reminder of Abram's journey.

Say: **Wow! Abram sure proved that he trusted God. Abram and his family had to carry everything they owned or leave it behind. They didn't know where God would take them, but they went anyway.**

Trusty Travelers
Supplies

Bibles
paper
washable markers
4 different coins
tape
Teacher Pack
"Trusty Traveler Game" poster
"Trusty Traveler" cards
game spinner

Trusty Travelers
Easy Prep

Separate the "Trusty Traveler" cards and stack them in numerical order, so that 1 will be the first card drawn.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **How was the game we played like or unlike Abram's journey?**
- **In our game, what made it difficult to take the most direct route to the finish line?**
- **What are things that happen in our lives that can make us feel like we've lost our way?**
- **Tell about a time you had to do something without knowing what could happen.**
- **What makes it difficult or easy to trust God to guide us when we're not sure what's going on?**

Say: ▶ **WE CAN ALWAYS TRUST GOD, just as Abram did. Sometimes it's easy to trust God. Other times it can be hard and even scary. The way God leads us might not always look the way we expected, and we might come across some difficult situations that make us feel like we can't get to the finish line. But we can still always trust God, because God knows what's best for us. Let's find out more about trusting God like Abram did.**

Trust Talk
Supplies

Bible Truth Sleuth pens

Trust Talk
Easy Prep

Tear out the Lesson 8 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book.

Trust Talk

What You'll Do

Have kids form pairs to discuss the following questions.

Ask:

- **Who are some people you trust?**
- **Why do you trust those people?**

Say: **The people we trust the most are the people we're closest to, whether it's our best friends or our families. We have a relationship with the people we trust. A big part of trusting God is knowing him. Abram had a personal relationship with God. He got to know God as his friend, and God spoke to him, so Abram could trust him.**

Ask:

- **How does God talk to us today?**

Say: **One way God talks to us is through his words in the Bible.** Distribute pens and today's Bible Truth Sleuth pages, and have kids find the "Trust Talk" section. Say: **Read the Bible verses written there, and choose which verse is the most special for you today, right now. In the space provided, write why that verse is special to you.**

Give kids a few minutes to read and write, and then say: **Now tell your partner why you chose the verse you did, and explain or read what you wrote.**

Give kids another few minutes to share their ideas.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **Why is the verse you picked special for you?**
- **What is God saying to you through that verse?**
- **What's a specific situation in your life that you can apply the verse to?**

Say: **God told Abram to move, but he didn't tell him where to go right away. God speaks to us in many different ways. As we talk to God and get to know him, we'll discover that ▶ WE CAN ALWAYS TRUST GOD. God has some great plans for our lives, we just have to listen and trust. Let's find out what we can do to trust God in our own lives.**

3 WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

A Trusting Tune

A Trusting Tune
Supplies

Bibles
CD player
copies of the lyrics page (at the end of this lesson)
chairs
Teacher Pack
CD: "Trust in the Lord" (Proverbs 3:5-6) (track 15)

What You'll Do

Say: ▶ **WE CAN ALWAYS TRUST GOD, no matter what happens. Here's a song to help us remember that we can trust God.**

Pass out copies of the lyrics, and play "Trust in the Lord" (Proverbs 3:5-6) (track 15 on the CD). Sing along with the kids.

♫ *(Chorus)*
Trust in the Lord *(trust in the Lord)*
With all your heart *(with all your heart)*
And lean not on your own understanding. *(understanding)*
In all your ways *(in all your ways)*
Acknowledge him *(acknowledge him)*
And he will make your paths straight.

Once you begin that way, don't you ever, ever stray;
You'll be on your way to an amazing life.
Once you begin that way, don't you ever, ever stray;
You'll be on your way to an amazing life.

(Repeat from the beginning; then repeat chorus.)

Yeah, he will make your paths straight.
Oh yeah, he will make your paths straight.

"Trust in the Lord" (Proverbs 3:5-6) by Rob Biagi. © 2005 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.

Say: **The words to the song we've just learned are the words of today's Key Verse.** Make sure kids have Bibles, and help them find Proverbs 3:5-6. Say: **Find a partner, and read the Key Verse together**.

Say: **Let's do a quick activity that might help us understand part of the Key Verse.** Have each pair find two chairs. **Stand in front of your chair, and start to sit down, but don't sit all the way down. Stop just short of actually sitting on the chair.** Pause as kids follow your instructions.

Stay in that position as you answer these next questions with your partner. Remember, don't sit all the way down!

Talk With Kids

Lead pairs in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What makes trusting God with all your heart easy or hard?**
- **Why do you think it's better not to lean on our own understanding?**
- **Explain whether what you're doing now is more like trusting God or leaning on our own understanding.**

Say: **Okay, sit down! I'm sure that feels better! Sitting without a chair to support you is like trying to run your life without letting God support you. You'll eventually collapse! Abram showed us how to lean on God as he trusted God through a long journey. And our Key Verse tells us to trust God instead of leaning on our own understanding. ▶ WE CAN ALWAYS TRUST GOD to support us and show us the way to go.**

Map Reminders

Map Reminders
Supplies

CD player
1 brown paper lunch bag per child
several pairs of scissors
washable markers
washable paints
paintbrushes
Teacher Pack
CD: "Trust in the Lord" (Proverbs 3:5-6) (track 15)

What You'll Do

Distribute lunch bags, and have the craft supplies available. Say: **We're going to make treasure maps of our lives to see how we can trust God. Cut the brown paper bag so it'll lie flat for your map.** Allow time, and help kids as needed. Then have kids write the beginning words of today's Key Verse at the top of their maps: "Trust in the Lord with all your heart" (Proverbs 3:5).

Say: **Think of how God has led you in your life so far. Think of the family God's given you, the place you were born, the places you've lived, the schools you've gone to, and the pets you've had. Draw your map so it shows all those things, and connect them with a path. Then think of the things you can trust God for in the future. Think of what you hope to be when you grow up and the places you want to see. Include those things on your map, too.**

As kids work, play "Trust in the Lord" (Proverbs 3:5-6) (track 15 on the CD). Give kids about 15 minutes to work, and give a 5-minute warning to finish their maps.

Talk With Kids

After kids have completed their maps, gather everyone in a circle. Go around the circle and have kids briefly describe three things they included on their maps.

Ask:

- **As you look at the things you put on the future part of your map, what can you learn from Abram that will help you trust God with those things?**

Say: ▶ **WE CAN ALWAYS TRUST GOD, just as Abram did. Your map shows how you've been able to trust God so far in your life and how you plan to trust him in the future. Take your map home, and hang it up in your room. Every time you look at it, remember that God loves you and you can trust him to guide you—through any situation you experience this week, as well as through your whole life!**

4 LASTING **IMPRESSIONS**

Daily Challenges

Daily Challenges Supplies

Bible Truth Sleuth

What You'll Do

Say: **Today we learned that ▶ WE CAN ALWAYS TRUST GOD. On your Bible Truth Sleuth page, look at the Daily Challenges and pick one way you'll trust God this week. You can choose one or more of these three options:**

- **Trust God to give you peace when you're worried.**
- **Trust God to help you talk to a friend you're not getting along with.**
- **Ask God to help you trust him in a tough situation during the week.**

Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell kids what you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.

Talk With Kids

Ask:

- **What's a practical way you're going to do your Daily Challenge? Share a time, a place, or other ideas.** Allow time.

Say: **Let's remember what we learned from Abram's journey and that ▶ WE CAN ALWAYS TRUST GOD as we follow through on our Daily Challenges this week.**

Weaving Faith at Home
Supplies

Maps from the "Map Reminders" activity

Weaving Faith at Home

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about trusting God. Kids can also do the activities in the "HomeConnect" section of their Bible Truth Sleuth pages with their families.

Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church's families. Available at group.com/digital.

Take a couple of minutes to pray with your kids, thanking God for always being trustworthy, no matter what happens in our lives. Have kids lay their maps in front of them and point to one thing they trusted God for in the past and point to one thing they're trusting God for in their future. Then pray aloud: **God, we thank you for how you've already guided our lives and we trust you to guide us in the future. Help us remember to lean on you, God, as we follow you. In Jesus' name, amen.**

Lyrics

Trust in the Lord (Proverbs 3:5-6)

(Chorus)
Trust in the Lord *(trust in the Lord)*
With all your heart *(with all your heart)*
And lean not on your own understanding. *(understanding)*
In all your ways *(in all your ways)*
Acknowledge him *(acknowledge him)*
And he will make your paths straight.

Once you begin that way, don't you ever, ever stray;
You'll be on your way to an amazing life.
Once you begin that way, don't you ever, ever stray;
You'll be on your way to an amazing life.

(Repeat from the beginning; then repeat chorus.)

Yeah, he will make your paths straight.
Oh yeah, he will make your paths straight.

"Trust in the Lord" (Proverbs 3:5-6) by Rob Biagi. © 2005 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.

! OK TO COPY

Lot and Abram Divide the Land

Genesis 13

Third-and fourth-graders have "best friends" who can easily turn into "worst enemies," depending on the day of the week or the hour of the day. At this age especially, feelings are easily hurt and snubs wound deeply. But you can help kids discover ways to restore and maintain relationships. Use this lesson to help kids develop strategies for treating others as they want to be treated—as the Bible says to do.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started	**Hands-Full Relay** *(about 10 min.)* Compete in a relay with too many items to hold.	various items from around the room such as books, toys, balls, and markers	Place various items on one side of the room.
2 Bible Exploration	**On the Road Again** *(about 25 min.)* Travel with Abram through Genesis 13.	Bibles, masking tape, animal crackers, round crackers, pens, green and brown construction paper, paper plates, cups of water, chairs, antibacterial gel (optional)	Use masking tape to mark a circle on your floor just large enough for everyone in your group to sit inside, but small enough that kids will feel cramped. Also set aside extra animal crackers.

Bold text *within the lesson is spoken text.*

▶Bible Point
God wants us to put others first.

Key Verse
"Do to others as you would have them do to you" (Luke 6:31).

Weaving Faith Into Life
Children will put others first in specific ways.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
3 Weaving Faith Into Life	**Do to Others** *(about 10 min.)* Discuss situations that require putting others first.	Bibles, Bible Truth Sleuth, pens	Tear out the Lesson 9 pages of each Bible Truth Sleuth student book.
	Friendship Bracelets *(about 10 min.)* Work in pairs to make bracelets, and think of ways to live out the Bible Point.	CD player, resealable plastic bags, several pairs of scissors, 5 craft beads per child **Teacher Pack:** CD, neon lacing	Cut the neon lacing into three 8-inch lengths for each child. Then in each resealable bag, place 6 lengths of neon lacing, a pair of scissors, and 10 craft beads.
4 Lasting Impressions	**Daily Challenges** *(about 5 min.)* Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	Bible Truth Sleuth	
	Weaving Faith at Home *(about 2 min.)* Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.	Bracelets from the "Friendship Bracelets" activity	

Bold text *within the lesson is spoken text.*

Lot and Abram Divide the Land

Genesis 13

BIBLE BACKGROUND FOR LEADERS

Abram and Lot Go to Egypt

Abram and Lot had gone south into Egypt because of a famine in the land of Canaan (Genesis 12:10). In Egypt, Abram pretended to be Sarai's brother because Sarai was beautiful and Abram was afraid Pharaoh would kill him and take her. Pharaoh did bring Sarai into his palace, but he treated Abram very well, giving him sheep, cattle, servants, and a lot more. But then God began to inflict diseases on Pharaoh's household because of Sarai. When Pharaoh realized what was happening, he sent Abram and Sarai away.

Abram Returns to the Promised Land

Abram and Lot headed north, back to the land God had promised to Abram's descendants. This was another long journey of hundreds of miles. The travelers would travel from one source of food and water to the next, but they would have to stay at each place long enough for the flocks and herds to recover.

As Abram returned to Canaan, he again "called on the name of the Lord." Perhaps the incident in Egypt reminded Abram of who God is and of how blessed he was to be chosen by God.

Abram Concedes the Best Land to Lot

In Genesis 13:5 we discover for the first time that Lot was wealthy. It became apparent that a single area wasn't sufficient to support both of their families' flocks and herds.

In this situation and culture, etiquette dictated that Lot allow Abram to take whatever he deemed was rightfully his, because Abram was the more powerful and wealthy as well as the respected elder.

So Abram's offer probably shocked Lot. Abram, to keep peace within his family, was willing to give up what was rightfully his. Lot, thinking only of himself, made a choice his entire culture would have deemed unthinkable.

God Reaffirms Promises to Abram

After Lot left, God spoke again to Abram, expanding on the promise made earlier. God's command to Abram to walk around the land likely came from the custom that a new landowner would walk the boundary of the land he was purchasing. God was telling Abram that he had given Abram that land.

The Jesus Connection

Jesus' message of an unselfish and servant heart is central to improving our relationships. Thank Jesus for showing us how to be servants to all, for his sake.

Think about a relationship that's important to you. How would it improve if you put each other first? Look for an opportunity in the coming week to put that other person first, and see if it changes anything. You can pray for that person and write your prayer here.

Hands-Full Relay
Supplies

various items from around the room such as books, toys, balls, and markers

Hands-Full Relay
Easy Prep

Place various items on one side of the room.

1 GETTING **STARTED**

Hands-Full Relay

What You'll Do

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went.

When everyone has arrived, have kids form two teams, and direct both teams to line up on the side of the room opposite where you placed the items.

Demonstrate the game as you say: **The first player in each line will run to the opposite side of the room and pick up one item. Then those players will each run back and hand the items to the next people in line. Those team members will run, carrying their items, to the opposite side of the room and will each pick up an additional item. Continue the relay, with each player adding an additional item to carry back and forth. If any items are dropped, the player must pick up the items and continue the race. The goal is to finish the relay first while trying to hold all the items.**

At the end of the game, congratulate both teams for their efforts. Then have kids sit with their teams to discuss the following questions.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What was it like trying to carry all those items?**
- **What would have made this game easier?**
- **What are some things people try to have a lot of in our culture?**

Say: **In this activity, there was too much stuff for two teams to carry. In the Bible today, we'll learn about two families who also had too much stuff. In fact, they had so much stuff they couldn't live with each other anymore. As we learn about these families, watch carefully how they handle their problem. Their actions will give you clues about how ▶ GOD WANTS US TO PUT OTHERS FIRST.**

2 BIBLE EXPLORATION

On the Road Again

What You'll Do

Have kids sit in a circle. Have kids clean their hands before you begin, and make sure everyone has a Bible.

Say: **In the Bible, a man named Abram obeyed God's directions and went on a long journey with his family to a new home. Let's join Abram and his family on the road.** Invite a willing child to read aloud Genesis 13:1.

Invite someone to be Abram and to lead the entire group around the room once. Then have kids sit down again. Invite another willing child to read Genesis 13:2.

Say: **Since Abram had become wealthy in livestock, we'd better bring some animals into our group.** Give each child a handful of animal crackers. **And since Abram was wealthy in silver and gold, I'd better give you some money.** Give each child a few round crackers, and tell kids not to eat any of the snacks yet.

Invite a willing child to read Genesis 13:3-4, but this time say: **Since your hands are so full, I'll hold the Bible for you.** Hold the Bible so the child can read the passage. Say: **The tape circle on the floor represents the place where Abram and his family settled. Everyone sit inside the circle.** Invite another willing child to read, and hold the Bible while he or she reads aloud Genesis 13:5.

Say: **We can't forget all about Lot! He was traveling with Abram, and he was rich too!** Give each child a few more animal crackers and "coin" crackers.

Say: **Turn to the person sitting closest to you, and answer the following questions.** After each question, ask willing pairs to share their answers with the rest of the group.

Ask:

- **What do you like or not like about sitting smooshed together with your hands full of stuff?**
- **What do you think about the way Abram and Lot crowded together with all their families, animals, and belongings?**
- **Tell about a time you felt like someone was taking over your space.**

Say: **Let's see what happens next.** Hold the Bible as another willing child reads aloud Genesis 13:6-7.

Uh-oh, it sounds like there's trouble between Abram's people and Lot's people. Discuss this question with a new partner.

On the Road Again
Supplies

Bibles
masking tape
animal crackers
round crackers
pens
green and brown construction paper
paper plates
cups of water
chairs
antibacterial gel (optional)

! ALLERGY ALERT

On the Road Again
Easy Prep

Use masking tape to mark a circle on your floor just large enough for everyone in your group to sit inside, but small enough that kids will feel cramped. Also set aside extra animal crackers.

Ask:

- **What makes it hard to get along with others when everyone's uncomfortable?**

Invite willing pairs to share their answers with the rest of the group.

Say: **Let's find out what they did to solve the problem.** Invite another willing child to read aloud Genesis 13:8-9.

Say: **Everybody scoot around in the circle until you find a new partner. Make sure you don't lose any of your animals or gold or get outside the circle.** Pause while kids scoot around to find new partners. Then have kids discuss the following questions with their new partners. After each question, invite willing pairs to share their answers with the rest of the group.

Ask:

- **Do you think Abram's solution was fair and peaceful? Explain your answer.**
- **Abram gave Lot first choice of where to move. What do you think about Abram's kindness?**

Say: **Abram was Lot's uncle, so Abram was technically the head of the family. Because of that, Abram was entitled to the best land. In fact, he didn't even have to give Lot *any* land, and definitely not first choice.** Have kids answer these questions with their partners. Then invite willing pairs to share their responses.

Ask:

- **Tell about a time someone let you choose something first.**
- **What did you like about someone allowing you to have your first choice? Were you satisfied with your choice?**

Say: **Before we go on, I think this would be a perfect time to discover what the Bible says about putting others first. Our Key Verse, Luke 6:31, may explain why Abram acted the way he did. Since your hands are so full, I'll read the verse: "Do to others as you would have them do to you" (Luke 6:31).**

Let's see if Lot treated Abram as he would like to be treated. Hold the Bible, and invite another willing child to read aloud Genesis 13:10-12. Say: **Lot chose the better land for himself and left Abram with the land of Canaan—a dry, desertlike land.**

Ask:

- **What differences do you notice between Abram's actions and Lot's actions?**
- **Based on their actions, describe both Abram's and Lot's personalities.**

Say: **The Bible says Lot and Abram separated, so we'd better separate, too.**

Give kids paper plates to hold their crackers. Help kids form two new, evenly numbered groups and sit in circles on opposite sides of the room. Give each group a Bible. Then

give one group a sheet of green construction paper and a pen. Give the green group chairs to sit in, and provide them with extra animal crackers and cups of water. Don't provide these things to the other group.

Say: **The green group will write "Lot" at the top of the paper and make a list of all the things that make your side of the room better than the other side. Lot's side looked better than Abram's because it had fresh water and green grass.** Give the other group a piece of brown construction paper and a pen. Say: **Brown group, you'll write "Abram" at the top of the paper and make a list of all the ways your side of the room is not as good as the other side.**

When groups have finished their lists, have them compare what they wrote. Then ask the green group to think of ways to show kindness to the brown group and put them first. At this point, the green group can share the extra snacks and hand out extra cups of water.

Say: **Even though Abram didn't get the best land at that time, God had other plans to bless Abram. God hadn't missed the kindness Abram had shown to Lot, and God was pleased with Abram. Let's read about what happened next.** Invite a willing child to read aloud Genesis 13:13-18.

Say: **Now that you've settled in your new homes, go ahead and enjoy your treats as we discuss these questions.**

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **In what ways have you seen people in our group put others first during this experience?**
- **Explain whether the way you normally act is more like Abram or Lot. Give an example from the past week.**
- **God blessed Abram's choice to put Lot first. What does that tell us about God?**

Say: **God promised Abram that he'd bless Abram and that all the land he could see—even the land Lot had chosen—would eventually belong to him. God was pleased with Abram because he treated Lot as he would like to be treated. Let's find out how ▶ GOD WANTS US TO PUT OTHERS FIRST, as Abram did.**

Do to Others
Supplies

Bibles
Bible Truth Sleuth pens

Do to Others
Easy Prep

Tear out the Lesson 9 pages of each Bible Truth Sleuth student book.

3 WEAVING FAITH **INTO LIFE**

Do to Others

What You'll Do

Have kids form pairs, and have the pairs number off by threes. Give each pair a Bible.

Say: **Our Key Verse is very important in our next activity. Let's take a look at it again to make sure we remember what it says.** Help kids find Luke 6:31, and invite a willing child to read it aloud. Then lead the kids in repeating the Key Verse: **"Do to others as you would have them do to you" (Luke 6:31).**

Distribute pens and today's Bible Truth Sleuth pages, and have kids find the "Do to Others" section.

Say: ▶ **GOD WANTS US TO PUT OTHERS FIRST. And as we discovered with Abram and Lot, that means doing to others what we would want them to do to us. We're going to talk about some situations where we can do exactly that. Ones will follow the directions for Story #1, Twos will follow directions for Story #2, and Threes will follow directions for Story #3. You'll have five minutes to work, and then you can share what you wrote with the rest of the group. Ready? Go!**

Circulate around the room to offer help and encouragement as needed. After kids finish, allow pairs to share what they wrote for their stories.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **How did these stories remind you of experiences you've had?**
- **What did you do in those situations?**
- **When is it hardest for you to put others first?**
- **What helps you remember to think about things from another person's perspective?**

Say: **Like Abram, we'll have opportunities to put others first and it's up to us to decide whether or not we'll do it. It's easier to *say* we can treat others the way we want to be treated than it is to actually *do* it. But ▶ GOD WANTS US TO PUT OTHERS FIRST, so let's make something to remind us to do that this week.**

Friendship Bracelets

What You'll Do

Have kids form pairs, and give each pair a resealable bag containing the prepared craft supplies.

Say: **Just as Abram and Lot had to decide how to divide the land, you'll have to decide how to divide the supplies in your bag so each person can make a bracelet. Since ▶ GOD WANTS US TO PUT OTHERS FIRST, try to help each other in this activity. For example, each of you can hold the strands of neon lacing while your partner threads beads onto the lacing and ties knots to make sure the beads don't fall off.**

As kids work, play "Do to Others" (Luke 6:31) (track 16 on the CD). When kids have finished making their bracelets, have partners talk about how they could use the bracelets they made to put someone first.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What did you do to treat your partner as you'd like to be treated during this activity?**
- **What did you like or not like about being treated that way?**
- **What did you like or not like about treating someone else that way?**
- **What did you decide you'd like to do with your bracelet to put someone else first?**

Say: **You needed your partner to be able to make your bracelet—and as you put each other first, your project was successful. When Abram put Lot first, their separation of land was successful and they avoided fighting. We can work that way with the people around us: our brothers and sisters, our parents, our friends, and everyone we meet. None of us lives alone—our actions affect other people's lives. That's why our actions are so important. And that's why ▶ GOD WANTS US TO PUT OTHERS FIRST.**

Friendship Bracelets
Supplies

CD player
resealable plastic bags
several pairs of scissors
5 craft beads per child
Teacher Pack
CD: "Do to Others" (Luke 6:31) (track 16)
neon lacing

Friendship Bracelets
Easy Prep

Cut the neon lacing into three 8-inch lengths for each child. Then in each resealable bag, place 6 lengths of neon lacing, a pair of scissors, and 10 craft beads.

Daily Challenges Supplies

Bible Truth Sleuth

4 LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

What You'll Do

Say: **Let's think about how ▶ GOD WANTS US TO PUT OTHERS FIRST this week.**

Have kids find this week's Daily Challenges on their Bible Truth Sleuth pages and choose one to do this week. They can choose one or more of these three options:

- **Help a family member with a chore.**
- **Say something nice to or about someone who you don't normally get along with very well.**
- **Let a friend play with one of your favorite possessions, such as a toy, a game, or trading cards.**

Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell kids what you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.

Talk With Kids

Ask:

- **What's a practical way you're going to do your Daily Challenge? Share a time, a place, or other ideas.** Allow time.

Say: **What Abram did for Lot is a great example of how to put others first. It can take some practice, but ▶ GOD WANTS US TO PUT OTHERS FIRST, too. Let's practice doing that as we follow through on our Daily Challenges this week.**

Weaving Faith at Home Supplies

Bracelets from the "Friendship Bracelets" activity

Weaving Faith at Home

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about putting others first. Kids can also do the activities in the "HomeConnect" section of their Bible Truth Sleuth pages with their families.

Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church's families. Available at group.com/digital.

Close with prayer. Have kids each hold their bracelet and think of the person they'd like to give it to in order to put that person first. Then pray aloud: **God, we know you want us to put others first. Please bless…**(invite kids to say the name of the person they'd like to give their bracelet to) **as we give them our bracelets as a gift today. Help us keep practicing putting others first. In Jesus' name, amen.**

God Makes a Covenant With Abram

Genesis 15:1-18

Third-and fourth-graders are great at making plans. They can plan a school project. They can plan an imaginary adventure to play all afternoon in the backyard. They can make plans with friends for a sleepover. But they can't always understand the difference between good plans and plans that'll fall apart or spell disaster for them. Use this lesson to help kids discover that God's plans for us are always good.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started	**10 Years From Now** *(about 15 min.)* Play a fun game to predict where they might be in 10 years.	Bibles	
2 Bible Exploration	**Let's Make a Deal** *(about 20 min.)* Learn from Genesis 15:1-6 how God had good plans for Abram.	Bibles, CD player, bag of small treats, paper, pens **Teacher Pack:** CD	

Bold text *within the lesson is spoken text.*

▶Bible Point
God has good plans for us.

Key Verse
" 'For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future' " (Jeremiah 29:11).

Weaving Faith Into Life
Children will find ways God works in the lives of his people.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
3 Weaving Faith Into Life	**Personal Timelines** *(about 15 min.)* Make timelines that tell about their lives.	Bibles, CD player, Bible Truth Sleuth, copies of the lyrics page (at the end of this lesson), paper, tape, washable markers, rulers **Teacher Pack:** CD, Bible Timeline	Tear out the Lesson 10 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book.
	Star Prayer *(about 10 min.)* Thank God for the Christians he's placed in their lives.	Bible Truth Sleuth, pens	
4 Lasting Impressions	**Daily Challenges** *(about 5 min.)* Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	Bible Truth Sleuth	
	Weaving Faith at Home *(about 2 min.)* Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.		

Bold text *within the lesson is spoken text.*

God Makes a Covenant With Abram

Genesis 15:1-18

BIBLE BACKGROUND FOR LEADERS

God Reveals His Plan to Abram

Abram had just returned from defeating a coalition of kings to rescue his nephew, Lot, and God appeared to him in a vision. Notice that in Haran God simply spoke to Abram; later in Canaan God appeared before Abram; now God appeared in a lengthy vision. With each meeting, God's plan for Abram became a bit more clear.

God's first words to Abram were words of comfort. What was bothering Abram was Abram's continuing lack of a son to be his heir. In response to God's words of comfort, Abram poured out his heart—pleading with God to bless him in this one area he'd not yet received God's promised blessing.

Abram Displays Faith in God

When God assured Abram by restating his promise that Abram would have his own son, Abram responded in faith. He believed God, and God declared him righteous because of his faith! Nothing that Abram could *do* in obedience to God could make him righteous, but his faith in God did!

To give Abram complete assurance, God made a covenant with him. In those days a covenant was a very serious thing. The cutting in half of animals described in Genesis 15:10 was to signify that the same would happen to any party breaking the covenant. Notice, however, that Abram wasn't asked to pass between the animals, which would have sealed his commitment to the covenant. Only God, symbolized by the smoking firepot and blazing torch, passed and sealed God's commitment to the covenant. Only God was required to fulfill the covenant.

God Promises to Bless Abram's Descendants

Another interesting note is that each type of animal that was sacrificed was later used in particular cleansing ceremonies and sacrifices.

God's listing of all the things that were to come for Abram's descendants accomplished at least two things: First, it confirmed that God's promise would come true because God could see the results more than 400 years in the future. Second, it assured Abram that even though his people would endure hardship, they would eventually possess the land as God had promised.

The Jesus Connection

Make this your prayer today: *God, your plans are perfect. We thank you for Jesus, who revealed your plans and helped us see that when we follow your direction, you're with us at every step.*

When have you recognized God's plans for you? It's a special feeling when God guides you. Pray for God's guidance for the individuals in your ministry. You can write your prayer here.

10 Years From Now
Supplies

Bibles

1 GETTING **STARTED**

10 Years From Now

What You'll Do

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went.

When everyone's arrived, say: **Let's play a fun game about the future!** Have kids sit in one long line. **You'll have a few things whispered in your ear at the beginning of our game. Try your best to remember all three things that are whispered to you.** Choose a child at one end of the line to be Player 1. Take the child aside, and whisper the name of an activity or an occupation. Explain to Player 1 that he or she will then go down the line and whisper a different activity or occupation to each person in line. Allow time.

After Player 1 has whispered to each child in line, have him or her sit down in place again. Then choose the next child in line to be Player 2. Whisper the name of a place to Player 2, then have him or her whisper the name of a different place to each child in line. Allow time.

Then choose a Player 3, and whisper someone's name to him or her. Have him or her go down the line and whisper different names to each person in line. The child can name people from school, people from church, sports figures, TV or movie celebrities, or even fictional characters. Allow time.

Say: **The name of this game is "10 Years From Now." As we go down the line, each of you can tell us what you'll be doing 10 years from now by repeating the three things that were whispered to you. You'll start by saying, "Ten years from now, I'll be…" Then you can say what you'll be doing, where you'll be doing it, and who you'll be with. For example, you might say, "Ten years from now, I'll be a teacher in Texas with Snow White."** Go down the line and let each child tell what he or she will be doing in 10 years.

Say: **Turn to a person sitting next to you to answer these questions. After each question, I'll invite pairs to share their answers with the rest of the group.**

Ask:

- **What do you think about the predictions the players whispered to you as ideas for your future? Explain whether you'd call them "good" plans.**
- **What makes God's plans different from the game we played?**

Make sure kids have Bibles, and have them turn to the Key Verse, Jeremiah 29:11. Invite a willing child to read the passage aloud: " 'For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.' "

Talk With Kids

Lead all the kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What can this verse help you understand about the way God makes plans for our lives?**
- **What do you like or not like about God's plans for you so far?**

Say: ▶ **GOD HAS GOOD PLANS FOR US because he loves us. God knows exactly what he wants us to do in 10 years and every day of our lives. And it will be a whole lot more accurate than our silly predictions! No one else can tell us who we'll be with or what we'll be doing with that person. Only God has those plans. And we can trust God to guide us. Let's find out about some other people who learned they can trust God's good plans.**

2 BIBLE **EXPLORATION**

Let's Make a Deal

Let's Make a Deal Supplies

Bibles
CD player
bag of small treats
paper
pens
Teacher Pack
CD: "Let's Make a Deal, Parts 1-3" (tracks 17-19)

! ALLERGY ALERT

What You'll Do

Have kids form two groups, Group One and Group Two.

Say: **Before we read the Bible today, let's play a game called "Let's Make a Deal." Choose one person to be your group's representative in this game.**

Let groups choose their representatives, and have the representatives come forward and stand facing each other. Designate the two kids Contestant 1 and Contestant 2 according to their groups.

Say: **In this game, our contestants will decide whether to make a deal or not. The rest of you will be the studio audience. The game show host on the CD will tell you how to play. Listen carefully, and respond to the CD as you're prompted to do so. Ready? Let's play!**

Play "Let's Make a Deal, Part 1" (track 17 on the CD), pausing the CD between sections when instructed.

Ask your first contestant if he or she wants to make a deal. If the child says yes, tell the child to walk around the room once quacking like a duck. Then give your contestant a handful of treats (enough for everyone in Group One). Encourage the studio audience to clap and cheer for the contestant as he or she heads back to the group.

If the child chooses not to make a deal, send the contestant back to his or her group with a round of applause—but no treats.

Say: **Now it's Contestant 2's turn!** Play "Let's Make a Deal, Part 2" (track 18 on the CD).

When you pause the CD after this segment, ask your second contestant if he or she wants to make a deal. If the child says yes, tell the child to walk around the room once singing "Old MacDonald Had a Farm." Then give your contestant a handful of treats (enough for everyone in Group 2). Encourage the studio audience to clap and cheer for the contestant as he or she heads back to the group.

If the child chooses not to make a deal, send the contestant back to his or her group with a round of applause—but no treats.

Say: **What a fun game! I wanted to play "Let's Make a Deal" because in the Bible, God sort of made a deal with Abram. God made a covenant with Abram. A *covenant* is a deal or an agreement, but God's covenant with Abram was very different from the deals we made in our game. I'll show you what I mean.**

Give each group a Bible. Have each group invite a willing child to read aloud Genesis 15:1-6.

Say: **Abram and God were making an agreement. Answer these next questions in your group. After each question, I'll invite groups to share their answers with everyone. Feel free to go back to the Bible to find the answers.**

Ask:

- **What do you think about Abram's worries about his future?**
- **What things do you worry about for your future?**
- **What kind of deal would you make if it meant you didn't have to worry about those things?**
- **Explain whether you think God was making a good deal for Abram.**

Say: **Let's listen to what this conversation between God and Abram might have sounded like if they had been playing "Let's Make a Deal."** Play "Let's Make a Deal, Part 3" (track 19 on the CD), stopping the CD when instructed.

Say: **God meant that Abram's offspring would be all of the people who would come to believe in God after Abram. That means you and me! We're part of God's plan!**

Ask:

- **What do you think about being part of the offspring God promised to Abram?**

Say: **Let's find out about the rest of God's deal with Abram. One willing person in each group can read aloud Genesis 15:9-11, and then also verses 17 and 18.** Allow time.

Give each group paper and pens. Say: **Let's write the next "Let's Make a Deal" segment between God and Abram. Group One, you'll write about what God asked Abram to do and how Abram followed through on his part of the deal. Group Two, you'll write about what God did to show the deal was made. You'll have three**

minutes to write, and you can look at your Bibles for help with the details. Ready? Go! Allow time.

Say: **Now, pair up with someone in the other group.** Allow time (kids can form trios if Groups One and Two are uneven). **Act out the last part of "Let's Make a Deal" with the people from Group One acting out Abram's part and the people from Group Two acting out God's part. Ready? Go!** Allow two minutes.

Talk With Kids

After kids finish acting out the last "Let's Make a Deal" segment, lead them in this discussion.

Ask:

- **How effective do you think the way God and Abram sealed their deal was? Explain.**
- **Tell about a deal you've made with another person and what you did to show you'd keep your part of the deal.**
- **Abram lived a *long* time ago. If God could see that we'd be a part of Abram's offspring, what does that tell us about God's promises and plans?**
- **What about God's promise to Abram helps you believe that God will keep his promises to you?**

Say: **Abram knew he could trust God's plans to keep his promises. Earlier in his life, God told Abram to pack up and leave his home. What did Abram do? He trusted God. Later, Abram let his nephew, Lot, have the best land, and God promised Abram lots of land and offspring. Abram knew that God had a plan for his life. And we know that ▶ GOD HAS GOOD PLANS FOR US, too. We may not know what those plans are, but God does know what's best for us. Let's explore what that means for us.**

3 WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

Personal Timelines

What You'll Do

Say: **We can experience joy when we know that ▶ GOD HAS GOOD PLANS FOR US. His plans can give us a reason and a purpose to live. Let's sing a song about that.**

Pass out copies of the lyrics, and play "Got a Reason for Livin' Again" (track 20 on the CD). Sing along with the kids.

Personal Timelines
Supplies

Bibles
CD player
Bible Truth Sleuth
copies of the lyrics page (at the end of this lesson)
paper
tape
washable markers
rulers
Teacher Pack
CD: "Got a Reason for Livin' Again" (track 20)
Bible Timeline

Personal Timelines
Easy Prep

Tear out the Lesson 10 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book.

Got a reason for livin' again,
Oh, oh, oh.
Got a reason for laughin' again,
Oh, oh, oh.
Got a reason for lovin' again.
I got the love of God in my heart!

No reason to cry anymore,
Oh, oh, oh.
No reason to sigh anymore,
Oh, oh, oh.
No reason to die anymore.
I got the love of God in my heart!

Monday, I was all alone.
Tuesday, I had my sins to atone.
Wednesday, I cried and I cried.
Thursday, Lord, I thought I would die.
Friday, I started to pray.
Saturday, I read my Bible today.
Sunday, Lord, the heavens did part.
I got the love of God in my heart!

(Repeat from the beginning.)

Got a reason for livin' again,
Oh, oh, oh.
Got a reason for laughin' again,
Oh, oh, oh.
Got a reason for lovin' again.
I got the love of God in my heart!

No reason to cry anymore,
Oh, oh, oh.
No reason to sigh anymore,
Oh, oh, oh.
No reason to die anymore.
I got the love of God in my heart!
I got the love of God in my heart!
I got the love of God in my heart!

Say: **When we've got the love of God in our heart, it's easy to trust that God has great plans for our lives. Because God loves us, we can know that he'll make plans to take care of us. Let's make personal timelines that'll help us see these plans. A timeline is a long chart that shows when certain important events occurred. Look at the Bible Timeline to see what I mean.** Allow kids to examine the Bible Timeline.

Say: **Our timelines will show things that have happened in our lives, important things we've seen God do in our lives, and good plans we hope God might have for us in the future. We'll also add something we can do this week to think about God's plans in our lives.**

Distribute today's Bible Truth Sleuth pages, and have the other supplies available. Say: **Work in groups of three or four to make your timelines. You can tape together pieces of paper for your timeline. You'll have paper and some colored markers, Bibles, and rulers for each group to share. Find the "My Timeline" section on your Bible Truth Sleuth page, and follow the directions to make your timelines.** Allow time.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **Which things on your timeline are things you planned to have happen?**
- **Which things were surprises to you? Talk about that.**
- **What do you think are the differences between God's plans and our own plans for our lives?**
- **What can you do to thank God for the best events in your life?**

Say: **Take your timeline home, and hang it in your room to remind you that God loves us and that ▶ GOD HAS GOOD PLANS FOR US, just as he had wonderful plans for Abram. Remember how God said that Abram's offspring would be as many as the stars? Let's close with a star prayer!**

Star Prayer

Star Prayer
Supplies

Bible Truth Sleuth
pens

What You'll Do

Have kids find the "Star Prayer" section on today's Bible Truth Sleuth page, and make sure everyone has a pen.

Say: **Inside the star shape, write a prayer to God, thanking him for the good plans he has for your life.** Give kids a few moments to write; then have kids stand in a circle.

Say: **Because we believe in God, we each represent one of the stars God told Abram about. That didn't happen by accident. It was part of God's good plan for us. Think of someone who's helped you believe in God. God put that person in your life on purpose. As we go around the circle to the right, put your right arm into the center of the circle and say the name of someone who's helped you believe in God. After we've gone around the circle, our arms will form a star!**

Say a name, and put your right arm into the circle. After each child has said a name and placed his or her arm in the circle, close with a short prayer, thanking God for loving us enough to make good plans for our lives.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What are some of the things you wrote about in your star prayer?**
- **What are some ways you can see that God has used other people to do good things in your life?**
- **In what ways can you be a part of God's good plan for someone else?**

Say: **Just as God made good plans for Abram, ▶ GOD HAS GOOD PLANS FOR US and does so many wonderful things to make those plans come true. God puts people in our lives to help us believe in him, and we can do that for others, too. God's plans are amazing and the best for our lives. Let's look at ways we can seek God's plans for us this week.**

4 LASTING **IMPRESSIONS**

Daily Challenges

Daily Challenges Supplies

Bible Truth Sleuth

What You'll Do

Say: **Let's think about how ▶ GOD HAS GOOD PLANS FOR US this week as we follow through on our Daily Challenges.**

Have kids find this week's Daily Challenges on their Bible Truth Sleuth pages and choose one to do this week. They can choose one or more of these three options:

- **Talk to God about the things you hope to do in the future. Ask him to help you trust his plans.**
- **Talk to your leader at church about how he or she has experienced God's good plans.**
- **Create an "I Trust God" certificate to promise in writing that you'll follow God's plans in your life.**

Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell kids what you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.

Talk With Kids

Ask:

- **What's a practical way you're going to do your Daily Challenge? Share a time, a place, or other ideas.** Allow time.

Say: **Remember when you feel worried—this week, or any time—that ▶ GOD HAS GOOD PLANS FOR US. As you follow through on your Daily Challenges, think about what God planned for Abram and know God cares for you that way, too. Talk to God about your worries, and remember: You can trust that God has a plan for every day of your life.**

Weaving Faith at Home

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about God's good plans for us. Kids can also do the activities in the "HomeConnect" section of their Bible Truth Sleuth pages with their families.

Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church's families. Available at group.com/digital.

Take a couple of minutes to pray with your kids, thanking God for making good plans for each person's life. You may want to mention each student by name.

Lyrics

Got a Reason for Livin' Again

Got a reason for livin' again,
Oh, oh, oh.
Got a reason for laughin' again,
Oh, oh, oh.
Got a reason for lovin' again.
I got the love of God in my heart!

No reason to cry anymore,
Oh, oh, oh.
No reason to sigh anymore,
Oh, oh, oh.
No reason to die anymore.
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I got the love of God in my heart!
I got the love of God in my heart!

! OK TO COPY

Abraham's Visitors/Sodom and Gomorrah Genesis 18:1–19:29

Children in the middle elementary ages can begin to understand that God's amazing feats are an outflow of his character. Help your third- and fourth-graders begin to understand what God's amazing power and presence means for their lives. Use this lesson to introduce kids to the amazing things God does, and tell kids that they can watch for those things every day.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started	**Amazing Feats** *(about 10 min.)* Attempt to keep a partner in a chair with one finger.	chairs	
2 Bible Exploration	**Believe It or Not!** *(about 20 min.)* Pantomime the Bible passage in groups along with the CD.	Bibles, Bible Truth Sleuth, CD player, pens **Teacher Pack:** CD	Tear out the Lesson 11 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book.
	Mission Impossible *(about 10 min.)* Draw pictures of amazing things God has done.	Bibles, Bible Truth Sleuth, several pairs of scissors, washable markers, tape **Teacher Pack:** "Nothing Is Impossible With God!" poster	

Bold text *within the lesson is spoken text.*

▶Bible Point
God does amazing things.

Key Verse
"For nothing is impossible with God" (Luke 1:37).

Weaving Faith Into Life
Kids will watch for God to do amazing things.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
3 Weaving Faith Into Life	**Praise Pennants** *(about 20 min.)* Make pennants that show amazing things God does.	sheets of construction paper, several pairs of scissors, rulers, tape, washable markers, 1 drinking straw per child, glitter glue	
4 Lasting Impressions	**Daily Challenges** *(about 5 min.)* Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	Bible Truth Sleuth	
	Weaving Faith at Home *(about 2 min.)* Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.	Praise Pennants from the "Praise Pennants" activity	

Bold text *within the lesson is spoken text.*

Abraham's Visitors/Sodom and Gomorrah

Genesis 18:1–19:29

BIBLE BACKGROUND FOR LEADERS

Abraham: Father of Many

God changed Abram's name, which means "exalted father," to Abraham, "father of many." Abraham and all the males of his household then went through the covenant of circumcision. God also renamed Sarai. Her new name, Sarah, likely stressed that she was to be the mother of nations and kings.

Abraham Shows Hospitality

In Abraham's desert-dwelling culture, visitors were rare. A warm welcome and hospitality were requirements in the culture of that day, and Abraham knew what it was like to travel in the desert. Thus, he was ready to warmly welcome the travelers.

Many scholars believe that these travelers were angels (see Genesis 19:1). The fact that they knew Sarah's name may support this idea, and in Genesis 18:10, it becomes clear that at least one of them was speaking for God.

For many years, God had been promising Abraham a son. Now God predicted the time of the birth to 99-year-old Abraham and 89-year-old Sarah: Within one year, their son would be born. Sarah's laughter is understandable. Who would have thought that a 90-year-old woman could have a baby! God does truly amazing things!

Abraham Pleads With God to Spare Sodom and Gomorrah

When God made it clear that his intent was to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah, Abraham was horrified. He'd likely done business with people there, and his nephew, Lot, lived there with his family. So Abraham pleaded with God to spare the few who were still faithful. God said the whole city would be saved if only 50 righteous people lived there. It's helpful to remember here God's definition of *righteous*. Abraham was declared righteous because of his faith, not because of a righteous lifestyle. As Abraham voiced his pleas ever more carefully, God promised to spare the city if just 10 righteous people were living there. But not even so small a number of faithful people could be found.

God did an amazing thing in sparing the lives of Lot and his family. Lot didn't appear to deserve it, just as we don't deserve the grace God gives to us. But we can be thankful that God is wonderfully merciful and still does amazing things for us.

The Jesus Connection

Jesus is God's most amazing miracle. He gave us eternal life when we were dead in sin. You can thank God for his precious Son and his greatest miracle.

Look for miracles all around you, not just in big, dramatic situations but also in "smaller" things: the beauty of the sunrise, the happy gleam in a baby's eyes, couples addressing their problems with forgiveness and love. Ask God to help individuals in your ministry to do the same. You can write your prayer here.

Amazing Feats
Supplies

chairs

1 GETTING **STARTED**

Amazing Feats

What You'll Do

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went. Help kids form pairs, with partners being similar in size.

Say: **Today we're going to begin with something really amazing. You're going to keep a friend from getting up out of a chair—using only one finger! Turn to your partner, and discuss why you think it's possible or impossible.**

Give kids a few moments to discuss. Then ask pairs to share their thoughts with the rest of the group.

Say: **I want one person in each pair to sit in a chair. Then I'll give you instructions about how to do this amazing thing I've told you about.** Give kids a few moments to get into position.

Are you ready to be amazed? Here's how! If you're the partner sitting in the chair, tilt your chin up and your head back. If you're the person standing up, place your right index finger against your partner's forehead and gently press. Now tell your partner to try to stand up. Tell sitting kids to sit way back in the chair.

Pause while kids try this experiment. Then have kids in each pair switch places and do the experiment again. After everyone's had a chance to be in both roles of the experiment, have kids sit in a circle.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What surprised you when you tried to stand up?**
- **Explain whether or not you'd call this experiment amazing.**
- **Tell about some other amazing tricks you know.**

Say: **Keeping your partner in the chair was pretty incredible, but not like what God can do— ▶ GOD DOES AMAZING THINGS! In the Bible today, we'll hear about an amazing thing God did for a man named Abraham and his wife, Sarah.**

2 BIBLE EXPLORATION

Believe It or Not!

What You'll Do

Have kids form groups of four. Distribute pens and today's Bible Truth Sleuth pages, and give each group a Bible.

Say: **In your group, invite a willing person to read aloud the verses in Genesis 18:1-5.** Allow kids time to read in their groups. **Now find the "Believe it or Not!" section on your Bible Truth Sleuth page. In the section for "Scene One," follow the directions there to write directions for pantomiming the actions of what you've just heard from the Bible. *Pantomiming* means you'll act it out with motions, not words. You can look at the Bible verses again to help you write your acting notes.** Give kids several minutes to work.

Now we're going to act out what we've read in the Bible along with the CD. Have groups stand in the center of the room. Play the track as kids silently act out their role for "Scene One." Pause the CD when instructed.

Ask:

- **What seems amazing or ordinary about Abraham and Sarah's special guests?**

Say: **Move back into your groups and we'll find out what happened next. Invite another willing person in your group to read aloud Genesis 18:6-10.** Allow time. **Now find the "Scene Two" section on your Bible Sleuth Truth page and follow the directions as you did for "Scene One." Then we'll act out the Bible passage along with the CD again.** Allow kids time to work.

Play the CD, pausing again when prompted.

Ask:

- **What seems amazing or ordinary about God telling Abraham and Sarah they'd have a baby in the next year?**
- **Sarah thought what God said was too amazing to be true. What's something you've experienced that seemed too good to be true?**

Say: **Move back into your groups one more time for "Scene Three." Invite a willing person in your group to read aloud Genesis 18:11-15.** Allow time. **Find the "Scene Three" section on your Bible Truth Sleuth page and follow the directions again for writing your acting notes. Then we'll finish the final scene with the CD.** Allow kids time to write.

Play the CD and stop it after the track ends. Then have kids sit in a circle.

Believe It or Not!
Supplies

Bibles
Bible Truth Sleuth
CD player
pens
Teacher Pack
CD: "Believe It or Not!" (track 21)

Believe It or Not!
Easy Prep

Tear out the Lesson 11 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth book.

Talk With Kids

Lead all the kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What seems amazing or ordinary to you about God's visit to Abraham and Sarah and the promise he made?**
- **Tell about a time you were very surprised.**
- **What makes it difficult or easy for you to believe God does amazing things?**

Say: **The things God did for Abraham and Sarah are amazing! The Bible is full of examples of how ▶ GOD DOES AMAZING THINGS! And those amazing things tell us something very important about God: "For nothing is impossible with God" (Luke 1:37). That's our Key Verse today. Let's find out more about why nothing is impossible with God.**

Mission Impossible
Supplies

Bibles
Bible Truth Sleuth
several pairs of scissors
washable markers
tape
Teacher Pack
"Nothing Is Impossible With God!" poster

Mission Impossible

What You'll Do

Have kids form pairs, give each pair a Bible, and help kids find Luke 1:37. Invite a willing child in each pair to read the verse aloud. As kids read, tape up the "Nothing Is Impossible With God!" poster, and set out the scissors, markers, and tape.

Say: **Today's Key Verse tells us that nothing is impossible with God. We're going to create a poster to remind us of just how amazing God is!**

Have kids find the "Nothing Is Impossible With God!" section on their Bible Truth Sleuth pages. Say: **Read the directions with your partner, and then cut out and complete your pictures.**

As kids work, circulate to offer help as needed. If kids seem stumped about what to draw, encourage them to think about things they've seen that only God could do. For example, kids might draw something amazing from nature, such as a rainbow or a storm. Or they might draw about a personal experience, such as when a friend or family member was healed or saved from harm. Or they might draw a picture of a favorite amazing thing from the Bible.

Allow kids about five minutes to complete their pictures and captions. Invite kids to come up to the poster one at a time to tape their drawings to the spaces on the poster. If your poster fills up, kids can tape their drawings around the edges of the poster.

Talk With Kids

As kids tape their drawings to the poster, lead them in this discussion.

Ask:

- **Tell about what you drew in your picture frame.**
- **Why is that an amazing thing to you?**

Say: **Just look at all the examples that show ▶ GOD DOES AMAZING THINGS! The Bible's right—nothing is impossible with God! He even made a very old couple have a baby! Let's say the verse together again: "For nothing is impossible with God" (Luke 1:37). That can be hard to remember when we're in difficult situations. Let's make something that'll help us remember that ▶ GOD DOES AMAZING THINGS.**

3 WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

Praise Pennants

Praise Pennants Supplies

- sheets of construction paper
- several pairs of scissors
- rulers
- tape
- washable markers
- 1 drinking straw per child
- glitter glue

What You'll Do

Say: **Today we've learned more about how amazing our God is. God did an incredible thing when he visited Abraham and Sarah and promised them a son—especially because that promise seemed impossible. We're going to make reminders to help us remember that ▶ GOD DOES AMAZING THINGS for us, too.**

Have kids form pairs. Give each pair a sheet of construction paper and two drinking straws.

Say: **Choose one person in your pair to use a marker and a ruler to draw a diagonal line from corner to corner on the sheet of construction paper.** Allow time, and help kids as needed. Say: **The other partner in your pair can cut along the diagonal line to form two triangular pieces.** Allow time and help kids as needed.

Show kids how to tape the short edge of the construction paper triangle to the straw to form a pennant. Say: **You can use the art supplies to decorate both sides of your pennants. Be creative in your decorations. Leave room to add more decorations to your pennants this week when you see something amazing.**

Talk With Kids

When kids have finished making their pennants, gather everyone in a circle. Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What things did you draw or add to your pennant to help you remember to watch for the amazing things God does? Why did you include those things?**
- **Pennants are often waved at sporting events to cheer on the team. Tell about an exciting sports game you've seen. What amazing things happened there?**
- **Why is God even more amazing than the people who played in those games?**
- **What are amazing things you'll be watching for God to do this week?**

Say: **Take your pennant home, and hang it in your room to remind you that nothing is impossible with God! Just think of the amazing things Abraham could put on a pennant! When you experience something amazing, even something God does all the time (like a beautiful sunrise), draw a symbol of that amazing thing on your pennant. Keep adding to your pennant as you continue to discover that ▶ GOD DOES AMAZING THINGS.**

4 LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges
Supplies

Bible Truth Sleuth

Daily Challenges

What You'll Do

Say: **Let's think about how we can watch for God and thank him as ▶ GOD DOES AMAZING THINGS this week.**

Have kids find this week's Daily Challenges on their Bible Truth Sleuth pages and choose one to do this week. They can choose one or more of these three options:

- **Write down or draw on your Praise Pennant three amazing things you witness. These can be anything from a sunset to someone's life being saved—whatever seems amazing to you!**
- **Point out an amazing thing to a friend or family member, and then share what it shows you about God.**
- **Thank God for an amazing thing he's done in your life.**

Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell kids what you you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.

Talk With Kids

Ask:

- **What's a practical way you're going to do your Daily Challenge? Share a time, a place, or other ideas.** Allow time.

Say: **Sarah may have laughed at the idea that God could do something as amazing as giving her and Abraham a baby, but God came through! They had their baby boy. We can believe that ▶ GOD DOES AMAZING THINGS, and we can watch for those things as we follow through on our Daily Challenges this week.**

Weaving Faith at Home

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about the amazing things God does. Kids can also do the activities in the "HomeConnect" section of their Bible Truth Sleuth pages with their families.

Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church's families. Available at group.com/digital.

Take a couple of minutes to pray with your kids, thanking God for doing amazing things. As you pray, invite kids to thank God for the amazing things they drew on their Praise Pennants and wave them in the air. Close with: **in Jesus' name, amen.**

Weaving Faith at Home
Supplies

Praise Pennants from the "Praise Pennants" activity

Isaac Is Born

Genesis 21:1-6

Third-and fourth-graders are still young enough that gifts and surprises captivate them and bring them great joy. They're also old enough to begin to understand they can thank gift-givers not only because that's what they've been told to do, but because gift-givers deserve thanks. Use this lesson to launch kids' discovery of God's gifts and how we can respond to God with thanks.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started	**Golden Oldies** *(about 10 min.)* Attempt to perform tasks as if they were 100 years old.	small bowl, copy of the "Golden Oldies" handout (at the end of this lesson), colored markers **Teacher Pack:** game spinner	Cut along the dotted lines on the copied pages, and color the dot on each piece with the designated color. Fold the strips so kids can see the colored dot but not the words, and place the strips in a small bowl.
2 Bible Exploration	**The Big Surprise** *(about 10 min.)* Read how God was gracious to Sarah and Abraham.	Bibles	
	What's in a Name? *(about 10 min.)* Hear about the birth of Isaac, and talk about ways to respond to God's gifts.	Bibles	

Bold text *within the lesson is spoken text.*

▶Bible Point
Thank God for his gifts.

Key Verse
"Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!" (Philippians 4:4).

Weaving Faith Into Life
Children will respond to God's many gifts by joyfully thanking God.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
2 Bible Exploration (*continued*)	**Laugh It Up** *(about 10 min.)* Try to make each other laugh, discuss joy, and learn the Key Verse.	Bibles, CD player, copies of the lyrics page (at the end of this lesson) **Teacher Pack:** CD	
3 Weaving Faith Into Life	**Silly Smiles** *(about 5 min.)* Write about how God has brought joy to their lives.	pens **Teacher Pack:** "Silly Smile Punch-Outs"	Separate the "Silly Smile Punch-Outs."
	Joy Cradles *(about 15 min.)* Make Joy Cradles, share treats, and commit to thanking God for his gifts.	Bible Truth Sleuth, CD player, lyrics handouts from the "Laugh It Up" activity, Laffy Taffy or other treats, 3 index cards or pieces of card stock per child, several pairs of scissors, tape, washable markers, glue sticks **Teacher Pack:** CD	Tear out the Lesson 12 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book.
4 Lasting Impressions	**Daily Challenges** *(about 5 min.)* Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	Bible Truth Sleuth	
	Weaving Faith at Home *(about 2 min.)* Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.	Silly Smiles from the "Silly Smiles" activity	

Bold text *within the lesson is spoken text.*

Isaac Is Born

Genesis 21:1-6

BIBLE BACKGROUND FOR LEADERS

God Promises a Child to Abraham and Sarah

God keeps his promises. In the first two verses of this passage, three times we read that God did what he said he would do. For Abraham and Sarah, it was the miraculous fulfillment of an amazing promise: the birth of a son to 90- and 100-year-old parents who had never before been able to have a child! And it was really their child—the son of both Abraham and Sarah—as confirmed in Genesis 21:2-3. The shame of childlessness that had haunted them for decades was finally erased. God brought a kind of joy to Abraham and Sarah that they had never known.

Isaac Means "He Laughs"

Isaac, the name Abraham gave his son, means "he laughs." God had told Abraham to give the child that name a year or more earlier (Genesis 17:19).

The circumcision of Isaac when he was eight days old wasn't done just in obedience to God's command. It was a sign of the covenant between God and Abraham, a sign that this child was one of God's chosen people (Genesis 17:10-14).

Genesis 21:6 contains a play on words that's pretty obvious even in English. Through the child named "he laughs," God had brought laughter to Sarah and to all who knew her. In those days, any birth of a healthy child brought great joy, even more so if it was a boy. But a firstborn son, born to such elderly parents, was certainly a laughing matter! Sarah could hardly contain her happiness. Who could blame her?

Twenty-five years had passed since Abraham had left his home in Haran to follow God and since God first promised to make Abraham's descendants into a great nation. Twenty-five years had passed since a childless couple of 65 and 75 years of age first believed God's promise that they would have descendants. What a fantastic mountaintop in Abraham and Sarah's faith journey! "He laughs" was born!

The Jesus Connection

Jesus' mission was serious, but he knew how to have joy, too. He never doubted God's gifts. As God's Son, he would know best!

Recall some gifts God has given you. How did they bring joy? Perhaps they were answers to prayers or things you never even asked for. Write down those gifts and a prayer of joy. You can write your prayer here.

Golden Oldies
Supplies

small bowl
copy of the "Golden Oldies" handout (at the end of this lesson)
colored markers
Teacher Pack
game spinner

Golden Oldies
Easy Prep

Cut along the dotted lines on the copied pages, and color the dot on each piece with the designated color. Fold the strips so kids can see the colored dot but not the words, and place the strips in a small bowl.

1 GETTING **STARTED**

Golden Oldies

What You'll Do

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went.

Say: **We're going to pretend that 90 or so years have gone by, and you're each 100 years old. You'll each get a turn to spin the arrow on the game spinner. When the arrow points to a color, choose a slip of paper marked with a dot in that color. Then act out what's on your paper while the rest of us try to guess what you're doing. The catch is, you must perform your action as if you were 100 years old.**

Invite a willing child to go first and spin the game spinner. Then have the child choose a paper with a dot matching the color the arrow points to. Have the child act out the activity as other kids try to guess the action. Give everyone a turn to act.

Say: **Doing certain tasks usually becomes more difficult as we get older. A gift from God that you might not realize you have right now is your youth. There are many things you can do well while you're young.**

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **Explain whether or not you agree that being young is a gift from God.**
- **What do you think are other gifts God gives us?**
- **Tell about a gift or a surprise that made you really happy.**
- **What did you do when you opened that gift or first saw your surprise?**
- **What have you done to respond to God's gifts?**

Say: **In the Bible today, we'll hear about two people who thought they were too old to experience certain joys in life. But God had a different plan! Let's find out how they responded to the joyful surprise God had for them and how we can ▶ THANK GOD FOR HIS GIFTS.**

2 BIBLE EXPLORATION

The Big Surprise

The Big Surprise
Supplies

Bibles

What You'll Do

Say: **In the Bible, God promised a man named Abraham and his wife, Sarah, that after *many* years of not being able to have a family, they'd have a baby. What made God's promise even more amazing was that Abraham was about 100 years old, and Sarah was 90! Without God's help, it's impossible for people that age to have babies. It's a gift from God usually reserved for when people are still young adults.**

Let's play a game to find out what people we know who've had babies have in common. Spread out around the room and when I ask a question, talk to others in the room about your answer to the question and link arms with people who have similar answers. Then I'll invite you to share your discoveries.

Ask kids these questions as you play, and allow kids to share their answers after each.

- **Who in the group remembers when their mother was pregnant with a younger brother or sister? Tell about it.**
- **Who in the group knows someone who's pregnant right now? Tell about that person.**
- **Who in the group has seen a pregnant woman with gray hair and wrinkles? Tell about how old you think that person was.**
- **Tell about how old the oldest people you know are, and figure out who in the room knows the oldest person.**

Say: **We've learned a lot about what the people we know who have had babies have in common. Let's read the Bible and find out more about what made Abraham and Sarah's baby such a special gift from God.**

Distribute Bibles, and help kids find Genesis 21. Invite a willing child to read aloud Genesis 21:1-2.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **These verses say that God was gracious to Sarah. What do you think it means to be gracious?**
- **What do you think about the way God showed grace to Sarah when he gave her a son?**
- **Sarah had been hoping to have a child for a *long* time. Tell about something you've been hoping for.**

Say: **God gave Sarah and Abraham a gift they'd hoped to have for many years.**

What's in a Name?
Supplies

Bibles

Sometimes God blesses us with wonderful gifts we've been hoping for, too. When that happens we can ▶ THANK GOD FOR HIS GIFTS. Let's find out more about what God did for Abraham and Sarah.

What's in a Name?

What You'll Do

Have kids form pairs, and distribute Bibles. Invite a willing child in each pair to read aloud Genesis 21:3.

Say: **Abraham gave his son the name Isaac, which in Hebrew means "he laughs." With your partner, imitate some different kinds of laughs—such as happy laughs, nervous laughs, fake laughs, and any others you can think of. Then take turns guessing what kind of laugh your partner made.** Allow kids to play for two minutes.

Say: **Talk with your partner about which of the laughs you imitated best fits this Bible passage and Isaac's name.** Invite willing pairs to share their answers, and then invite willing kids in each pair to read aloud verse 5. Say: **Abraham was 100 years old when his son Isaac was born.**

Have pairs answer the following questions. After each question, invite willing pairs to share their answers.

Ask:

- **What's amazing about Abraham and Sarah having a baby when they were that old?**
- **What can you learn about God's gifts from the way he kept his promise to Abraham and Sarah—even when it seemed impossible?**

After kids have responded, invite a willing child to read aloud for the entire group verses 6-7.

Talk With Kids

Lead all the kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **Explain whether you think laughter like Sarah's is a good response to God's gift.**
- **What are good things in your life you believe are gifts from God?**
- **Based on the way Abraham and Sarah responded to God's gifts, how can you ▶ THANK GOD FOR HIS GIFTS?**

Say: **God gives us many gifts. Sometimes we have to be very patient, like Abraham and Sarah were when they waited many years to receive the gift of a family. When God blessed them with baby Isaac, they were so happy and thankful. When God blesses us with gifts in our lives, no matter how long they take, we can ▶ THANK GOD FOR HIS GIFTS.**

Laugh It Up

What You'll Do

Have kids sit in a circle with their hands folded in their laps.

Say: **The Bible tells us to rejoice, and that means to be glad, happy, and delighted. It's the kind of joy that's contagious. Let's see what I mean. Try to do whatever you can to make each other laugh and at the same time keep from laughing yourself. You can't get up or move your hands. If you do start to laugh, turn around and face away from the circle.** Play "Laugh It Up" (track 22 on the CD).

Afterward, have kids turn around to face into the circle.

Ask:

- **What made it difficult when you were trying not to laugh?**
- **Why do you think it was difficult to keep from laughing?**
- **What did you like about finally giving in and laughing?**

Say: **That's what joy is all about—being so happy that you just can't help laughing out loud! God wants us to have fun, and he loves to hear us laugh. In fact, the Bible tells us to have joy and rejoice. Let's look at today's Key Verse, Philippians 4:4.**

Make sure everyone has a Bible, and help kids look up Philippians 4:4. Lead kids in repeating the Key Verse: **"Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!" (Philippians 4:4).**

Pass out copies of the lyrics, and play "Rejoice in the Lord Always" (Philippians 4:4) (track 23 on the CD). Sing along with the kids.

Rejoice! Rejoice!
And again I say rejoice!
Rejoice! Rejoice!
And again I say rejoice!

Rejoice in the Lord always.
And again I say rejoice!
Rejoice in the Lord always.
And again I say rejoice!

(Repeat from the beginning 2x.)

Rejoice! Rejoice!
And again I say rejoice!
Rejoice! Rejoice!
And again I say rejoice!
And again I say rejoice!
And again I say rejoice!

Laugh It Up
Supplies

Bibles
CD player
copies of the lyrics page (at the end of this lesson)

Teacher Pack
CD: "Laugh It Up" (track 22)
"Rejoice in the Lord Always" (Philippians 4:4) (track 23)

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What about God's gifts makes you happy?**
- **What do you like about singing to God to show your joy?**
- **What are other things we can do to show God our joy?**

Say: **There are many reasons to rejoice and be happy, but there's something very special about the happiness we feel when God blesses us with his gifts. Abraham and Sarah knew that joy, and it felt so great that Sarah couldn't contain her laughter. Through her laughs, she showed God her joy at what he'd done. We can laugh, sing, and do all kinds of fun things to ▶ THANK GOD FOR HIS GIFTS.**

3 WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

Silly Smiles

Silly Smiles
Supplies

pens
Teacher Pack
"Silly Smile Punch-Outs"

Silly Smiles
Easy Prep

Separate the "Silly Smile Punch-Outs."

What You'll Do

Give each child a pen and a "Silly Smile Punch-Out."

Say: **On your Silly Smile, write about one thing that represents a gift from God that has made you happy. Maybe you'll write about your family or friends, or your pet. Be ready to share what you've written.**

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What did you write on your Silly Smiles?**
- **What about those people and things makes you happy and thankful for God's gifts?**

Say: **Isaac's name meant "he laughs," and his birth brought great joy to Sarah and Abraham. I can see by your Silly Smiles that you ▶ THANK GOD FOR HIS GIFTS, too. Just looking at those Silly Smiles makes me smile! Let's make something to remind us all week of how God makes us happy.**

Joy Cradles

Tip Jolly Ranchers candy is another great option for treats in this activity.

What You'll Do

Distribute this week's Bible Truth Sleuth pages. Give each child three index cards (or pieces of card stock), and have kids find the "Joy Cradle" section on their pages. Have kids follow the directions for making the cradles. Then let kids use markers to decorate the rocker portions of their Joy Cradles. As kids work, play "Rejoice in the Lord Always" (Philippians 4:4) (track 23 on the CD). When kids have finished making their cradles, play the song again and invite the kids to sing along, referring to the lyrics handout.

Talk With Kids

After the song, have kids sit in a circle, and lead them in this discussion.

Ask:

- **This week, what can you do with these cradles to remind you that God makes us happy?**
- **Why do you think it's important to remember that God makes us happy?**

Say: **It's important for us to recognize the joy God gives us and to ▶ THANK GOD FOR HIS GIFTS in our lives. I've brought a treat to help us do just that. We've already talked about some things God has done to bring us joy. Now let's get more specific.** Bring out the bag of Laffy Taffy candy or other treat of your choice.

Say: **I'm going to pass around this candy. When it comes to you, you may take a piece of candy to put in your cradle. First, though, you'll answer this question:**

Ask:

- **What's one thing that's given you joy so far today?**

If kids have difficulty coming up with specific things that have brought them joy, help them see God's gifts by suggesting simple joys, such as having something good to

Joy Cradles
Supplies

Bible Truth Sleuth
CD player
lyrics handouts from the "Laugh It Up" activity
Laffy Taffy or other treats
3 index cards or pieces of card stock per child
several pairs of scissors
tape
washable markers
glue sticks
Teacher Pack
CD: "Rejoice in the Lord Always" (Philippians 4:4) (track 23)

! ALLERGY ALERT

Joy Cradles
Easy Prep

Tear out the Lesson 12 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book.

eat for breakfast, seeing a friend at church, or getting along with siblings. Let everyone answer the question and take a piece of candy.

Ask:

- **What can we do to be on the lookout for God's gifts every day?**
- **What will you do this week to appreciate God's gifts?**

Say: **No matter where we are or what we're doing, we can ▶ THANK GOD FOR HIS GIFTS. Sometimes he gives us big gifts, as he did for Sarah and Abraham, and other times he gives us small gifts, such as a kind word from a friend. But God is faithful in his love and because of that, every day of our lives can be filled with joy. Let's think of some ways we can respond to God's gifts with joy this week.** Let kids enjoy their candy.

4 LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges
Supplies

Bible Truth Sleuth

Daily Challenges

What You'll Do

Say: **Here are some ideas for ways you can ▶ THANK GOD FOR HIS GIFTS this week.**

Have kids find this week's Daily Challenges on their Bible Truth Sleuth pages and choose one to do this week. They can choose one or more of these three options:

- **Say a prayer before dinner to joyfully thank God for his gifts.**
- **Ask your family to join you in listing everything you're thankful for.**
- **Ask God to bless a friend or family member with a special gift.**

Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell kids what you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.

Talk With Kids

Ask:

- **What's a practical way you're going to do your Daily Challenge? Share a time, a place, or other ideas.** Allow time.

Say: **Abraham and Sarah were so excited about God's gift to them—baby Isaac—that they couldn't help but joyfully thank God. I know we'll be happy to ▶ THANK GOD FOR HIS GIFTS as we follow through on our Daily Challenges this week.**

Weaving Faith at Home

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about thanking God for his gifts. Kids can also do the activities in the "HomeConnect" section of their Bible Truth Sleuth pages with their families.

Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church's families. Available at group.com/digital.

Have kids hold up their Silly Smiles. Pray: **God, we're thankful for your gifts and the way you give us joy. Thank you for…** Invite kids to say what they wrote on their Silly Smiles. **In Jesus' name, amen.**

Weaving Faith at Home
Supplies

Silly Smiles from the "Silly Smiles" activity

Golden Oldies

RED	Playing basketball.	GREEN	Picking flowers.	BLUE	Looking both ways, and then crossing the street.
RED	Tying a shoe.	GREEN	Going for a run.	YELLOW	Reading a book.
RED	Mowing the lawn.	GREEN	Taking something off the top shelf.	YELLOW	Checking the mailbox.
RED	Talking on the phone.	BLUE	Driving a car.	YELLOW	Playing volleyball.
RED	Playing soccer.	BLUE	Playing tennis.	YELLOW	Ice skating.
GREEN	Walking a dog.	BLUE	Hiking up a hill.	YELLOW	Jumping into a pool.
GREEN	Grocery shopping.	BLUE	Building something with a hammer and nails.		

! OK TO COPY

Lyrics

Rejoice in the Lord Always

Rejoice! Rejoice!
And again I say rejoice!
Rejoice! Rejoice!
And again I say rejoice!

Rejoice in the Lord always.
And again I say rejoice!
Rejoice in the Lord always.
And again I say rejoice!

(Repeat from the beginning 2x.)

Rejoice! Rejoice!
And again I say rejoice!
Rejoice! Rejoice!
And again I say rejoice!
And again I say rejoice!
And again I say rejoice!

! OK TO COPY

God Cares for Hagar and Ishmael

Genesis 21:8-21

Third-and fourth-graders take the concept of prayer seriously. But sometimes they can take it too far by treating prayer as a personal wish list. You can affirm kids for their belief that God hears us and does answer our prayers while helping them understand that our prayers don't always have to be about what we need or want. Use this lesson to guide kids' understanding of communicating with God about anything they'd like and to assure them that God always hears us when we pray.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started	**Blah, Blah!** *(about 5 min.)* Attempt to communicate by using only the word *blah*.	copies of the "Blah, Blah" handout (at the end of this lesson), scissors	Cut apart the "God hears us" and "Talk to God" phrases along the dotted lines.
2 Bible Exploration	**Wilderness Journey** *(about 15 min.)* Hear about Hagar and Ishmael, and make bushes to hide behind.	Bible, CD player, items from around the room, salty crackers, antibacterial gel (optional) **Teacher Pack:** CD	
	Are You Listening, God? *(about 15 min.)* Find out what happened to Hagar and Ishmael, and discuss times God has answered their prayers.	Bible, CD player, paper, pens, 1 cup of water per child, bushes from previous activity **Teacher Pack:** CD	

Bold text *within the lesson is spoken text.*

▶Bible Point

God always hears us when we pray.

Key Verse

"So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you" (Luke 11:9).

Weaving Faith Into Life

Children will communicate with God about their needs.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
3 Weaving Faith Into Life	**Open Doors** *(about 15 min.)* Make doors to remind them that God will answer when they knock.	Bible Truth Sleuth, CD player, copies of the lyrics page (at the end of this lesson), several pairs of scissors, stapler **Teacher Pack:** CD	Tear out the Lesson 13 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book.
	Prayer Journals *(about 10 min.)* Make Prayer Journals to talk to God.	pens, 2 sheets of paper and 1 pairs of scissors per child, washable markers, stapler	
4 Lasting Impressions	**Daily Challenges** *(about 5 min.)* Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	Bible Truth Sleuth, Prayer Journals from previous activity	
	Weaving Faith at Home *(about 2 min.)* Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.		

Bold text *within the lesson is spoken text.*

God Cares for Hagar and Ishmael

Genesis 21:8-21

BIBLE BACKGROUND FOR LEADERS

Ishmael Mocks Isaac

It was typical in Abraham's culture to have a celebration when a child was weaned, which was usually when the child was around 2 or 3 years of age. The celebration for Isaac was probably even bigger than most because he was something of a miracle child.

Unfortunately the joyous occasion soon turned bitter. We don't know if Ishmael's mocking of Isaac happened on the day of the celebration, but it must have occurred soon afterward. Ishmael had been born to Abraham through Hagar, Sarah's maidservant, after Sarah had decided to take things into her own hands and had Abraham sleep with Hagar to "build a family" (Genesis 16:2). By the time Isaac was 2, Ishmael was about 16 (Genesis 16:16; 21:5).

Sarah and Hagar had been at odds ever since Hagar was pregnant with Ishmael (Genesis 16:4-10). Abraham's decision to send Hagar and Ishmael away had probably been a long time in coming.

Abraham Casts Out Hagar and Ishmael

Abraham didn't want to send Hagar and Ishmael away. He knew it was wrong according to his culture and according to anyone's standards of fatherhood. When God told Abraham to do what Sarah wanted, God didn't say it was right. But God did promise to take care of Ishmael, eventually making a great nation of his descendants as well as Isaac's.

The area where Abraham lived was desert, and the skin of water and the food Abraham gave them was probably as much as they could comfortably carry, but it wouldn't have lasted very long.

God Responds to Hagar and Ishmael's Suffering

Remember that Ishmael was at least 16 by this time. If Hagar had to put him under a bush, he must have been terribly weakened by fluid deprivation. He likely wasn't far from death, as Hagar estimated (Genesis 21:16).

It seems odd that God responded to Ishmael's cry but sent an angel to speak to Hagar. It may be that Ishmael was simply too weak to even get water for himself. It also is likely that the well had been there all the time but Hagar didn't see it until God "opened her eyes"—God was actually there taking care of them and providing the water they needed, but they couldn't see it until they acknowledged their need for God.

The Jesus Connection

Pray about a challenge you're facing right now. You can cry out to God. Because of Jesus, we can trust that God always hears us. You can write your prayer here.

Blah, Blah!
Supplies

copies of the "Blah, Blah" handout (at the end of this lesson)
scissors

Blah, Blah!
Easy Prep

Cut apart the "God hears us" and "Talk to God" phrases along the dotted lines.

1 GETTING **STARTED**

Blah, Blah!

What You'll Do

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went. Have kids spread out around the room in pairs.

Say: **In this game, you'll get a slip of paper with a phrase you need to share with your partner. But the only way you can communicate will be by making motions with your body and saying the word "blah." You can't use any other words. If your partner guesses what you're trying to say, raise your hand and I'll give your partner something to say to you in return. In your pair, decide who'll go first.** Give a "God hears us" slip from the "Blah, Blah" handout to the first person in each pair, and allow kids time to read and plan what they'll do. **Ready? Go!** Allow time. Then give a "Talk to God" slip to the other person in each pair and repeat the activity.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What was it like to try to get your partner to understand?**
- **What was it like to try to understand your partner?**
- **Tell about a time you had a hard time understanding someone.**

Say: **It's difficult to communicate when we're unsure if the person we're talking to understands us. Because of that, it can be hard to communicate with God. When we can't see him in front of us or hear a voice talking back to us, we might wonder if the words we say to God are actually heard. The truth is, ▶ GOD ALWAYS HEARS US WHEN WE PRAY. God hears our prayers clearly and perfectly, every time. Let's look in the Bible to find out what happened for a mother and son who desperately needed to communicate with God.**

2 BIBLE EXPLORATION

Wilderness Journey

What You'll Do

Have kids sit in a circle.

Say: **Today we'll hear about a boy named Ishmael and his mother, Hagar. Let's sit back and listen to the CD as we find out what happened to Hagar and Ishmael. As you listen, think about what prayer requests you'd list for Abraham in this situation.**

Play "Hagar and Ishmael, Part 1" (track 24 on the CD), pausing the CD when prompted.

Ask:

- **What prayer requests did you think of as you listened to this track?**
- **Tell about a time you were worried like Abraham. What did you pray about?**
- **God assured Abraham that Hagar and Ishmael would be okay. What does that tell you about God's ability to answer prayers?**

Say: **Hagar and Ishmael went out into the wilderness with very little food and water. Let's turn our room into a sort of wilderness, too, and then we'll find out what happened to Hagar and Ishmael. Let's use items from around our room to build things that represent bushes and rocks in the wilderness.** Allow time.

Have children clean their hands, and give two salty crackers to each child and allow them to eat.

Say: **Now hide behind your "bushes" so that no one can see you, and quietly listen to what happened next for Hagar and Ishmael. As you listen, think about what the most urgent prayer is in this situation.**

After all the kids are hidden behind their bushes, play "Hagar and Ishmael, Part 2" (track 25 on the CD), pausing when prompted.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What do you think the most urgent prayer in this situation would be?**
- **Eating salty crackers can leave your mouth feeling very dry. Why do you think that might be similar to what Hagar and Ishmael experienced in the desert?**

Wilderness Journey
Supplies

Bible
CD player
items from around the room
salty crackers
antibacterial gel (optional)
Teacher Pack
CD: "Hagar and Ishmael, Parts 1 and 2" (tracks 24 and 25)

- **What do you think about the danger Hagar and Ishmael faced in the desert?**
- **Tell about a time you were very scared, like Hagar. What did you pray about?**

Say: **Hagar and Ishmael were in a scary situation being in a blistering hot desert without any water. Hagar was afraid she and her son were going to die. We'll face scary times in life, too, but no matter where we are or what we're going through,**
▶ **GOD ALWAYS HEARS US WHEN WE PRAY.**

Are You Listening, God?
Supplies

Bible
CD player
paper
pens
1 cup of water per child
bushes from previous activity
Teacher Pack
CD: "Hagar and Ishmael, Part 3" (track 26)

Are You Listening, God?

What You'll Do

Allow kids to remain behind the bushes they created, and give them paper and pens. Say: **Hagar and Ishmael were all alone, rejected by their own family. Think about a time you felt lonely or rejected. Close your eyes and imagine you're the only one in the room right now. Picture that experience, and remember how you felt as you went through that time.** Allow time.

Ask:
- **Describe loneliness and rejection.**

Say: **Now think about times you've felt as if you really needed God to answer your prayers. Write about those times on your paper.**

Give kids a chance to write. Then say: **As we hear what happened to Hagar and Ishmael, listen for God's answers to the prayer requests you listed earlier.** Play "Hagar and Ishmael, Part 3" (track 26 on the CD).

Say: **God answered the cries of Hagar and Ishmael! God gave them the water they desperately needed and answered their prayers.** Ask kids to list some of the answers to prayer requests that they noticed.

Give each child a cup of water and allow kids to drink. Say: **Now think about times God has answered *your* prayers. Write about those answered prayers on the other side of your paper.** Allow time.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:
- **God heard Ishmael's cries and then helped Ishmael and Hagar. What does that tell you about God?**
- **Describe what it was like to get a drink of water after having a salty snack.**
- **What makes that water similar to your feelings when God answers a prayer?**
- **What did you write about times you really needed God to answer your prayers?**

- **What are some of the answered prayers you wrote about on the other side of your paper?**

Say: **Sometimes we may feel alone in our circumstances, as if we're hiding behind a bush where no one, not even God, can see us. Hagar and Ishmael probably felt very alone and scared in the desert. But God heard Ishmael and Hagar and cared for them. ▶ GOD ALWAYS HEARS US WHEN WE PRAY, too, and cares about everything we say to him. Let's take a look at our Key Verse and find out more about talking to God.**

3 WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

Open Doors

What You'll Do

Say: **Our Key Verse today, Luke 11:9, tells us how much God wants us to talk to him. Listen as I read the verse: "So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you" (Luke 11:9). Let's say it again together.** Lead kids in repeating the verse.

Say: **God often uses examples in the Bible of things we're familiar with to help us understand and remember what he's saying. In this verse, God uses the image of a door opening to represent his willingness to listen to our prayers. To help us remember that ▶ GOD ALWAYS HEARS US WHEN WE PRAY, we're going to make doors of our own.**

Distribute today's Bible Truth Sleuth pages, and have kids find the "Open Doors" section. Lead kids through these instructions to make their doors:

- **First, cut out the picture of the two doors.** Allow time.
- **Next, cut between the two doors.** Allow time.
- **Cut out the rectangle with the Key Verse printed on it.** Allow time.
- **Now place your two doors on top of the Key Verse piece.** Allow time.
- **Staple the pieces together along the dotted lines to form door hinges.** Allow time.
- **Then fold the doors back along the dotted lines so the doors open and close.** Allow time.

When kids open the doors, the Key Verse should show underneath. "The Word for the Week" will be visible on the back of the doors. When kids finish making their doors, have them form a circle. Pass out copies of the lyrics, and play "God Is Our Help" (Psalm 33:20) (track 27 on the CD). After they listen once, sing along with the kids.

Open Doors
Supplies

Bible Truth Sleuth
CD player
copies of the lyrics page (at the end of this lesson)
several pairs of scissors
stapler
Teacher Pack
CD: "God Is Our Help" (Psalm 33:20) (track 27)

Open Doors
Easy Prep

Tear out the Lesson 13 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book.

We can depend on the Lord alone to save us.
Only he is the one who will protect us.
Like a shield that will not budge,
He is watching over us.
Every moment of the day,
He keeps us safe.

(Repeat.)

I can depend on the Lord alone to save me.
Only he is the one who will protect me.
Like a shield I cannot see,
He is watching over me.
Every moment of the day,
He keeps me safe.

"God Is Our Help" (Psalm 33:20) by Jay Stocker. © 2004 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **How could the words of this song help you to believe that God will always hear you when you pray?**
- **In what ways are God's answers to prayers like someone opening a door when we knock?**
- **What can you do with this door you've made to help you remember that you can pray anytime and anywhere, and God will be listening?**

Say: **Whenever we knock on God's door, he's waiting there to answer. It didn't matter where Hagar and Ishmael were or even if they used words in their prayers. God heard their cries and protected them. God does the same for us today. These doors are for you to take home as a reminder that ▶ GOD ALWAYS HEARS US WHEN WE PRAY, anytime and anywhere. And when you open the doors, you'll see Bible verses that you can read this week to hear back from God. Along with your doors, let's make one more thing for you to take home and practice talking to God.**

Prayer Journals

What You'll Do

Say: **God cares for us so much that ▶ GOD ALWAYS HEARS US WHEN WE PRAY. God wants us to come to him with our needs, our joys, our questions, our fears—all of it! God loves it when we talk to him. When we communicate with God, we can get to know him better and stay close to him.**

Ask:

- **What do you think it means to communicate with God?**
- **What kinds of things do you like talking to God about most?**

Say: **We're going to focus on communicating with God this week. To help you do that, you'll each create a Prayer Journal.**

Have kids spread out and find a place to sit away from others. Give each child paper, scissors, a pen, and several markers. Show kids how to make praying hands and then, leaving one hand held like a praying hand, place it on a piece of paper to trace around it.

Say: **Repeat tracing your praying hand on each piece of paper and then cut out your traced hands.** Allow time. Circulate with the stapler and help kids staple their papers together for the Prayer Journals. Say: **Write on the first page of your Prayer Journal some things you'd like to talk to God about this week. They can be needs, prayers for friends and family—anything you'd like.** Allow time.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **As you were writing your prayers and thinking about what you want to talk to God about, he could hear your prayers even then! What do you think about that?**
- **Other than talking and writing, what are some ways you can think of that we can talk to God?**

Say: **We know now that ▶ GOD ALWAYS HEARS US WHEN WE PRAY and that our prayers don't always have to be put into words. And we can pray anytime, anywhere, about anything. Just as God heard Ishmael and Hagar's cries in the desert, God hears us and cares for us. Keep adding to your Prayer Journal this week.**

Prayer Journals
Supplies

pens
2 sheets of paper and 1 pair of scissors per child
washable markers
stapler

Daily Challenges
Supplies

Bible Truth Sleuth
Prayer Journals from previous activity

4 LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

What You'll Do

Say: **Take home your Prayer Journal, and keep it by your bed. Every day when you wake up or before you go to bed, write in your journal as you follow through with your Daily Challenge. Practice talking to God and remember that ▶ GOD ALWAYS HEARS US WHEN WE PRAY.**

Have kids find this week's Daily Challenges on their Bible Truth Sleuth pages and choose one to do this week. They can choose one or more of these three options:

- **Write in your journal a prayer to God each day.**
- **Write in your journal how God has answered one of your prayers.**
- **Write in your journal a prayer for a family member or friend.**

Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell kids what you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.

Talk With Kids

Ask:

- **What's a practical way you're going to do your Daily Challenge? Share a time, a place, or other ideas.** Allow time.

Say: **God heard Hagar and Ishmael's cries of desperation. We can talk to God about anything and ▶ GOD ALWAYS HEARS US WHEN WE PRAY. As we pray to follow through on our Daily Challenges this week, we can trust that God will hear us.**

Weaving Faith at Home

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about talking to God. Kids can also do the activities in the "HomeConnect" section of their Bible Truth Sleuth pages with their families.

Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church's families. Available at group.com/digital.

Take a couple of minutes to pray with your kids, and invite them to add to the prayer with what they wrote on the first page of their Prayer Journals. Close your prayer with: **in Jesus' name, amen.**

"Blah, Blah"

God hears us.

Talk to God.

God hears us.

Talk to God.

God hears us.

Talk to God.

God hears us.

Talk to God.

God hears us.

Talk to God.

God hears us.

Talk to God.

God hears us.

Talk to God.

God hears us.

Talk to God.

God hears us.

Talk to God.

God hears us.

Talk to God.

! OK TO COPY

Lyrics

God Is Our Help (Psalm 33:20)

We can depend on the Lord alone to save us.
Only he is the one who will protect us.
Like a shield that will not budge,
He is watching over us.
Every moment of the day,
He keeps us safe.

(Repeat.)

I can depend on the Lord alone to save me.
Only he is the one who will protect me.
Like a shield I cannot see,
He is watching over me.
Every moment of the day,
He keeps me safe.

"God Is Our Help" (Psalm 33:20) by Jay Stocker. © 2004 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.

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