

BIBLE STUDY MEDIA

UPPER ELEMENTARY

HEARTS

A GOSPEL LECTIONARY CURRICULUM

ALIVE

YEAR A

WINTER

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HEARTS ALIVE

SCOPE & SEQUENCE | lectionary year A

WINTER | YEAR A

WEEK 1 ❖ 12/1/19 Advent 1	(SS) Prophecy and Expectation: The Mountain of the Lord (Isaiah 2:1–5) (CC) Hope Comes from Jesus (Romans 13:11–14)
WEEK 2 ❖ 12/8/19 Advent 2	(SS) Prophecy and Expectation: The Shoot of Jesse (Isaiah 11:1–10) (CC) Hope That is for Everyone (Romans 15:4–13)
WEEK 3 ❖ 12/15/19 Advent 3	(SS) Prophecy and Expectation: Garden in the Desert (Isaiah 35:1–10) (CC) Hope That Yawns (James 5:7–10)
WEEK 4 ❖ 12/22/19 Advent 4	(SS) Prophecy and Expectation: Emmanuel God with Us (Isaiah 7:10–16) (CC) Hope Has a Name (Romans 1:1–7)
WEEK 5 ❖ 12/29/19 Christmas 1	(SS) Praise the Lord: Raised up a Horn/King (Psalm 148) (CC) Like His Brothers and Sisters (Hebrews 2:10–18)
WEEK 6 ❖ 1/5/20 Christmas 2–ABC	(SS) Praise the Lord: For His Divine Plan (Psalm 147:12–20) (CC) God's Blessing in Christ (Ephesians 1:3–14)
WEEK 7 ❖ 1/12/20 Baptism of the Lord Lectionary 1	(SS) Baptism of Jesus (Matthew 3:13–17) (CC) A Light to the Nations (Isaiah 42:1–9)
WEEK 8 ❖ 1/19/20 Epiphany 2–Lectionary 2	(SS) John Points to Jesus (John 1:29–42) (CC) Called to Be Saints (1 Corinthians 1:1–9)
WEEK 9 ❖ 1/26/20 Epiphany 3–Lectionary 3	(SS) Jesus Calls His First Disciples (Matthew 4:12–23) (CC) Baptized into Unity (1 Corinthians 1:10–18)
WEEK 10 ❖ 2/2/20 Epiphany 4–Lectionary 4	(SS) Sermon on the Mount: Beatitudes (Matthew 5:1–12) (CC) God's Amazing Wisdom (1 Corinthians 1:18–31)
WEEK 11 ❖ 2/9/20 Epiphany 5–Lectionary 5	(SS) Sermon on the Mount: Salt and Light (Matthew 5:13–20) (CC) Paul's One Message (1 Corinthians 2:1–12 [13–16])
WEEK 12 ❖ 2/16/20 Epiphany 6 Proper 1, Lectionary 6	(SS) Sermon on the Mount: The Higher Law (Matthew 5:21–37) (CC) God Grows the Church (1 Corinthians 3:1–9)
WEEK 13 ❖ 2/23/20 Transfiguration Sunday	(SS) Transfiguration (Matthew 17:1–9) (CC) A More Certain Word (2 Peter 1:16–21)

SPRING | YEAR A

WEEK 1 ❖ 3/1/20 Lent 1	(SS) Baptism: Temptation and Repentance (Matthew 4:1–11) (CC) The Fall into Sin (Genesis 2:15–17; 3:1–7)
WEEK 2 ❖ 3/8/20 Lent 2	(SS) Baptism: Be Born Again (John 3:1–17 or Matthew 17:1–9) (CC) God Calls Abraham (Genesis 12:1–4a)
WEEK 3 ❖ 3/15/20 Lent 3	(SS) Baptism: Living Water (John 4:5–42) (CC) Water from the Rock (Exodus 17:1–7)
WEEK 4 ❖ 3/22/20 Lent 4	(SS) Baptism: New Eyes (John 9:1–41) (CC) Samuel Anoints David (1 Samuel 16:1–13)
WEEK 5 ❖ 3/29/20 Lent 5	(SS) Baptism: Death to Life (John 11:1–45) (CC) Valley of Dry Bones: God's Offered New Start (Ezekiel 37:1–14)
WEEK 6 ❖ 4/5/20 Palm Sunday	(SS) Liturgy of the Passion (Matthew 26:14–27:66) (CC) Liturgy of the Palms (Psalm 118:1–2, 19–29)
WEEK 7 ❖ 4/12/20 Easter Sunday	(SS) Resurrection (John 20:1–18 or Matthew 28:1–10) (CC) Peter Preaches to Cornelius (Acts 10:34–43 or Jeremiah 31:1–6)
WEEK 8 ❖ 4/19/20 Easter 2	(SS) A Living Hope: Faith Greater Than Gold (1 Peter 1:3–9) (CC) Peter at Pentecost: Witnesses (Acts 2:14a, 22–32)
WEEK 9 ❖ 4/26/20 Easter 3	(SS) A Living Hope: Sincere Love (1 Peter 1:17–23) (CC) Peter at Pentecost: Blessings for Families and Nations (Acts 2:14a, 36–41)
WEEK 10 ❖ 5/3/20 Easter 4	(SS) A Living Hope: Follow the Shepherd of Our Souls (1 Peter 2:19–25) (CC) How to Build Christian Community (Acts 2:42–47)
WEEK 11 ❖ 5/10/20 Easter 5	(SS) A Living Hope: Holy Living Temple (1 Peter 2:2–10) (CC) Stephen and the Ascended Jesus (Acts 7:55–60)
WEEK 12 ❖ 5/17/20 Easter 6	(SS) A Living Hope: Suffering for Doing Good (1 Peter 3:13–22) (CC) Paul in Athens: Jesus Is Lord (Acts 17:22–31)
WEEK 13 ❖ 5/24/20 Easter 7	(SS) A Living Hope: Standing Firm and Faithful (1 Peter 4:12–14; 5:6–11) (CC) Jesus's Promised Holy Spirit (Acts 1:6–14)
WEEK 14 ❖ 5/31/20 Day of Pentecost	(SS) God's Spirit on His People (Numbers 11:24–30) (CC) The Holy Spirit (John 20:19–23 or John 7:37–39)

HEARTS ALIVE

SCOPE & SEQUENCE | lectionary year A

SUMMER | YEAR A (CHILDREN'S CHURCH)

WEEK 1 ♦ 6/7/20 Trinity Sunday	(CC) The Great Commission (Matthew 28:16–20)
WEEK 2 ♦ 6/14/20 Proper 6, Lectionary 11	(CC) Missionary Sermon: Jesus Sends Workers (Matthew 9:35—10:8, [9–23])
WEEK 3 ♦ 6/21/20 Proper 7, Lectionary 12	(CC) Missionary Sermon: Pick Up Your Cross (Matthew 10:24–39)
WEEK 4 ♦ 6/28/20 Proper 8, Lectionary 13	(CC) Missionary Sermon: A Cup of Cold Water (Matthew 10:40–42)
WEEK 5 ♦ 7/5/20 Proper 9, Lectionary 14	(CC) Come to Jesus (or Not) (Matthew 11:16–19, 25–30)
WEEK 6 ♦ 7/12/20 Proper 10, Lectionary 15	(CC) Parables: Sower (Matthew 13:1–9, 18–23)
WEEK 7 ♦ 7/19/20 Proper 11, Lectionary 16	(CC) Parables: Weeds (Matthew 13:24–30, 36–43)
WEEK 8 ♦ 7/26/20 Proper 12, Lectionary 17	(CC) Parables: Mustard Seed (Matthew 13:31–33, 44–52)
WEEK 9 ♦ 8/2/20 Proper 13, Lectionary 18	(CC) Mighty Acts: Feeding the 5,000 (Matthew 14:13–21)
WEEK 10 ♦ 8/9/20 Proper 14, Lectionary 19	(CC) Mighty Acts: Walking on Water (Matthew 14:22–33)
WEEK 11 ♦ 8/16/20 Proper 15, Lectionary 20	(CC) Hypocrites and True Believers (Matthew 15: (10–20), 21–28)

FALL | YEAR A

WEEK 1 ♦ 8/23/20 Proper 16, Lectionary 21	(SS) (SS) Baby Moses Saved from Pharaoh (Exodus 1:8—2:10) (CC) Discipleship: Peter's Confession (Matthew 16:13–20)
WEEK 2 ♦ 8/30/20 Proper 17, Lectionary 22	(SS) Moses and the Burning Bush (Exodus 3:1–15) (CC) Discipleship: Take Up Your Cross (Matthew 16:21–28)
WEEK 3 ♦ 9/6/20 Proper 18, Lectionary 23	(SS) Plagues and Passover (Exodus 12:1–32) (CC) Community Sermon: If Another Member Sins against You (Matthew 18:15–20)
WEEK 4 ♦ 9/13/20 Proper 19, Lectionary 24	(SS) Salvation at the Red Sea (Exodus 14:19–31) (CC) Community Sermon: Parable of the Unforgiving Servant (Matthew 18:21–35)
WEEK 5 ♦ 9/20/20 Proper 20, Lectionary 25	(SS) Manna in the Wilderness (Exodus 16:1–15) (CC) Community Sermon: Parable of the Vineyard Workers' Wages (Matthew 20:1–16)
WEEK 6 ♦ 9/27/20 Proper 21, Lectionary 26	(SS) Water from the Rock (Exodus 17:1–7) (CC) Temple Conflicts: By What Authority (Matthew 21:23–32)
WEEK 7 ♦ 10/4/20 Proper 22, Lectionary 27	(SS) Sinai and the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:1–4, 7–9, 12–20) (CC) Temple Conflicts: Parable of the Vineyard Owner (Matthew 21:33–46)
WEEK 8 ♦ 10/11/20 Proper 23, Lectionary 28	(SS) The Golden Calf (Exodus 32:1–14) (CC) Temple Conflicts: Parable of the Wedding Banquet (Matthew 22:1–14)
WEEK 9 ♦ 10/18/20 Proper 24, Lectionary 29	(SS) Moses's Intercession (Exodus 33:12–23) (CC) Temple Conflicts: Is it Lawful to Pay Caesar? (Matthew 22:15–22)
WEEK 10 ♦ 10/25/20 Proper 25, Lectionary 30	(SS) Moses's Death and Burial (Deuteronomy 34:1–12) (CC) Temple Conflicts: The Greatest Commandment (Matthew 22:34–46)
WEEK 11 ♦ 11/1/20 Proper 26, Lectionary 31	(SS) Joshua and Israel Cross the Jordan (Joshua 3:7–17) (CC) Temple Conflicts: Do What the Scribes Teach, Not What They Do (Matthew 23:1–12)
WEEK 12 ♦ 11/8/20 Proper 27, Lectionary 32	(SS) Joshua and the Covenant Renewal (Joshua 24:1–28) (CC) Be Ready: Parable of the Bridesmaids (Matthew 25:1–13)
WEEK 13 ♦ 11/15/20 Proper 28, Lectionary 33	(SS) Deborah and Barak (Judges 4:1–23) (CC) Be Ready: Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14–30)
WEEK 14 ♦ 11/22/20 Reign of Christ Proper 29, Lectionary 34	(SS) God the Good Shepherd (Feast of Christ the King) (Ezekiel 34:1–24) (CC) Be Ready: Parable of the King, Sheep, and Goats (Matthew 25:31–46)

HEARTS ALIVE

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WINTER | YEAR B

WEEK 1 ❖ 11/29/20

Advent 1

(SS) God Wants to Give Us a Gift (His Presence) (1 Corinthians 1:1–9)
(CC) O Shepherd, Stir Up Your Power (Psalm 80:1–7, 17–19)

WEEK 2 ❖ 12/6/20

Advent 2

(SS) Jesus Will Give the Baptism of the Spirit (Mark 1:1–8)
(CC) The Lord God Comes with Might (Isaiah 40:1–11)

WEEK 3 ❖ 12/13/20

Advent 3

(SS) Don't Quench the Spirit (1 Thessalonians 5:16–24)
(CC) Like People Who Dream (Psalm 126)

WEEK 4 ❖ 12/20/20

Advent 4

(SS) The Spirit Will Come upon Mary (Luke 1:26–38)
(CC) Mary's Song of Praise (Luke 1:46–55)

WEEK 5 ❖ 12/27/20

Christmas 1

(SS) We Are God's Children by the Spirit of Adoption (Luke 2:22–40)
(CC) Messiah Blesses All Creation (Psalm 148)

WEEK 6 ❖ (1/3/21)

Christmas 2

(SS) Children Born of God (John 1:1–18)
(CC) Messiah Blesses His People (Psalm 147:12–20)

WEEK 7 ❖ 1/10/21

Baptism of the Lord-Lectionary 1

(SS) Revelation of Jesus As the Son of God (Mark 1:4–11)
(CC) Baptized into Jesus (Acts 19:1–7)

WEEK 8 ❖ 1/17/21

Epiphany 2-Lectionary 2

(SS) Revelation of God through Jesus (John 1:43–51)
(CC) Raised By God's Power—A Temple of His Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:12–20)

WEEK 9 ❖ 1/24/21

Epiphany 3-Lectionary 3

(SS) Revelation of the Kingdom and Call to Follow (Mark 1:14–20)
(CC) Commitment to Family and God (1 Corinthians 7:29–31)

WEEK 10 ❖ 1/31/21

Epiphany 4-Lectionary 4

(SS) Revelation by a Demon of Jesus's Identity (Mark 1:21–28)
(CC) Help Each Other Stand (1 Corinthians 8:1–13)

WEEK 11 ❖ 2/7/21

Epiphany 5-Lectionary 5

(SS) Revelation of Jesus As Healer (Mark 1:29–39)
(CC) All for the Sake of the Gospel (1 Corinthians 9:16–23)

WEEK 12 ❖ 2/14/21

Transfiguration Sunday

(SS) Revelation of the Divine Glory of Jesus (Mark 9:2–9)
(CC) We Proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord (2 Corinthians 4:3–6)

SPRING | YEAR B

WEEK 1 ❖ 2/21/21

Lent 1

(SS) God's Covenant with Noah (Genesis 9:8–17)
(CC) Passing through the Waters to New Life (1 Peter 3:18–22)

WEEK 2 ❖ 2/28/21

Lent 2

(SS) God's Covenant with Abraham (Genesis 17:1–7, 15–16)
(CC) Abraham Grows Strong in Faith (Romans 4:13–25)

WEEK 3 ❖ 3/7/21

Lent 3

(SS) God's Covenant with Moses: Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:1–17)
(CC) God's Power and Wisdom in Christ (1 Corinthians 1:18–25)

WEEK 4 ❖ 3/14/21

Lent 4

(SS) New Covenant: Promise of Forgiveness in Jesus (John 3:14–21)
(CC) The Gift of God (Ephesians 2:1–10)

WEEK 5 ❖ 3/21/21

Lent 5

(SS) Jesus's New Covenant (Jeremiah 31:31–34)
(CC) Jesus Our Obedient, Perfect Priest (Hebrews 5:5–10)

WEEK 6 ❖ 3/28/21

Palm Sunday

(SS) The Cross of Jesus (Philippians 2:5–11)
(CC) Triumphal Entry (Mark 11:1–11)

WEEK 7 ❖ 4/4/21

Easter Sunday

(SS) Jesus Is Alive! (John 20:1–18 or Mark 16:1–8)
(CC) Of First Importance (1 Corinthians 15:1–11 or Acts 10:34–43)

WEEK 8 ❖ 4/11/21

Easter 2

(SS) New Life through Belief and the Spirit (John 20:19–31)
(CC) True Fellowship (1 John 1:1–2:2)

WEEK 9 ❖ 4/18/21

Easter 3

(SS) New Life by Seeing Jesus (Luke 24:36b–48)
(CC) True Children (1 John 3:1–7)

WEEK 10 ❖ 4/25/21

Easter 4

(SS) New Life by Following the Good Shepherd (John 10:11–18)
(CC) True Service (1 John 3:16–24)

WEEK 11 ❖ 5/2/21

Easter 5

(SS) New Life by Being Connected to the Vine (John 15:1–8)
(CC) True Love (1 John 4:7–21)

WEEK 12 ❖ 5/9/21

Easter 6

(SS) New Life by Love (John 15:9–17)
(CC) True Obedience (1 John 5:1–6)

WEEK 13 ❖ 5/16/21

Easter 7

(SS) New Life through Jesus's Prayer (John 17:6–19)
(CC) True Confidence and Testimony (1 John 5:9–13)

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SUMMER | YEAR B (CHILDREN'S CHURCH)

WEEK 1 ❖ 5/23/21

Day of Pentecost

(SS) Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1–21)
(CC) Outpouring of the Holy Spirit (Ezekiel 37:1–14)

WEEK 2 ❖ 5/30/21

Trinity Sunday

(SS) Isaiah's Glorious Vision (Isaiah 6:1–8)
(CC) Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Romans 8:12–17)

WEEK 3 ❖ 6/6/21

Proper 5, Lectionary 10

(CC) Christian Maturity: Eternal Perspective (2 Corinthians 4:13–5:1)

WEEK 4 ❖ 6/13/21

Proper 6, Lectionary 11

(CC) Christian Maturity: New Creation (2 Corinthians 5)

WEEK 5 ❖ 6/20/21

Proper 7, Lectionary 12

(CC) Christian Maturity: Service through Suffering (2 Corinthians 6:1–13)

WEEK 6 ❖ 6/27/21

Proper 8, Lectionary 13

(CC) Christian Maturity: Generosity (2 Corinthians 8:7–15)

WEEK 7 ❖ 7/4/21

Proper 9, Lectionary 14

(CC) Christian Maturity: Power in Weakness (2 Corinthians 12:2–10)

WEEK 8 ❖ 7/11/21

Proper 10, Lectionary 15

(CC) Spirit-Filled Church: Adoption as Spiritual Children (Ephesians 1:3–14)

WEEK 9 ❖ 7/18/21

Proper 11, Lectionary 16

(CC) Spirit-Filled Church: Members of God's Family (Ephesians 2:11–22)

WEEK 10 ❖ 7/25/21

Proper 12, Lectionary 17

(CC) Spirit-Filled Church: Unimaginable Power (Ephesians 3:14–21)

WEEK 11 ❖ 8/1/21

Proper 13, Lectionary 18

(CC) Spirit-Filled Church: One Body, Different Parts (Ephesians 4:1–16)

WEEK 12 ❖ 8/8/21

Proper 14, Lectionary 19

(CC) Spirit-Filled Church: Follow Christ's Example (Ephesians 4:25–5:2)

WEEK 13 ❖ 8/15/21

Proper 15, Lectionary 20

(CC) Spirit-Filled Church: Wise Living (Ephesians 5:15–20)

WEEK 12 ❖ 8/22/21

Proper 16, Lectionary 21

(CC) Spirit-Filled Church: The Armor of God (Ephesians 6:10–20)

FALL | YEAR B

WEEK 1 ❖ 8/29/21

Proper 17, Lectionary 22

(SS) Living in Wisdom: "Song of the Beloved" (Song of Solomon 2:8–13)
(CC) Walking in Wisdom: Hearing and Doing (James 1:17–27)

WEEK 2 ❖ 9/7/21

Proper 18, Lectionary 23

(SS) Living in Wisdom: Justice and Mercy (Proverbs 22:1–2, 8–9, 22–23)
(CC) Walking in Wisdom: Showing Faith by Action (James 2:1–10, 14–17)

WEEK 3 ❖ 9/12/21

Proper 19, Lectionary 24

(SS) Living in Wisdom: Lady Wisdom's Invitation (Proverbs 1:20–33)
(CC) Walking in Wisdom: Controlling Your Tongue (James 3:1–12)

WEEK 4 ❖ 9/19/21

Proper 20, Lectionary 25

(SS) Living in Wisdom: The Wise Wife (Proverbs 31:10–31)
(CC) Walking in Wisdom: Two Kinds of Wisdom (James 3:13–4:3, 7–8a)

WEEK 5 ❖ 9/26/21

Proper 21, Lectionary 26

(SS) Exile (Monarchy's Failure): Esther's Bravery (Esther 7:1–6, 9–10; 9:20–22)
(CC) Walking in Wisdom: Pray in All Circumstances (James 5:13–20)

WEEK 6 ❖ 10/3/21

Proper 22, Lectionary 27

(SS) Job's Sorrowful Test (Job 1:1; 2:1–10)
(CC) Worship in the Living Temple: Jesus Is the Head of All Things (Hebrews 1:1–4; 2:5–12)

WEEK 7 ❖ 10/10/21

Proper 23, Lectionary 28

(SS) Job's Lament (Job 23:1–9, 16–17)
(CC) Worship in the Living Temple: Jesus Is a Compassionate High Priest (Hebrews 4:12–16)

WEEK 8 ❖ 10/17/21

Proper 24, Lectionary 29

(SS) Job's Conversation with God (Job 38:1–7, 34–41)
(CC) Worship in the Living Temple: God Appointed Jesus High Priest (Hebrews 5:1–10)

WEEK 9 ❖ 10/25/21

Proper 25, Lectionary 30

(SS) Job's Restoration (Job 42:1–6, 10–17)
(CC) Worship in the Living Temple: Jesus Made One Sacrifice for All (Hebrews 7:23–28)

WEEK 10 ❖ 10/31/21

Proper 26, Lectionary 31

(SS) Restoration: Ruth and Naomi (Ruth 1:1–18)
(CC) Worship in the Living Temple: Better Than the Blood of Goats (Hebrews 9:11–14)

WEEK 11 ❖ 11/7/21

Proper 27, Lectionary 32

(SS) Restoration: Ruth and Boaz and Baby Obed (Ruth 3:1–5; 4:13–17)
(CC) Worship in the Living Temple: Jesus Will Return from Heaven (Hebrews 9:24–28)

WEEK 12 ❖ 11/14/21

Proper 28, Lectionary 33

(SS) Restoration: Hannah's Prayer (1 Samuel 1:4–20)
(CC) Worship in the Living Temple: Drawing Near to God (Hebrews 10:11–25)

WEEK 13 ❖ 11/21/21

Reign of Christ
Proper 29, Lectionary 34

(SS) Restoration: David's Final Prayer (2 Samuel 23:1–7)
(CC) Christ the King: Returning in Glory (Revelation 1:4b–8)

HEARTS ALIVE

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WINTER | YEAR C

WEEK 1 ❖ 12/2/18

Advent 1

(SS) Be Alert (Luke 21:25–36)
(CC) Messianic Promises: Righteousness (Jeremiah 33:14–16)

WEEK 2 ❖ 12/9/18

Advent 2

(SS) Prepare the Way (Luke 3:1–6)
(CC) Messianic Promise: Refining (Malachi 3:1–4)

WEEK 3 ❖ 12/16/18

Advent 3

(SS) Rejoice (Philippians 4:4–7)
(CC) Messianic Promise: Restoration (Zephaniah 3:14–20)

WEEK 4 ❖ 12/23/18

Advent 4

(SS) Magnify the Lord (Luke 1:39–55)
(CC) Messianic Promise: Rule (Micah 5:2–5a)

WEEK 5 ❖ 12/30/18

Christmas 1

(SS) The Peace of Christ Rule Our Hearts (Colossians 3:12–17)
(CC) Growth in Stature and Favor in the Lord (1 Samuel 2:18–20, 26)

WEEK 6 ❖ 1/6/19

Epiphany of the Lord

(SS) Visit of the Magi (Matthew 2:1–12)
(CC) Mystery Revealed (Ephesians 3:1–12)

WEEK 7 ❖ 1/13/19

Baptism of the Lord
Lectionary 1

(SS) Baptism (Luke 3:15–17, 21–22)
(CC) Receive the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:14–17)

WEEK 8 ❖ 1/20/19

Epiphany 2–Lectionary 2

(SS) Jesus's First Sign at Cana (John 2:1–11)
(CC) Spiritual Gifts: Different Gifts (1 Corinthians 12:1–11)

WEEK 9 ❖ 1/27/19

Epiphany 3–Lectionary 3

(SS) Jesus's Call: Sermon in the Temple (Luke 4:14–21)
(CC) Spiritual Gifts: One Body (1 Corinthians 12:12–31a)

WEEK 10 ❖ 2/3/19

Epiphany 4–Lectionary 4

(SS) Jesus's Call: Rejected in Nazareth (Luke 4:21–30)
(CC) Spiritual Maturity: Love (1 Corinthians 13:1–13)

WEEK 11 ❖ 2/10/19

Epiphany 5–Lectionary 5

(SS) Our Call: Disciples (Luke 5:1–11)
(CC) The Heart of the Gospel (1 Corinthians 15:1–11)

WEEK 12 ❖ 2/17/19

Epiphany 6
Proper 1, Lectionary 6

(SS) Jesus's Way: Blessings and Woes (Luke 6:17–26)
(CC) The Resurrection of Jesus (1 Corinthians 15:12–20)

WEEK 13 ❖ 2/24/19

Epiphany 7
Proper 2, Lectionary 7

(SS) Jesus's Way: Love Your Enemies (Luke 6:27–38)
(CC) What Will Our Resurrection Be Like? (1 Corinthians 15:35–38, 42–50)

WEEK 14 ❖ 3/3/19

Transfiguration Sunday

(SS) Transfiguration: Turn to the Cross (Luke 9:28–43)
(CC) Glory: We Will Be Transfigured! (2 Corinthians 3:12–4:2)

SPRING | YEAR C

WEEK 1 ❖ 3/10/19

Lent 1

(SS) Faith to Salvation: Call on the Name (Romans 10:8b–13)
(CC) Prayers for Salvation (Psalm 91:1–2, 9–16)

WEEK 2 ❖ 3/17/19

Lent 2

(SS) Personal Relationship: Jesus Longing as Mother Hen (Philippians 3:17–4:1)
(CC) Prayers for Relationship (Psalm 27)

WEEK 3 ❖ 3/24/19

Lent 3

(SS) Resisting Temptation: Repentance and Fruit (Luke 13:1–9)
(CC) Prayers for Longing for God (Psalm 63:1–8)

WEEK 4 ❖ 3/31/19

Lent 4

(SS) Reconciliation: Parable of the Lost Son and Elder Brother (Luke 15:1–3, 11b–32)
(CC) Prayers for God's Presence (Psalm 32)

WEEK 5 ❖ 4/7/19

Lent 5

(SS) Extravagant Surrender: Mary Anoints Jesus's Feet (John 12:1–8)
(CC) Prayers for Restoration (Psalm 126)

WEEK 6 ❖ 4/14/19

Palm Sunday

(SS) Cross of Jesus (Philippians 2:5–11)
(CC) Liturgy of the Passion (Luke 22:14–23:56)

WEEK 7 ❖ 4/21/19

Easter

(SS) Resurrection (Luke 24:1–12)
(CC) Resurrection of the Lord (John 20:1–18 or Luke 24:1–12)

WEEK 8 ❖ 4/28/19

Easter 2

(SS) Visions of Heaven: Glory and Power (Revelation 1:4–8)
(CC) Resurrection: Doubting Thomas Believes (John 20:19–31)

WEEK 9 ❖ 5/5/19

Easter 3

(SS) Visions of Heaven: Worthy Is the Lamb (Revelation 5:11–14)
(CC) Resurrection: Denying Peter Is Restored (John 21:1–19)

WEEK 10 ❖ 5/12/19

Easter 4

(SS) Visions of Heaven: The Multitude Worshiping Christ (Revelation 7:9–17)
(CC) Resurrection: Jesus's Sheep Hear His Voice (John 10:22–30)

WEEK 11 ❖ 5/19/19

Easter 5

(SS) Visions of Heaven: New Heaven and New Earth (Revelation 21:1–6)
(CC) Resurrection: The New Commandment (John 13:31–35)

WEEK 12 ❖ 5/26/19

Easter 6

(SS) Visions of Heaven: The New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:10, 22–22:5)
(CC) Resurrection: The Promise of the Holy Spirit (John 14:23–29 or John 5:1–9)

WEEK 13 ❖ 6/2/19

Easter 7

(SS) Visions of Heaven: Gold and Jewels (Revelation 22:12–14, 16–17, 20–21)
(CC) Resurrection: Jesus's High Priestly Prayer (John 17:20–26)

HEARTS ALIVE

SCOPE & SEQUENCE | lectionary year c

SUMMER | YEAR C (CHILDREN'S CHURCH)

WEEK 1 ❖ 6/9/19 Day of Pentecost	(CC) Pentecost Day (Acts 2:1–21)
WEEK 2 ❖ 6/16/19 Trinity Sunday	(CC) Trinity Sunday: Who is Man? (Psalm 8)
WEEK 3 ❖ 6/23/19 Proper 7, Lectionary 12	(CC) Galatians: Gospel Children (Galatians 3:23–29)
WEEK 4 ❖ 6/30/19 Proper 8, Lectionary 13	(CC) Galatians: Gospel Character (Galatians 5:1, 13–25)
WEEK 5 ❖ 7/7/19 Proper 9, Lectionary 14	(CC) Galatians: Gospel Application (Galatians 6:1–16)
WEEK 6 ❖ 7/14/19 Proper 10, Lectionary 15	(CC) Colossians: Truth of the Gospel (Colossians 1:1–14)
WEEK 7 ❖ 7/21/19 Proper 11, Lectionary 16	(CC) Colossians: Supremacy of the Gospel (Colossians 1:15–28)
WEEK 8 ❖ 7/28/19 Proper 12, Lectionary 17	(CC) Colossians: Sufficiency of the Gospel (Colossians 2:6–19)
WEEK 9 ❖ 8/4/19 Proper 13, Lectionary 18	(CC) Colossians: Seeking the Life of the Gospel (Colossians 3:1–11)
WEEK 10 ❖ 8/11/19 Proper 14, Lectionary 19	(CC) Following Jesus on the Way: God's Kingdom (Luke 12:32–40)
WEEK 11 ❖ 8/18/19 Proper 15, Lectionary 20	(CC) Following Jesus on the Way: Watching for His Return (Luke 12:49–56)

FALL | YEAR C

WEEK 1 ❖ 8/25/19 Proper 16, Lectionary 21	(SS) Jeremiah's Call (Jeremiah 1:4–10) (CC) Following Jesus on the Way: Jesus is Master (Luke 13:10–17)
WEEK 2 ❖ 9/1/19 Proper 17, Lectionary 22	(SS) Jeremiah's Warning to Judah (Jeremiah 2:4–13) (CC) Following Jesus on the Way: Please God, Not People (Luke 14:1, 7–14)
WEEK 3 ❖ 9/8/19 Proper 18, Lectionary 23	(SS) Jeremiah's Message: Potter and Clay (Jeremiah 18:1–11) (CC) Following Jesus on the Way: Counting the Cost (Luke 14:25–33)
WEEK 4 ❖ 9/15/19 Proper 19, Lectionary 24	(SS) Jeremiah's Warning: Creation Reversed (Jeremiah 4:11–12, 22–28) (CC) Following Jesus on the Way: Seeking the Lost (Luke 15:1–10)
WEEK 5 ❖ 9/22/19 Proper 20, Lectionary 25	(SS) Jeremiah Laments for His People (Jeremiah 8:18—9:1) (CC) Following Jesus on the Way: Serving Only One Master (Luke 16:1–13)
WEEK 6 ❖ 9/29/19 Proper 21, Lectionary 26	(SS) Jeremiah Buys a Field in Hope (Jeremiah 32:1–3a, 6–15) (CC) Following Jesus on the Way: Don't Wait to Do Good (Luke 16:19–31)
WEEK 7 ❖ 10/6/19 Proper 22, Lectionary 27	(SS) Lament for Judah's Fall (Lamentations 1:1–6) (CC) Following Jesus on the Way: Servants Honor the Master (Luke 17:5–10)
WEEK 8 ❖ 10/13/19 Proper 23, Lectionary 28	(SS) Jeremiah's Letter to the Exiles (Jeremiah 29:1, 4–7) (CC) Following Jesus on the Way: Showing Jesus Our Gratitude (Luke 17:11–19)
WEEK 9 ❖ 10/20/19 Proper 24, Lectionary 29	(SS) Jeremiah Promises a New Covenant (Jeremiah 31:27–34) (CC) Following Jesus on the Way: Keep on Praying (Luke 18:1–8)
WEEK 10 ❖ 10/27/19 Proper 25, Lectionary 30	(SS) Restoration's Outpoured Spirit (Joel 2:23–32) (CC) Following Jesus on the Way: Humbling Ourselves (Luke 18:9–14)
WEEK 11 ❖ 11/3/19 Proper 26, Lectionary 31	(SS) Habakkuk's Difficult Question (Habakkuk 1:1–4, 2:1–4) (CC) Following Jesus on the Way: Repenting with Joy (Luke 19:1–10)
WEEK 12 ❖ 11/10/19 Proper 27, Lectionary 32	(SS) Restoration's Promised New Temple (Haggai 1:15b—2:9) (CC) Following Jesus on the Way: Alive Forever (Luke 20:27–38)
WEEK 13 ❖ 11/17/19 Proper 28, Lectionary 33	(SS) Restoration's Promised New Creation (Isaiah 65:17–25) (CC) Following Jesus on the Way: Suffering for the Kingdom (Luke 21:5–19)
WEEK 14 ❖ 11/24/19 Reign of Christ Proper 29, Lectionary 34	(SS) God the Good Shepherd (Jeremiah 23:1–6) (CC) Christ the Crucified King (Luke 23:33–43)



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WELCOME TO HEARTS ALIVE



In the line of Christian formation resources for children, the *Hearts Alive* curriculum is something brand-new! We have listened to the desire of churches to have a fully integrated weekly worship experience in which children and adults are engaged in exploring the same scriptural texts. Each lesson in both the Sunday school and Children's church curricula is built on one or more readings taken from the Revised Common Lectionary (RCL), a three-year cycle of Bible readings used by churches across denominations and around the world to guide weekly worship. By aligning the lessons of *Hearts Alive* to these common readings, families are able to have cross-generational discussions related to the worship service message, Sunday school, and Children's church teachings.

While *Hearts Alive* is a natural fit for churches in the liturgical tradition that incorporate regular use of the RCL, its appeal is much broader. *Hearts Alive* is evangelical in its interpretation of Scripture and contemporary in its teaching style and life application. By using a sequential approach to Scripture teaching, *Hearts Alive* seeks to help churches train up young disciples in the whole Word of God, emphasizing a high view of scriptural authority and a gospel focus. The weekly age-specific lessons support and even elevate liturgical traditions as well as important observances in the church calendar while using clear and contemporary teaching techniques to present the Word of God in ways that will produce lifelong followers of Christ. *Hearts Alive* is flexible enough to fit any congregation, no matter how large or small, of any Christian denomination.

HEARTS ALIVE IS:

- ▶ Gospel-centered, emphasizing the story of salvation through Jesus Christ in every lesson.
- ▶ Scriptural, teaching the full scope of the Bible over a 3-year span following the RCL.
- ▶ User-friendly, making it easy for teachers and Christian educators to implement.
- ▶ Fun and engaging for children, offering age-appropriate storytelling, crafts, and activities.
- ▶ Family-oriented, providing a Take-Home page so parents and children can apply the lesson with activities throughout the week.
- ▶ Varied, offering both small- and large-group moments so children stay interested and engaged.
- ▶ Cost-effective for both small and large churches, available for quarterly purchase with price adjustments for volume.
- ▶ Downloadable, in a format that is easy to share with a whole team of leaders and volunteers.



What Each Lesson Provides

Each weekly *Hearts Alive* lesson provides two hours of material for children ranging from Pre-K/Kindergarten through Grade 6. The curriculum is divided into two categories: Sunday school and Children's church. These two distinct curricula offer different themes for each week's lesson so that children participating in both programs have fresh, engaging material in each class.

Sunday School Curriculum:

The *Hearts Alive* Sunday school curriculum is designed to be used during the Sunday school or Bible study hour of a church's weekly worship time. It is divided into three separate age groups and perfect for use in classroom-sized group settings. The age divisions are: Pre-K/Kindergarten, Lower Elementary (grades 1–3), and Upper Elementary (grades 4–6).

Children's Church Curriculum:

The *Hearts Alive* Children's church curriculum offers a weekly church experience tailored just for young followers of Jesus. It is intended for a larger, age-inclusive setting for children from pre-K through grade 5 (ages 4 through 11) designed to help them learn the basics of an adult worship service, including Welcome, Worship, Scripture Reading, Lesson, Creed, Prayer, and Offering. The larger group setting encourages children of varying ages to worship together, mirroring the generational integration of the church. At the close of each lesson, an age-specific breakout time ensures that every child, from the youngest to the oldest, can take part in a follow-up game, craft, or activity that will help them apply the week's lesson to their own lives. Many churches hold Children's church during the first part of the adult worship service. After Children's church concludes, there is time to welcome the children into the adult service for the final portion, often the celebration of Communion/the Eucharist.

How To Use The *Hearts Alive* Curriculum

Hearts Alive follows the 3-year cycle of the RCL. Because liturgical dates vary from year to year, specific dates are not assigned to the lessons. Instead, lessons are numbered and an accompanying online chart identifies which lesson falls on which calendar date for that specific year. In the heading of each lesson, you will find the Lectionary Year, Season, and Week number, plus the associated liturgical day (if applicable) and lectionary reading. This information can help you design your entire congregation's weekly worship experience around shared themes all year, providing a fresh unity to your congregation's spiritual focus and growth.

The first page of each Sunday school and Children's church lesson includes Lesson Title, Key Scripture, Big Idea, Memory Verse, and Lesson Overview. The Big Idea summarizes in one or two sentences the main point you want the children to learn from that day's lesson. The Lesson Overview provides a more in-depth explanation of the key points of the lesson.



Next, there is a Lesson Outline chart to help you stay organized. It tells you what happens when. On this chart, you'll find each lesson component along with a time estimate for how long it will take, a list of the supplies you will need, and a list of the things you'll need to prepare before class for that activity.

A unique Bible Background study is provided for each lesson to help you prepare your heart and mind as a leader or volunteer before class. It aims to provide a thorough understanding of the biblical setting of the day's passage along with any helpful information to help you field questions the children may have about the lesson. (Detailed explanations of each lesson component follow below.)

Anything that needs to be printed and possibly copied for each lesson (the "printables") are included in the download of each lesson. They are designed to be effective using simple black and white printing on standard-sized paper.

Finally, each lesson has a Take-Home page designed to be copied and sent home with the child. The resource is directed either toward parents (Sunday school) or children (Children's church). Either way, parents are encouraged to use the resource to talk with their child about the week's lesson. The page also suggests ways to apply scriptural lessons all week through family discussions and activities.

The Sunday School Curriculum

The Sunday school curriculum is divided by age group into: Pre-K/Kindergarten, Lower Elementary (grades 1–3), and Upper Elementary (grades 4–6). The lessons are designed for use in small group settings of approximately 10–12 children. If you expect more than 18 children in a room, we recommend dividing into smaller groups so all children feel engaged in the activities. If your group is smaller than 9 or 10, the games and activities can be adapted for fewer children.

Each weekly Sunday school lesson contains the following sequential Lesson Elements:

- ▶ **Welcome Activity** – An attention grabber designed for the beginning of class as you wait for latecomers to arrive.
- ▶ **Lesson Introduction** – A group activity to start the children thinking about the Big Idea and its application.
- ▶ **Scripture Story** – An engaging way to tell the story of the Key Scripture passage. It may include visual aids, drama, costumes, simple experiments, or props.
- ▶ **Story Discussion** – Discussion questions varied according to age group. We provide suggested answers for some of the trickier questions to aid you in your discussion with the children.



► **Variable Elements** – The below elements are variable to keep each week's approach fresh.

- **Memory Verse Activity**
- **Snack**
- **Craft** – Step-by-step directions and illustrations are provided at the end of each lesson.
- **Music** – You may choose to find your own recordings or sing the songs with instrument accompaniment or without musical background.
- **Game**
- **Other Lesson Application Activities**

► **Closing Activity** – A simple and quick activity that allows you to bring the lesson to a close. Hand out the "Live It All Week" Take-Home page during this part of the lesson, and make sure children take home any crafts or activity pages.

A Special Note to Leaders

Congratulations on your role in helping to shape young hearts and minds in the Christian faith. Sunday school is a time-honored tradition of inviting the youngest of Christ's family to get to know their Savior, their church family, and their place in the Kingdom of God through weekly teaching and hands-on participation. We have specifically designed the *Hearts Alive* curriculum to be everything you need to confidently lead an engaging time of worship, learning, and fun in the service of Christian formation. Here are a few specifics about the curriculum to help you in your role:

- *Hearts Alive* uses the New International Reader's Version (NIRV) of The Holy Scriptures, believing it is the easiest translation for children to read and understand while remaining faithful to the original text. If you choose, you may use a different version in your lessons.
- We have included a unique Bible Background section specifically to help you get familiar with the background of the week's passage of Scripture. It provides the setting of the passage in the overall story of the Bible, the connection to the life and work of Jesus Christ, and how the passage speaks to the church today. We recommend taking some time to read, pray through, and digest this information to help you be prepared for questions and good discussion.
- Much of the Lesson Content is bolded and prefaced by words like "Say:" or "Continue:" These sections are designed for you, the leader, to speak aloud. However, we suggest that you use



the words as a guide rather than reading directly from the page. The most effective way to communicate with children is by making eye contact. Try reading the lesson several times to get a good idea of what you want to say and the main points of the Bible teaching. You may want to highlight the sections you want to be sure to mention specifically. Other parts you can put into your own words. Have the lesson handy to refer to on paper or electronic device as you go.

- Feel free to adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of your class. If a different approach to the lesson works better, go for it! For example, you may choose to swap out drama for a visual aid in the lesson or vice versa. Use what is written as a guide to present the beauty and power of God's Word to your group of children in the most effective way possible.

Jesus said to "*let the children come to me.*" What greater calling can there be than helping to lead precious young souls to the heart of God and the joy, peace, and power of living the Christian faith? We pray that you will find the *Hearts Alive* curriculum an exciting and effective way to bring the wonderful message of salvation to the children of your congregation and community even as your entire church body unites in the weekly exploration of God's Word as one.



Prophecy and Expectation: The Mountain of the Lord

Isaiah 2:1–5

Big Idea:

One day, on God's holy mountain, all nations
will worship together and live as God desires.
Praise God—this time is coming!

Memory Verse:

"Let us go up to the LORD's mountain."
Isaiah 2:3a



Lesson Overview

This lesson introduces the meaning of Advent: "Coming." This year, the Advent lessons focus on God's promises. We should wait with expectation for those promises because we have seen repeatedly that God always keeps his promises. This first week of Advent centers on God's promise to rule and reign from his holy mountain in the New Jerusalem. Though now we have war and strife, God promises a future of peace with Jesus as King.



Week 1 Lesson Plan	Activity and Supplies	To Prepare
1 Welcome Activity (5 minutes)	Simon Says Mountain Edition	
2 Lesson Introduction (5 minutes)	Making a Trek <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Backpack • Sneakers or hiking boots • Granola bar • Water bottle • Map • Bible 	Fill the backpack with the supplies.
3 Scripture Story (10 minutes)	The Mountain of the Lord <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bibles for the class 	
4 Discussion (5 minutes)		
5 Memory Verse Activity (10 minutes)	Verse Code Printables: Verse Code (one for each child) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pencils • Bibles 	Copy the printables.
6 Snack (10 minutes)	Trail Snack <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Granola bars (one for each child) • Water bottles (one for each child) 	Gather the supplies.
7 Game (10 minutes)	Mountain Quiz	
8 Closing (5 minutes)	Advent Prayer Printables: Take-home page (one for each child) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 votive candles • Lighter 	Make enough copies of the Take-home page for each child.



Bible Background for Leader

Continuing his discourse from the previous chapter, Isaiah the prophet speaks to the Jews of his day. While the Jews were outwardly keeping traditions, they were not following God's law in their hearts. Isaiah reminded them of their position among the nations, the chosen people of God: The Lord and his holy mountain, Zion, are higher than all the other gods and their mountains (Isaiah 2:2). Mount Zion is not the highest mountain because of its physical height; rather, it is "the mountain of the Lord," the dwelling place of the God of Israel, the god higher than all other gods. As his people, the Jews ought to live as God taught them, as a guide to all nations. They ought to be aware that, in the end, God's ways will be the ways of all people.

Old Testament. Old Testament prophets were people from every walk of life. Unlike the Levitical priesthood, which was hereditary, prophets came from a variety of backgrounds. Most often the prophets spoke to the nation of Israel on God's behalf. They also spoke to Judah after the kingdom was divided. Isaiah is one of the "major prophets," a designation determined by the length of his writings. Prophets were considered God's voice for their generation; yet, we need to consider and carefully interpret their words as God's voice to all generations, since there are events still to come.

In the first chapters of Isaiah, the prophet exposes the wrongdoing and wandering hearts of God's people. They were content in their sin. Isaiah's prophecy is to his generation, but also for the future. God desires a relationship with his people and his plan is that all nations, not just Israel, will know him through Christ Jesus. In Israel's history, Mount Zion was the physical mountain where the temple stood and the place where God's presence was known to dwell. Isaiah is prophesying about the future when

God's people, the church, will be made up of all nations. There will be no more war; everyone will live together in peace because everyone will know and love the God of their salvation. Considering this, Isaiah tells the people to live now as God has taught them.

Jesus. During his ministry, Jesus referred to believers as a city set on a hill (Matthew 5:14) and a light to the Gentiles (Acts 13:47). These and other metaphors indicate that God's fame would spread throughout the nations. The coming of all nations to Zion (his church) occurs between the two advents of Jesus—his first as the babe in the manger and the suffering servant, and the second as Judge and King (Isaiah 2:4).

The Church and the World. When the word *Zion* is used prophetically in Scripture, it refers to the church and coming kingdom of God. While we wait for the Second Advent, we can experience the kingdom of God in our lives by the Holy Spirit's power. The presence of God lives no longer on the temple mount, but in us. God teaches us how to live, both by the Scriptures and by the Holy Spirit's prompting. As the apostle Paul says in Romans 14:17, "God's kingdom is not about eating or drinking. It is about doing what is right and having peace and joy. All this comes through the Holy Spirit."

We are the city on a hill; we are the light of the world (Matthew 5:14). This is what Jesus said about us. We are to live as he taught us to live, to treat others as he demonstrated. There is a peace—an absence of turmoil and war where the Holy Spirit dwells. This makes God famous and draws others to want to know him. This has been God's plan from the beginning. As believers in Jesus, as the citizens of God's kingdom on earth, and as the Zion of God, the church is to live lives worthy of the gospel of Christ and be his witnesses to the uttermost parts of the earth.



1 Welcome Activity

Simon Says Mountain Edition

Say: **We will begin our day on our feet! Do you all know how to play Simon Says? I will call out an action, but you only do it if I say “Simon says” before the action. This is the “mountain edition” of Simon Says because all the motions have to do with hiking or climbing.** Begin the game. Any person who performs an action without first hearing “Simon Says,” is eliminated.

Use the following actions, and feel free to add your own:

- Climb up a steep hill
- Take off your backpack
- Tie your shoes
- Unscrew your water bottle cap
- Plug your nose as you walk by a skunk
- Swat the fly
- Stamp the mud off your boots
- Pick up sticks for a fire
- Warm your hands by the fire
- Fill your mouth with marshmallows
- Put on a hat
- Spray insect repellent
- Put sunscreen on your face
- Jump over the root
- Pull your foot out of the mud
- Guzzle a water bottle
- Tie on a bandana

After several minutes, announce the winner and have the children return to their seats.

To Prepare:

Fill the backpack with the supplies.

2 Lesson Introduction

Making a Trek

Wear the backpack. Say: **Imagine you are going on a long hike—perhaps you are hiking a section of the Appalachian Trail. You have to travel a long way. What would you need to bring in your backpack?** Let the children brainstorm.



Retrieve the shoes from the backpack. **You will need to wear comfortable shoes. On a long journey comfortable shoes are an absolute necessity. If your feet get sore you cannot hike!**

Retrieve the water bottle. **You will need water. Walking can make you thirsty.**

Retrieve the granola bar. **You will need snacks. You don't want to go hungry on your journey!**

Retrieve the map. **You need a map. You need to make sure you don't lose your way. A map will help you stay on the right path.**

Now imagine your hike involves a mountain—a steep mountain, one of the highest in the world! What else might you need for a trek like that? (Examples might include: Cold weather gear, rope, ice ax, flashlight, Swiss army knife, compass, etc.)

In our Bible passage today, we will learn about a mountain—the highest mountain of all. Will it be like Mount Everest in Asia—cold, barren, and dangerous to climb? We're not sure. But the Bible says people from all the nations will go there. This includes us! What should we take along for gear? Retrieve the Bible. **Let's consult our trail guide to find out!**

Scripture Story

The Mountain of the Lord

Distribute the Bibles and have the children turn to Isaiah 2. Say: **Before we read, did you know this is the first day of a new season? I am not talking about fall or winter; I am talking about a season of the church year. Does anyone know the name for this season?** (Advent) **Does anyone know how long Advent is?** (Four weeks) **Advent leads up to what holiday?** (Christmas) **Advent is a season of waiting and preparing. What are we waiting for? Today's passage tells us about something to come.**

This passage comes from Isaiah. What do you know about Isaiah? Is Isaiah a man or a woman? (Man) **He has a book of the Bible named after him. Why?** (He wrote it—under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit) **The book of Isaiah is in the Old Testament. Does that mean Isaiah lived before or after Jesus?** (Before) **Isaiah was a prophet, which means he listened to God and spoke his words to the people. Isaiah lived in the kingdom of Judah over seven hundred years before Jesus was born.**

What does Isaiah share with us in this chapter? Recruit a volunteer to read



Isaiah 2:1: "Here is a vision that Isaiah, the son of Amoz, saw about Judah and Jerusalem."

What is a vision? (When God speaks to someone through a picture or image.)

A vision is a glimpse of something, often something to come. Recruit a volunteer to read verse 2: "In the last days the mountain where the Lord's temple is located will be famous. It will be the highest mountain of all. It will be raised above the hills. All the nations will go to it."

What does God show Isaiah? (A mountain with the Lord's temple) **What is a temple?** (Church/house of the Lord)

God's people were used to the idea of the Lord's temple sitting on a mountaintop. King Solomon had built a temple to God on Mount Zion. The Spirit of God dwelled there in the center of the temple, in a place called the Holy of Holies. Only the high priest could enter that special place, and even he could go in only once a year. The temple Solomon built in Mount Zion was completely destroyed about two hundred years after Isaiah spoke these words. It was mainly the Hebrews, God's people, who worshiped at the temple. The other nations worshiped false gods, far from the Lord's temple. Based on this evidence, do you think the temple God showed Isaiah was the temple of Solomon? (Probably not)

If it's not Solomon's temple, what is it? Let's look for more clues. Recruit a volunteer to read verse 3: "People from many nations will go there. They will say, 'Come. Let us go up to the Lord's mountain. Let's go to the temple of Jacob's God. He will teach us how we should live. Then we will live the way he wants us to.' The law of the Lord will be taught at Zion. His message will go out from Jerusalem."

Do people want to go to this mountain? (Yes.) **Which people—the Hebrews?** (Yes, but also people from all the nations) **What will God teach them there?** (How to live) **What do you think it means—that God will teach them how to live?** (He'll teach them right from wrong; they will love, honor, and obey God; they will live in peace, etc.) **Does God tell us how to live?** Hold up the Bible. (Yes.) **We know how we should live. God has told us. Do you remember what Jesus said when someone asked him which of God's commands was most important?** Recruit a volunteer to read Matthew 22:37-40: "Jesus replied, ' "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul. Love him with all your mind." This is the first and most important commandment. And the second is like it. "Love your neighbor as you love yourself." Everything that is written in the Law and the Prophets is based on these two commandments.'"



God has already told us how to live, but do we always obey? (No.) We know how God wants us to live, but we don't always live that way.

In his vision, Isaiah sees something new. Recruit a volunteer to read Isaiah 2:4: "He will judge between the nations. He'll settle problems among many of them. They will hammer their swords into plows. They'll hammer their spears into pruning tools. Nations will not go to war against one another. They won't even train to fight anymore."

What does God do? (He is the judge between the nations/settles problems.) **Is there war?** (No.) **What do people do with their weapons?** (Melt them down and turn them into farm equipment) **Why do they do this?** (They don't need them anymore—there is no more fighting.)

What did Isaiah see? Let the children respond. **Have we already seen this event take place?** Let the children respond. **Let's look at the evidence. It is a time and place where God will dwell with his people. There will be no more war, no more weapons. People of all nations will gather and live as God desires—at peace with him and with each other. Has this already happened?** (No.)

God gave Isaiah a vision of something to come. This is not the only glimpse God gives of this future time and place. We can also read about it in the book of Revelation. The mountain of the Lord is more than just a pretty picture; it is a promise. If God says something will happen, then it will happen. God *always* keeps his promises. He promised to send a Savior—and he did. God sent his Son to earth to save us from our sins and make a way for us to be with him forever.

Thanks to Jesus, who makes it possible for us to stand in the presence of a holy God, we can live forever with him. And we can trust God's promise: One day, on God's holy mountain, all nations will worship together and live as God desires. Praise God—this time is coming!



4 Discussion

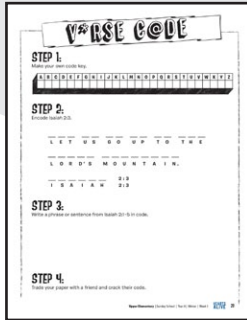
- ▶ **Does anyone know what the highest mountain in the world is?** (Mount Everest in Asia) **The top of Everest is frigid, icy, and only accessible a few weeks a year.**
- ▶ **Isaiah had a vision about a mountain. Do you remember when I said we can read more about this in the book of Revelation?** Recruit a volunteer to read Revelation 21:1-4: "I saw 'a new heaven and a new earth.' The first heaven and the first earth were completely gone. There was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem. It was coming down out of heaven from God. It was prepared like a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. I heard a loud voice from the throne. It said, 'Look! God now makes his home with the people. He will live with them. They will be his people. And God himself will be with them and be their God. "He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death." And there will be no more sadness. There will be no more crying or pain. Things are no longer the way they used to be.'" **Where will this mountain be?** (In the new heaven and new earth)
- ▶ **Advent is a time of waiting. What are we waiting for?** (Answers will vary. A possible answer might include today's promise: that God will live with his people once again.)
- ▶ **Advent is also a time of preparation. How can we prepare for this future event?** Recruit a volunteer to read Isaiah 2:5: "People of Jacob, come. Let us live the way the Lord has taught us to." (Live as God desires right now)
- ▶ **At the time of Isaiah, the only people who worshiped God at his temple were the Hebrews. They lived in a tiny part of the world that we now call the Middle East. How have things changed?** (People all over the world worship God—people on all the continents.) **God's kingdom has spread and will continue to spread!**
- ▶ **How do we know God will keep this promise?** (Answers will vary. Possible answers might include: God always keeps his promises, the Bible tells us so, and we can see how he kept his promises in Jesus.)

Close in prayer: **Dear Lord, thank you that you keep your promises. We can't wait for the day when we get to gather at your holy mountain! Help us wait with excitement and get ready for that time! Amen.**



5 Memory Verse Activity

To Prepare:
Copy the printables.



Verse Code

"Let us go up to the LORD's mountain." Isaiah 2:3a

Say: **We learned about a promise God has made to us. One day, on God's holy mountain, all nations will worship together and live as God desires. Praise God; this time is coming! Today's memory verse has to do with just that: "Let us go up to the LORD's mountain" (Isaiah 2:3). We will learn it by writing it in a code. First, you need to make your own unique code.** Distribute the printables and supplies.

The alphabet is written at the top. The alphabet usually starts with A, but instead, pick any letter and write it inside the box under the A. Now write the rest of the alphabet in order. For example, if you start with L, you would write M in the box under B, N in the box under C, and so on and until you get to Z. After you write the letter Z, you need to start back at A and continue to write all the letters through K. This is now the key to your code key.

Practice your code by writing the memory verse: "Let us go up to the LORD's mountain" (Isaiah 2:3a). The first letter in "let" is L. What is the letter you have chosen to stand for L? Write that down. Have the children complete the code for their memory verse. Then have each person turn to Isaiah 2:1-5. They may transcribe any sentence or phrase in their code. When they finish, have them trade codes with another child. Using the key, they can crack one another's secret messages.

6 snack

To Prepare:
Gather the supplies.

Trail Snack

Say: **We learned about a promise God has made to us. One day, on God's holy mountain, all nations will worship together and live as God desires. Praise God—this time is coming! Let's make a snack that reminds us of a mountain. Do you remember what we had in our backpack? (Granola bars and water)** Distribute the snack and enjoy.



7 Game

Mountain Quiz

Say: **Remember, we are in the season of Advent. Advent means coming. God's promises are all sure to come true. Look how he kept his promise in sending Jesus as our Savior on Christmas Day long ago! He will keep his promise that all nations will worship together and live as God desires. Praise God—this time is coming! Let's play a trivia game to test our memory.**

1. What is a prophet? (Answer: Someone who listens to God and speaks his words to the people)
2. Who is the prophet from our passage? (Answer: Isaiah)
3. Geologists say a mountain must be at least how many feet high?
(Answer: [c] 1000 feet)
 - a) 500 feet
 - b) 800 feet
 - c) 1000 feet
4. When God shows a prophet a picture of something, it is called a what?
(Answer: Vision)
5. What is a temple? (Answer: A church or house of God)
6. Who built the first temple to God—the one on Mt. Zion? (Answer: Solomon)
7. What do you call the holy inner place in Solomon's temple? (Answer: The Most Holy Place or the Holy of Holies)
8. Where is a mountain summit? (Answer: At the top of a mountain)
9. Where is a mountain slope? (Answer: On the side of a mountain)
10. Who was the only person who could go into the Holy of Holies? (Answer: The high priest)
11. Can a mountain be underwater? (Answer: Yes)
12. Are there mountains on all seven continents? (Answer: Yes)
13. Who made a way for us to stand in the presence of a holy God? (Answer: Jesus)
14. Mountains with hot, molten rock inside are called what? (Answer: Volcanoes)
15. The faces of four American presidents are carved into which mountain?
(Answer: Mount Rushmore in South Dakota)
16. What will people do with their weapons on God's holy mountain? (Answer: Turn them into farm equipment)



17. What is the tallest mountain in North America? (Answer: [a] Denali, formerly known as Mt McKinley, which is in Alaska.)
 - a) Denali
 - b) Mt. Whitney
 - c) Mt. St Helens
 - d) Mt. Everest
18. Besides Isaiah, what other book of the Bible talks about God's people worshiping on his holy mountain? (Answer: Revelation)
19. What is the tallest mountain in the world? (Answer: Mt. Everest)
20. What church season are we in right now? (Answer: Advent)
21. How long is Advent? (Answer: Four weeks)
22. What is the connection between snowy mountains and rivers? (Answer: The snow melts to become the source of the rivers.)
23. What holiday does Advent lead up to? (Answer: Christmas)

8 Closing

Advent Prayer

Set up the four votive candles. Say: **This is the first week of Advent, so we light the first candle.** Light the first candle.

Let's close in prayer. I will read a prayer for the first Sunday of Advent. It is the first verse of the Advent hymn, "Come Thou Long-expected Jesus." It speaks about another promise of God—the promise that Jesus will return to earth. During Advent, we wait. We don't wait anxiously; we wait with hope. God always keeps his promises. He sent Jesus to earth long ago on Christmas Day, just as he promised. Jesus will come back again, just as he promised. One day, on God's holy mountain, all nations will worship together and live as God desires. This will happen just as God has promised. Let's bow our heads.

**"Come, thou long-expected Jesus, born to set thy people free;
From our fears and sins release us; let us find our rest in thee," Amen.**
(Charles Wesley)

Children line up to meet their parents. As the children leave, hand out their Take-home pages and remind them to bring home their worksheets.

To Prepare:

Make enough copies of the Take-home page for each child.



V*RS E C@DE

STEP 1:

Make your own code key.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z

STEP 2:

Encode Isaiah 2:3.

L E T U S G O U P T O T H E

L O R D ' S M O U N T A I N .

I S A I A H 2 : 3
2 : 3

STEP 3:

Write a phrase or sentence from Isaiah 2:1-5 in code.

STEP 4:

Trade your paper with a friend and crack their code.

WEEK 1

Live It All Week

Upper Elementary Take Home Paper for Families**What Your Child Learned Today**

The word *advent* means coming. During the season of Advent (the four weeks before Christmas), we *remember* that Jesus came to earth on Christmas Day long ago. We look *forward* to when he comes back again, and we are *thankful* that he is with us even now. Jesus's first coming was a promise God fulfilled on Christmas Day. His second coming is a promise yet to be fulfilled. Today your child learned of another promise spoken through the prophet Isaiah: believers from all over the world will someday unite in worship of God. We will live as God desires—at peace with God and with one another.

Try This

According to God's promise in Isaiah 2, people from many nations will gather at the Lord's mountain. Do you know any Christians who live in other countries? Does your church support any missionaries? Find a recent update from a missionary to see what God is doing in their part of the world.

Table Talk

- ▶ **Advent means coming. Have you ever looked forward to the coming of a special visitor? Share your memories together.**
- ▶ **People often make promises. Do people always keep their promises? Why or why not?**
- ▶ **Does God always keep his promises? Why? See 1 Chronicles 29:11–12. (God is powerful and rules over all things.)**
- ▶ **We know that God keeps his promises because he kept his promise in sending a Savior. Who is that Savior? (Jesus)**
- ▶ **God promises that he will bring people from all over the world into his family. They will worship him and live just as he desires. Do we see this already happening? (Yes, there are Christians all over the world.)**

**Prophecy and Expectation:
The Mountain of the Lord**

- Scripture: Isaiah 2:1–5
- Big Idea: One day, on God's holy mountain, all nations will worship together and live as God desires. Praise God—this time is coming!
- Memory Verse: "Let us go up to the LORD's mountain."
Isaiah 2:3a

**SOMETHING
ELSE TO DO**

This Advent, learn some traditional carols that have words rich with meaning. Play the carols during dessert, at bedtime, or during family devotions. This week's carol is the traditional Advent hymn, "Come Thou Long-expected Jesus." Your child prayed the first verse as today's closing prayer. Learn the song as a family. Your child will pray a verse each week of Advent—you can do this at home as well.



Prophecy and Expectation: The Branch of Jesse

Isaiah 11:1–10

Big Idea:

One day, everyone will know Jesus—he is the Branch of Jesse who will bring peace and goodness to the earth.

Memory Verse:

“Glory to God in highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased.” Luke 2:14 NLT



Lesson Overview

This year, the Advent lessons focus on God’s promises. God kept his promise to send Jesus the first time, and Jesus made peace between God and us. This second week of Advent centers on God’s promise that, when Jesus returns, he will establish peace in all creation. He is the Branch of Jesse, a worthy king and judge, and the Prince of Peace. “Glory to God in highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased” (Luke 2:14 NLT).



Week 2 Lesson Plan		Activity and Supplies	To Prepare
1	Welcome Activity (5 minutes)	Where in the World • Globe or world map	
2	Lesson Introduction (5 minutes)	The First Christians • Globe or world map (from the Welcome Activity)	
3	Scripture Story (10 minutes)	The Branch of Jesse	
4	Discussion (5 minutes)		
5	Craft (10 minutes)	Word Art Printables: Word Art Branch (one for each child) • Colored pencils or fine-tip markers	Copy the printables.
6	Game (10 minutes)	Branch Hunt • Small branch	
7	Snack (10 minutes)	Polish Kolaczki (Jam-Filled Christmas Cookies) • Thumbprint cookies (e.g., Pepperidge Farm Verona) • Napkins • Paper cups • Pitcher of water	Gather the supplies.
8	Closing (5 minutes)	Advent Prayer Printables: Take-home page (one for each child) • 4 votive candles • Lighter	Make enough copies of the Take-home page for each child.



Bible Background for Leader

In Isaiah, chapter 11, the prophet continues to speak to the people regarding their sin and God's resulting judgment. In chapter 10, woven into the description of the impending destruction coming upon God's people, there is also hope. In our passage today, the hope is the coming Messiah, the King and Judge of God's people who will restore everything to the original intent and glory of the knowledge of God. In Isaiah 11:1, he is the "Branch" coming from the root of Jesse; in verse 10, he is the "Root." The plan of God from the foundation of the earth (see also Revelation 13:8) is that the Messiah's glorious kingdom will include all nations.

Old Testament. The book of the prophet Isaiah might be considered a miniature of the entire Bible; it has sixty-six chapters, numerically corresponding with the sixty-six books of the Bible, thirty-nine books in the Old Testament and twenty-seven books in the New Testament. Isaiah's prophecies thematically parallel the movement of God's interaction with people: the law, sin, and condemnation in the first thirty-nine chapters, followed by twenty-seven chapters of grace, redemption, and restoration.

Today's passage is found in the first section of Isaiah—God's lament over the self-centered, hard hearts of his people and their resulting wickedness. God's heart is for all people, and he will deal with them as ethnic groups (families) and nations. They will all be judged for their sin. In the preceding

chapter (Chapter 10), Isaiah illustrates God's judgment metaphorically as the cutting down of great trees. In the first verse of chapter 11, Isaiah continues the metaphor: "the stump of Jesse" refers to the family tree of King David, the son of Jesse. God promised David that his descendant would reign forever; that descendant is Jesus. His line goes back to David through Mary.

Jesus. Jesus is the Branch spoken of in this prophecy. He is described in Isaiah 11:1–5; the result of his kingship is great peace to the nations as well as to individuals. The Jews of Jesus's day were looking for this king, and some thought that it might be Jesus; they were correct. Jesus will fully establish his kingdom at the Second Advent.

The Church and the World. As believers, we look forward to the Second Advent and peaceful kingdom that Christ will establish for eternity. Our role today as citizens of his kingdom is not only to look forward to that time with hope, but to live today as true representatives and ambassadors of Christ. In Isaiah 11:2–5, we see the characteristics of King Jesus, but it is in the work of the Holy Spirit that wisdom, understanding, counsel, power, and all other virtues will be demonstrated until Jesus returns. God's goodness is seen on the earth today through the changed lives of believers and the love of his followers. We are to be visible banners by which the Holy Spirit will draw all nations to redemption.



1 Welcome Activity

Where in the World

Set out the map or globe. Say: **When I say a place, point to it on the map/globe. Are you ready?**

Where in the world is . . .

1. **North America**
2. **Australia**
3. **South America**
4. **Europe**
5. **Africa**
6. **Pacific Ocean**
7. **Antarctica**
8. **Greenland**
9. **China**
10. **Madagascar**
11. **Japan**
12. **Panama Canal**
13. **Canada**
14. **Hawaii**
15. **Mediterranean Sea**
16. **Italy**
17. **Southern Ocean**
18. **Atlantic Ocean**

2 Lesson Introduction

The First Christians

Display the world map/globe. Say: **Does anyone remember the name of the church season we are in?** (Advent) **How long is Advent?** (Four weeks) **Advent leads up to what holiday?** (Christmas)

Look on the map/globe. Where in the world was Jesus born? (Israel) **Provide assistance as needed in locating Israel.**

Where in the world are we? Have the children point to your location on the map/globe.

If you were to go to Israel, what places and seas would you cross? Point out



all the places along the way.

We are Christians. Jesus is our Lord and Savior, but we live far away from the place where Jesus first came to earth. Back then, the first Christians were local people who lived in and around Judea and Jerusalem. So how did news of Jesus spread all the way to where we are? (Possible answers: missionaries, travel, the printing and distribution of Bibles, etc.)

We learned last week that one day, on God's holy mountain, all nations will worship together and live as God desires. The gospel is already spreading around the globe. Our Bible reading is about the spreading of something else. What is it? Let's turn to the book of Isaiah and find out.

3 scripture story

The Branch of Jesse

Have the children open their Bibles to Isaiah 11. Say: **There are many names for Jesus. Do you know any?** (Lamb of God, Son of God, Son of Man, Good Shepherd, King of Kings, Prince of Peace, Great High Priest, Lion of Judah, Messiah, etc.) **All of Jesus's names tell us something about him. For example, Jesus is the Good Shepherd; that means he takes care of his people like a shepherd takes care of their sheep. We will learn about a name for Jesus from the book of Isaiah. We talked about Isaiah last week. Who was he?** (A prophet of God who lived seven hundred years before Jesus came to earth)

Recruit a volunteer to read Isaiah 11:1: "Jesse's family is like a tree that has been cut down. A new little tree will grow from its stump. From its roots a Branch will grow and produce fruit."

Ask: **This verse mentions someone by name—who is it?** (Jesse) **Have you ever heard of him?** If not, explain that Jesse was the father of King David. **What is a family tree?** (It is a diagram that shows how generations of people in a family are related. It looks a bit like a tree.) **What does this verse say happened to Jesse's family tree?** (It was cut down.) **But that tree isn't dead; how do we know?** (We are told that a little tree will grow from its stump.)

Do you see the word *Branch* in verse 1? It begins with a capital letter. Why? (It is a name.) **The Branch of Jesse is actually a name for someone. Guess who?** (Jesus) **Why is Jesus called the Branch of Jesse?** (Because he is part of Jesse's family)

Now we know about something that Isaiah and the people of his time



did not know—we know about the life of Jesus. He would come to earth over seven hundred years later. Isaiah is giving a prophecy about Jesus. Let's read each of the verses. If you think they apply to Jesus, say, "Check!" Read verses 2-5 (After each sentence, pause for the children to say "Check!" if the sentence describes Jesus. [Hint: they all do.]):

² The Spirit of the Lord will rest on that Branch. The Spirit will help him to be wise and understanding. The Spirit will help him make wise plans and carry them out. The Spirit will help him know the Lord and have respect for him. ³ The Branch will take delight in respecting the Lord. He will not judge things only by the way they look. He won't make decisions based simply on what people say. ⁴ He will always do what is right when he judges those who are in need. He'll be completely fair when he makes decisions about poor people. When he commands that people be punished, it will happen. When he orders that evil people be put to death, it will take place. ⁵ He will put on godliness as if it were his belt. He'll wear faithfulness around his waist.

Because we know about the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, we have seen all these prophecies about Jesus, the Branch of Jesse, fulfilled. But now the passage takes a turn. Recruit a volunteer to read verses 6-8: "Wolves will live with lambs. Leopards will lie down with goats. Calves and lions will eat together. And little children will lead them around. Cows will eat with bears. Their little ones will lie down together. And lions will eat straw like oxen. A baby will play near a hole where cobras live. A young child will put its hand into a nest where poisonous snakes live."

Have you observed any animals behaving this way? I have not. Leopards eat goats; they don't nap with them. Lions eat meat; they are carnivores. They don't eat straw. And I would not hand a baby a poisonous snake! This all seems strange. Up until these verses, Isaiah's prophecies were exactly right. What is going on? Let the children guess. (This part of Isaiah's prophecy is about a future time from now.)

Last week we learned about a promise. Jesus will return to earth. After that, God will make a new heaven and a new earth; people from all the nations will be there. Jesus will reign as King. God will dwell with his people. This part of Isaiah's prophecy is about this future time. It is a promise to us. Recruit a volunteer to read verses 9-10: "None of those animals will harm or destroy anything or anyone on my holy mountain of Zion. The oceans are full of water. In the same way, the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the



Lord. At that time, here is what the man who is called the Root of Jesse will do. He will be like a banner that brings nations together. They will come to him. And the place where he rules will be glorious."

On the first Christmas night, angels sang in heavens, "Glory to God in highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased" (Luke 2:14 NLT). Jesus brought peace to earth. By dying for our sins, he made peace between God and us. But when he comes again, his peace will spread to all of creation. Even the animals will behave peaceably! When Jesus comes back, his peace and goodness will spread to everyone and everything. Praise God this time is coming!

4 Story Discussion

- ▶ **Do you remember what Jesus was called in this passage?** (The Branch of Jesse) **Why?** (Jesus was a member of Jesse's family.) **Were you surprised at Isaiah's accurate prophecy about Jesus?** Let the children explain. **Why or why not?**
- ▶ **Before Jesus, there was no peace between God and us. Why?** (Because people kept sinning and turning away from God)
- ▶ **When Jesus came to earth the first time, how did he bring peace?** (He made peace between God and us by taking all our sins upon himself, dying once and for all.)
- ▶ **The peace of God has not yet spread through all the earth. What kinds of things do not yet have the peace and goodness of God?** (Storms, fires, bad leaders, fighting between people and nations, etc.)
- ▶ **Jesus promises he will bring peace and goodness to the earth when he returns. Does he always keep his promises?** (Yes!) **Why do you believe that he will keep this promise?** (Answers will vary.)

Close in prayer: **Dear Lord, thank you that you keep your promises. We are so happy that people all over the world will know and love you, and that there will be peace. Help us to wait with excitement and get ready for that time! Amen.**



5 Craft

Word Art

To Prepare:
Copy the printables.



"Glory to God in highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased." Luke 2:14 NLT

Say: **Do you remember what the angels said at Christ's birth? "Glory to God in highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased" (Luke 2:14 NLT). When Jesus came the first time, he made peace between God and us. When he comes again, he will bring peace and goodness to the whole earth. Praise God—that time is coming! Let's learn our memory verse.** Distribute the printables and supplies. Recite the verse together several times. Then have the children write the verse inside the image on the page. Encourage them to write the words creatively—it's art! They can expand or shrink their letters to fit within each part of the picture.

6 Game

Branch Hunt

Say: **When Jesus came to earth the first time, he made peace between God and people. When Jesus comes again, his peace will spread over the entire earth. We look forward to that day when everyone will know Jesus—he is the Branch of Jesse who will bring peace and goodness to the earth. While we wait, let's live at peace with those around us and keep watch for Jesus.**

Hold up the branch. **Let's take turns playing hide and seek with our branch.** Play a game of hot/cold hide and seek with the branch. Have one person close their eyes, while another hides the branch. As the seeker moves around the room, the one who hid the branch gives clues (e.g., "You're getting warmer.") Take turns, so every child has a chance to both hide the branch and seek it.

7 Snack

Polish Kolaczki (Jam-Filled Christmas Cookies)

Say: **Do you remember when we looked at the map/globe? We saw how the knowledge of God has spread to countries all around the world. Christians are in every country, and they all celebrate Christmas with different foods. In Japan, people eat fried chicken. In Italy, they eat a special orange raisin bread called *panettone*. In Costa Rica, they eat tamales. In**

To Prepare:
Gather the supplies.



Poland, they eat a jam-filled cookie called *kolaczki* (ko-LOX-ski), which is what we will enjoy today! This reminds us that one day everyone in the world will know Jesus. The Bible says: “When the name of Jesus is spoken, everyone will kneel down to worship him. Everyone in heaven and on earth and under the earth will kneel down to worship him. Everyone’s mouth will say that Jesus Christ is Lord. And God the Father will receive the glory” (Philippians 2:10–11). Distribute the snack and enjoy.

8 CLOSING

Advent Prayer

Set up the four votive candles. Say: **This is the second week of Advent, so we light the first and second candles.** Light the candles.

Let’s close in prayer. I will read a prayer for the second Sunday of Advent. It is the second verse of the Advent hymn, “Come Thou Long-expected Jesus.” It speaks about Jesus—that he is our hope, our joy, and our peace. During Advent, we wait. We don’t wait anxiously; we wait with hope. God always keeps his promises. He sent Jesus to earth long ago on Christmas day, just as he promised. Jesus will come back again, just as he promised. And one day, everyone will know Jesus is the Branch of Jesse who will bring peace and goodness to the earth. This is the day that we long for. It will happen just as God has promised. Let’s bow our heads.

Jesus, you are . . .

“Israel’s strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art,

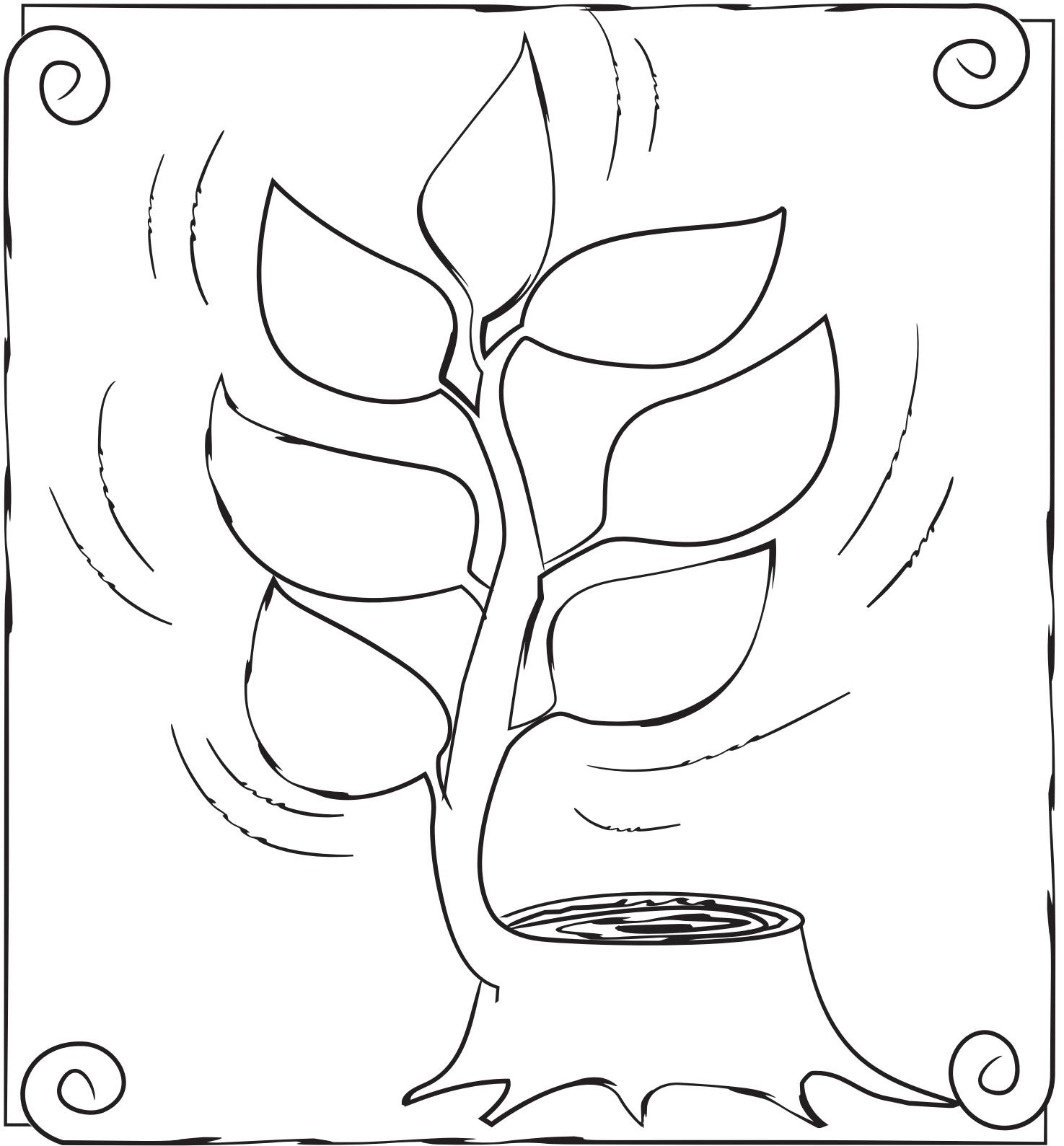
Dear Desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart,” Amen. (Charles Wesley)

Children line up to meet their parents. As the children leave, hand out their Take-home pages and remind them to bring home their crafts.

To Prepare:

Make enough copies of the Take-home page for each child.





WORD ART

Directions: Write out Luke 2:14 within the tree branch and leaves: “Glory to God in highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased.” Luke 2:14

WEEK 2

Live It All Week

Upper Elementary Take Home Paper for Families**What Your Child Learned Today**

This Advent season, we focus on the promises of God. Jesus's first coming was a promise that God fulfilled on Christmas Day. Jesus is the Branch of Jesse; as promised, he came from the family line of King David and his father, Jesse. Jesus is also the Prince of Peace. Through his first coming, he made peace between God and men. The second coming of Jesus is a promise yet to be fulfilled. On that day, Jesus's peace will extend to all creation.

Try This

Your child learned that one day everyone will know Jesus. Even now, there are Christians all over the world. In class, your child had a Christmas treat from Poland. Research Christmas foods or traditions of other countries. Consider incorporating one of these into your celebration this year.

Prophecy and Expectation: The Branch of Jesse

- Scripture: Isaiah 11:1–10
- Big Idea: One day, everyone will know Jesus—he is the Branch of Jesse who will bring peace and goodness to the earth.
- Memory Verse: “Glory to God in highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased.” Luke 2:14 NLT

Table Talk

- ▶ **When the angels appeared to the shepherds on the first Christmas night, they said, “Glory to God in highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased” (Luke 2:14 NLT). Do these words sound familiar? Where have you heard them before?**
- ▶ **The angels promised peace to God’s people. How did Jesus bring peace? (See Romans 5:1. By his death, he paid for our sins and washed us clean. Now we can stand in the presence of a holy God.)**
- ▶ **Even though there is peace between God and those who belong to Jesus, there is not peace in our world. In what areas do you see a need for peace? (There are wars, fighting, natural disasters, etc.)**
- ▶ **When will Jesus’s peace spread throughout creation? (When he returns)**
- ▶ **God promises that Jesus will return and that he will bring peace and goodness to the earth. Can we count on this promise to come true? (Yes. God always keeps his promises! Look how he kept his promise in sending Jesus the first time!)**

SOMETHING
ELSE TO DO

This Advent, learn some traditional carols that have words rich with meaning. Listen to the carols during dessert, at bedtime, or during family devotions. This week’s carol is the Advent hymn “O Come, O Come Emmanuel.” It has a verse that speaks of Jesus as the Branch of Jesse: “O come, O Branch of Jesse’s stem, unto your own and rescue them.” It also speaks of the reigning peace of Jesus at his second coming: “O come, O King of nations, bind / in one the hearts of all mankind / Bid all our sad divisions cease / and be yourself our King of Peace.”



Prophecy and Expectation: Garden in the Desert

Isaiah 35:1–10

Big Idea:

One day, the Lord will return! The desert will become like a garden, and all who know Jesus will experience joy forever.

Memory Verse:

"Your God will come." Isaiah 35:4



Lesson Overview

This year, the Advent lessons focus on the promises of God. Today's lesson tells us more about the new heavens and new earth. The desert will become like a garden. All those who know Jesus will experience joy forever! While there is sickness, sadness, and death here on this earth, Jesus will return and lead us into new life with him. We wait with joy and certain hope for that day.



	Week 3 Lesson Plan	Activity and Supplies	To Prepare
1	Welcome Activity (10 minutes)	Word Association Catch • Soft, pliable ball (e.g., Nerf ball)	
2	Lesson Introduction (5 minutes)	No Magic Trick • Coin • Hat	
3	Scripture Story (15 minutes)	Garden in the Desert • Bibles for the class	
4	Discussion (5 minutes)		
5	Craft (10 minutes)	Sand Art Verse Printables: Sand Art Verse (see note in “To Prepare”) • Pencils • Liquid school glue (one for each child) • Colored sand • Paper plates (one for each child) • Disposable tablecloth • Optional: Music player with Web access • Optional: Visit YouTube and search for “Joy the World” by Bethel Music. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yAfmw4mT4U	Queue the song. Copy the printables. Note: There are two versions of the verse. Copy one version for half of the class and copy the other version for the other half of the class. Also, make some additional copies so the children can work on their preferred design.
6	Snack (10 minutes)	Rice Cake Flowers • Rice cakes • Hummus • Cucumbers, cut in slices (for “flowers”) • Grape tomatoes, cut in halves (for “flower centers”) • Plate • Knife • Paper cups • Pitcher of water	Wash and slice the vegetables.
7	Closing (5 minutes)	Advent Prayer Printables: Take-home page (one for each child) • 4 votive candles • Lighter	Make enough copies of the Take-home page for each child.



Bible Background for Leader

The Israelites were a people of the land; their agrarian culture of orchards and fields, flocks and herds, was a much-celebrated blessing from Yahweh. They were familiar with the joy of a good harvest, especially when that harvest involved the struggle of cultivating a desert patch into a fruitful field. Using this metaphor that resonated with their daily lives, Isaiah calls his generation of Israelites to look forward to the time when the promised King will make their lives joyful and rich with the blessings of good harvests and freedom from enemies.

Old Testament. In a seemingly endless cycle of blessing, rebellion, captivity/oppression, repentance, and restoration, God's longsuffering love for his people plays out in this passage. They have been rebellious yet again and turned away from following Yahweh with sincere hearts. They will suffer under his judgment, but in his mercy, he will restore them.

There was a pattern of sin in Israel: the people turned away from their God and their disobedience was followed by God's call to return to him. We are in this pattern as well, born into sin, but drawn by the Holy Spirit to receive the blessing of redemption through the act of Jesus on the cross. His redemptive suffering and subsequent victory over sin and death is pictured as a desert blooming into a beautiful garden.

Jesus. Jesus is the restoration of all things. We are promised that, in him, we have life "in the fullest possible way" (John 10:10). Today's passage is a lovely picture of not only a physical land restoration, which was promised to the people of Isaiah's generation as a specific blessing, but whole restoration of all believers in Jesus. The healing of bodies and emotions, the restoration of hope and joy, is the full life of John 10:10. Jesus is the blessing of new life, wellness, and deliverance from our enemies spoken of in Isaiah 35. He is to the spirit and soul of a person the joy and beauty of spring after a long and harsh winter. He came in the First Advent to purchase salvation and redemption for us and will return in the Second Advent to bring us into new life.

The Church and the World. Here, as in other Second Advent prophecies, the role of the church in the world is to exemplify God's goodness in our generation, "for a time just like this" (Esther 4:14). Jesus has made the full life available to us by his sacrifice and by giving us direct access to the Father. In Isaiah 35:3-4, the church has a directive from the Lord to encourage others.

All who know Jesus will experience joy forever; we who have been redeemed and know Jesus today are to share this good news with our generation.



1 Welcome Activity

Word Association Catch

Assemble the children into a circle. Say: **Do you know what word association is? If I say the word *restaurant*, what words do you think of? What words go along with *restaurant*? You could think of what you would find in a restaurant; for example, tables, chairs, silverware, and menus. You could think of foods; for example, hamburger, tacos, and lasagna. You could think of people who would be there; for example, waiters, cooks, and customers. We think of all those words when we hear the word *restaurant*.** Hold up the ball. **Now I will call out a word and toss the ball to someone. That person will say a word associated with the word I said, and then throw the ball to someone else, who will say a different word. Here is the word: desert.** Toss the ball to someone in the circle. Some ideas for associated words are camel, snake, cactus, oasis, sand, hot, dry, tent, Sahara, pyramid, etc.

2 Lesson Introduction

No Magic Trick

Hold up the coin. Say: **Have you ever seen a magic trick where a magician pretends to pull a coin out of somebody's ear? (Yes.) There was never a coin in the person's ear. How does the magician do that?** (It's called sleight of hand—they were holding the coin all along.) Hold up the hat. **Have you ever seen a magician pull a rabbit out of a hat? (Yes.) How do you think they do that?** Let the children respond. Typically, the rabbit is wrapped in a black scarf and then slid into the hat.

Magicians say they use magic, but there isn't anything truly magical. It is all an illusion. It is not real magic. The magician didn't make a coin appear from nothing. The magician didn't create a rabbit from thin air.

Does that type of change ever happen? Let the children respond. **Think about a desert again. Picture the enormous Sahara Desert of Africa—hot, dry, and sandy. Could a magician make water gush out of the ground in the Sahara? Could a magician do this truly, without using trickery? (No.) No magician could make water from nothing.**

Do you know anyone who could do this? (God) "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth" (Genesis 1:1). How did God make the earth? Let the children respond. **He spoke, and it was there. God can create in**



an instant. He has done it before, and he will do it again—no magic tricks. No illusions.

Let's read more about this in the Bible.

3 Scripture story

Garden in the Desert

Have the children open their Bibles to Isaiah 35. Say: **Christmas is coming in two weeks. Now, we are in the season of . . . (Advent). Advent comes right before Christmas. The word *advent* means coming.**

This Advent we have learned about God's promises that, one day, will come true. Jesus is coming back to earth. And God will make a new heaven and a new earth. In the first week of Advent, we learned that people from all over the world will gather and live as God wants. In the second week of Advent, we learned that there will be total peace and goodness there. Jesus will rule as king, and he will live with his people.

We will learn more about this new earth in our Bible reading today. We will read from chapter 35 in the book of Isaiah. Turn in your Bibles to Isaiah 35.

Who was Isaiah? (A prophet who lived before the time of Jesus) **What is a prophet?** (Someone who listens to God and speaks his words to the people)

Recruit a volunteer to read Isaiah 35:1: "The desert and the dry ground will be glad. The dry places will be full of joy. Flowers will grow there. Like the first crocus in the spring."

The people in Isaiah's time knew about deserts. With little water, what could you drink? You couldn't grow plants or raise animals either. A desert is a hostile living environment. But God promises a change. This is no magic trick, no illusion. What does he say will happen to the desert? (It will be glad/covered with flowers.)

God is announcing a dramatic change in the desert! One day, the desert will become a place of great beauty and life. Recruit a volunteer to read verse 2: "The desert will bloom with flowers. It will be very glad and shout for joy. The glorious beauty of Lebanon will be given to it. It will be as beautiful as the rich lands of Carmel and Sharon. Everyone will see the glory of the Lord. They will see the beauty of our God."



What will this new place look like? (It will be beautiful.) **What will people see there?** (The glory and beauty of God) **Isaiah is getting a glimpse of the new earth. Later, the apostle John gets another glimpse. Listen to what John says in the book of Revelation: “The city does not need the sun or moon to shine on it. God’s glory is its light, and the Lamb is its lamp” (Revelation 21:23). The glory of the Lord is an actual light that will light up the new earth. Can you imagine that?**

God tells his people this promise to give them hope. Recruit a volunteer to read Isaiah 35:3-4: “Strengthen the hands of those who are weak. Help those whose knees give way. Say to those whose hearts are afraid, ‘Be strong and do not fear. Your God will come. He will pay your enemies back. He will come to save you.’”

What is the word of hope for the people? (Your God will come.) **This promise was kept when Jesus came to earth the first time. He came, and he did save. But when he comes again, he will set everything right.**

The new earth will be a place of health and healing. Just as Jesus healed those who came to him, now healing will flow to *all* those in the new earth. Recruit a volunteer to read verses 5-6: “Then the eyes of those who are blind will be opened. The ears of those who can’t hear will be unplugged. Those who can’t walk will leap like a deer. And those who can’t speak will shout for joy. Water will pour out in dry places. Streams will flow in the desert.”

What happens to the blind? (Their eyes are opened.) **The deaf?** (Their ears are unplugged.) **Those who can’t walk?** (They leap like deer!) **Those who can’t speak?** (They shout for joy!)

The new earth will be a place of abundance and refreshment. Recruit a volunteer to read verse 7: “The burning sand will become a pool of water. The thirsty ground will become bubbling springs. In the places where wild dogs once lay down, tall grass and papyrus will grow.”

How will the land be transformed? (Streams will flow through the desert, pools and springs will form, and plants will grow.) **This is no magic trick. There will be a great difference between this earth and the new earth. How will God make this place? Can he make it?** (Yes, nothing is impossible for him.) **The Bible tells us that God “creates things that did not exist before” (Romans 4:17b). He has done it before; he will do it again. Unlike a magician, God really can make something appear out of nothing. The Bible also says, “So we understand that everything was made when God commanded it. That’s why we believe that what we see was not made out of what could be seen” (Hebrews 11:3).**



How do we get to this wonderful new place? Can anyone enter? Recruit a volunteer to read verses 8-9: "A wide road will go through the land. It will be called the Way of Holiness. Only those who lead a holy life can use it. "Unclean" and foolish people can't walk on it. No lions will use it. No hungry wild animals will be on it. None of them will be there. Only people who have been set free will walk on it."

Who can't enter? (Those who are unclean) **What does it mean to be unclean?** **Is God talking about dirt and mud?** (No—unclean means sinful.) **So what about us? Everyone sins—I do, and you do, too. Does that mean we can't enter the new earth?** Read (or recruit a volunteer to read) Romans 3:22–26:

²² We are made right with God by putting our faith in Jesus Christ. This happens to all who believe. It is no different for the Jews than for the Gentiles. ²³ Everyone has sinned. No one measures up to God's glory. ²⁴ The free gift of God's grace makes us right with him. Christ Jesus paid the price to set us free. ²⁵ God gave Christ as a sacrifice to pay for sins through the spilling of his blood. So God forgives the sins of those who have faith. God did all this to prove that he does what is right. He is a God of mercy. So he did not punish for their sins the people who lived before Jesus lived. ²⁶ God did all this to prove in our own time that he does what is right. He also makes right with himself those who believe in Jesus.

Who paid for our sins? (Jesus) **Are we slaves to sin?** (No.) **What are we?** **Hint: Read verse 24.** (We're free!) **Yes, Jesus has made us right with God. His blood has washed us clean, and he has set us free from sin and death. If you believe in Jesus, you belong to him.**

Turn back to Isaiah 35:9. Who will walk on the Way of Holiness? (Those who have been set free) **We are those people!** Recruit a volunteer to read verse 10: "Those the Lord has saved will return to their land. They will sing as they enter the city of Zion. Joy that lasts forever will be like beautiful crowns on their heads. They will be filled with gladness and joy. Sorrow and sighing will be gone."

How will we react when we enter the new earth? (With singing, full of joy and gladness)

One day, the Lord will return! "Your God will come" (Isaiah 35:4) is his promise to us. The desert will become like a garden and all who know Jesus will experience joy forever. Praise God this time is coming!



4 story discussion

- ▶ **What season is this?** (Advent)
- ▶ **We are learning about God's promises this Advent. Today we learned more about the new earth. What will it be like?** (Answers may include: joy-filled, beautiful, lit by God's glory, a place of health, etc.)
- ▶ **At the end of Isaiah 35, God says, "Sorrow and sighing will be gone." Why is that?** (There will be no more death or pain or illness—there is nothing to be sad about!)
- ▶ **What part of the new earth sounds best to you?** (Answers will vary.)

Close in prayer: **Dear Lord, thank you that you keep your promises. We can't wait to spend forever with you in the beautiful new earth! Amen.**

5 craft

Sand Art Verse

Say: **One day; the Lord will return! The desert will become like a garden and all who know Jesus will experience joy forever. This week's memory verse is short, but it is very important to know: "Your God will come" (Isaiah 35:4). That is God's promise to every one of us. Jesus is coming back to us.**

Play the song.

Spread the tablecloth on the table. Distribute the printable and glue.

Have each child trace the verse in glue. They can also draw a picture or design in glue on the page.

Set a plate under each picture. Have the children sprinkle sand over the glue. Hold the picture over the plate and shake lightly so the plate catches the excess sand. Allow the picture to dry.

6 snack

Rice Cake Flowers

Say: **One day; the Lord will return! The desert will become like a garden and all who know Jesus will experience joy forever. Let's eat a snack that reminds us of that day.** Distribute the snack. Have the children spread hummus on their rice cake, and then show them how to make flowers with the cut veggies. Enjoy!

To Prepare:

Queue the song. Copy the printables. Note: There are two versions of the verse. Copy one version for half of the class and copy the other version for the other half of the class. Also, make some additional copies so the children can work on their preferred design.



To Prepare:

Wash and slice the vegetables.



7 closing

To Prepare:

Make enough copies of the Take-home page for each child.



Advent Prayer

Set up the four votive candles. Say: **This is the third week of Advent, so we light the first, second, and third candles.** Light the candles.

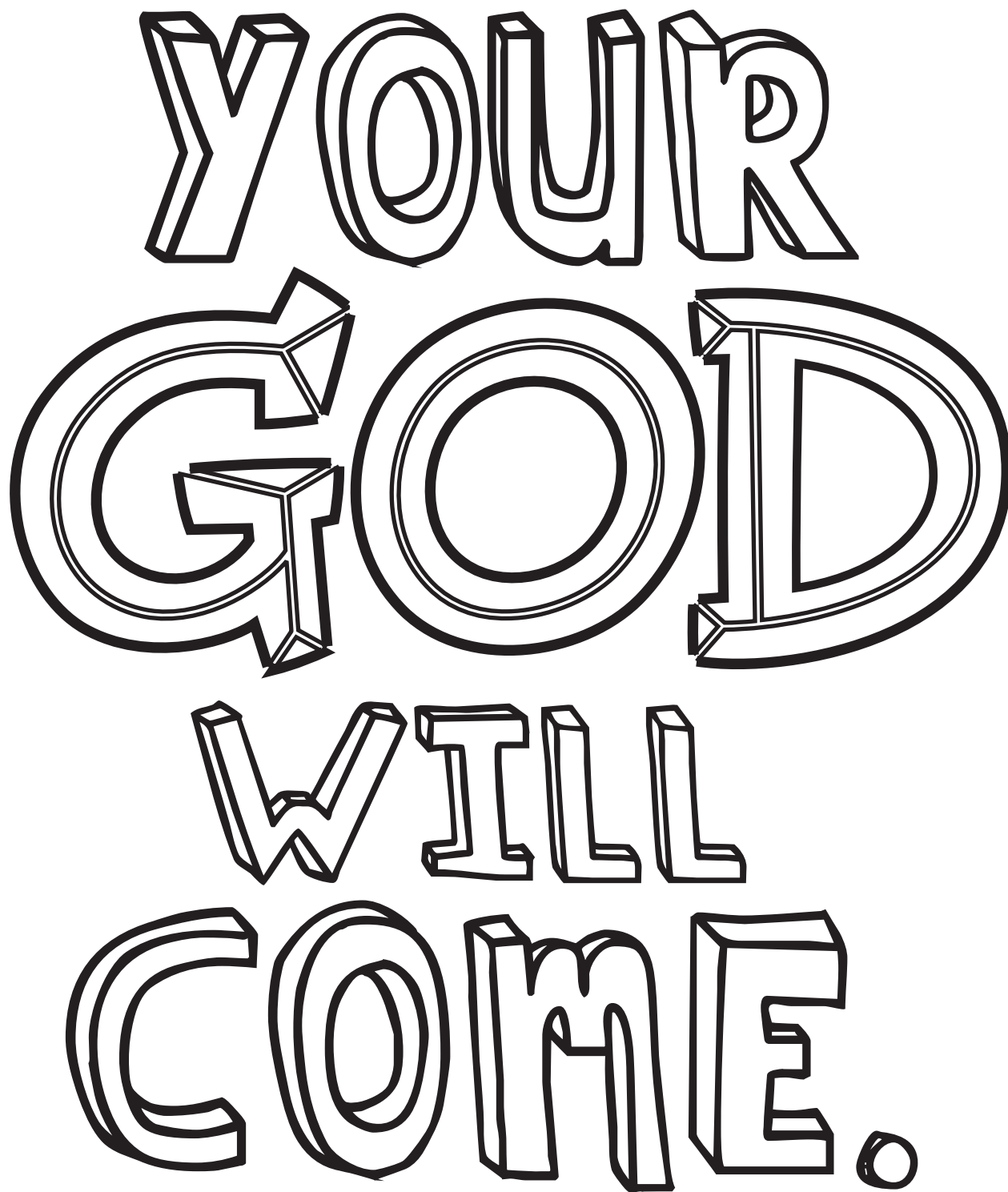
Let's close in prayer. I will read a prayer for the third Sunday of Advent. It is the third verse of the Advent hymn, "Come Thou Long-expected Jesus." It speaks about Jesus. Though at his first coming he came as a baby, he was still King of heaven and earth. Through his Spirit, he reigns in us. And he has come to set us free from sin and death. We have life with him forever and ever. The desert will become like a garden and all who know Jesus will experience joy forever. Come, Lord Jesus!

Jesus, you were . . .

**"Born thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a king,
Born to reign in us forever, now thy gracious kingdom bring," Amen.**

(Charles Wesley)

Children line up to meet their parents. As the children leave, hand out their Take-home pages and remind them to bring home their crafts.



**YOUR
GOD
WILL
COME.**

Isaiah 35:4



Your
GOD
will
come.

ISAIAH 35:4

WEEK 3

Live It All Week

Upper Elementary Take Home Paper for Families**What Your Child Learned Today**

This year's Advent lessons focus on God promises. Today your child learned more about the new heavens and new earth. The desert will become like a garden. All those who know Jesus will experience joy forever! While there is sickness, sadness, and death on this earth, Jesus will return and lead us into new life with him. We wait with joy and certain hope for that day.

Try This

God promises that the desert will become like a garden. As a reminder of this promise of our future home, place a flower on your Christmas tree this year. You can look for a flower ornament or nestle a silk flower among your tree's branches.

**Prophecy and Expectation:
Garden in the Desert**

- Scripture: Isaiah 35:1–10
- Big Idea: One day, the Lord will return! The desert will become like a garden, and all who know Jesus will experience joy forever.
- Memory Verse: "Your God will come." Isaiah 35:4

Table Talk

- ▶ **Have you ever been to a desert? What was it like? If not, describe the driest place you have ever visited.**
- ▶ **Now imagine that dry place getting plenty of rain. Springs of water burst from the ground. How would that change things? (Plant and animal life would flourish.)**
- ▶ **Read Isaiah 35. What sounds the most appealing to you about the new earth?**
- ▶ **Why do you think God tells us what is to come? (To give us hope; help us get through the difficulties now)**
- ▶ **What would you say to someone who does not believe that God will keep this promise? (He kept his promise in sending Jesus the first time. He will be faithful to his promises again!)**

**SOMETHING
ELSE TO DO**

This Advent, learn some traditional carols that have words rich with meaning. Play the carols during dessert, at bedtime, or during family devotions. This week's carol is the traditional Christmas carol, "Joy to the World." This song works equally well as an Advent hymn. Verse 3 talks about the renewed creation: "No more let sins and sorrows grow / Nor thorns infest the ground / He comes to make his blessings flow / Far as the curse is found."



Prophecy and Expectation: Immanuel, God With Us

Isaiah 7:10–16

Big Idea:

Isaiah prophesied that a baby would be born of a virgin—this is Jesus, “Immanuel,” which means “God with us.” Jesus made a way for us to be with him forever.

Memory Verse:

“The name Immanuel means ‘God with us.’” Matthew 1:23b



Lesson Overview

This year, the Advent lessons focus on God’s promises. The first three lessons focus on promises yet to be fulfilled, while this last week celebrates God’s greatest promise realized: Jesus himself. Jesus fulfilled the prophecy in Isaiah that a virgin would give birth to a Son, and he would be called Immanuel. “The name Immanuel means ‘God with us’” (Matthew 1:23b). God the Son would exchange his heavenly throne for a manger filled with hay to be Immanuel, God with us.



Week 4 Lesson Plan	Activity and Supplies	To Prepare
1 Welcome Activity (10 minutes)	Driving Test: Road Signs Printables: Road Signs (two copies) • Scissors • Bowl	Copy the printables. Cut apart one copy and set the pieces in the bowl. Set aside the second copy as an answer key.
2 Lesson Introduction (5 minutes)	Guess Who? • Optional: Guess Who game	
3 Scripture Story (10 minutes)	Immanuel, God with Us • Bibles for the class	Look up the meaning of your name. Optional: Look up the meanings of the names of some of your students.
4 Discussion (5 minutes)		
5 Memory Verse Activity (5 minutes)	Tangled Hands	
6 Snack (10 minutes)	Manger Snack • Graham crackers (one for each child) • Plates • Plastic knives • Napkins • Cocoa-hazelnut spread and pretzel sticks • Paper cups • Pitcher of water	Gather the supplies.
7 Craft (10 minutes)	Immanuel Printables: Color by Number (one for each child) • Crayons, colored pencils, or markers • Optional: Music player with Web access • Optional: Visit YouTube and search for "Emmanuel (Hallowed Manger Ground)" by Chris Tomlin. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aJZwuhR6u4k	Copy the printables. Make sure there are plenty of each required color (see printable) crayon, colored pencil, or marker. Preview and queue the song for class.
8 Closing (5 minutes)	Advent Prayer Printables: Take-home page (one for each child) • 4 votive candles • Lighter	Make enough copies of the Take-home page for each child.



Bible Background for Leader

A crisis was brewing in Judah as Syria and Israel (Samaria) threatened King Ahaz with war. God sent the prophet Isaiah to assure King Ahaz of deliverance and to provide him with instructions on what to do (see Isaiah 7:13–16). Ahaz, however, refused to listen. He defiantly rejected Isaiah's instructions from God.

Despite Ahaz's disobedience, Isaiah still communicated God's plan. In verses 14–16, Isaiah foretells of the specific miraculous sign of the virgin birth along with the remarkable wisdom of the young boy Jesus. He foretells of the destruction of Syria and Israel in verse 16, and of thirteen-year-old Jesus teaching the elders while visiting the temple in Jerusalem ("He was sitting with the teachers. He was listening to them and asking them questions. Everyone who heard him was amazed at how much he understood. They also were amazed at his answers" [Luke 2:46–47]).

Old Testament. Isaiah chapters 7 through 12 are sometimes called the "Book of Immanuel" because the focus is on the Messiah and the Messianic age to come. The book of Isaiah unfolds God's plan with descriptions of the specific ways God will reveal himself through the Messiah. It includes specific events and circumstances identifying and confirming Jesus as the Savior of all people (Isaiah 43:9–11; Romans 5:6). Our passage today focuses on the virgin birth as proof the Messiah's identity ("But then the chosen time came. God sent his Son. A woman gave

birth to him. He was born under the authority of the law" [Galatians 4:4]). The book of Isaiah, taken as a whole, forms a complete picture of Jesus, from the suffering servant to the glorious King. Isaiah is the Old Testament prophet most quoted by the New Testament writers, and Jesus fulfilled Isaiah's prophecies.

Jesus. Jesus is Immanuel, the one whose birth is foretold in Isaiah 7:14. Jesus is God the Son, and by his act of redemption on the cross, through to his ascension, God was able to send his Holy Spirit to dwell *in* us. Isaiah makes numerous specific prophecies about both the first advent of Christ as well as his second advent. Jesus spoke to his generation about himself, pointing to the prophecies that foretold his life and death. The gospel writers quote Jesus citing Isaiah eight times, identifying himself as the One foretold in the prophecies. The Jewish scholars of his day recognized that Jesus was implying that he was the Son of God, Savior, and true King of Israel. These scholars could not accept that these prophecies would be fulfilled by a humble carpenter from Nazareth.

The Church and the World. The virgin birth of Christ is a core truth upon which the church is built. The deity and humanity of Jesus qualify him not only to redeem us but also to be our perfect High Priest (Hebrews 4:15). He gives us access to the Father through his sacrifice, qualifying us to be children of God who will live with him forever.



To Prepare:

Copy the printables. Cut apart one copy and set the pieces in the bowl. Set aside the second copy as an answer key.

1 Welcome Activity

Driving Test: Road Signs

Set the bowl on the table. Say: **As you travel about, you likely notice signs along the road. Some signs are easier to figure out than others. Let's see how many you know.** Point to the bowl and tell the children to match the signs with their meanings. **After several minutes, say: Great job! Now let's play another game.**

	Deer Crossing		Railroad Crossing
	Workers		Height
	Keep Right		Dead End
	No U-Turn		Railroad Crossing
	No Parking		No Left Turn
	One-Way Street		No Skidding

2 Lesson Introduction

Guess Who?

If you have the Guess Who game, display it as you explain it. Say: **Have you ever played the game Guess Who? As the name implies, it is a guessing game. There are twenty-four faces on the game board, and one player secretly selects one face.**

As the other player, you ask questions to figure out which face your opponent has. All the faces are different. You must ask yes or no questions to figure out which face it might be. The questions might include: "Does the face have glasses?" "Does it have a mustache?" "Does it have red hair?" The answers will help you identify the correct face.

In real life, you might one day need to "guess who." Imagine you are applying for a job at a new company. The company doesn't yet have an office, so you arrange to have your interview at a local coffee shop. The problem is this: How will you recognize the person giving the interview? Maybe they told you to look for signs: "I will be wearing glasses and I will have a red notebook on the table." You arrive to find the coffee shop packed with people. You scan the crowd. You notice five people wearing glasses. You check the tables. Only one has a red notebook at their place. Thanks to the signs, you know they must be the one you are meeting.

Our Bible reading today is a little bit like Guess Who. God's people are waiting for a mystery person. Who is it? When will this person arrive? How will they recognize this person? Let's read and find out.



3 scripture story

To Prepare:

Look up the meaning of your name. Optional: Look up the meanings of the names of some of your students.

Immanuel, God with Us

Have the children open their Bibles to Isaiah 7. Say: **Our Bible reading today comes from the book of Isaiah. What is Isaiah's job?** (He is a prophet.) **What is a prophet?** (Someone who listens to God and speaks his words to the people) **Our reading today starts in the middle of a conversation between Isaiah and the king of Judah, King Ahaz. King Ahaz wants God to tell him, through Isaiah the prophet, about an upcoming battle. He wants to know if Judah will fall, and if Ahaz will be defeated. God tells him this will not happen. To prove that God is on his side, he offers to give Ahaz a sign.** Recruit a volunteer to read verses 10–11: "The Lord spoke to Ahaz through Isaiah again. He said, 'I am the Lord your God. Ask me to give you a sign. It can be anything in the deepest grave or in the highest heaven.'"

Ahaz could ask God for anything. He could ask God to show him an angel or make the moon travel backward across the night sky. He could ask for a frog to talk. Nothing is impossible with God. If you were Ahaz, what sign would reassure you? Let the children respond.

Let's see what Ahaz chooses. Recruit a volunteer to read verse 12: "But Ahaz said, 'I won't ask. I won't test the Lord.'"

Ahaz asks for nothing. You might be thinking, "He must really trust God! He doesn't even need a sign." But God wants to give Ahaz a sign; unfortunately, Ahaz refuses to accept it. Recruit a volunteer to read verse 13: "Then Isaiah said, 'Listen, you members of the royal family of David! Isn't it enough for you to test the patience of human beings? Are you also going to test the patience of my God?'"

In the middle of this conversation about battles and threats to Ahaz's throne, God changes the topic. God says if Ahaz won't ask for a sign, God will send one anyway. But the sign won't have anything to do with the current threat. Let's skip ahead to verse 16. Recruit a volunteer to read: "Even before then, the lands of the two kings you fear will be ruined."

God says long after those challenging kingdoms fall, someone will come. Who will that someone be? How will people know that he is the one God is speaking of? Recruit a volunteer to read verses 14–15: "The Lord himself will give you a sign. The virgin is going to have a baby. She will give birth to a son. And he will be called Immanuel. He will still be very young when he can decide between right and wrong."



God gives three clues. What is the first one? (A virgin will give birth to a baby.) **This is something that has never happened in the world's history, either before or since. Every baby, when its life is created, has a mother and a father. Though families grow and change, in the beginning all human babies have both a mother and father. But this baby will be different. This baby will only have a ____ (mother).**

That is unusual! God gives a second clue. Will it be a baby boy or girl? (a boy)

God gives a third clue. What will people call him? (Immanuel) **Even his name is an amazing sign.**

Did you know all names have meanings? My name is _____, which means _____. Do any of you know the meaning of your name? Let the children respond.

***Immanuel* is a Hebrew word. Does anyone know what it means?** (God with us) **This baby boy will be called Immanuel, which means "God with us." God is speaking about Jesus, the Savior King he has promised his people. How will they recognize this Savior King, the Promised One of God? Let's review. In this passage, God mentions three signs. What are they again?** (A baby will be born who will only have a mother; the baby will be a boy; and he will be called *Immanuel*, which means "God with us.")

Christmas is close, but it isn't here yet. Now we are in the season of Advent. Do you remember what the word *advent* means? (Coming) **We remember that Jesus, the Promised One, came to earth on Christmas Day over two thousand years ago. He was born of the Virgin Mary, and his first bed was a manger filled with hay. Hundreds of years before the first Christmas, prophets such as Isaiah, spoke of Jesus's birth, life, and even his death. This proves that God always keeps his promises. Jesus is our Immanuel, God with us. He is with us now through his Spirit, and one day we will live forever with him in heaven.**

4 story discussion

- ▶ **Jesus was called Immanuel. Do you remember what that means?** (God with us)
- ▶ **Why did God give his people clues about Jesus?** (So they could recognize that Jesus was the Promised One of God)



► **Even with all the signs from God, some people refused to believe that Jesus was the Promised One. Why do you think that is?** (Answers will vary.)

► **Even now, there are people who don't believe that Jesus is God's Son. How can we help share the love of God with them?** (Answers will vary. Possible answers might include: pray for them, share God's Word, invite them to church, share how God keeps his promises, etc.)

Close in prayer: **Dear Father, thank you that you keep your promises. Thank you that you kept your promise by sending Jesus who is Immanuel, God with us. Thank you that, because of Jesus, we will be with you forever. Amen.**

5 Memory Verse Activity

Tangled Hands

"The name Immanuel means 'God with us.'" Matthew 1:23b

Say: **Today's memory verse is easy to learn because we've already heard it today! Matthew 1:23b says, "The name Immanuel means ____ ____ ____." (God with us) See? You already know half. The reference is easy to learn because 1:23 is simply the numbers 1-2-3 in order! Repeat after me: "The name Immanuel means 'God with us'" (Matthew 1:23b).**

Assemble the children into a circle. Have each child extend their hands into the circle and grab hold of the hands of two other people. The two people cannot be directly beside the person. They must be across the circle in some way. Once all the hands are clasped, recite the verse together. Then try to "untangle" yourselves without unclasping hands. Repeat this game as time allows.

6 snack

Manger Snack

Say: **Christmas is coming in one week. On Christmas, we will celebrate Jesus's birthday. We rejoice that on this day, God came to earth as a baby. Jesus, God's Son, came down from heaven to live with us, his people. He is our Immanuel, God with us. Because he loves us, Jesus made a way for us to be with God forever and ever.**

Let's make a snack that looks like an empty manger bed because we are looking forward to Christmas when the manger was filled with God himself.

To Prepare:
Gather the supplies.



Distribute the snack. Have the children spread on the topping and add the “hay” (pretzel sticks) to the manger.

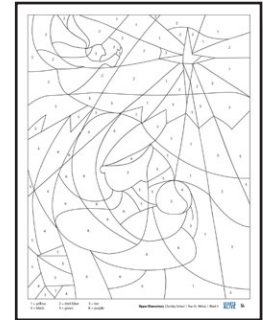
7 Craft

Immanuel

To Prepare:

Copy the printables. Make sure there are plenty of each required color (see printable) crayon, colored pencil, or marker. Preview and queue the song for class.

Say: **Jesus, our Immanuel, came down from heaven to earth to live with us, his people. He is with us now through his Spirit. He has also made a way for us to live with him forever. Let’s complete a color-by-number picture to reveal Jesus, the Promised One.**



Distribute the printables and crayons. Play the song. After several minutes, say: **I’m so thankful that Jesus came to earth and is with us now through his Spirit.**

8 Closing

Advent Prayer

To Prepare:

Make enough copies of the Take-home page for each child.

Set up the four votive candles. Say: **This is the fourth week of Advent, so we light all four candles.** Light each candle.

Let’s close in prayer. I will read to you a prayer for the fourth Sunday of Advent. It is the last verse of the Advent hymn, “Come Thou Long-expected Jesus.” It speaks about Jesus being Immanuel for us now because he is with us through his Spirit. The Spirit of Jesus lives in the hearts of all those who believe. The prayer also speaks of the truth that Jesus has made a way for us to be with him forever. He is, and always will be, our Immanuel, God with us. Let’s bow our heads.

“By thine own eternal Spirit, rule in all our hearts alone;

By thine all-sufficient merit, raise us to thy glorious throne,” Amen. (Charles Wesley)

Children line up to meet their parents. As the children leave, hand out their Take-home pages and remind them to bring home their crafts.





Deer Crossing



Railroad Crossing



Workers



Hospital



Keep Right



Road Splits



No U-turn



School Crosswalk



No Parking



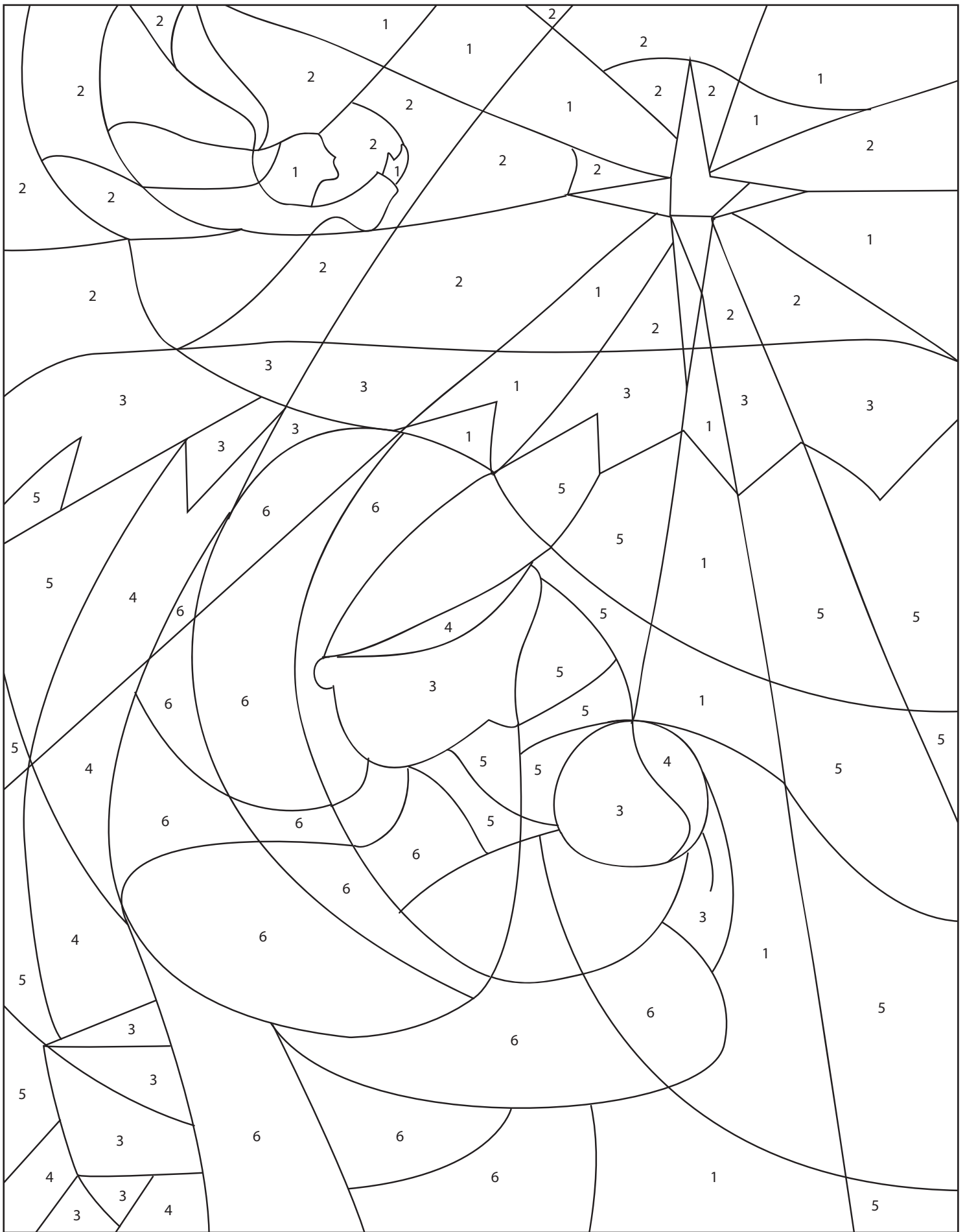
No Left Turn



Pedestrian Crossing



No Hitchhiking



1 = yellow 2 = dark blue 3 = tan
 4 = black 5 = green 6 = purple

WEEK 4

Live It All Week

Upper Elementary Take Home Paper for Families**What Your Child Learned Today**

The word *advent* means coming. In this last week of the Advent season, we remember God's promise fulfilled: Jesus would be born of a virgin, and he would be Immanuel, God with us.

Try This

Make an acrostic poem with the name *Immanuel* or *Jesus*. Write the name vertically down a piece of paper. Then write across, turning each letter into a word or phrases about Jesus. For example, here is one about Advent:

Arrival
Deepening
Very soon
Emmanuel
Nations will gather
Time to get ready

Table Talk

- ▶ **Names have meanings. What are the meanings of the names in your family? (A simple Internet search will tell you.)**
- ▶ **Read Isaiah 7:10–16. Why do you think God told people about Jesus hundreds of years before he was born? (So they would recognize him; to give them hope)**
- ▶ **Jesus, Son of God, came as a baby born on Christmas Day. Do you think people found this surprising? Why or why not?**
- ▶ **Where was Jesus before he came to earth as a baby? (On his heavenly throne) What did he get in place of his throne? (A manger filled with hay) Why would he make such a trade? (Out of love for us)**
- ▶ **Jesus is still our Immanuel. How is he with us now? (Through his Spirit) How will he be Immanuel in the future? (He made a way for us to live with him forever in heaven.)**

Prophecy and Expectation: Immanuel, God with Us

- Scripture: Isaiah 7:10–16
- Big Idea: Isaiah prophesied that a baby would be born of a virgin—this is Jesus, “Immanuel,” which means “God with us.” Jesus made a way for us to be with him forever.
- Memory Verse: “The name Immanuel means ‘God with us.’” Matthew 1:23b

**SOMETHING
ELSE TO DO**

This Advent, learn some traditional carols that have words rich with meaning. Play the carols during dessert, at bedtime, or during family devotions. This week's carol is the traditional Christmas hymn, “God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen.” One of its verses highlights that Jesus fulfills the prophecy in Isaiah 7: “In Bethlehem in Jewry / This blessed babe was born / And laid within a manger / Upon this blessed morn / That which his mother Mary / Did nothing take in scorn / O tidings of comfort and joy.”



Praise the Lord: God Raised Up a King

Psalm 148

Big Idea:

The Lord sent Jesus as a gift, first to the people of Israel, and then to all of us. Let us join all his creation in praise!

Memory Verse:

"[The LORD] has given his people a strong king. All his faithful people praise him for that gift." Psalm 148:14a



Lesson Overview

This Sunday our theme is "Praise the Lord" and our Scripture is Psalm 148. This magnificent psalm calls on everything in the universe to praise the Lord God, maker of heaven and earth. So, what does *everything* include? It includes the sun, moon, and stars. It includes everything in the natural world: clouds, lightning, hail, snow, stormy winds, rain, rivers, lakes, and oceans. It includes forests, fruit trees, shrubs, and every other kind of plant life. It includes sea creatures, fish, wild animals, farm animals, reptiles, and birds. *Everything* also includes every human being on this planet: men and women, elderly and infants, children and young people, rich and powerful, impoverished and poor, in every nation around the globe. And why is everyone on earth to praise the Lord God? For the wonderful, marvelous gift of our King Jesus, the Messiah!



Week 5 Lesson Plan	Activity and Supplies	To Prepare
1 Welcome Activity (5 minutes)	Who Should Praise the Lord? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Video player with Web access • Visit YouTube and search for “Sing Praise (Psalm 148)” by Grow in Love by Veritas. https://vimeo.com/230442395 	Preview and queue the video for class. Mute the volume.
2 Lesson Introduction (10 minutes)	Everything, Everywhere, Praise the Lord <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Video player with Web access • Visit YouTube and search for “Psalm 148 Song–Praise Him” by Jason Silver. https://youtu.be/MFHe4cs-6d8 (End at 3:49.) 	Preview and queue the video for class.
3 Scripture Story (10 minutes)	Praise the Lord <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three 3- x 5-in. index cards • Fine-tip marker • Bibles for the class 	Write each of the following Scripture references on an index card: Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:8; 2 Corinthians 9:15.
4 Discussion (5 minutes)		
5 Memory Verse Activity (5 minutes)	Psalm 148:14a with “Jesus!”	
6 Music (5 minutes)	Psalm 148 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optional: Music player with Web access • Optional: Visit YouTube and search for “Psalm 148 (Highly Exalted) Official Lyric Video” by Sixteen Cities. https://youtu.be/uJQBgEbopOg 	Preview and queue the song for class.
7 Snack (10 minutes)	Christmas Cookies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christmas cookies • Napkins • Paper cups • Pitcher of water 	Gather the supplies.
8 Activity (5 minutes)	Let’s Never Forget! <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Video player with Web access • Visit YouTube and search for “Praise the Lord–Psalms 148:1–5” by Seeds Family Worship. https://youtu.be/fqVZjtVLQHA 	Preview and queue the video for class.
9 Closing (5 minutes)	Review and Prayer Printables: Take-home page (one for each child)	Make enough copies of the Take-home page for each child.



Bible Background for Leader

In Psalm 148:14, the word "king" that appears in the NIV is traditionally translated "horn." In Hebrew, "horn" means strong king. In the Hebrew Scriptures, horn is used both literally and figuratively to refer to royalty and the celebration surrounding it. Literally, horn refers to the horns of an animal (Genesis 22:13) used as musical instruments, including shofars made from the horns of rams (Exodus 19:13; Joshua 6:4; Psalm 81:3). Animal horns also were used as vessels to hold oil for anointing kings (1 Samuel 16:1, 13; 1 Kings 1:39). Additionally, horn-shaped protrusions were included in the design of several altars used as part of the tabernacle (Exodus 27 and Leviticus 4).

Figuratively, horn refers to exalted strength. We see this in the opening and closing verses of Hannah's prayer (1 Samuel 2:1, 10 NIV). Additionally, the psalmists and prophets associated horn both with God's anointed king (Psalm 89:24; 92:10; and 148:14 [all NIV]) and with God's salvation (2 Samuel 22:3; Psalm 18:2 [both NIV]). Both of these thoughts are combined in Zechariah's messianic prophecy about Jesus (Luke 1:69 NIV).

Jesus. As prophesied by John the Baptist's father, Zechariah, Jesus was (and is!) both God's gift of

salvation and God's Anointed One (the Christ, the Messiah, the King). Jesus speaks of himself as God's gift for salvation in John 4:10. The apostle Paul speaks of Jesus as God's gift for salvation in four more Scripture passages, some of which also refer to him as King/Ruler.

First, "Those who receive the rich supply of God's grace will rule with Christ. They will rule in his kingdom. They have received God's gift and have been made right with him. This will happen because of what the one man, Jesus Christ, has done" (Romans 5:17). Second, "God gives you the gift of eternal life. That's because of what Christ Jesus our Lord has done" (Romans 6:23). Third, "Let us give thanks to God for his gift. It is so great that no one can tell how wonderful it really is!" (2 Corinthians 9:15). Fourth, "God's grace has saved you because of your faith in Christ. Your salvation doesn't come from anything you do. It is God's gift" (Ephesians 2:8).

The Church and the World. As stated in Psalm 148:14 and again in 2 Corinthians 9:15, our heartfelt response to Jesus, as God's incredible gift for salvation, is praise and thanksgiving. The more we can encourage children to praise and thank God, the better!



1 Welcome Activity

To Prepare:

Preview and queue the video for class. Mute the volume.

Who Should Praise the Lord?

Say: **Welcome, everyone!** Arrange the class standing in a line or semicircle where the words of the video can be seen easily. Tell everyone to hold hands with the people next to them. Starting at one end of the line, have each person read the words on a slide in the video. Then they will squeeze the hand of the person next to them, who will immediately read the words on the next slide. When you get to the end of the line, go back the other way. Say: **I'll start us out at this end of the line. Everybody holding hands and ready to squeeze? OK, let's go.**

Play the video with the volume muted. Go back and forth through the line as many times as necessary to finish the video (there are approximately 46 slides).

Great job, everyone! Now, please take your seats.

2 Lesson Introduction

To Prepare:

Preview and queue the video for class.

Everything, Everywhere, Praise the Lord

Say: **What surprised you the most as you read the lines in the video?** Let the children respond.

What surprised me is that everywhere in the universe, everything in the universe is doing the same thing. Pause briefly. **To find out what everything, everywhere, is doing, let's listen carefully to the singing of Psalm 148, one of my favorite psalms.**

Play the video. Stop at 3:49.

As you might have guessed, our Scripture today is Psalm 148. As you just saw and heard, Psalm 148 calls on everything, everywhere, to praise the Lord.

Can the sun, moon, and stars really praise the Lord? Let the children respond. **Yes, the Lord has designed them to praise him. And they often inspire us to praise him, as well! When we see the stars on a clear night, we say Wow! That Wow! feeling is designed by the Lord to prompt us to praise him.**

What else in the universe praises the Lord? Let the children respond. **Yes, angels praise the Lord. In fact, it's their most important job.**



Here on earth, what within the natural world praises the Lord? Let the children respond.

Among all the people in the world, who praises the Lord? Let the children respond.

3 Scripture Story

Praise the Lord

To Prepare:

Write each of the following Scripture references on an index card: Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:8; 2 Corinthians 9:15.

Have the class open their Bibles to Psalm 148. Give each of three volunteers an index card with a verse to look up and read aloud when asked.

Say: **Before I have our volunteers read their verses, let's read the last two verses of Psalm 148. In many ways, these are the two most important verses in the entire Psalm. Here's why: these last two verses tell us why everyone, everywhere, should praise the Lord.**

Have a volunteer read Psalm 148:13: "Let them praise the name of the LORD. His name alone is honored. His glory is higher than the earth and the heavens."

Let's never forget that the Lord (extend hands from your mouth outward toward the children) **could merely speak the word—and create the entire universe. At the Lord's command, everything was created. Talk about power and wisdom and beauty and glory! Nothing in the universe can say** (use mocking voice), **"Oh, the Lord didn't make me." Of course he did. The Lord made everything, everywhere, in the universe.**

Now, have a volunteer read Psalm 148:14: "He has given his people a strong king. All his faithful people praise him for that gift. All the people of Israel are close to his heart. Praise the LORD."

This verse speaks of a gift. Who is that gift? Who is that strong king above all **kings? Yes, it's Jesus. Ultimately, the reason that everyone, everywhere, should praise the Lord God is because he gave us the gift of Jesus.**

Besides the Psalms, many other books of the Bible talk about this wonderful gift of Jesus.

John the Baptist's father was named Zechariah. Zechariah said in the Gospel of Luke that Jesus is God's gift of salvation—and the Savior of the world (Luke 1:69).

Then in the Gospel of John, Jesus spoke of himself as God's gift of salvation—and the Savior of the world (John 4:10).



Later in the New Testament, the apostle Paul wrote about Jesus as God's gift of salvation in other Scripture passages.

In Romans 5:17, Paul wrote: **"Those who receive the rich supply of God's grace . . . have received God's gift . . . Jesus Christ."** What does that verse tell us? It talks about how God's grace is part of his gift to us in Jesus Christ.

Here's where I need my volunteers to read a few other passages that Paul wrote.

Have the volunteer read Romans 6:23: "When you sin, the pay you get is death. But God gives you the gift of eternal life. That's because of what Christ Jesus our Lord has done."

What does this verse tell us? It tells us that eternal life is part of God's gift to us in Jesus Christ.

Have the volunteer read Ephesians 2:8: "God's grace has saved you because of your faith in Christ. Your salvation doesn't come from anything you do. It is God's gift."

What does this verse tell us? It tells us that faith is part of God's gift to us in Jesus Christ.

Have the volunteer read 2 Corinthians 9:15: "Let us give thanks to God for his gift. It is so great that no one can tell how wonderful it really is!"

What does this verse tell us? It tells us that God's gift to us in Jesus Christ is wonderful, incredible, and thrilling beyond words.

Thanks again, volunteers. So, everyone, what is our best heartfelt response to the Lord God? Let the children respond. **Yes, our best response is praise and thanksgiving for God's gift to us in Jesus. The more we praise and thank the Lord God for Jesus, the better!**

Great job listening and participating! Now, I have a few more questions for you.

4 Story Discussion

- ▶ **Who is supposed to praise the Lord?** (Everything)
- ▶ **Where is everything supposed to praise the Lord?** (Everywhere)
- ▶ **We are supposed to praise the Lord especially for what?** (For God's gift to us in Jesus)



- ▶ **Is there anything in the universe that can say** (use mocking voice), **"Oh, the Lord didn't make me"?** (No.)
- ▶ **The Bible says that everyone, everywhere has sinned. Does that make God's gift to us in Jesus more important or less important?** (More important!)
- ▶ **What is our best heartfelt response to the Lord today?** (Praise and thanksgiving)

5 Memory Verse Activity

Psalm 148:14a with "Jesus!"

"[The LORD] has given his people a strong king. All his faithful people praise him for that gift." Psalm 148:14a

Today's memory verse is, "[The LORD] has given his people a strong king. All his faithful people praise him for that gift" (Psalm 148:14a).

Based on our story, who is the strong king that God gave his people?
(Jesus) **Yes, Jesus! Let's add Jesus's name to this verse so that we can remember who it is talking about!**

Let's form a circle making sure it is nice and round. Now, let's recite our verse together. Repeat after me:

"[The LORD] . . .	Children repeat.
has given his people . . .	Children repeat.
a strong king [Jesus].	Children repeat.
All his faithful people . . .	Children repeat.
praise him for that gift."	Children repeat.
Psalm 148:14a	Children repeat.

Let's try that again, this time raising our arms up high and shouting "Jesus!" Repeat after me. Say each phrase, this time with special emphasis on "Jesus!" Repeat as time allows, then have the children return to their seats.

6 Music

Psalm 148

Play the song. Encourage the children to sing along.

To Prepare:

Preview and queue the song for class.



To Prepare:
Gather the supplies.

7 snack

Christmas Cookies

Distribute the snack and enjoy.

8 Activity

Let's Never Forget!

To Prepare:
Preview and queue the video for class.

Say: **Our last activity of the day is called, "Let's Never Forget!"** Have the class stand up and form a line or semicircle as they did for today's Welcome activity. Again, make sure that everyone has a good view of the lyrics on the video.

Say: **Everyone hold hands. This time, everyone is going to say the same thing. That one thing is the word, "Yeah!" Let's all say it together: "Yeah!" OK, that was pretty weak. I need you to yell it out, "Yeah!" Let's all say it together again: "Yeah!" That's much better. This time, I also need everyone to jump up and down. Not huge jumps. Just small jumps so we can keep holding hands. Let's practice. (Jump) Now, let's practice three jumps in a row. (Jump, jump, jump) In this activity, we're going to jump; but when the singers shout, "Yeah," we'll shout along with them.**

Play the video (with the sound level set a bit higher this time around).

8 closing

Review and Prayer

Say: **Today's theme was "Praise the Lord" and our Scripture was Psalm 148. This magnificent psalm calls on everything in the universe to praise the Lord God, maker of heaven and earth. So, what does everything, everywhere, include? It includes the sun, moon, and stars. It includes everything in the natural world. It includes clouds, rain, rivers, lakes, and oceans. It also includes forests, fruit trees, shrubs, and every other kind of plant life. It also includes fish, wild animals, farm animals, reptiles, birds, and bugs. What's more, everything includes every human being on this planet. And why is everyone on earth to praise the Lord God? For his wonderful, marvelous gift of Jesus Christ.**

The more we thank and praise the Lord, the better. So, let's all stand to pray: Dear Lord God, We praise your great and marvelous name. Thank you

To Prepare:
Make enough copies of the Take-home page for each child.





so much, God our Father, for giving us the gift of your Son, Jesus. Thank you, Father, for giving us everything else we could possibly want through the gift of your Son, Jesus. You have given us the gift of faith. You have forgiven our sins. You have given us new, eternal life. You have adopted us into your family forever. Help us never forget to praise and thank you every day of our lives. Amen.

Children line up to meet their parents. As the children leave, hand out their Take-home pages.

WEEK 5

Live It All Week

Upper Elementary Take Home Paper for Families**What Your Child Learned Today**

This week's theme was "Praise the Lord." Our Scripture, Psalm 148, is a magnificent psalm that calls on everything in the universe to praise the Lord God, maker of heaven and earth. That includes the sun, moon, and stars. It includes clouds, lightning, hail, snow, stormy winds, rain, rivers, lakes, and oceans. It includes forests, fruit trees, shrubs, and every other kind of plant life. It includes sea creatures, fish, wild animals, farm animals, reptiles, and birds. Everything also includes every human being on this planet: young and old, rich and poor, in every nation around the globe. And why is everyone on earth to praise the Lord God? For the wonderful, marvelous gift of the "strong king" he has given us—Jesus, the Messiah!

Try This

Discuss the following questions:

1. What has the Lord God created to praise him? (Everything, everywhere)
2. What has the Lord God created each of us to do? (Praise him—in many ways—all of our lives)
3. What is the most important thing we can do each day? (Praise the Lord!)
4. What would you like to praise God for today?

Praise the Lord: God Raised Up a King

- Scripture: Psalm 148
- Big Idea: The Lord sent Jesus as a gift, first to the people of Israel, and then to all of us. Let us join all his creation in praise!
- Memory Verse: "[The LORD] has given his people a strong king. All his faithful people praise him for that gift." Psalm 148:14a

**SOMETHING
ELSE TO DO**

Visit YouTube and search for "What a Beautiful Name" by Hillsong Worship. https://youtu.be/CUBBlddm_rM Listen and praise God for the wonderful gift of Jesus.

Table Talk

Read and discuss the following verses and questions:

- Read Romans 6:23. What is God's gift to us?
- Read 2 Corinthians 9:15. How great is God's gift to us?
- Read Ephesians 2:8. How do we receive God's wonderful gift to us?



Praise the LORD for His Divine Plan

Psalm 147:12–20

Big Idea:

Israel is unique among the nations because God gave them the gift of his law. Jesus, God's greatest gift, strengthens, blesses, and satisfies his people.

Memory Verse:

"Praise the LORD. How good it is to sing praises to our God! How pleasant and right it is to praise him!" Psalm 147:1



Lesson Overview

This week we learn that the Ten Commandments are a gift from God. Each commandment is designed to protect us against heartache and loss. They are fashioned to help us enjoy God's blessings in our lives, rather than turn against them. God invites us to come walk in the truth of his Word—to confess our sins and experience his forgiveness, mercy, and grace. That's what the good news of the gospel is all about. Jesus Christ alone gives us everything we need to lead godly lives (1 Peter 2:24; 2 Peter 1:3). Everything we desire, want, and need is found in the Lord alone. His divine plan is the only plan that truly strengthens, blesses, and satisfies us, now and forever.



Week 6 Lesson Plan	Activity and Supplies	To Prepare
1 Welcome Activity (5 minutes)	Naming God's Gifts	
2 Lesson Introduction (10 minutes)	God's Special Ten Gifts to His People <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Video player with Web access• Visit YouTube and search for "Ten Commandments for Kids" by Rajamanickam Antonimuthu. https://youtu.be/Bmz1xaVKM-4	Preview and queue the video for class. Mute the sound.
3 Scripture Story (10 minutes)	Praise the Lord for His Divine Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bibles for the class	
4 Discussion (5 minutes)		
5 Memory Verse Activity (5 minutes)	Psalms 147:1 Stepping Forward	
6 Music (5 minutes)	Praise the Lord <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Optional: Music player with Web access• Optional: Visit YouTube and search for <i>Million Reasons Shipwrecked VBS Group Publishing</i> by Lifetree Kids. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ox1WEI84LSg	Preview and queue the song for class.
7 Snack (10 minutes)	Crispy Rice Treats <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Crispy rice treats (store-bought or homemade)• Napkins• Paper cups• Pitcher of water	Gather the supplies.
8 Activity (5 minutes)	Mystery Gift Guessing Game <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Five-dollar gift card• Bubble wrap• Box• Coins• Timer	Wrap the gift card in bubble wrap and set it inside the box. Toss in loose coins.
9 Closing (5 minutes)	Review and Prayer Printables: Take-home page (one for each child)	Make enough copies of the Take-home page for each child.



Bible Background for Leader

People often view the Ten Commandments as God's idealistic yet impossible demands for his people of long, long ago. Today, we prefer to do things our way—to make our own choices and set our own rules. We don't want to submit to rules of long ago. But, what if these rules are a pathway of blessing?

The Ten Commandments are designed to protect us against heartache and loss. Consider their wisdom. Should you invest tens of thousands of dollars worshipping false gods? Work long hours seven days a week to get ahead? Take a former neighbor to court on false charges and commit perjury? Commit adultery or murder? Each of these will result in pain in your life and the lives of others.

Jesus. The good news is that if you love God and confess your sins to him, he will forgive you, always. The apostle Peter understood this well.

In the course of a single evening, Peter denied Jesus Christ three times: first to a servant, then in front of a couple of the servant's friends, then before an entire group of bystanders. Yet, after the

Lord's resurrection, Jesus made a point of repeatedly reassuring Peter that he still had great things in store for him, and the same is true for us.

Later in life, Peter was quick to remind his fellow believers that Jesus Christ "'carried our sins' in his body on the cross. He did it so that we would die as far as sins are concerned. Then we would lead godly lives. 'His wounds have healed you'" (1 Peter 2:24 and Isaiah 53:5).

The Church and the World. After nearly 3,500 years, God's Ten Commandments are more relevant than ever. Each one continues to offer God's rich blessings. May we never tire of appreciating what the Lord truly means for our good. And, like Peter (and the other apostles and followers of Jesus), let's rejoice in the Lord's marvelous, amazing mercy and grace—through his greatest gift, Jesus. He alone truly strengthens, blesses, and satisfies us. He alone gives us everything we need to lead godly lives (1 Peter 2:24 and 2 Peter 1:3). Everything we desire, want, and need is found in the Lord, and in the Lord alone.



1 Welcome Activity

Naming God's Gifts

Announce the name of the activity: "Naming God's Gifts." Ask the children to take a moment to consider God's many gifts to his people. Then, encourage them to raise their hands and share some of those gifts with the class. Affirm all answers—especially those pertaining to Jesus, the Spirit, and the Bible.

2 Lesson Introduction

To Prepare:

Preview and queue the video for class. Mute the sound.

God's Special Ten Gifts to His People

Say: **Great job naming God's gifts. It was great to hear you give thanks for Jesus, his Spirit, and the Bible. It also was great to hear you say (name two or three more answers).**

I noticed that no one named (hold up 10 fingers) **any of God's "Special Ten" gifts to his people. Any guesses** (raise hand in air) **what those might be?** Let the children respond.

I might just have to show you. (If a child guesses the "Ten Commandments," say instead: **Great job!**) **Listen as I name the "Special Ten" gifts, one by one.**

Play the video with muted sound. Instead of reading the words on the video, read aloud this condensed version of the actual Ten Commandments:

1. Do not worship any other gods.
2. Do not make any idols.
3. Do not misuse the Lord's name.
4. Keep the Sabbath holy.
5. Honor your father and mother.
6. Do not murder.
7. Do not commit adultery.
8. Do not steal.
9. Do not lie.
10. Do not covet.

Now, why would I call the Ten Commandments some of God's special gifts to his people? Aren't they just a list of rules? No, actually, they are much more important than that. The Ten Commandments are God's boundaries—God's fences—of blessing. That means the Ten Commandments are



designed to protect us from harm and heartache. They are designed to help us enjoy God's rich blessings in our lives.

Now, shout out "Good idea!" or "Bad idea!" when I call out a few ideas. First, what do you think of us spending thousands of dollars to worship false gods? (Bad idea!) Yes, bad idea. How about working long hours seven days a week to get ahead? (Bad idea!) Yep, another bad idea. How about taking a former neighbor to court and telling lies to the judge and jury? (Bad idea!) You are right. That's a super bad idea. Those are all bad ideas.

Sadly, we're often tempted to follow bad ideas. We like to make our own rules to suit our own ways. Thankfully, God is gracious. As we confess our sin to him, he offers us forgiveness. He reminds us that his plan is the only one that strengthens, blesses, and satisfies us now and forever. He gives us strength to lead godly lives (1 Peter 2:24; 2 Peter 1:3).

Again, the Ten Commandments are God's fences of blessing. Each of the Ten Commandments protects us from harm and heartache. If we accept God's blessings through these commandments, we enjoy his blessings in our lives. So . . . is following the Ten Commandments a good or bad idea? (Good idea!) In fact, it's a great idea!

With this in mind, let's listen to today's Scripture Story.

3 Scripture Story

Praise the Lord for His Divine Plan

Open your Bible to Psalm 147:12–20. Say: The first part of today's Scripture Story comes from Psalm 147. The book of Psalms is in the middle of the Bible. Let's all turn there so we can read Psalm 147 together.

Recruit a volunteer to read verses 12 and 13: "Jerusalem, praise the Lord. Zion, praise your God. He makes the metal bars of your gates stronger. He blesses the people who live inside you."

Say: These two verses talk about how the Lord physically protects his people living in Jerusalem, the City of David.

Recruit a volunteer to read verses 14 to 18: "He keeps your borders safe and secure. He satisfies you with the finest wheat. He sends his command to the earth. His word arrives there quickly. He spreads the snow like wool. He scatters the frost like ashes. He throws down his hail like pebbles. No one can stand his icy blast. He gives his command, and the ice melts. He stirs up his winds, and the waters flow."



Say: These verses talk about how the Lord commands the weather throughout the seasons—summer warmth, harvest time, cold winter, and spring rains.

Recruit a volunteer to read verses 19 and 20: "He has made his word known to the people of Jacob. He has made his laws and rules known to Israel. He hasn't done that for any other nation. They don't know his laws. Praise the Lord."

Say: These last two verses talk about how the Lord blesses and protects his people when they live by his commandments.

We only have one problem! What percentage of people have disobeyed God's Ten Commandments? Let the children respond. **Yes, 100%—everyone. That leads us to the second part of today's Scripture Story.**

The second part of today's Scripture Story tells us about God's best gift to his people.

Think about it. Many of you have heard the phrase: "Three strikes and you're out." That comes from baseball. Thankfully, God's kingdom operates on an entirely different basis. That's what the good news of Jesus Christ is all about. You can never let God down one too many times. Each time, you can own up to your sins, confess them, and ask for God's forgiveness. And each and every time, God forgives you! Why? Because of God's number one, best gift to his people. Who is God's best gift? Let the children respond. **Yes, God's number one best gift is Jesus Christ and the good news of forgiveness we have in him.**

The apostle Peter is one person who understood God's forgiveness, mercy, and grace through Jesus. In the course of a single evening, Peter denied Jesus three times: first to a woman, then to her and a couple of her friends, and then before an entire group of bystanders. Yet after his resurrection, Jesus made a point of repeatedly reassuring Peter that he still had great things in store for this very human, less-than-perfect disciple.

Later in life, Peter was quick to remind his fellow believers that Jesus Christ "'carried our sins' in his body on the cross. He did it so that we would die as far as sins are concerned. Then we would lead godly lives. 'His wounds have healed you'" (1 Peter 2:24; Isaiah 53:5).

I'm so thankful for God's divine plan down through the ages. After nearly 3,500 years, God's Ten Commandments are more relevant than ever. Each and every one continues to offer God's rich blessings.



After more than 2,500 years, Psalm 147 is still true: “How good it is to sing praises to our God” (Psalm 147:1). May we never tire of enjoying what the Lord truly means for our good.

Like Peter did nearly 2,000 years ago, let’s rejoice in Jesus Christ. He offers us God’s forgiveness, mercy, and grace.

Jesus Christ alone truly strengthens, blesses, and satisfies us. He alone provides everything we need to “lead godly lives” (1 Peter 2:24; 2 Peter 1:3). Everything we truly desire, want, and need is found in the Lord alone. Why would we look anywhere else?

4 story discussion

- ▶ **What are God’s “Special Ten” gifts to his people?** (The Ten Commandments)
- ▶ **The Ten Commandments are God’s fences of what?** (Blessing and protection)
- ▶ **True or False: The last two verses of Psalm 147 talk about how the Lord blesses and protects his people when they live by his commandments.** (True)
- ▶ **What is God’s number one best gift to his people?** (Jesus Christ and his good news, which offers us forgiveness, mercy, and grace)
- ▶ **What did Jesus Christ do to make his good news a reality?** (Jesus died for our sins, was buried, and rose again from the dead on the third day.)
- ▶ **Which apostle of Jesus denied him three times, yet was still was forgiven by God?** (The apostle Peter)
- ▶ **Everything we desire, want, and need is found where?** (In the Lord alone)
- ▶ **Why would someone look anywhere else for what they desire, want, and need?** (We’re all tempted to go our own way and seek our own happiness. But the deepest blessings in life are found in Jesus.)



5 Memory Verse Activity

Psalm 147:1 Stepping Forward

"Praise the LORD. How good it is to sing praises to our God! How pleasant and right it is to praise him!" Psalm 147:1

Our memory verse today is, "Praise the LORD. How good it is to sing praises to our God! How pleasant and right it is to praise him!" (Psalm 147:1). Let's all stand up to say it out loud. Repeat after me:

"Praise the LORD.	Children repeat.
How good it is . . .	Children repeat.
to sing praises . . .	Children repeat.
to our God!	Children repeat.
How pleasant and right . . .	Children repeat.
It is to praise him!"	Children repeat.
Psalm 147:1	Children repeat.

Let's try that again, this time taking a step forward each time we finish saying a phrase. Repeat after me. Have the children return to their original places and then repeat the verse, stepping forward, as time allows. Have the children return to their seats.

6 Music

Praise the Lord

Play the song. Encourage the children to sing along.

7 Snack

Crispy Rice Treats

Distribute the snack and enjoy.

To Prepare:

Preview and queue the song for class.

To Prepare:

Gather the supplies.



8 Activity

To Prepare:

Wrap the gift card in bubble wrap and set it inside the box. Toss in loose coins.

Mystery Gift Guessing Game

Assemble the children in a circle. Announce the name of the activity: "Mystery Gift Guessing Game." Display the stopwatch. Then hold up the mystery gift. Explain that each child gets to guess what is in the box. They can each take twenty seconds to feel, shake, and smell the package and make their guess. Then they have to quickly hand it to the person on their right. The mystery gift keeps moving around the circle until someone correctly guesses what the mystery gift is (and gets to take it home)—or until time is up in four quick minutes. Afterward, say: **This mystery gift is worth five dollars. Reveal the gift. That's not bad, is it? Don't you think it's going to make (name of child) happy for the rest of their life? Pause. No? You're right! That's what today has been all about. Only God's gifts to us can make us happy for the rest of our lives. In fact, they will bring us joy for all eternity!**

9 Closing

To Prepare:

Make enough copies of the Take-home page for each child.



Review and Prayer

Say: **Today we learned that God's gifts to his people include the Ten Commandments, which are God's fences of blessing. Each commandment protects us from harm and heartache. They help us to enjoy God's blessings. Sadly, we're often tempted to make our own rules and follow our own ways. Thankfully, God is gracious. As we confess our sin to him, he offers us forgiveness. He reminds us that his plan is the only one that strengthens, blesses, and satisfies us now and forever. He gives us strength to lead godly lives (1 Peter 2:24; 2 Peter 1:3). Everything we truly desire, want, and need is found in the Lord alone.**

Let's stand and pray: Dear Lord, Thank you for your wonderful gifts to your people. Remind us that your divine plan is the only plan that strengthens, blesses, and satisfies us, now and forever. Thank you for the Ten Commandments. Thank you so much for the good news of Jesus Christ, for the Holy Spirit, and for the Holy Scriptures. We are blessed, indeed. Amen.

Children line up to meet their parents. As the children leave, hand out their Take-home pages.

WEEK 6

Live It All Week

Upper Elementary Take Home Paper for Families**What Your Child Learned Today**

This week we learned that God's gifts to his people include the Ten Commandments. Each commandment is like a fence of protection. Following the Ten Commandments will help us enjoy God's rich blessings in our lives. Rather than ignore God's rules or try to make up our own, God invites us to confess our sins and experience his forgiveness, mercy, and grace. That's what the good news of the gospel is all about. Jesus Christ alone gives us everything we need to lead godly lives (1 Peter 2:24; 2 Peter 1:3). Everything we desire, want, and need is found in the Lord alone. His divine plan is the only plan that strengthens, blesses, and satisfies us, now and forever.

Try This

As a family, create a list of ten words to compose a song of praise to God. Then, use the word list to create lyrics and music that you can perform together as a family. Have fun!

Table Talk

As a family, read aloud and discuss the following passages:

- ▶ **Psalm 147:19–20.** According to these verses, the Lord blesses and protects his people when they live by what? (God's commands)
- ▶ **1 Peter 2:24–25.** According to these two verses, Jesus is both our Savior and . . . (another word that begins with an S). (Shepherd)
- ▶ **Read 2 Peter 1:3.** God's power has given us everything we need to live what kind of lives? The answer starts with the letter G. (Godly lives)

Praise the Lord for His Divine Plan

- Scripture: Psalm 147:12–20
- Big Idea: Israel is unique among the nations because God gave them the gift of his law. God's greatest gift, Jesus, strengthens, blesses, and satisfies his people.
- Memory Verse: "Praise the LORD. How good it is to sing praises to our God! How pleasant and right it is to praise him!" Psalm 147:1

**SOMETHING
ELSE TO DO**

Visit YouTube and search for "My Number One" by Hillsong Kids. <https://youtu.be/c596aespKWQ> Have each person share a reason why they're thankful to seek God's ways and walk in his blessings.



Baptism of Jesus

Matthew 3:13–17

Big Idea:

At Jesus's baptism, God the Father spoke aloud that Jesus is his Son, and the Holy Spirit descended upon him as a dove—the first clear picture of the Trinity.

Memory Verse:

"A voice from heaven said, 'This is my Son, and I love him. I am very pleased with him.'" Matthew 3:17



Lesson Overview

The Bible offers many different names for Jesus. John the Baptist's favorite was the Lamb of God. After witnessing two incredible signs at Jesus's baptism, John knew that Jesus was the true Lamb of God. The first sign was when God the Father spoke from heaven. The second was when the Holy Spirit descended on Jesus in the form of a dove. These events displayed the New Testament's first clear picture of the Trinity—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit—acting in harmony. Together, they conveyed a clear and important message: Jesus is the Lamb of God who "takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). The apostle John later describes the exalted Jesus: "The Lamb . . . is worthy to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength! He is worthy to receive honor and glory and praise!" (Revelation 5:12). Jesus, the Lamb, is worthy, indeed!



Week 7 Lesson Plan	Activity and Supplies	To Prepare
1 Welcome Activity (5 minutes)	Names of Jesus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whiteboard and dry-erase marker • Video player with Web access • Visit YouTube and search for “Names of Jesus” by David C Cook. https://youtu.be/5wVvAt7ToV8 	Preview and queue the video for class.
2 Lesson Introduction (5 minutes)	John the Baptist Points to Jesus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Video player with Web access • Visit YouTube and search for “The Gospel–John 1:35–42 (Second Sunday in Ordinary Time)” by CCTNtv. https://youtu.be/9Ch61QGfbMw?t=16 (Begin at 0:16. End at 1:09.) 	Preview and queue the video for class.
3 Scripture Story (15 minutes)	Jesus Is Baptized <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Video player with Web access • Visit YouTube and search for “The Miracle Maker–Jesus Baptism” by Reveal. https://youtu.be/JZ5jm5lx5bY 	Preview and queue the video for class.
4 Discussion (5 minutes)		
5 Memory Verse Activity (5 minutes)	Matthew 3:17 with Cupped Hands	
6 Music (5 minutes)	Lamb of God <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optional: Music player with Web access • Optional: Visit YouTube and search for “Laura Story–Behold The Lamb Of God (feat. Brandon Heath) (Lyrics)” by Laura Story. https://youtu.be/asXZqzgi7Y0 	Preview and queue the song for class.
7 Snack (10 minutes)	Pretzel Doves <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pretzel sticks (two for each child) • Mini marshmallows (three for each child) • Napkins • Paper cups • Pitcher of water 	Gather the supplies.
8 Activity (5 minutes)	Say That Verse! <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dove chocolate candies 	
9 Closing (5 minutes)	Review and Prayer Printables: Take-home page (one for each child)	Make enough copies of the Take-home page for each child.



Bible Background for Leader

The Hebrew Scriptures speak repeatedly of ceremonial washings. In later centuries, the idea of baptism was associated with some of these water rituals, particularly those related to Gentile proselytes converting to Judaism. Against this backdrop, the Messiah's forerunner, John the Baptist, introduces a particular water ritual signifying repentance. John's announcement of the coming kingdom and Messiah fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah 40:3–5.

John spoke to crowds gathered along the Jordan River. The crowds were filled with people from throughout Judea. John urged everyone to confess their sins, turn back to God, receive forgiveness, and be baptized.

Jesus. All four Gospels offer accounts of John the Baptist baptizing Jesus. Matthew 3:13–17 is the longest account. The prelude, verses 1–12, gives us a thorough introduction to John, his prophetic role (quoting Isaiah 40:3), his eccentric appearance, the crowds who gathered to hear him, and a sampling of his fiery preaching in anticipation of the Messiah. The account itself tells us that Jesus came to be baptized by John. John objected, but Jesus insisted because of the need to follow God's holy plan. As soon as Jesus came out of the water, the Holy Spirit descended on him and God the Father spoke from heaven, saying, "This is my Son, and I love him. I am very pleased with him" (Matthew 3:17). This is the New Testament's first clear picture of the Trinity—conveying a clear message about Jesus as the Christ, the promised Messiah.

Mark 1:9–11 is the third longest account. The prelude, Mark 1:1–8, includes a quotation from Malachi 3:1. Luke 3:21–22 is the shortest account. The prelude, Luke 3:1–18, is much longer and more detailed about the historical setting, John's prophetic role (quoting all of Isaiah 40:3–5), and multiple samplings of his fiery preaching, which included dialogue with tax-collectors and soldiers. Luke then jumps ahead and tells us about John's imprisonment (Luke 3:19–20) before offering a short account of Jesus's baptism. Like Matthew and Mark, Luke clearly portrays the Trinity acting in harmony.

John 1:31–34 is the second longest account. John offers a lengthy prelude (John 1:19–30), as well as an even longer postlude (John 3:22–36). Both feature John the Baptist's direct words of testimony about Jesus as the promised Messiah, "The Lamb of God!" (John 1:29, 36). The account itself focuses on John the Baptist's testimony about the Holy Spirit descending on Jesus, "God's Chosen One" (John 1:34).

The Church and the World. Immediately after testifying that Jesus is "God's Chosen One" (John 1:34), John the Baptist urges two of his disciples to follow Jesus (John 1:35–37). They spend the rest of that day with Jesus (John 1:38–39). One of them, Andrew, becomes a disciple and then introduces his brother, Peter, to Jesus (John 1:40–42). Like Andrew and Peter, we should also spend time listening to Jesus and sharing what we learn with others.



1 Welcome Activity

To Prepare:

Preview and queue the video for class.

Names of Jesus

Announce the name of the activity: "Names of Jesus." Say: **To get us started, we're going to watch a two-minute video. It will reveal seventeen names of Jesus. And, yes, there will be a quick memory quiz right after, so pay close attention! To help us remember the names, let's all say each one aloud in unison as we watch.**

Play the video. Say each name of Jesus aloud in unison with the children.

Again, we just heard seventeen names of Jesus. How many can you recall? Do you think you can recall at least eight or nine? Let the children respond.

Write the names on the whiteboard as the children recall them. Check off the names below. Provide assistance as needed.

1. Branch from the Stump of Jesse
2. (The) Christ
3. Everlasting Father
4. Good Shepherd
5. Immanuel
6. Jesus
7. King of the Jews
8. Light
9. Lord
10. Messiah
11. Mighty God
12. Prince of Peace
13. Son of David
14. Son of Man
15. Son of God
16. Ruler
17. Wonderful Counselor



2

Lesson Introduction

To Prepare:

Preview and queue the video for class.

John the Baptist Points to Jesus

Say: **Did anything surprise you about Jesus's names?** Let the children respond. **I was surprised at how *many* names Jesus has! And guess what? There are more! Now we're going to watch a video that tells us five *more* of Jesus's names!**

We've already seen the names *Messiah* and *Christ* in the first video. In this brief video clip, John the Baptist urges two of his disciples to follow Jesus (John 1:35–37). They spend the rest of that day with Jesus (vv. 38–39). One of them, Andrew, becomes a disciple of Jesus and then introduces his brother, Peter, to Jesus (vv. 40–42). Like Andrew and Peter, we do well to spend time with Jesus—and listen to him!

Play the video. (Begin the video at 0:16 and stop it at 1:09.)

Now let's think back to when Jesus's name was foreshadowed in the Old Testament, 600 years before his birth. The prophet Isaiah spoke of Jesus as a Lamb led to slaughter for the sins of the people (Isaiah 53:7–8). Hence, Jesus's name *Lamb of God*. It was John the Baptist's favorite name for Jesus. It was a favorite of the apostles, as well.

John the Baptist said that Jesus was the Lamb of God who "*takes away the sin of the world!*" (John 1:29).

The apostle Paul said, "*Christ, our Passover Lamb, has been offered up for us*" (1 Corinthians 5:7b).

The apostle Peter said that we Christians "*were bought with the priceless blood of Christ. He is a perfect lamb. He doesn't have any flaws at all*" (1 Peter 1:19).

The apostle John described a scene in heaven where Jesus is worshiped with a new song. In part, that song says: "*The Lamb . . . is worthy to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength! He is worthy to receive honor and glory and praise!*" (Revelation 5:12).

So, how did John the Baptist know that Jesus was the Lamb of God? Thankfully, he tells us the whole story.



3 Scripture Story

To Prepare:

Preview and queue the video for class.

Jesus Is Baptized

Open your Bible to Matthew 3:13–17. Say: **The story takes place in the Jordan River, and we'll watch a two-minute video clip from the stop-motion movie, *The Miracle Maker*.**

Play the video.

Say: **In the first part, we saw John the Baptist preaching and teaching. In particular, John the Baptist urged everyone to confess their sins, turn back to God, receive forgiveness, and be baptized. He urged them to be baptized before the coming of Jesus, the Christ, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.**

In the second part, we saw John the Baptist baptizing people in the Jordan River. This was a step of faith taken by people before Jesus Christ died on the cross.

In the third part, we saw how John the Baptist reacted when Jesus came to be baptized. Did John feel worthy to baptize Jesus? No, just the opposite; John was humbled and said that Jesus needed to baptize him instead. Do you recall what Jesus said in reply? Let the children respond. Jesus said God the Father wanted John to baptize him—and so, he did.

In the video, what happened next? Let the children respond. Yes, God the Father spoke from heaven, but that's not all. All four gospels tell about John baptizing Jesus and what happened next. Our movie clip stopped right before this part of the story.

As soon as Jesus came out of the water, two things happened. First, God the Father spoke from heaven and said, "This is my Son, and I love him. I am very pleased with him" (Matthew 3:17). Second, the Holy Spirit descended on Jesus in the form of a dove.

This is the New Testament's first clear picture of the Trinity—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit—all acting together. They acted in harmony to convey a very clear and important message: Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah, the Son of God, and the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

As we saw earlier, there are many other names and titles of Jesus that we could mention, but I want to go back and read today's Scripture story from



Matthew 3:13–17. Please listen carefully as I read these five verses:

Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan River. He wanted to be baptized by John. But John tried to stop him. So he told Jesus, “I need to be baptized by you. So why do you come to me?”

Jesus replied, “Let it be this way for now. It is right for us to do this. It carries out God’s holy plan.” Then John agreed.

As soon as Jesus was baptized, he came up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened. Jesus saw the Spirit of God coming down on him like a dove. A voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, and I love him. I am very pleased with him.”

Now, I have a few more questions for you.

4 story discussion

- ▶ **How many names of Jesus are there in the Bible?** (There are dozens!)
- ▶ **What was John the Baptist’s favorite name for Jesus?** (Lamb of God)
- ▶ **In the New Testament, who else called Jesus the Lamb of God besides John the Baptist?** (The apostles Paul, Peter, and John)
- ▶ **Do you remember God the Father’s favorite name for Jesus?** (My Son)
- ▶ **What else did God the Father say about Jesus?** (“I love him. I am very pleased with him” [Matthew 3:17]. This is today’s memory verse.)
- ▶ **When Jesus came out of the water, the Holy Spirit didn’t say anything. Instead, what did the Holy Spirit do?** (He descended on Jesus in the form of a dove.)
- ▶ **True or false: The baptism of Jesus is the New Testament’s first clear picture of the Trinity.** (True)
- ▶ **What are some of the other names of Jesus we’ve talked about today?** (Christ, Messiah, etc.)
- ▶ **Are there any names of Jesus that don’t make sense to you?** (Answers will vary.)
- ▶ **Is there any name of Jesus that’s a favorite of yours?** (Answers will vary.)



5 Memory Verse Activity

Matthew 3:17 with Cupped Hands

"A voice from heaven said, 'This is my Son, and I love him. I am very pleased with him.'"
Matthew 3:17

Say: **Our memory verse today is Matthew 3:17: "A voice from heaven said, 'This is my Son, and I love him. I am very pleased with him.'" Let's all stand up to say it out loud. Repeat after me:**

"A voice from heaven said . . .	Children repeat.
'This is my Son . . .	Children repeat.
and I love him.	Children repeat.
I am very pleased . . .	Children repeat.
with him."	Children repeat.
Matthew 3:17	Children repeat.

Let's try that again, this time with cupped hands. Repeat after me. Say each phrase, this time with cupped hands and a mock deep voice. Repeat as time allows. Have the children return to their seats.

6 Music

Lamb of God

Play the song. Encourage the children to sing along.

To Prepare:

Preview and queue the song for class.

7 Snack

Pretzel Doves

Distribute the snack. Remind the children that the Holy Spirit came upon Jesus as a dove. Encourage them to make a dove by using the marshmallows as the dove's body and the pretzel sticks as its wings. Enjoy!

To Prepare:

Gather the supplies.

8 Activity

Say That Verse!

Announce the name of the activity: "Say That Verse!" Have the children stand. Say: **We heard today that at Jesus's baptism, God the Father confirmed that Jesus is his Son and told the world to listen to him. So, I have some Dove**



chocolate candies to share after I ask two challenge questions. If you know either answer, raise your hand. But don't say the answer until I call on you.

The first challenge question is: Without looking, who can recite today's memory verse? Raise your own hand in the air to encourage volunteers. Recruit a volunteer and provide assistance as needed. If they need little or no coaching, reward them with a Dove chocolate. Then recruit several more volunteers. The more children who can recite today's memory verse, the better!

The second challenge question I have for you is: Without looking, who can tell me the reference for today's memory verse? Raise your hand to encourage volunteers. Recruit a volunteer. If necessary, recruit another volunteer. Reward the first child who says the right answer. **Yes, Matthew 3:17.**

Allow each child an opportunity, so that by the end of the activity, each child has received a chocolate.

9 Closing

Review and Prayer

Say: **Today we learned that Scripture lists dozens of names and titles for Jesus. We learned that John the Baptist had a favorite name for Jesus: the Lamb of God. Six hundred years before Jesus's birth, the prophet Isaiah spoke of Jesus as a Lamb led to slaughter for the sins of the people (Isaiah 53:7–8). Centuries later, John the Baptist knew that Jesus was the Lamb of God for two incredible reasons. After Jesus was baptized, God the Father spoke from heaven. Then, the Holy Spirit descended on Jesus in the form of a dove. This is the New Testament's first clear picture of the Trinity—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit—acting in harmony. They acted in harmony to convey a very clear and important message: Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah, the Lamb of God who "takes away the sin of the world." John describes a scene in heaven where Jesus is worshiped with a new song that says: "The Lamb . . . is worthy to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength! He is worthy to receive honor and glory and praise!" (Revelation 5:12). Jesus is worthy, indeed!**

Let's all stand and pray: Dear Father, We gladly say that Jesus is worthy to receive power, wealth, wisdom, strength, honor, glory and praise! Jesus was, and is, and always will be the Lamb of God who takes away our sins. Thank you so much. Jesus is worthy, indeed! Amen.

Children line up to meet their parents. As the children leave, hand out their Take-home pages.

To Prepare:

Make enough copies of the Take-home page for each child.



WEEK 7

Live It All Week

Upper Elementary Take Home Paper for Families**What Your Child Learned Today**

Today we learned that Scripture presents many names for Jesus. We learned that John the Baptist had a favorite name for Jesus: the Lamb of God. After witnessing two incredible signs at Jesus's baptism, John the Baptist knew that Jesus was the Lamb of God. In the first sign, God the Father spoke from heaven, and in the second sign, the Holy Spirit descended on Jesus in the form of a dove. We are so glad that Jesus is the Lamb of God who "takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). The apostle John described a scene in heaven where Jesus is worshiped with a new song: "The Lamb . . . is worthy to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength! He is worthy to receive honor and glory and praise!" (Revelation 5:12). Jesus is worthy, indeed!

Try This

As a family, discuss the following questions:

1. What was John the Baptist's favorite name for Jesus? (The Lamb of God)
2. How did John the Baptist know that Jesus was the Lamb of God? (God the Father spoke from heaven, and the Holy Spirit descended on Jesus in the form of a dove.)
3. True or False: Jesus was, is, and always will be the Lamb of God. (True)

Table Talk

As a family, read aloud the following verses and answer the questions:

- ▶ **Read John 1:29. Who is the Lamb of God? (Jesus)**
- ▶ **Read 1 Peter 1:19. Did Jesus ever do anything bad, wrong, or sinful? (No.)**
- ▶ **Read Revelation 5:12. Who is worthy of power, wealth, wisdom, strength, honor, glory, and praise? (Jesus, the Lamb of God)**

Baptism of Jesus

- Scripture: Matthew 3:13–17
- Big Idea: At Jesus's baptism, God the Father spoke aloud that Jesus is his Son, and the Holy Spirit descended upon him as a dove—the first clear picture of the Trinity.
- Memory Verse: "A voice from heaven said, 'This is my Son, and I love him. I am very pleased with him.'" Matthew 3:17

**SOMETHING
ELSE TO DO**

As a family, visit YouTube and search for "Names of Jesus Intro" by minister2kids. <https://youtu.be/w28YzoQnwRs> Read each name aloud as it comes on screen. Afterward, see how many names you can recall, and discuss or look up any that you don't know the meaning of. Watch the video a second time. Then have everyone share what is their favorite name for Jesus and why! See if your children can remember which of the names of Jesus John the Baptist used in this week's story.



JOHN POINTS to JESUS

John 1:19–42

Big Idea:

John the Baptist exclaimed, “Look! The Lamb of God!” After his baptism, Jesus called his first disciples. Like them, we should tell others that we have found the Messiah.

Memory Verse:

“Look! The Lamb of God! He takes away the sin of the world!” John 1:29b



Lesson Overview

John the Baptist recognized Jesus as the Lamb of God—as the Messiah. He shared this message with everyone he met. Although we haven’t seen Jesus with our own eyes, we also can recognize him through his Word. We can trust that he is the One God sent to rescue his people from sin. The more we see Jesus, the more we can say to others: “Look! The lamb of God! He takes away the sins of the world!” (John 1:29b).



Week 8 Lesson Plan	Activity and Supplies	To Prepare
1 Welcome Activity (10 minutes)	Names of Jesus Word Search Printables: Names of Jesus Word Search (one copy for each child) • Pencils	Copy the printables.
2 Lesson Introduction (5 minutes)	John, the Messenger	
3 Scripture Story (15 minutes)	The Lamb of God Printables: Lamb of God Script (eight copies plus one for the leader) • Optional: Costumes	Copy the printables. Optional: Gather costumes.
4 Discussion (5 minutes)		
5 Snack (10 minutes)	Lamb Snack • Marshmallows (one for each child) • Mini-marshmallows (one for each child) • Toothpick (one for each child) • Pretzel sticks (four for each child) • Napkins • Paper cups • Pitcher of water	Gather the supplies.
6 Activity (10 minutes)	Seeing Jesus Changes Everything • Blank paper • Markers or colored pencils • Optional: Music player with Web access • Optional: Visit YouTube and search for “Quietly” by Scripture Lullabies. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e06_n9m9jbA	Preview and queue the song for class.
7 Closing (5 minutes)	Blessing the Children Printables: Take-home page (one for each child) • Bible	Make enough copies of the Take-home page for each child.



Bible Background for Leader

Prior to this week's Scripture, the Jewish religious leaders pressed John the Baptist on his identity. John replied, "I am not the Messiah" (John 1:20b). The leaders went down their list of other possible identities, and John denied them all (v. 21).

The very next day, Jesus walked by. John the Baptist gave him an ancient, sacred name: "Look! The Lamb of God! He takes away the sin of the world!" (v. 29b). Then both John the Baptist and John the apostle remind us that God the Father had given Jesus yet another name, more ancient and sacred: "God's Chosen One" (v. 34).

The day after that, John the Baptist was talking with two of his disciples when he abruptly said, "Look! The Lamb of God!" (v. 36). The disciples immediately ran to Jesus. They spent a few hours at the home where Jesus was staying. There was no question in Andrew's mind: this was God's Chosen One. Afterward, in his excitement, Andrew immediately looked for his brother, Simon. He couldn't wait to share the good news: "We have found the Messiah" (v. 41).

Jesus. Together, Andrew and Simon returned to the place where Jesus was staying. When they arrived, Jesus looked at Simon and said, "You are Simon,

son of John. You will be called Cephas" (John 1:42). John adds, "Cephas means Peter, or Rock" (v. 42b). Something important was revealed when Jesus changed Simon's name. (When Jesus was called by ancient and sacred names, those around him, and the whole world, were made to notice who he was. For the Lord to give someone a new name almost always conferred a new identity—and a new destiny.) Jesus changed Simon's name to Peter, the Rock, because he would be a foundation stone of the church.

It isn't surprising, then, to read the four Gospels and see that most of the twelve apostles have a second name. Simon is Peter. James and John are the Sons of Thunder. Thomas is the Twin. Matthew is Levi. Bartholomew is Nathanael. Thaddaeus is Jude. The other Simon is Zealot. Their new names reflect their new identity.

The Church and the World. When we receive God's free gift of salvation, our names change, as well. We become Christians. With our new name and identity, God calls us to follow Jesus and share his good news with others. After all, God doesn't want anyone to perish, but all to come to repentance (2 Peter 3:9). This should be our desire as well!



1 Welcome Activity

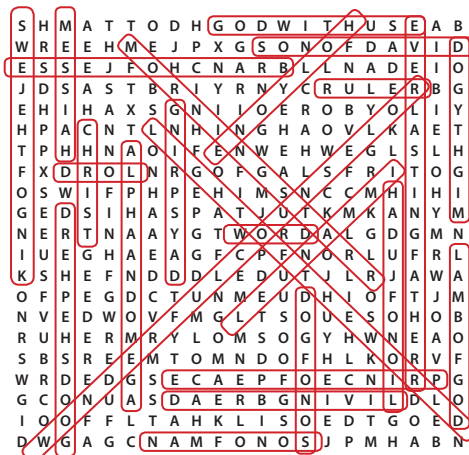
To Prepare:

Copy the printables.



Names of Jesus Word Search

Tell the class that today they will start by recalling some of the names of Jesus they learned last week. Distribute a copy of the printable and pencils to the children. Tell them to write their name on the front or back. Invite the children to work together to complete the puzzle. After several minutes, review the answers together.



2 Lesson Introduction

John, the Messenger

Say: **When the religious people asked John the Baptist who he was, John identified himself as a messenger. John pointed people to Jesus, the Lamb of God. John the Baptist recognized Jesus as the Messiah—the Promised One. John shared this message with everyone he met. In today’s lesson we will pick up the story of John the Baptist and hear what happens next.**

3 Scripture Story

The Lamb of God

Say: **Today we’re picking up the story of John the Baptist, this time from the book of John, chapter 1. Let’s act out the story together.** Recruit volunteers for the roles listed below. Distribute a copy of the script to each volunteer, and the costumes, if using.

Roles:

- Narrator
- John the Baptist
- Pharisee #1, #2, and #3
- Jesus
- Andrew
- Simon
- Several people (non-speaking)
- Other disciple (non-speaking)

To Prepare:

Copy the printables. Optional: Gather costumes.





Encourage the children to read dramatically. When they are finished, applaud and have them return to their seats.

Say: **John was quite bold in calling out “Look! The Lamb of God!” Every Jewish person would have known exactly what he was referring to: he was saying that Jesus was the Messiah—the One God had promised way back in the garden of Eden. He was the One who would rescue his people from their sins.**

The Jewish people expected this Savior to come with political power and might, so it’s also important that John called him the “Lamb” of God, implying humility and gentleness.

Jesus gave Peter a new name. He went on to call more disciples to follow him and gave many of them new names as well. Over and over Jesus redefines the relationships between people and himself. Encountering the Lamb of God changes us—from enemies of God into friends of God, even more than that, into brothers of Jesus.

4 story discussion

- ▶ **Who did the Pharisees think John was?** (Three answers: Messiah, Elijah, prophet)
- ▶ **Who did John say he actually was?** (God’s messenger to point to the Messiah)
- ▶ **Who did John point them to?** (Jesus)
- ▶ **Who was the first disciple to follow Jesus?** (Andrew)
- ▶ **Who did Andrew invite to come see Jesus?** (His brother, Simon)
- ▶ **How many people were given new names or titles in this story?** (Two. John the Baptist gave Jesus the title Lamb of God. Jesus renamed Simon Cephas or Peter, which means rock.)

5 snack

Lamb Snack

Distribute the supplies. Have the children attach the mini-marshmallow to the regular marshmallow with the toothpick. It will be the “head” of the sheep. Then, attach the pretzel sticks to the marshmallow as legs. Enjoy!

To Prepare:
Gather the supplies.



6 Activity

To Prepare:

Preview and queue the song for class.

Seeing Jesus Changes Everything

Say: **John called out, “Look! The Lamb of God! He takes away the sin of the world!” (John 1:29b). He recognized Jesus for who he really was. Remember, there were religious teachers who had supposedly devoted their lives to watching for the Messiah, and they missed Jesus completely! In fact, they killed him. Why? Because he wasn’t what they imagined he would be—he wasn’t the kind of messiah they were looking for. They were unable to see him for who he was.**

When we see Jesus for who he really is, it changes everything. For Andrew, it changed his allegiance. He wasn’t John’s disciple anymore; he was Jesus’s disciple. Following Jesus, Simon received a new name. Jesus called his followers to lay down their very lives for one another and for the gospel. Jesus calls us to do the same.

Seeing Jesus changes everything. Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to show you a place in your life where you have not been looking to Jesus. Where have you relied on the wisdom of the world rather than the wisdom of Christ? Ask the Holy Spirit to change your heart.

Distribute the paper and coloring supplies. Encourage the children to pray quietly on their own for several minutes as the music plays. Play the song.

Then, tell the children to draw or write anything that came to mind during the prayer time. (Optional: Replay the song as they draw/write.) Then, invite the children to share what they learned. Alternatively, they can share later with a trusted adult. Close the time in prayer.

7 Closing

Blessing the Children

Say: **I’m going to pray to close us today. Dear Jesus, John the Baptist devoted his whole life to preparing the way for you. You are the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. Bless each child here, that they might see you this week and point others to you with their words and with their lives. For your glory, Lord Christ, Amen.**

Children line up to meet their parents. As the children leave, hand out their Take-home pages and remind them to bring home their puzzles and drawings.

To Prepare:

Make enough copies of the Take-home page for each child.



Names of Jesus

Word Bank:

Alpha and Omega
Branch of Jesse
Christ
Dayspring
Everlasting Father
God With Us
Good Shepherd

Holy One
Immanuel
King of the Jews
Lamb of God
Light of the World
Lion of Judah
Living Bread

Lord
Messiah
Mighty God
Morning Star
Prince of Peace
Son of David
Son of Man

Son of God
Ruler
Wonderful Counselor
Word

S H M A T T O D H G O D W I T H U S E A B
W R E E H M E J P X G S O N O F D A V I D
E S S E J F O H C N A R B L L N A D E I O
J D S A S T B R I Y R N Y C R U L E R B G
E H I H A X S G N I I O E R O B Y O L I Y
H P A C N T L N H I N G H A O V L K A E T
T P H H N A O I F E N W E H W E G L S L H
F X D R O L N R G O F G A L S F R I T O G
O S W I F P H P E H I M S N C C M H I H I
G E D S I H A S P A T J U T K M K A N Y M
N E R T N A A Y G T W O R D A L G D G M N
I U E G H A E A G F C P F N O R L U F R L
K S H E F N D D D L E D U T J L R J A W A
O F P E G D C T U N M E U D H I O F T J M
N V E D W O V F M G L T S O U E S O H O B
R U H E R M R Y L O M S O G Y H W N E A O
S B S R E E M T O M N D O F H L K O R V F
W R D E D G S E C A E P F O E C N I R P G
G C O N U A S D A E R B G N I V I L D L O
I O O F F L T A H K L I S O E D T G O E D
D W G A G C N A M F O N O S J P M H A B N

The Lamb of God

(from John 1:19–42)

Characters:

NARRATOR
JOHN THE BAPTIST
PHARISEE #1
PHARISEE #2

PHARISEE #3
JESUS
ANDREW
SIMON

Non-speaking roles:

SEVERAL PEOPLE
OTHER DISCIPLE

NARRATOR stands off to the side throughout the drama and speaks to the audience.

SCENE 1

JOHN THE BAPTIST stands at the Jordan River. The PHARISEES approach him.

NARRATOR JOHN has been baptizing people at the Jordan River. Everyone is wondering who he really is. And so, the religious leaders have sent some PHARISEES to ask JOHN some questions.

PHARISEES walk up to JOHN.

PHARISEE #1 Excuse us. Can we ask you a question? Some people say you are the Messiah—is that who you are?

JOHN THE BAPTIST (*Speaking clearly*) No, I am not the Messiah.

PHARISEE #2 Are you Elijah the prophet?

JOHN THE BAPTIST No. I am not Elijah.

PHARISEE #3 Are you another prophet, then?

JOHN THE BAPTIST No, I'm not.

PHARISEE #1 Look, we have to have an answer to take back to our leaders. Tell us who you are!

JOHN THE BAPTIST I am just a voice in the desert calling out, "Make the way for the Lord straight."

PHARISEE #2 Well, if you're not the Messiah or Elijah or a prophet, then why are you baptizing people?

JOHN THE BAPTIST I baptize people with water, but there is someone who will come after me who is much greater than I am. I'm not even good enough to bend down and untie his sandals!

PHARISEES exit.

SCENE 2

JOHN THE BAPTIST is at the river. Several PEOPLE stand nearby. JESUS walks up to JOHN.

NARRATOR The next day, JOHN continues baptizing PEOPLE at the Jordan River. JOHN sees JESUS walking up to him.

JOHN THE BAPTIST *(to the PEOPLE)* Look! The Lamb of God! He takes away the sin of the world! This is the one I was talking about. I said, "A man who comes after me is more important than I am. That's because he existed before I was born." I did not know him. But God wants to make it clear to Israel who this person is. That's the reason I came baptizing with water.

I saw the Holy Spirit come down from heaven like a dove and remain on Jesus. I myself did not know him. But the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, "You will see the Spirit come down and remain on someone. He is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit." I have seen it happen. I am a witness that this is God's Chosen One.

SCENE 3

JOHN THE BAPTIST stands at the river with ANDREW and the OTHER DISCIPLE. JESUS walks onto the scene. Three chairs are in a group at the other end of the "stage."

NARRATOR The next day JOHN THE BAPTIST is at the river again. This time, two of his own DISCIPLES are with him, one is named ANDREW. JESUS walks by.

JOHN THE BAPTIST (*Pointing at JESUS*) Look! The Lamb of God!

NARRATOR The two people with JOHN just have to find out more about JESUS. So they leave JOHN and follow JESUS.

ANDREW and the OTHER DISCIPLE follow JESUS. JESUS turns to look at them.

JESUS (*to ANDREW and the OTHER DISCIPLE*) What are you looking for?

ANDREW Teacher, where are you staying?

JESUS Come and see.

JESUS, ANDREW, and the OTHER DISCIPLE walk to the chairs and sit down.

NARRATOR They follow JESUS to the place where he is staying. They spend several hours with him. They become JESUS's disciples.

SCENE 4

SIMON stands on one side of the "stage." ANDREW gets up from talking with JESUS and walks over to SIMON. JESUS remains seated.

NARRATOR: ANDREW has a brother named SIMON. After spending the afternoon with JESUS, the first thing ANDREW does is find his brother.

ANDREW (*excitedly*) SIMON, SIMON. Wait till you hear! We have found the Messiah!

SIMON (*excitedly*) What!? Really?! Can you take me to him?

ANDREW Yes. Come with me now!

ANDREW and SIMON go to JESUS.

NARRATOR ANDREW brings SIMON to JESUS.

JESUS (*to SIMON*) You are Simon, son of John. (Pauses) You will be called Cephas.

NARRATOR The name Cephas means Peter, or Rock.

All exit.

WEEK 8

Live It All Week

Upper Elementary Take Home Paper for Families**What Your Child Learned Today**

John the Baptist repeatedly pointed to Jesus with his words and with his life. He recognized that Jesus was the Messiah and shared this with as many people as he could. He called Jesus by the name *Lamb of God*, an ancient title used by prophets to refer to the Messiah. When John's disciples began following Jesus, the Lord gave one of them a new name—Simon became Peter. We discussed how looking to Jesus changes everything; Jesus reorients every relationship in our lives.

Try This

Your child spent time praying and asking the Holy Spirit to show them where they haven't been looking to Jesus. They also prayed that the Lord would cause them to see Jesus in a way—and in response, point others to Christ. This week, pray that your child would continue to be receptive to the Lord's leading in their lives. If the opportunity presents itself, initiate a conversation with your child about what the Lord is teaching them.

Table Talk

- At dinner this week, ask your child if there are any people they find difficult to understand or love. Discuss how Jesus changes the way we relate to people, including people who are different from us. Brainstorm what it would look like if we were to think about our "enemies" as our "brothers."

John Points to Jesus

- Scripture: John 1:19–42
- Big Idea: John the Baptist exclaimed, "Look! The Lamb of God!" After his baptism, Jesus called his first disciples. Like them, we should tell others that we have found the Messiah.
- Memory Verse: "Look! The Lamb of God! He takes away the sin of the world!" John 1:29b

SOMETHING ELSE TO DO

In today's passage, John calls Jesus the Lamb of God. Spend some time as a family looking at other names for Jesus. There are seven other "I AM" statements of Jesus in the book of John alone. Spend a fun family night making art based on the one that appeals to you, and display these pieces in your home.

- I am the bread of life (John 6:25–59).
- I am the light of the world (John 8:12; 9:5b).
- I am the door of the sheep (John 10:7, 9).
- I am the good shepherd (John 10:11, 14).
- I am the resurrection and the life (John 11:25).
- I am the way, and the truth, and the life (John 14:6).
- I am the vine (John 15:1).



JESUS CALLS HIS First Disciples

Matthew 4:12–23

Big Idea:

When Jesus called people to be his disciples, they came immediately and without question. When we know he is calling us, we should do the same.

Memory Verse:

“Turn away from your sins! The kingdom of heaven has come near.”

Matthew 4:17b



Lesson Overview

Jesus was the long-awaited Savior of God's people. When he came, he fulfilled the promises God made to his people many years before. He is still fulfilling them today in carrying out God's rescue mission.

Today we will learn about the day Jesus called his first four disciples. We will learn about how they left everything to follow him. Jesus also calls us to leave everything behind to follow him. We are invited to join in his great rescue mission.



Week 9 Lesson Plan	Activity and Supplies	To Prepare
1 Welcome Activity (5 minutes)	Words about Jesus Printables: Words about Jesus (one strip for every 2–3 children) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blank paper • Pens or pencils • Bibles 	Copy and cut out the printables. Gather the remaining supplies. Preview the activity.
2 Lesson Introduction (5 minutes)	A Light in the Darkness	
3 Scripture Story (10 minutes)	An Invitation to the Kingdom	
4 Discussion (5 minutes)		
5 Craft (10 minutes)	The Kingdom Is Near <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watercolors • Paintbrushes • Heavy paper or watercolor paper (one sheet for each child) • Pens or colored pencils • Small cups or bowls • Water • Paper towels • Optional: Music player with Web access • Optional: Visit YouTube and search for “Instrumental Soaking Worship // Bethel Music Harmony” by SOAKING IN HIS PRESENCE Instrumental Worship. https://youtu.be/Xx1MjhzKcYw 	Fill the cups or bowls with water. Preview and queue the music for class.
6 Game (10 minutes)	Who Was There? Relay Printables: Names (two sets of names) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Masking tape • Two buckets or bowls 	Copy, cut out, and fold the printables in half to make two complete sets of names. Place one set of names in each of the buckets/bowls. Create a starting line with the masking tape.
7 Snack (10 minutes)	God’s Word <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fruit-filled cookie bars (e.g., Newtons—one for each child) • Plastic knives (one for each child) • Napkins • Paper cups • Pitcher of water 	Gather the supplies.
8 Closing (5 minutes)	Responding to the Invitation Printables: Bookmark (one card stock copy for each child plus extras); Take-home page (one for each child) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Card stock (for printing) 	Copy and cut out the bookmarks. Make enough copies of the Take-home page for each child.



Bible Background for Leader

The word *disciple* appears only once or twice, if at all, in most Old Testament translations, as in: "Bind up this testimony of warning and seal up God's instruction among my disciples" (Isaiah 8:16 NIV). Yet, the practice of calling an understudy is described repeatedly in the Hebrew Scriptures, such as Moses calling Joshua (Exodus 17:9ff) and Elijah calling Elisha (1 Kings 19:16ff). The ancient historian Josephus describes Elisha as Elijah's disciple, using the New Testament term. Unlike Jesus, however, Moses and Elijah called only one disciple each. And, unlike Jesus, after Moses died and Elijah was whisked to glory, their understudies took their place.

Jesus. Jesus called his disciples by many names: *twelve, disciples, apostles, my friends, servants, and little children*. John omits the use of *apostles*, but the Synoptic Gospels use it frequently. All four Gospels use the words *disciples* and *twelve* frequently. So, who are these people? The official lists appear in Matthew 10:2-4; Mark 3:16-19; Luke 6:13-16; and Acts 1:13. It's helpful to know that most have a second name or nickname. Simon is Peter. James and John are Sons of Thunder. Thomas is Didymus. Matthew is Levi. Bartholomew is Nathanael. Thaddaeus is Judas (not Iscariot). The other Simon is the Zealot.

Besides the twelve, Jesus also had a contingent of women who traveled with him. Luke 8:1-3 tells us: "After this, Jesus traveled about from one town and village to another, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God. The Twelve were with him, and also some women who had been cured of evil spirits and diseases: Mary (called Magdalene) from whom seven demons had come out; Joanna the wife of Chuza, the manager of Herod's household; Susanna; and many others. These women were helping to support them out of their own means."

In one place, Jesus calls seventy-two to go ahead of him, two by two (Luke 10:1-17). Church tradition offers several lists of the names of these men (and three women—Tabitha, Apphia, and Junia—spoken of in Acts 9:36-43; Philemon 1:2; and Romans 16:7).

The Church and the World. When Jesus calls his followers, he is calling them for the rest of their lives (Matthew 8:18-22; Luke 9:57-62). It costs "everything" to follow him—but his followers are promised "a hundred times as much" eternally (Matthew 19:21-30; Mark 10:21-31; and Luke 18:22-30). Just as Jesus called his disciples in the Gospels, he is calling us to follow him today.



To Prepare:

Copy and cut out the printables. Gather the remaining supplies. Preview the activity.

1 Welcome Activity

Words about Jesus

Divide the class into groups of 3 or 4. Distribute a Bible, piece of paper, and a printable strip to each group. Have the children work together to look up their passage and find out what it says about Jesus. After several minutes, invite them to share their findings.

Genesis 3:14-15 and Galatians 4:4-7
Deuteronomy 18:15-19 and Acts 3:19-22
Isaiah 9:2-7 and Matthew 4:13-16
Isaiah 35:5-6 and Matthew 11:4-6
Isaiah 40:3-5 and John 1:22-23
Micah 5:2 and Matthew 21:4-6

2 Lesson Introduction

A Light in the Darkness

Say: **Isn't it incredible how God made all these promises to his people over many long years? God's people had to believe that he would do what he said he would do, and they had to trust in a Savior whose name they didn't even know. Hebrews 11 says that God's people believed God would do what he promised; yet, in a lot of ways, they were in the dark. Our passage today quotes Isaiah saying that Jesus is the light for people living in darkness. Jesus shows God's people who he is and what he is doing. This is why Jesus's first words when he begins preaching are "Turn from your sins! The kingdom of heaven has come near" (Matthew 4:17b).**

3 Scripture Story

An Invitation to the Kingdom

Say: **We will read our Scripture passage differently today. I will invite each of you to find a comfortable place in this room. We will hear the story and imagine what it would have been like to be one of God's people who lived in darkness and actually saw the light of Jesus shining for the first time. We will be with the first disciples when Jesus calls to them and we'll hear the invitation to us as well. So find a comfortable place in the classroom. You are welcome to sit on the floor, or in a chair, to close your eyes, or to leave them open. Please do whatever will help you to listen to God's Word and not distract another friend.** Once the children are settled and ready to listen, read aloud Matthew 4:12–23:

¹² John had been put in prison. When Jesus heard about this, he returned to Galilee. ¹³ Jesus left Nazareth and went to live in the



city of Capernaum. It was by the lake in the area of Zebulun and Naphtali. ¹⁴ In that way, what the prophet Isaiah had said came true. He had said, ¹⁵ “Land of Zebulun! Land of Naphtali! Galilee, where Gentiles live! Land along the Mediterranean Sea! Territory east of the Jordan River! ¹⁶ The people who are now living in darkness have seen a great light. They are now living in a very dark land. But a light has shined on them.” ¹⁷ From that time on Jesus began to preach. “Turn away from your sins!” he said. “The kingdom of heaven has come near.”

¹⁸ One day Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee. There he saw two brothers, Simon Peter and his brother Andrew. They were throwing a net into the lake, because they were fishermen. ¹⁹ “Come and follow me,” Jesus said. “I will send you out to fish for people.” ²⁰ At once they left their nets and followed him. ²¹ Going on from there, he saw two other brothers. They were James, son of Zebedee, and his brother John. They were in a boat with their father Zebedee. As they were preparing their nets, Jesus called out to them. ²² Right away they left the boat and their father and followed Jesus. ²³ Jesus went all over Galilee. There he taught in the synagogues. He preached the good news of God’s kingdom. He healed every illness and sickness the people had.

Pause for several seconds. Then say: **I will read the passage again. This time, I want you to listen to Jesus’s words of invitation. Ask Jesus to help you hear his voice.** Reread the passage. Pause for several seconds. Then say: **Is there any part of the story that confuses you? Is there any part that fills you with joy?**

Now I will read the passage one more time. This time just think about what you hear and thank Jesus for speaking to you from his Word. Reread the passage. Then say: **Now we will sit silently for a couple of minutes so we can respond to Jesus in prayer. Maybe you will spend a little more time quietly listening. Maybe you will thank Jesus for what you have learned about him. Maybe you will respond to an invitation you heard from Jesus during this time.** Allow the children several minutes to be quiet.

4 story Discussion

- ▶ What was that experience like for you?
- ▶ Would anyone like to share a part of the story that was confusing?



► Would anyone like to share a part of the story that brought them joy or made them excited?

► Would anyone like to share the invitation they heard from Jesus in this passage?

To Prepare:

Fill the cups or bowls with water. Preview and queue the music for class.

5 Craft

The Kingdom Is Near

"Turn away from your sins! The kingdom of heaven has come near." Matthew 4:17b

Say: **Our Bible verse this week is what Jesus said when he began to preach: "Turn away from your sins! The kingdom of heaven is near!" (Matthew 4:17b). What good news this is! Distribute the painting supplies. I would like to invite you to paint a picture based on this verse. What does it mean to you that the kingdom of heaven is near? What does that look like? What did it mean to God's people then, and what does it mean to us now? As you paint, I will play some quiet music in the background. When you finish your picture, write the verse somewhere on it—perhaps even on the back of the paper—so that you remember what inspired your artwork. Play the music.**

To Prepare:

Copy, cut out, and fold the printables in half to make two complete sets of names. Place one set of names in each of the buckets/bowls. Create a starting line with the masking tape.

6 Game

Who Was There? Relay

Divide the group into two teams and have them stand at the starting line. Explain the relay: **When I say Go, the first child from each team should walk quickly (no running) to the bucket/bowl on the other end, grab a piece of paper, return to the team, and unfold and read the paper. If you read the name of a person (or group) from today's Scripture story, get out of line and hold up the paper in front of you. If the name is NOT someone in the story, drop the paper and go to the back of the line. The first team to get the names of all the people or groups in today's story and line up wins.** Warn the children that some names may be of people *mentioned* in today's story but not actually *present* in the story. The correct five names are: John the Baptist, Jesus, Pharisees/Religious leaders, Andrew, Simon Peter.

John the Baptist	Elph	John the Baptist	Elph
Jesus	Moses	Jesus	Moses
Pharisees/Religious Leaders	King Herod	Pharisees/Religious Leaders	King Herod
Simon Peter	John the Baptist	Simon Peter	John the Baptist
Andrew	Isaiah	Andrew	Isaiah



7 snack

To Prepare:
Gather the supplies.

God's Word

Distribute the snack and plastic knives. Show the children how to cut off one long side of their cookie bar to create a book. Say: **We've learned a lot today about listening to God's Word. Our snack reminds us that God is always speaking to us through his Word.**

8 closing

To Prepare:
Copy and cut out the book-marks. Make enough copies of the Take-home page for each child.



Responding to the Invitation

Say: **We have heard today that Jesus is the One who shows us who God is and what he does. He is the One promised long ago who came to rescue us, and now he invites all of us to join him in the work of God's kingdom. When Jesus came, he was bringing God's kingdom to the whole world—that means God is working in every time and every place, and he invites each of us to help in different ways.**

The best way we can hear Jesus's invitation and respond to it is by making time to listen. We have the whole Bible, full of the words of God. Are you creating space in your life to listen to God's Word? This week, take a few minutes each day to sit quietly with the Word of God and with Jesus, to listen to him and respond to his invitation.

I have something to help you with this. It's a bookmark. Set it in your Bible and read it each day. Distribute the bookmarks. Explain how each day has a short passage to read. Each passage tells us something about God's kingdom and includes an invitation. Say: **I will pray for you this week that God would show you how you can be a part of the work he is doing in your home, your school, your neighborhood, and in our church. Let's pray together and thank Jesus for showing us what God is like and inviting us to follow him. Let's ask Jesus to help us answer his invitation, like the first disciples.**

Children line up to meet their parents. As the children leave, hand out their Take-home pages and remind them to bring home their bookmarks and crafts.

Note: Save one of the bookmarks in the classroom for follow-up next week.

Genesis 3:14-15 and Galatians 4:4-7

Deuteronomy 18:15-19 and Acts 3:18-22

Isaiah 9:2-7 and Matthew 4:13-16

Isaiah 35:5-6 and Matthew 11:4-6

Isaiah 40:3-5 and John 1:22-23

Micah 5:2 and Matthew 2:1-6

Elijah

Moses

King Herod

Dora the
Explorer

Bumblebee

John the Baptist

Jesus

Pharisees/Religious
Leaders

Simon Peter

Andrew

Elijah

Moses

King Herod

Dora the
Explorer

Bumblebee

John the Baptist

Jesus

Pharisees/Religious
Leaders

Simon Peter

Andrew

Listening to Jesus

MONDAY

☐ Matthew 6:25-34

TUESDAY:

☐ Matthew 7:7-12

WEDNESDAY:

☐ Matthew 5:24-29

THURSDAY:

☐ Matthew 19:13-15

FRIDAY:

☐ Matthew 19:16-27

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE READINGS:

- ◆ What is Jesus inviting his listeners to do?
- ◆ What is Jesus inviting me to do?
- ◆ What is Jesus saying about his kingdom?

Spend several minutes quietly listening to Jesus.

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☐ Matthew 6:25-34

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QUESTIONS ABOUT THE READINGS:

- ◆ What is Jesus inviting his listeners to do?
- ◆ What is Jesus inviting me to do?
- ◆ What is Jesus saying about his kingdom?

Spend several minutes quietly listening to Jesus.

WEEK 9

Live It All Week

Upper Elementary Take Home Paper for Families**What Your Child Learned Today**

Jesus was the long-awaited Savior of God's people. The prophets had foretold his coming. When he came, Jesus fulfilled the promises God made many years before. We read some Old Testament prophecies about Jesus and looked at their New Testament fulfillment. We engaged our imaginations while reading our Scripture story and tried to hear Jesus's voice. When Jesus brings God's kingdom to earth, he doesn't do it alone. He invites others to join him. We discussed the day Jesus invited his first disciples to follow him, and how they obeyed promptly. We also discussed how Jesus invites as well—and how we need to create space to listen to him.

Try This

Your child brought home a bookmark with five Scripture passages and three questions. They can use this tool to help them listen to Jesus as he speaks through God's Word this week. Encourage them in this! Join your child in their exercise in listening to Jesus. Many adults do not create much space for listening and responding to Christ's invitations; this could bear fruit in your spiritual life as you assist your child in trying something new. Seek to create intentional space to listen to Jesus this week.

Table Talk

- **This week's memory verse quotes Jesus in saying that the kingdom of heaven has come near. There is kingdom work to be done in our homes, schools, neighborhoods, and churches. Spend time at a meal this week discussing what it looks like for each family member to listen to Jesus. Pray together that the Holy Spirit will quicken each of your hearts to hear and eagerly run to respond to the invitation of Jesus.**

Jesus Calls His First Disciples

- Scripture: Matthew 4:12–23
- Big Idea: When Jesus called people to be his disciples, they came immediately and without question. When we know he is calling us, we should do the same.
- Memory Verse: "Turn away from your sins! The kingdom of heaven has come near." Matthew 4:17b

SOMETHING ELSE TO DO

When we read about the earthly life of Jesus, we get a glimpse of what it looks like for the kingdom of God to come near: the gospel is preached, the sick and ill are healed, the hopeless find hope. Jesus is continuing the work God began at the beginning, in creation. He is making all things new. Read Revelation 21:1-7 and 22:1-5. What will the world look like when the kingdom is fully here?



Sermon on the Mount: Beatitudes

Matthew 5:1–12

Big Idea:

Jesus describes how his kingdom flips the world's values upside down. Those who embrace his values are blessed.

Memory Verse:

"Blessed are those who are hungry and thirsty for what is right. They will be filled." Matthew 5:6



Lesson Overview

Jesus taught that the kingdom of God is an upside-down kingdom. It's a place where sad things come *untrue*—where we receive gifts from Jesus, not because we are stronger, smarter, or better than anyone else, but because we are *needy*, and Jesus is generous. It is a place where those who have the least receive the most and those who the world diminishes are elevated by God. We do not need to fear our spiritual need, our sorrow, our yearning for righteousness, or our need to rest—Jesus has already provided all this for us; our job is just to enter in.



Week 10 Lesson Plan		Activity and Supplies	To Prepare
1	Welcome Activity (5 minutes)	Listening to Jesus • A bookmark from the previous week	
2	Lesson Introduction (10 minutes)	The Kingdom of This World Printables: Kingdom of This World Diagnosis (one for every two children) • Pencils	Copy the printables.
3	Scripture Story (10 minutes)	Life in the Kingdom of God Printables: Bible Study (one for each student) • Bibles for the class • Pens or pencils	Copy the printables.
4	Discussion (5 minutes)		
5	Craft (15 minutes)	Beatitudes Posters • Scripture story printables • Nine sheets of paper • Markers, pastels, watercolors, paints, etc. • Optional: Music player with Web access • Optional: Visit YouTube and search for “Oh Blessed (feat. Anthony Skinner)” by Stu Garrard. https://youtu.be/F4ZISGR4b1Y	Preview and queue the music for class.
6	Snack (10 minutes)	Pretzels and Grapes • Pretzels • Grapes, divided into small clusters • Napkins • Paper cups • Pitcher of water	Wash and divide the grapes into small clusters.
7	Closing (5 minutes)	Praying the Beatitudes Printables: Take-home page (one for each child) • Bible	Make enough copies of the Take-home page for each child.



Bible Background for Leader

Each Beatitude in Scripture begins with a condition described in the Hebrew Scriptures, and ends with a new teaching by Jesus. Jesus extends a blessing to all who are spiritually needy, sad, and humble—to those who are hungry and thirsty for righteousness, merciful, pure, peaceful, and who suffer for what's right.

All who accept his blessing receive his kingdom, comfort, fullness, and mercy to see, know, and become children of God. They receive the reward of heaven.

The closest parallels to the Beatitudes in the Old Testament include one or two-verse proverbs, teachings, and promises of God scattered from Job through Malachi.

Jesus. Up to when he delivers the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5), Jesus has spoken few words. In Matthew, Jesus has exhorted John the Baptist (Matthew 3:15); he has rebuffed the devil (Matthew 4:4, 7, 10); he has announced the kingdom (Matthew 4:17); and he has called the first four disciples (Matthew 4:19, 21). Now he shares his most famous sermon.

The first ten verses of the Sermon on the Mount, present eight Beatitudes. Seen together, the Beatitudes offer a surprisingly counterintuitive yet stunning cohesive image. That image portrays disciples of Jesus as happy, joyful, and blessed. At the end of Matthew 5:12, Jesus speaks of his disciples as the new prophets of God.

Jesus preached for three more years, so it's understandable that Jesus taught the Beatitudes at different times to different audiences for different purposes. In Matthew 5:3–12, Jesus presents eight Beatitudes in the third person. In Luke 6:20–23, Jesus recasts four Beatitudes in the second person, often nuanced differently. Matthew adds "spiritually" to "needy" (Matthew 5:3) and "thirsty" to "hungry" (v. 6). Luke changes "kingdom of heaven" to "God's kingdom" (Matthew 6:20), "filled" to "satisfied" (v. 21), and "comforted" to "laugh" (v. 21).

The Church and the World. In Matthew 5:3–12, each new Beatitude builds on the previous one. They begin with a deep sense of neediness (humility before God) and continue with a sorrow over sin (humility before others). The eight Beatitudes are not a checklist ("I've got five out of eight"). Instead, the Beatitudes describe a progressive pathway to authentic, life-changing discipleship.

Each set of Beatitudes offer complementary conditions on the progressive pathway to discipleship. In all, they include: humility and need, seeking heavenly reward, extending forgiveness to others, living in purity before God, living as peacemakers, and enduring persecution for Jesus's sake. They continue throughout Jesus's teaching and with his disciples, long after his resurrection.



1 Welcome Activity

Listening to Jesus

Hold up one of the bookmarks from last week. Ask the children to share how their week went—and if they made time to read the passages/listen to Jesus. If any did, invite them to share their insights. Some sample questions might include:

- If you made time for reading the passages, how did it go?
- If you didn't, what kept you from doing it?
- What was the most surprising thing you learned?
- What is one question you have?
- How did you hear from Jesus this week? What did you hear?
- Will you plan to continue listening to Jesus?

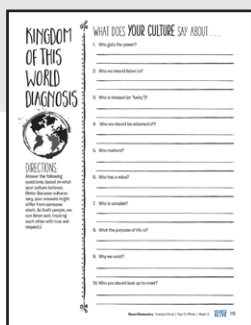
2 Lesson Introduction

The Kingdom of This World

Say: **Last week, we heard Jesus's invitation to join him in the work of God's kingdom. All week long, you had the opportunity to look at more invitations from Jesus. Today, we will look at Jesus's first sermon. In it, he makes a lot of surprising statements about the kingdom of heaven. These are surprising because they are not the way things work in our world. Sometimes it can be hard to hear something new if we are not ready. Let's think about how things work in our world.** Assemble the children into pairs and distribute the printables. Tell them to complete the worksheet with their partner. **After several minutes, invite the children to share what they learned. Then set the worksheets aside for later.**

To Prepare:

Copy the printables.



3 Scripture Story

Life in the Kingdom of God

Say: **Turn in your Bibles to Matthew 5. Let's look at what Jesus said about kingdom-life in his very first sermon—the Sermon on the Mount. You have probably heard this part of the sermon before. It's called the Beatitudes. You might have even heard someone describe it as an assessment of your life as a Christian.**

But that's not what's really going on here. Jesus is explaining how life works in his kingdom. Rather than giving us a list of rules to follow, he is

To Prepare:

Copy the printables.





offering us a host of gifts that will last forever. Jesus is showing us how dramatically different his kingdom is from the world.

Recruit several volunteers to read Matthew 5:1–12:

Jesus saw the crowds. So he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him. ²Then he began to teach them. He said, ³“Blessed are those who are spiritually needy. The kingdom of heaven belongs to them. ⁴Blessed are those who are sad. They will be comforted. ⁵Blessed are those who are humble. They will be given the earth. ⁶Blessed are those who are hungry and thirsty for what is right. They will be filled. ⁷Blessed are those who show mercy. They will be shown mercy. ⁸Blessed are those whose hearts are pure. They will see God. ⁹Blessed are those who make peace. They will be called children of God. ¹⁰Blessed are those who suffer for doing what is right. The kingdom of heaven belongs to them. ¹¹Blessed are you when people make fun of you and hurt you because of me. You are also blessed when they tell all kinds of evil lies about you because of me. ¹²Be joyful and glad. Your reward in heaven is great. In the same way, people hurt the prophets who lived long ago.

Distribute the printables and writing implements. Divide the children into groups of 2 or 3. Say: **Keep your Bibles open to the passage we just read and try to answer the questions on the left side of the page under the heading “Bible Study”:**

- 1. What is Jesus saying about the kinds of people in God’s kingdom?**
- 2. What is Jesus’s invitation to those who are listening? To us?**
- 3. How are the things Jesus is saying different from how the world works?**

Allow the children several minutes to respond to the questions in their small groups. Then invite them to share their answers with the entire class. Ask if the activity raised any questions.

Say: **Now we will read the same passage in a different version of the Bible to see if it helps us understand the verses differently.** Have the children read the passage on their printables. Allow several minutes to discuss as a large group how the second version added to their understanding of Jesus’s words. Use the following questions to guide the discussion.



4 story Discussion

- ▶ How did the second translation add to or help your understanding?
- ▶ What part of Jesus's sermon was most surprising to you?
- ▶ What part is hard for you to hear or believe?
- ▶ What would you ask Jesus about his kingdom?
- ▶ How do you think someone can be joyful and glad when they are suffering because of the gospel?

5 Craft

To Prepare:

Preview and queue the music for class.

Beatitude Posters

Say: **Let's create some art inspired by the beautiful truths about God's kingdom.** Direct student's attention to the Scripture passage printed out on the Scripture story printables. Assign each child a different verse from Matthew 5:3–12 (assign one child verses 11 and 12). If you have a large class, ask several children to work on the same verse. Say: **You now have an opportunity to illustrate today's passage. Read and reread your verse. You might find inspiration in the music also.**

Distribute the materials. Start the music. Encourage the children to create as they feel led. There is no right or wrong way to make this craft. Remind the children that this as an exercise in listening to Jesus, rather than an opportunity to prove themselves. Provide assistance as needed.

6 snack

To Prepare:

Wash and divide the grapes into small clusters.

Pretzels and Grapes

Distribute the snack and enjoy.

7 closing

To Prepare:

Make enough copies of the Take-home page for each child.

Praying the Beatitudes

Open your Bible to Matthew 5. Say: **We have heard today how living in God's kingdom is very different from living in this world—in fact, it's like an "upside-down" version of this world, turning the world's values on**





their head. Let's pray together, guided by the Scripture we read today. I will read each verse and then pause for you to pray in response to the verse. For example, when I read verse 4, "Blessed are those who are sad. They will be comforted," you will have the opportunity to pray that those who are grieving will know the comfort and peace of Jesus. You can also pray that Christ will comfort you when you are sad, or pray that Christ will show you ways to comfort others. Read through each verse, leaving a brief ten to-twenty-second pause after each verse to allow the children to pray silently.

Children line up to meet their parents. As the children leave, hand out their Take-home pages and remind them to bring home their crafts.

KINGDOM OF THIS WORLD DIAGNOSIS



DIRECTIONS:

Answer the questions, based on what your culture believes. (Note: Because cultures vary, your answers might differ from someone else's. As God's people, we can listen well, treating each other with love and respect.)

WHAT DOES YOUR CULTURE SAY ABOUT . . .

1. Who gets the power?

2. Who we should listen to?

3. Who is blessed (or "lucky")?

4. Who we should be ashamed of?

5. Who matters?

6. Who has a voice?

7. Who is valuable?

8. What the purpose of life is?

9. Why we exist?

10. Who you should look up to most?

Read Matthew 5:1-12 and answer these questions:

1. What is Jesus saying about the kinds of people in God's kingdom?
2. What is Jesus's invitation to those who are listening? To us?
3. How are the things Jesus is saying different from how the world works?

Matthew 5:1-12 (The Message)

¹⁻² When Jesus saw his ministry drawing huge crowds, he climbed a hillside. Those who were apprenticed to him, the committed, climbed with him. Arriving at a quiet place, he sat down and taught his climbing companions. This is what he said:

³ "You're blessed when you're at the end of your rope. With less of you there is more of God and his rule.

⁴ "You're blessed when you feel you've lost what is most dear to you. Only then can you be embraced by the One most dear to you.

⁵ "You're blessed when you're content with just who you are—no more, no less. That's the moment you find yourselves proud owners of everything that can't be bought.

⁶ "You're blessed when you've worked up a good appetite for God. He's food and drink in the best meal you'll ever eat.

⁷ "You're blessed when you care. At the moment of being 'care-full,' you find yourselves cared for.

⁸ "You're blessed when you get your inside world—your mind and heart—put right. Then you can see God in the outside world.

⁹ "You're blessed when you can show people how to cooperate instead of compete or fight. That's when you discover who you really are, and your place in God's family.

¹⁰ "You're blessed when your commitment to God provokes persecution. The persecution drives you even deeper into God's kingdom.

¹¹⁻¹² "Not only that—count yourselves blessed every time people put you down or throw you out or speak lies about you to discredit me.

What it means is that the truth is too close for comfort and they are uncomfortable. You can be glad when that happens—give a cheer, even—for though they don't like it, I do! And all heaven applauds. And know that you are in good company. My prophets and witnesses have always gotten into this kind of trouble."

WEEK 10

LIVE IT ALL WEEK

Upper Elementary Take Home Paper for Families



What Your Child Learned Today

Today, we studied the Beatitudes in Matthew 5:1–12. In this passage, each new beatitude builds on the previous one. We must start with a deep sense of neediness (humility before God), then mourn for sin (humility before others), and so on. In this sense, the eight beatitudes are not a checklist ("I've got five out of eight"). Instead, they describe a progressive pathway to authentic, life-changing discipleship. We discussed the difference between life in the kingdom of this world and life in God's kingdom.

Try This

Your child made a piece of artwork based on a Beatitude today during the lesson. Ask them to tell you about their artwork. As a family, work together to create other works of art based on the Beatitudes.

Sermon on the Mount: Beatitudes

- Scripture: Matthew 5:1–12
- Big Idea: Jesus describes how his kingdom flips the world's values upside down. Those who embrace his values are blessed.
- Memory Verse: "Blessed are those who are hungry and thirsty for what is right. They will be filled." Matthew 5:6

SOMETHING ELSE TO DO

Visit The Rabbit Room, a collaborative site of Christian artists, to read an article about the Beatitudes (<https://rabbitroom.com/2017/06/if-steve-jobs-translated-the-beatitudes/>). Then discuss it with your child. How does it add to their understanding of the Beatitudes? What new questions arise? How can you address these together?

Table Talk

In class, we read today's Scripture passage in both the New International Reader's Version and The Message versions. Try doing this at home. Compare the Beatitudes with what you know about how the world works. Here are some questions for discussion:

- ▶ What surprised you in Jesus's teaching?
- ▶ What was difficult to hear?
- ▶ What questions still remain?



Sermon on the Mount: Salt and Light

Matthew 5:13–20

Big Idea:

Jesus saves us for a purpose. He asks us to shine our light (his love) in the world so others are drawn to him.

Memory Verse:

“Let your light shine so others can see it. Then they will see the good things you do. And they will bring glory to your Father who is in heaven.” Matthew 5:16



Lesson overview

Today your class will learn about the Sermon on the Mount. They will discover that they are to be salt and light to the world around them.



Week 11 Lesson Plan	Activity and Supplies	To Prepare
1 Welcome Activity (5 minutes)	A Light in the Darkness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several small flashlights 	Before class, set up several flashlights around the classroom and turn out the lights.
2 Lesson Introduction (10 minutes)	Sketchbook Printables: Sketchbook Cover (one for each child) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Half-sheets (5½ x 8½ in.) of white paper (three for each child) • Stapler • Pencils, colored pencils, crayons, and/or markers 	Copy and cut out the printables. Create a sketchbook for each child by stacking and stapling three half-sheets of paper to a printable cover to make a four-page booklet.
3 Scripture Story (15 minutes)	Sermon on the Mount: Salt and Light <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sketchbooks from the Lesson Introduction • Bibles (one for each child) • Pencils, colored pencils, crayons, and/or markers 	
4 Discussion (5 minutes)		
5 Activity (10 minutes)	Salt of the Earth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salt • Styrofoam bowls (one for every 2–3 children) • Paper cups (one for every 2–3 children) • Waterproof container to transport ice • Water • Food coloring • Eye droppers (one for every 2–3 children) • Trays, e.g., baking sheets, trays, pans, tubs, etc. (one for every 2–3 children) 	Fill the Styrofoam bowls with water, leaving some room at the top for expansion. Set them in the freezer overnight. Then peel off the Styrofoam and set the ice blocks in the waterproof container. Prior to class, fill the paper cups half full of water and set 2–3 drops of food coloring in each one. Set a dropper beside each cup.
6 Snack (10 minutes)	Let Your Light Shine! <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mini cupcakes (one for each child) • Straws, cut into 2-in. segments (one for each child) • Napkins • Plastic cups • Pitcher of water 	Set a piece of straw in the center of each mini cupcake (like a candle).
7 Closing (5 minutes)	City on a Hill Printables: Take-home page (one for each child) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sketchbook from Lesson Introduction 	Make enough copies of the Take-home page for each child.



Bible Background for Leader

In the Old Testament, salt refers to God's righteous judgment (Genesis 19:26; Deuteronomy 29:23) and to holy offerings to the Lord (Exodus 30:35; Leviticus 2:13; Numbers 18:19). Salt was used to make an enemy's soil infertile and to make bad water drinkable again (through clarifying). Several places in the Old Testament include "salt" in their name, and salt was an everyday part of preparing food to eat (as a seasoning or preserving agent). Finally, salt was used in the making of important covenants.

Of course, in biblical times, no one used glass, wood, or plastic saltshakers with little holes in the top. Instead, they used what God provided in nature: salty oceans, salt lakes, salt flats, salt springs, and salt rocks. Most likely, Jesus and his followers used salt in rock form—boiled in a pot of water—to flavor the food they were preparing. If a salt rock trapped its salt inside and didn't flavor the food, or if all of its saltiness was used up, it was tossed into the street as a common stone.

In the Hebrew Scriptures, light is used to describe God and his creation. From Genesis to Revelation, light describes God's creation of the heavens and earth (sun, moon, stars), revelation (natural, prophetic, scriptural), glory (brilliance, holiness, sovereignty), presence (full of light, no need for sun), worship (altar fires, candlesticks in tabernacle and temple), holiness and judgment (lightning, bolts of fire), physical guidance (fire by night), spiritual guidance (illumination in our minds), kingdom (of light), Jesus Christ (the light of the world), and God's children (reflecting God's light to the world).

Jesus. In Matthew 5:13–16, Jesus talks about his disciples acting as salt and light. In verse 13, he makes a declaration ("You are the salt of the earth") and offers an illustration (salt that's lost its saltiness). In verses 14–16, Jesus again makes a declaration ("You

are the light of the world"), offers another illustration (light that's prevented from lighting its surroundings), and adds a specific application ("let your light shine"). Given the parallelism between these two verses, it's easy to see Jesus teaching us that, ultimately, we bring goodness into the world through the works we do in him. The Holy Spirit living in us enables these works, such as gracious speech (Colossians 4:6) and a peacemaking way of life (Mark 9:50). They indicate our citizenship in God's kingdom (Colossians 1:12; 1 Thessalonians 5:5; 1 Peter 2:9). By abiding in Jesus, we are vessels through which he shines his light into the world.

In Matthew 5:17–20, Jesus presents a high view of the Old Testament before proceeding to extend the teaching. Jesus clearly states that he will fulfill the Hebrew Scriptures completely (vv. 17–18). He also clearly states that anyone who is going to be part of his kingdom must practice and teach God's Word accurately and completely (vv. 19–20). People cannot reject or judge God's Word. Instead, it is God's Word that judges the thoughts and intentions of our hearts (Hebrews 4:12).

The Church and the World. Salt enhances the flavors of foods and beverages. It preserves foods, beverages, and animal skins. It even cleans wounds and promotes faster healing. Likewise, as followers of Christ, we enhance and heal the world with our lives. The word *light* is mentioned eighty-seven times in the New Testament. Light helps people see what is right in front of them, keeps them from stumbling, and provides warmth. Jesus and his followers are referred to as the light of the world—we carry his light to others, giving them a means to see Jesus, follow him, and be warmed by his love.



1 Welcome Activity

To Prepare:

Before class, set up several flashlights around the classroom and turn out the lights.

A Light in the Darkness

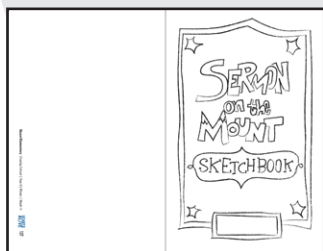
As the children arrive, tell them to carefully find their seats. Say: **Imagine a world in darkness—where candles or flashlights guide you, and the moon and stars light your path. Imagine a world without electricity. The world lived this way for most of history. On the last day of 1879, Thomas Edison demonstrated the first incandescent light bulb, and the world changed. With the help of Benjamin Franklin's discovery of electricity, the idea of light at the flick of a switch was a reality.** Turn on the classroom lights.

Even today, over a hundred and forty years later, we can see how special light is. Just try brushing your teeth at night without it or enjoying a good book before bed. Now, let's go back in time, before Thomas Edison and Benjamin Franklin, keep going to the days of chariots and robes—back to the time of Jesus. Today we will find out what Jesus had to say about light.

2 Lesson Introduction

To Prepare:

Copy and cut out the printables. Create a sketchbook for each child by stacking and stapling three half-sheets of paper to a printable cover to make a four-page booklet.



Sketchbook

Distribute the sketchbooks. Set the art supplies nearby. Say: **Today we will travel to a mountainside in Israel. We will hear what Jesus taught in his Sermon on the Mount, one of the most memorable passages in Scripture. We heard a portion of it last week. Today, here on the hillside, we will pretend to be artists. We will sketch as we listen to Jesus's sermon. But, first, let's color the cover of your sketchbook.**

Jesus tells his followers he is fulfilling God's ancient promises. He mentions names of people that his listeners know and trust, like Moses. He uses images the people can relate to in their everyday life. He wants them to understand God's call on their lives. Let's listen to find out what this call entails.



3 Scripture Story

Sermon on the Mount: Salt and Light

Make sure art supplies and sketchbooks are at hand. Distribute the Bibles. Say:
Open your Bible to Matthew chapter 5. Recruit several volunteers to read verses 13–20, taking turns verse-by-verse:

¹³ "You are the salt of the earth. But suppose the salt loses its saltiness. How can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything. It will be thrown out. People will walk all over it.

¹⁴ "You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill can't be hidden.
¹⁵ Also, people do not light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead, they put it on its stand. Then it gives light to everyone in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine so others can see it. Then they will see the good things you do. And they will bring glory to your Father who is in heaven.

¹⁷ "Do not think I have come to get rid of what is written in the Law or in the Prophets. I have not come to do this. Instead, I have come to fulfill what is written. ¹⁸ What I'm about to tell you is true. Heaven and earth will disappear before the smallest letter disappears from the Law. Not even the smallest mark of a pen will disappear from the Law until everything is completed. ¹⁹ Do not ignore even one of the least important commands. And do not teach others to ignore them. If you do, you will be called the least important person in the kingdom of heaven. Instead, practice and teach these commands. Then you will be called important in the kingdom of heaven. ²⁰ Here is what I tell you. You must be more godly than the Pharisees and the teachers of the law. If you are not, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.

Say: **Jesus was seated on the mountain, surrounded by a great crowd. Some of the people were already his followers and others were curious. Jesus taught so powerfully, that people remembered his words. They wrote them down and passed them on to others.**

Jesus began his sermon by promising that God's kingdom would bring blessing to people who had little hope for good things. Many people had been wrongly told that God's promises were not for *them*. Jesus corrected that lie. This was very good news!

Jesus went on to describe how his followers would live in God's kingdom.



Tell the children that you will share three word pictures from Jesus's sermon. Each word picture describes God's kingdom. Have the children sketch these pictures in their sketchbook, each picture on its own page.

In the first word picture, Jesus compares his disciples to *salt*. Open your sketchbooks and start drawing your first entry: salt. This can be a jar of salt, salt coming out of a shaker, or a big mound of salt.

What does salt do? Let the children respond. **Yes, salt helps food taste better. It can actually bring out the real flavor of food. Before refrigeration, salt helped food last longer. Is salt useful if it stays in the jar? No. It has to be sprinkled out. Why do you think Jesus said his followers should be like salt?** Let the children respond. **Yes, because he wanted us to “sprinkle” Jesus’s love and forgiveness on those around us. Then, they can become what they were meant to be—God’s children. Also, we help preserve order and peace in our world by living out God’s love.**

Remind the children they can finish drawing at home. For now, they should do a basic sketch of each image.

Now, let’s look at the second word picture Jesus gives. He compares his disciples to *light*. Begin sketching your second entry: light. What does light do? Let the children respond. **Yes, light makes it easier to see. When there’s light, we don’t lose our way or fall down. Light also brings warmth, like a fire. Why does Jesus want us to be like light?** Let the children respond. **Good ideas! Yes, he wants us to shine his love and kindness into the world. Then people will be drawn to Jesus. We can also bring Jesus’s warm love to comfort those who are suffering.**

The third picture Jesus uses to describe his disciples is a *town on top of a hill*. You can start sketching this image. What does a town on a hill do? Let the children respond. **Yes, a brightly lit town on a hill can be seen for miles and miles around. Day or night, a town set high on a hill can be used for navigation. Why do you think Jesus wants us to be like this town?** Let the children respond. **Good ideas! Yes, Jesus wants us to help others see his kingdom, even if they are far away. As a town on a hill, we can help others find Jesus.**

So the three word pictures are: salt, light, and a town on a hill. You can add details to your drawings as I share the rest of the lesson. But be sure to listen as well.

The people must have wondered where Jesus learned these things! His



words were different from the other religious teachers. Would this new teaching replace what God had already said in earlier Scriptures? No, Jesus says. In fact, he guarantees that every single word God had said before, was part of the plan Jesus is now describing.

Jesus told them he did not come to end God's promises, but to accomplish them (Matthew 5:17). Every promise is still true, and because Jesus has come, the ancient promises of God will now be fulfilled.

The words of Israel's first teacher on the mountain, Moses, are still true. His promise that a Messiah would come through Israel was true. The prophets who promised that God's Messiah would be a light to the Gentiles also were right. All these words and Scriptures agree with the words of Jesus because Jesus had come to accomplish all of God's plans.

Jesus accomplished God's promises by giving his life as the perfect Lamb on our behalf. He took our sins and gave us his purity. Now, we can be reconciled with God, our Father in heaven, and live with Jesus forever. Jesus is still fulfilling God's promises—calling many to his kingdom through the Holy Spirit and through us!

That's why we are to be salt in the world, light in the dark, and a town on a hill. When others see the way we love others, forgive, and live differently, through the help of the Spirit, they will know we are Christ-followers. Many will see that God's kingdom has come, and they will thank God.

4 story discussion

- ▶ **Who is Jesus speaking to on the mountain?** (His disciples and the crowds)
- ▶ **Jesus compares his followers to salt, light, and a town on a hill. Which image do you connect with the most? Why?** (Answers will vary.)
- ▶ **Share about a time when you have acted like salt, light, or a town on a hill.** (Answers will vary.)
- ▶ **The lives of Jesus's disciples, including ours, will be visible to those around us. How can we impact others?** (Lord willing, we will point people to Jesus through our love and actions.)
- ▶ **Jesus's purpose was not to abandon God's promises made in the Old Testament but to accomplish them. What proof do we have of this?** (Jesus fulfilled the words of the Old Testament prophets that a Messiah would come, like a spotless lamb, to take away the sins of the world. See Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53.)



5 Activity

To Prepare:

Fill the Styrofoam bowls with water, leaving some room at the top for expansion. Set them in the freezer overnight. Then peel off the Styrofoam and set the ice blocks in the waterproof container. Prior to class, fill the paper cups half full of water and set 2–3 drops of food coloring in each one. Set a dropper beside each cup.

Salt of the Earth

Set out the pre-frozen ice blocks and supplies. Say: **In our lesson today, Jesus calls us to be the salt of the earth. We are to bring flavor to the drab world of sin. We are to help preserve peace and righteousness across the globe. We are to be useful every day: praying for others, serving others, and caring for others *all* the days of the week, not just Sunday. Let's explore these ideas with a fun science experiment.**

Divide the class into groups of 2 or 3. Set a tray in front of each group and put 1–2 tbsp of salt in a corner of the tray. Then set one large ice block in the center of each tray. Say: **Use your fingers to sprinkle salt over your block of ice and let's see what happens.** Allow time for the children to sprinkle salt and for the salt to work. The ice should start melting and leave cracks in the blocks. Allow a full five minutes for the most dramatic results. As they watch, ask the children to describe what they see. Then, distribute the droppers and cups with food coloring. Have the children use the droppers to drop colored water onto the ice blocks. This will expose the effects of the salt.

Say: **Salt can bring wonder and awe. In ancient times, salt was as valuable as gold. If we are salt, we will bring wonder and awe that points back to our Father in heaven. If we are salt, we will be used by the Holy Spirit to create cracks for the gospel to move inside people's hearts and lives. If we are salt, we will be used every day to show Jesus's love to others. These ice blocks would be only that—colorless, uninteresting blocks of ice—if not for the salt.**

Jesus saves us for a purpose. He asks us to act like salt and to shine our light (his grace) in the world, so others are drawn to him. We are more valuable than gold to our Father in heaven! When we allow him to love us, we become the salt that makes others thirst for him, too.

Have the children help clean up and then return to their seats.

6 Snack

To Prepare:

Set a piece of straw in the center of each mini cupcake (like a candle).

Let Your Light Shine!

Distribute the snack and enjoy.



7 closing

To Prepare:

Make enough copies of the Take-home page for each child.



City on a Hill

Say: **Our last picture is the town on the hill. Imagine now, instead of being in the town, you are looking for the town. You are lost, alone, and need help. What kind of town would you be looking for where you would feel safe to go inside? How can we be that kind of town for others? How can we love others and welcome others into God's kingdom? How can we point them to Jesus? God calls us to shine our light (his grace) in the world, so others are drawn to him.**

Children line up to meet their parents. As the children leave, hand out their Take-home pages and remind them to bring home their crafts.



WEEK 11

LIVE IT ALL WEEK

Upper Elementary Take Home Paper for Families



What Your Child Learned Today

Your child heard part of the Sermon on the Mount. They explored the word pictures Jesus gives his listeners to help them understand their role in bringing the kingdom of God to the earth (salt, light, and a town on a hill). Your child learned that they are more precious than gold to our heavenly Father. He wants all his children to share in his heavenly kingdom.

Try This

Look in your church bulletin. Find examples of how your church is being a town on a hill in your community. What are ways your child can join the Christian community this week in bringing the kingdom of God to a corner of your city? If you don't find a good match, are there ways your family can serve others in your community this week with a smile and a kind word? Maybe your family will be salt and "season" the community kitchen or bring light to the local homeless shelter.

Sermon on the Mount: Salt and Light

- Scripture: Matthew 5:13–20
- Big Idea: Jesus saves us for a purpose. He asks us to shine our light (his love) in the world, so others are drawn to him.
- Memory Verse: "Let your light shine so others can see it. Then they will see the good things you do. And they will bring glory to your Father who is in heaven." Matthew 5:16

SOMETHING ELSE TO DO

On your next trip to the library, check out a book on the painter, Rembrandt Van Rijn. He painted many biblical scenes (preview these before viewing them with your child). In these scenes, notice where Rembrandt placed the light and how the darkness around it almost flees in the presence of the light. Discuss how Jesus calls us to be a light in the darkness. How might that look in our everyday lives?

Table Talk

- **Sample a few of your favorite dishes without salt. What do you think? Salt adds so much flavor to our lives. Discuss the ways Christians add flavor to the world and how we can bring out the true flavor of God's world. Read Jesus's words about being salt in Matthew chapter 5.**



Sermon on the Mount: The Law in our Hearts

Matthew 5:21–37

Big Idea:

Jesus calls us to follow God's laws not only by our actions, but in our hearts. When we sin, we should turn to God, who forgives us in Jesus and sends his Spirit to help us obey him from the inside out.

Memory Verse:

"Help me understand your law so that I may follow it. I will obey it with all my heart."

Psalm 119:34



Lesson Overview

Today your class will learn that Jesus cares more about the heart than outward actions. The children will complete their study of the Sermon on the Mount and will be reminded that Jesus rescues everyone who calls on him by faith.



Week 12 Lesson Plan	Activity and Supplies	To Prepare
1 Welcome Activity (5 minutes)	Math Equation • Chalkboard/whiteboard and chalk/dry-erase marker	On the board, write the math equation: $4,286 - 1,532 = 2,756$. (This is meant to be the incorrect answer.)
2 Lesson Introduction (5 minutes)	Jesus, the Great Teacher	
3 Scripture Story (10 minutes)	Sermon on the Mount: The Law in Our Hearts • Bible	
4 Discussion (5 minutes)		
5 Game (10 minutes)	Picture Dilemma Printables: Storyboard • Sandwich-size zipper bags • Timer	Copy and cut apart the printables. Set all the panels for Group A in one bag and the panels for Group B in another.
6 Craft (10 minutes)	Beauty in Our Wounds • Pens or pencils • Clear tape • Gold glitter glue • Paint brushes or cotton swabs • Construction paper in a variety of pale colors • Markers	Cut 4-in. diameter paper hearts out of construction paper (one heart for each child).
7 Snack (10 minutes)	A New Heart • Strawberries, cut in halves • Whipped cream • Spoon • Napkins • Paper plates • Paper cups • Pitcher of water	Cut the strawberries in halves.
8 Closing (5 minutes)	His Heart Printables: Take-home page (one for each child)	Make enough copies of the Take-home page for each child.



Bible Background for Leader

In Matthew 5:17–18, Jesus declares that he will fulfill the Hebrew Scriptures in their entirety. He then declares in verses 19–20 that anyone who is going to be part of his kingdom must practice and teach God's Word accurately and completely. People cannot reject or judge God's Word. Instead, it is God's Word that judges the thoughts and intentions of our hearts.

Jesus. In this week's Scripture, Jesus expands and clarifies what it means to follow the Old Testament laws, focusing on the heart attitude beneath the overt observation. For example, when Jesus talks about the prohibition against murder, he adds that despising a brother or sister in your heart or holding onto unresolved anger against them is akin to murder. Jesus goes on to give two positive examples of prioritizing relationships—being sure to resolve any conflict with others before going to the "altar," meaning a place of worship, and attempting to resolve legal issues before resorting to a court of law. Both of these injunctions reveal Jesus's focus on matters of the heart: true obedience is from the heart.

Jesus continues this expansion and clarification of the law in his discussion of adultery and divorce, again putting emphasis on the relationship—true love

does not see the opposite sex as a means of self-gratification, but honors others and esteems marriage at the relational level.

When Jesus turns to discussing promises, or oaths, we may not at first see the same pattern, but it is there. His appeal not to swear by God or by the earth or even by one's own name is actually an appeal to honor God from our hearts. We do this by recognizing that his name is holy and not to be used lightly; the earth is his footstool and he is sovereign over it. Even our own lives are in God's hands. When we honor him as Lord over all, we put ourselves under his leadership and submit to his rule. We trust his Spirit to shape and guide our hearts.

The Church and the World. As believers in Jesus, we have seen the fulfillment of the law in Jesus. He is the righteousness we can never be, the only sinless human being ever to walk the earth. In God's grace and providence, he provided a way to wrap us in the righteousness of Jesus. Now, as Christ's followers, still subject to a sinful world, we ask for the help of his Spirit to walk in step with his righteousness. How do we do that? By humbly following his teachings from the heart, with the strength and grace he provides.



To Prepare:

On the board, write the math equation: $4,286 - 1,532 = 2,756$. (This is meant to be the incorrect answer.)

1 Welcome Activity

Math Equation

Say: **Have you ever taken a math quiz and missed every single problem? Smile. OK, have you ever missed just one or two? What if you went back to a problem you got wrong, looked at it again, reworked it** (pretend to rework the equation on the board), **and again got the same wrong answer?** Point to the problem with the incorrect answer. **When you ask the teacher, she says, "Your answer is still not correct. Go all the way back to the beginning." So, you go back and try again. And guess what? You get the same wrong answer again! Finally, after a few minutes of looking, the teacher says, "Oh, I see. You copied the problem down wrong!"** Erase the second line (1,532) and replace it with 1,530. **When we write it correctly, guess what? The answer is correct! In today's lesson, we are going to talk about another incorrect equation. Let's get started!**

2 Lesson Introduction

Jesus, the Great Teacher

Say: **Can you remember the name of your favorite teacher from elementary school? I bet you can. Let's hear them.** Recruit volunteers to share the name of their favorite teacher. If time permits, have them also share *why* that teacher was their favorite. **Every teacher gives us knowledge. Really good teachers give us wisdom. And really great teachers give us ways to remember what they have taught us. Today we are finishing our study on the Sermon on the Mount. For three weeks, we have learned from this teaching of Jesus. I think that we could keep studying this passage for three years and still have more to learn! In today's Scripture story, Jesus brings surprising wisdom and truth the people of Israel had never heard before. Let's hear what he says.**

3 Scripture Story

Sermon on the Mount: The Law in Our Hearts

Open your Bible to Matthew 5:21–37. Say: **Jesus was a great teacher. He spoke with God's authority. God had sent many teachers to Israel before; they had also spoken true words. Moses, the temple priests, and the prophets had each received God's words and told them to the people. But**



Jesus was now expanding their teaching, helping his followers understand what God truly desired from them.

Remember our earlier equation? We had the answer right, but the problem was wrong. Well, now, Jesus is giving God's people the full correct equation, so to speak. In the Old Testament, only part of the equation was known. People knew they were not supposed to murder, commit adultery, lie, or steal. But now, Jesus is saying, you are missing something! An essential part of the equation of pleasing God has been left out. Does anyone know what that is? Let the children respond. Yes, it is the heart! Real obedience to God must come from the heart. It's deeper than just actions.

For example, Jesus reminded his listeners that God commanded them not to murder. But Jesus said, wait, that's not all. If you don't murder someone, but you still hate them in your heart, run them down under your breath, or refuse to ever forgive them, that's just like murdering that person in your heart. God takes that very seriously.

Here's another one. Jesus said that it's not enough just to worship God—we need to have a pure heart while we do that. So, if you are going to church the next week and remember that you have hurt someone's feelings or harmed them, you should go to them as soon as you can—preferably before worship—and ask their forgiveness.

These words sound difficult to follow, don't they? In a few minutes, I'll share some good news with you.

Two more teachings from Jesus. Are you ready?

Jesus had something to say about how people relate to each other. We already knew that God commanded married couples to be faithful to each other and honor their marriage vows. That was in the Old Testament equation. But, Jesus adds, God wants you to honor every person you see as a child of God. Don't look at them as an object—as something you want to possess. Look at them as God does—as his creation to be treated with honor and respect.

Finally, Jesus says something about our promises. He says we should simply say "Yes" or "No" rather than make a promise by heaven, or by his name, or even by the hair on our heads. Today's equivalent might be when someone says, "I swear I'll do it!" Or even adds God's name to that. Jesus says that when we do this, it is evil. We are not honoring God in our hearts. We are being prideful and boasting that we will do something no matter



what. But we don't control the world or even know what will happen to us today. So we should stay humble. Just say "Yes, I will do that" or "No, I won't."

Imagine how wonderful the world would be if everyone followed these words of Jesus! If we didn't hold hatred in our hearts, if we made up with those we hurt before we worshiped God, if we respected everyone and put our trust in God rather than boasting.

But first, people need NEW hearts. The good news is, this is what Jesus came to earth to do—to forgive our sins and give us new hearts. When we trust Jesus as our Savior, we receive a new heart.

But even with new hearts, will we always do the right thing? Let the children respond.

No, we won't. We are not fully perfected yet; we still live in a broken world and we still sin. There may be times when we stay angry for a long time, call people names, refuse to forgive, or make promises we can't keep. When we do these things, what should we do? Let the children respond. **Yes, we should come to God through Jesus and ask his forgiveness. We should determine to turn away from that sin. If we do that, God promises to forgive us. He also promises his Spirit will help us obey him by our actions and in our hearts. That's great news!**

4 story discussion

- ▶ **What are some of the issues Jesus addresses with his listeners on the mountainside?** (Murder, adultery, divorce, oaths/promises)
- ▶ **How do we "murder" someone in our hearts?** (Hate them, call them names, refuse to forgive them)
- ▶ **How should we treat every person we see?** (With honor and respect)
- ▶ **When we trust Jesus, what does he do with our hearts?** (He gives us new hearts that want to obey him.)
- ▶ **When we have feelings in our hearts—like anger or pride—that don't honor God, what can we do?** (We can bring our inward feelings to Jesus and ask him to help us not act on those feelings but change them and help us do the right thing.)



5 Game

To Prepare:

Copy and cut apart the printables. Set all the panels for Group A in one bag and the panels for Group B in another.



Picture Dilemma

Divide the group into two teams. Distribute a bag with the cut apart printables to each team. Say: **Each team has two minutes to put their story in the correct order. Look at the pictures and decide how the events happened. Line up the pictures and raise your hands when your team has finished.** Set the timer and allow time for the children to line up the pictures. Once both teams have completed their storyboards, say: **Great job, both teams! Let's talk about what we see in our stories.** Let each team recruit a spokesperson to tell their story. After each team has told their story, say: **What are the similarities in the two stories?** The children should recognize that the first two squares are the same. The paths diverge when the main character makes different choices based on how they are feeling. Discuss the differences the children see in the stories. Ask the children: **How would you feel if your friend treated you this way? Have they ever treated a friend like this? What does it mean to reconcile with someone?** Let the children respond.

Every day, we are given opportunities to guard our hearts. Jesus cares about all the moments in our lives, no matter how unimportant they seem. In any moment, we can whisper a prayer in our hearts as simple as, "Help me, Jesus!" He hears, and he will help. Our small upsets grow larger if we allow them to stay in our heart. Jesus wants us to have a new heart; he wants to be our rescuing Savior. All we have to do is ask him and receive his grace.

6 Craft

To Prepare:

Cut 4-in. diameter paper hearts out of construction paper (one heart for each child).

Beauty in Our Wounds

Say: **There is an art form called Kintsugi (kin-soo-gee). In Japan, artists repair broken pottery with gold or sometimes gold-colored paint. The renewed pottery is considered all the more beautiful because of its brokenness.** Distribute hearts. Say: **On one side of your paper heart, write one or more sinful or sad feelings or action. When you are finished writing, tear your heart into 3 or 4 pieces.** Explain how our human hearts are broken by pain and sin. Then tell the children to tape the pieces back together. Once the heart is taped together, have the children flip their heart over and carefully apply gold glitter glue over the tear marks. Say: **Use the gold glue to create beauty in the broken heart as you put it back together. How is this like what Jesus**



does with our hearts? Let the children respond. **Yes, Jesus receives our broken hearts and heals and renews them. Jesus can make our hearts all the more beautiful because of their brokenness through his redeeming touch, just like the gold.** Have the children turn the paper back over to reveal the sinful parts. Then flip it over again. Say: **God promises to make something beautiful out of all our sin and pain when we bring our broken hearts to him.**

7 snack

To Prepare:

Cut the strawberries in halves.

A New Heart

Say: **Let's give thanks for the healing of our hearts in Jesus. Distribute the snack and enjoy.**

8 closing

To Prepare:

Make enough copies of the Take-home page for each child.

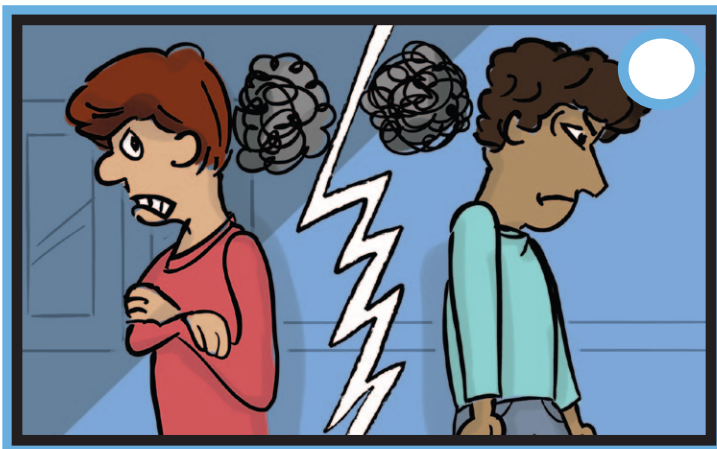
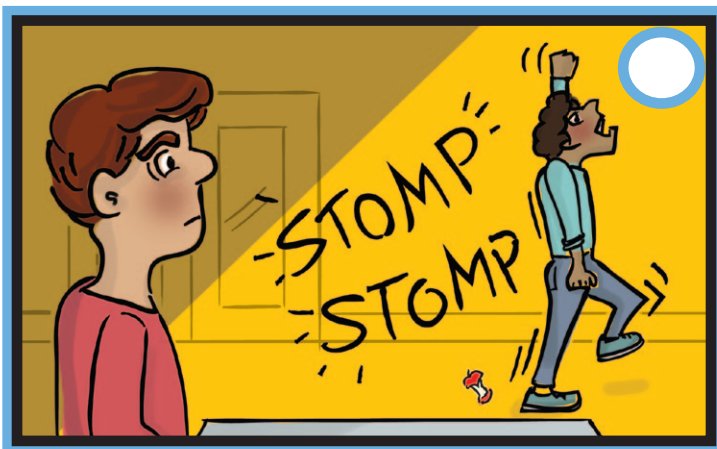


His Heart

Say: **Without Jesus and his sacrifice for our sins, it would be scary to look inside our hearts. But remembering what Jesus has accomplished on the cross gives us hope—when we see the evil in our own hearts, we can ask Jesus for forgiveness and he will forgive our sins. We do not have to be afraid to bring our hearts to Jesus. When we repent of our sins and call on Jesus, God forgives us and helps us obey him from the inside out. That's why Jesus went to the cross. His death redeems us, forgives us, changes our hearts, and helps us obey God.** Recruit volunteers to close in prayer.

Children line up to meet their parents. As the children leave, hand out their Take-home pages and remind them to bring home their crafts.

Group A



Group B



WEEK 12

Live It All Week

Upper Elementary Take Home Paper for Families


 Obey

What Your Child Learned Today

Today your child heard about Jesus as the great teacher. Jesus not only cares about our outward actions, but also our hearts. At any moment, Jesus invites us to stop, pray, and ask him for help with our difficult or painful feelings. When we allow the Holy Spirit to change our hearts, our actions will change too. Jesus helps us obey God from the inside out.

Try This

In the *Book of Common Prayer* there is a prayer of confession with the line: "I have not loved you with my whole heart. I have not loved my neighbor as myself." Discuss what this means with your child; talk about how it is a reminder to look both at our actions and our hearts. Discuss the forgiveness Jesus offers for all our sins.

Sermon on the Mount: The Law in Our Hearts

- Scripture: Matthew 5:21–37
- Big Idea: Jesus calls us to follow God's laws not only by our actions, but in our hearts. When we sin, we should turn to God, who forgives us in Jesus and sends his Spirit to help us obey him from the inside out.
- Memory Verse: "Help me understand your law so that I may follow it. I will obey it with all my heart." Psalm 119:34

SOMETHING ELSE TO DO

Bake a batch of cookies together. As you are putting the recipe together, ask your child if they think it would be a good idea to put only a quarter of the sugar into the dough. Chances are you would find out very quickly how important the sugar is in making the cookies taste delicious. When God changes us from the inside, he takes our sinful, sad hearts and makes them sweet and full of his love.

Table Talk

- Go around the table and share a moment this week when you felt angry. Give each person a chance to share. Then ask each other a few questions. How did you handle the situation? Could you have done something differently? What would you change if you could travel back in time? How can you respond differently the next time you are angry?



Transfiguration

Matthew 17:1–9

Big Idea:

In his transfiguration, Jesus revealed his divinity and his disciples were terrified. We should be in awe of Jesus, but not afraid. Jesus died for our sins so we can stand before God's holy presence forever.

Memory Verse:

"His face shone like the sun. His clothes became as white as the light."

Matthew 17:2b



Lesson Overview

Today your class will hear the story of the transfiguration. They will see and hear Jesus reveal himself as God. They will hear about the terrified disciples, but they will find reassurance that we have no reason to fear Jesus. We can come to him with all our needs. The children will make a take-home play set to continue telling the story of the transfiguration.



	Week 13 Lesson Plan	Activity and Supplies	To Prepare
1	Welcome Activity (10 minutes)	One-Up • Paper clip	
2	Lesson Introduction (10 minutes)	Glory Story • Toy animal sponge capsules (e.g., Magic Grow capsules) • Clear pitcher • Warm water	Fill the pitcher with warm water.
3	Scripture Story (10 minutes)	Transfiguration • Bibles • 7 tennis balls • Permanent marker • Bibles for the class	Gather the materials. With permanent marker, write the following names on the balls: Peter, James, John, Moses, Elijah, God the Father, and Jesus.
4	Discussion (5 minutes)		
5	Snack (10 minutes)	Snack Shelters • Graham crackers (one for each child) • Marshmallow fluff • Potato sticks, pretzel sticks, raisins, and chocolate chips • 4 bowls • Paper cups • Pitcher of water • Napkins	Set the loose ingredients in bowls.
6	Game (10 minutes)	Who Did What? Printables: People Cards and Action Cards	Copy and cut out the printables. Keep the two sets of cards separate.
7	Closing (5 minutes)	Camouflage Printables: Take-home page (one for each child) • Video player with Web access • Visit YouTube and search for "Top Ten Animals with Amazing Camouflage" https://youtu.be/3TNv3t8XI-4?t=303 (Watch 5:03 to end.)	Preview and queue the video for class. Make enough copies of the Take-home page for each child.



Bible Background for Leader

This week's Scripture story features Jesus, Peter, James, John, Moses, Elijah, and God the Father. The account appears not only here in Matthew 17:1–9, but also in slightly different ways in Mark 9:2–8 and Luke 9:28–36. Importantly, it recalls the giving of the old covenant law to Moses (Exodus 19–20; 31–34). Comparing the Old and New Testaments' introduction of the covenants, we find that both happened on a mountain. In the Old Testament, Moses's face shone, but his glory from God faded; Moses and the people all heard God's voice; and God showed Moses a bit of his eternal radiance and glory. In the New Testament, Jesus's whole being shone and his glory was a preview of his eternal glory as God's Son (only veiled while on earth); Peter, James, and John heard God's voice; and Jesus showed them a bit of his eternal radiance and glory. Both Moses and Jesus encountered unbelief when they descended the mountains.

Jesus. The focus of this week's Scripture story is Jesus Christ's divinity. Jesus is the one and only (unique) Son of God. While still fully God, Jesus became fully human. We see his humanity from the cradle (his humble birth, yet he was worshiped by angels, shepherds, and magi) to the cross (his humiliating death, yet he conquered sin and death for us forever). In many ways, the transfiguration is both a glimpse of Jesus's coming bodily resurrection as well as a glimpse of his eternal radiance in heaven. When

we teach about Jesus's divinity, it's helpful to explain who God is and why we worship him.

First, who is God? God is the Trinity: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Second, why do we worship God? We worship God because of his infinite, eternal sovereignty (greatness), providence (guidance and goodness), holiness (glory), love (graciousness), and mystery ("God alone knows"). In other words, we worship God because of his infinite, eternal power (omnipotence), presence (omnipresence), plans (omniscience), providence, purity, and passion.

Let us never forget to teach that human beings can't fully understand who God is. Still, God has given us 1,000 pages of Scripture to help quench our thirst to know God as he really is. Across those pages, God urges us to believe him, trust him, receive him, obey him, worship him, and love him with all our heart, soul, strength, and mind.

The Church and the World. So, what is our proper response to the transfiguration? Clearly, it's not fear. Jesus told his disciples not to be afraid. Instead, our proper response is belief and trust in Jesus's divinity and in the new covenant that he offers through the good news gospel message. The more clearly children see and understand these two proper responses, the more they will celebrate God's love and friendship now—and forever.



1 Welcome Activity

One-Up

Assemble the children in a circle on the floor. Say: **In today's story, Jesus shares something amazing with his friends. We are going to start our time together by playing a game about sharing amazing things. Sometimes, when people are in groups, they try to outdo one another's stories or experiences by one-upping them. They add facts or details to take the focus off the first speaker and place it on themselves instead. We will go around our circle and play a game of "One-Up."**

I will start with a sentence. "My paper clip holds papers together." Then I will pass the paper clip to the person to my left, who will say something like, "You think that's something? My paper clip holds papers together AND is very shiny!" Then they will pass it on to the next person, who will add to the paper clip's amazing powers. It's up to you if you want to say something the paper clip can actually do, or if you want to make it crazy! Each person will make the sentence a little grander or more unbelievable until everyone has had a chance to one-up their neighbor. Play as long as time permits.

Ask: **Have you ever been in a situation with a one-upper? How do you feel about someone who always highlights their most unique and advantageous features?** Let the children respond.

In today's lesson, we will see that Jesus revealed something profoundly unique about himself on a mountain, but he didn't do so by exaggeration or bragging. In fact, his response to his friends teaches us a great deal about his character.

2 Lesson Introduction

Glory Story

Display the filled water pitcher. Set the capsules nearby. Say: **I can change water by adding things to it. For example, if I add lemons and sugar to this pitcher of water, I can make lemonade. I can also change the water in other ways. If I add heat to the water, I can make steam. If I surround it with cold, I can make ice. These are all changes that come from the outside. Things on the outside make the water change inside.**

Display the capsules. Say: **Inside these capsules are pieces of foam that**

To Prepare:

Fill the pitcher with warm water.



expand when dissolved. While we wait to see what is revealed when we place these in water, I want you to listen to our Scripture story and think about where Jesus's glory originated. Hint: Jesus was begotten from the Father. He is God from God—the second person of the Trinity. He took on a body, but that's not when he came into being. He had always been. We'll learn more about his glory in today's story.

3 scripture story

To Prepare:

Gather the materials. With permanent marker, write the following names on the balls: Peter, James, John, Moses, Elijah, God the Father, and Jesus.

Transfiguration

Have the children open their Bibles to Matthew 17. Say: **Today's story took place right after Jesus had taught large crowds of people—after he had done many mighty works. It happened before Jesus went to Jerusalem to be crucified.**

Recruit a volunteer to read Matthew 17:1: "After six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John the brother of James with him. He led them up a high mountain. They were all alone."

●●● *Set the first four tennis balls on the table in a line (Jesus, Peter, James, and John).*

Say: **Jesus led three of his friends up a mountain. These three friends already knew that Jesus was special. They had witnessed all he had said and done. This time, they were not going up the mountain to hear his powerful words or see his miracles. They were going up the mountain to be with Jesus.**

Recruit a volunteer to read Matthew 17:2: "There in front of them his appearance was changed. His face shone like the sun. His clothes became as white as the light."

Say: **While they were on the mountain, Jesus's appearance radically changed! His face shone like the sun. It's dangerous to even try to look at the sun isn't it! But Jesus shone like that. His clothes became as white as light. We call this amazing event the Transfiguration, which means to change appearance. But unlike our water earlier, Jesus's change did not come from the outside. He wasn't reflecting another light. The glory that was always inside him was being revealed. Jesus is full of glory, not because of his words or his miracles, but because of who he is: The Son of God.**

Recruit a volunteer to read Matthew 17:3: "Just then Moses and Elijah appeared in front of them. Moses and Elijah were talking with Jesus."



Say: **While the disciples were on the mountain, suddenly two men appeared and began talking with Jesus. Who were they?** Let the children respond. **Yes, Moses and Elijah appeared! They had both been in heaven for a long, long time. But here they were.**

●●● *Set out the next two tennis balls in a line above the first three, beginning to build a flat (or 3-D) pyramid.*

Say: **The Son of God was standing in front of the three friends. And he was joined by Moses and Elijah. Jesus had taught the crowds the true meaning of Moses's words, and he had performed mighty signs like Elijah had. But here, Moses and Elijah were talking with Jesus like friends. They, too, were seeing the glory of Jesus.**

Recruit a volunteer to read Matthew 17:4: "Peter said to Jesus, 'Lord, it is good for us to be here. If you wish, I will put up three shelters. One will be for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.'"

Peter wanted to make this amazing moment last. His idea was to build a shelter for all three of these great leaders, so Israel would know that Jesus was full of glory. Peter wanted everyone to see Jesus as he was seeing him right then.

But Jesus didn't need a shelter because his glory was not temporary or fading. Only his earthly ministry was temporary. God's love for the world led Jesus to come to earth and offer his life so that we can draw near to God.

Recruit a volunteer to read Matthew 17:5: "While Peter was still speaking, a bright cloud covered them. A voice from the cloud said, 'This is my Son, and I love him. I am very pleased with him. Listen to him!'"

●●● *Set the final tennis ball at the top of the pyramid (God the Father).*

Say: **While the glory of God was still shining from Jesus, a bright cloud—a symbol of God's presence—enveloped the three friends and God the Father spoke. Do you remember what he said? Where have we heard similar words before?** Let the children respond. **Yes! God repeated his words from Jesus's baptism: "This is my Son, and I love him. I am very pleased with him" (Matthew 3:17; 17:5). This time God added, "Listen to him!" Throughout Scripture, God tells us that Jesus is his Son. He wants us to believe in Jesus. The testimony of who Jesus is comes right down from God the Father, like this pyramid. He sent his Son to save the world.**



Recruit a volunteer to read Matthew 17:6: "When the disciples heard this, they were terrified. They fell with their faces to the ground."

The disciples were afraid. Their friend Jesus was not just a good man or miracle worker who had volunteered to serve God. Jesus *was* God, and his glory was being shown to them. Their ideas about Jesus were surely changing. When they were talking to Jesus, they were talking to God. And when they listened to Jesus, they were hearing the voice and heart of God. God had granted the friends of Jesus an extraordinary glimpse into the glory of his Son, but he had simply reaffirmed what he had said at the beginning: Trust him. He is doing everything perfectly: showing mercy to sinners, moving towards the cross, and offering friendship with God.

Recruit a volunteer to read Matthew 17:7–8: "But Jesus came and touched them. 'Get up,' he said. 'Don't be afraid!' When they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus."

●●● *Roll away the tennis balls for God the Father, Moses, and Elijah.*

Say: This Jesus, the Glorious One, came to them and touched them. He told them not to be afraid. They opened their eyes and, once again, it was just Jesus and they on the mountain.

Recruit a volunteer to read Matthew 17:9: "They came down the mountain. On the way down, Jesus told them what to do. 'Don't tell anyone what you have seen,' he said. 'Wait until the Son of Man has been raised from the dead.'"

On the way down the mountain, Jesus told his friends what to do. Peter wanted to stay on the mountain and build shelters, but Jesus told his friends not to tell anyone what happened. He didn't boast or brag about it. Instead, Jesus wanted them to wait until God's mercy and justice were displayed in his death and resurrection. Then people would understand how important the Transfiguration was.

Jesus had invited his friends to join him on the mountain. They had seen a glimpse of the glory and goodness of God that earlier Israelites like Moses and Elijah had longed to see. The glory was not shown as Jesus spoke, even though his words bring life. The glory was not shown while he did miracles, even though they lead others to give praise to God. The glory was shown in Jesus himself. He is God's one and only Son, perfect and majestic. His love for the world led to his suffering and death. His resurrection made it possible for people to see the glory of Christ.



4 story discussion

- ▶ **Who did Jesus take up the mountain with him?** (Peter, James, and John)
- ▶ **Who appeared with Jesus on the mountain?** (Moses and Elijah)
- ▶ **Why do you think the Father reaffirmed the words he had said at Jesus's baptism, on the mountain?** (To encourage the disciples and remind them of what he had already told them)
- ▶ **Jesus's glory tells us that he isn't just a servant of God who witnessed God's glory. Why is it important to honor Jesus as God?** (Jesus has to be divine to pay for our sins.)
- ▶ **Jesus's humility and death on the cross open the door for us to have a restored relationship with God. Why did Jesus ask his friends not to tell what they had seen until his resurrection?** (Until his resurrection, people would not understand that Jesus used his glory for our good.)
- ▶ **How do you imagine the disciples felt as they left the mountain?** (Answers will vary.)

5 snack

To Prepare:

Set the loose ingredients in bowls.

Snack Shelters

Distribute the snack and tell the children to build a "shelter" out of their supplies. As they do so, say: **After he saw the glory of Jesus, Peter offered to build three shelters for the guests of honor on the mountain: one for the Lord, one for Moses, and one for Elijah. But this was not God's plan. Jesus said that they should not talk about what they had witnessed until after his sacrifice on the cross and his resurrection.**

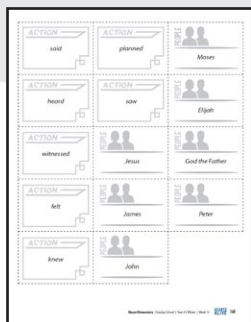
In the Old Testament stories, both Moses and Elijah had seen God's glory on mountains. And both were called back down from the mountains, too. God had commissioned them to fulfill his plan, and both Moses and Elijah returned to the people they were called to serve. Since we won't be needing these shelters for housing the special guests, let's eat them. As we do, we remember that Jesus showed us that he is truly the Son of God. We can draw near to him because of his finished work on the cross.



6 Game

To Prepare:

Copy and cut out the printables. Keep the two sets of cards separate.



Who Did What?

To review the lesson, play a quick game of "Who Did What?" Set the people cards and action cards in two separate piles. One at a time, have each child draw one person and one action, and see if they can fill in a detail from the story. For example, if they draw "Peter" and "felt," they might say, "Peter felt scared and excited." Or if they draw "God the Father" and "said," they might say, "God the Father said that Jesus was his Son and he was pleased with him." Note that there may not be only one right answer for each combination, and not all combinations will have a good answer. If someone struggles with the combination they draw, open it up for the whole class to make suggestions, or just say, "Moses didn't say anything in this story!" After a child has taken their turn, have them return their cards to the bottom of each pile. When everyone has had a turn, say: **Jesus revealed himself on the mountain to his friends to encourage them in the difficult days ahead when they saw him suffer and die. He's such a loving Savior and friend.**

7 Closing

Camouflage

To Prepare:

Preview and queue the video for class. Make enough copies of the Take-home page for each child.



Say: **In today's lesson, Jesus revealed his glory to some of his friends. Jesus's glory was not new. He is divine and had shared in the glory of God from all eternity. He laid aside the full display of his glory and humbled himself by taking on human nature and a body. Jesus was full of the glory of God because he is God, but his glory was hidden from view.**

Show the video of the camouflaged animals to the class. Elicit the children's reaction to the video. Say: **Aren't these animals amazing! Because of their camouflage, they are difficult to see.**








Say: **The Father's voice on the mountain told the disciples to follow Jesus. Jesus set aside his glory so that he could be a perfect offering for our salvation. His humility wasn't a trick; it was a display of sympathy and true love. Jesus is fully God and fully human. He doesn't pretend to be human. He doesn't pretend to be God. He truly is. And that is a gift to us.**

Let's pray. Jesus, Thank you for showing your glory to your friends and making it clear that you are God. Thank you for your work on earth, especially on the cross, to show us what kind of God you are. Thank you for



showing us your mercy, compassion, and humility. Give us grace to worship you and accept the invitation to turn to you and be received as a friend of God. Amen.

Children line up to meet their parents. As the children leave, hand out their Take-home pages.

<div>ACTION</div> <div>said</div>	<div>ACTION</div> <div>planned</div>	<div>PEOPLE</div> <div>  </div> <div>Moses</div>
<div>ACTION</div> <div>heard</div>	<div>ACTION</div> <div>saw</div>	<div>PEOPLE</div> <div>  </div> <div>Elijah</div>
<div>ACTION</div> <div>witnessed</div>	<div>PEOPLE</div> <div>  </div> <div>Jesus</div>	<div>PEOPLE</div> <div>  </div> <div>God the Father</div>
<div>ACTION</div> <div>felt</div>	<div>PEOPLE</div> <div>  </div> <div>James</div>	<div>PEOPLE</div> <div>  </div> <div>Peter</div>
<div>ACTION</div> <div>knew</div>	<div>PEOPLE</div> <div>  </div> <div>John</div>	

WEEK 13

LIVE IT ALL WEEK

Upper Elementary Take Home Paper for Families



What Your Child Learned Today

Today your child heard the story of Jesus's transfiguration. They heard that this event revealed Jesus as God. Jesus was seen in his glory, and the Father declared Jesus as his Son. This event was recorded so that we also might trust in Christ's divinity. We can know that Jesus is who he says he is, and his sacrifice secures our salvation.

Try This

Give your child a glow stick, explaining to them that there are chemicals inside with properties that are revealed when the stick is bent and the chemicals are allowed to mix with each other. On the mountain Jesus revealed the glory that was always within him. Jesus is God, and his friends saw his radiant glory!

Transfiguration

- Scripture: Matthew 17:1–9
- Big Idea: In his transfiguration, Jesus revealed his divinity and his disciples were terrified. We should be in awe of Jesus, but not afraid. Jesus died for our sins so we can stand before God's holy presence forever.
- Memory Verse: "His face shone like the sun. His clothes became as white as the light." Matthew 17:2b

SOMETHING ELSE TO DO

What monuments to historic figures or events are on display in your town? Visit one of these and find out more about whom or what the monument honors. Remind your children that God the Father urged us to honor his Son not by building a monument but by listening to what he has said. How can you better listen to Jesus?

Table Talk

- **Share with your family a time when you met a well-known person that you admired. After meeting them and knowing more about them, did you think more or less of them? Sometimes our expectations are either met or disappointed. Jesus's friends were in awe when they discovered more about Jesus. Do you imagine the disciples loved Jesus even more after this moment on the mountain?**