

Small Group Experience

LESSON 4 - “Jesus Is...EVERLASTING FATHER”



Watt's Up:

“My Heavenly Father Is The BEST!”



Power Verse:

“See how very much our Father loves us, for he calls us his children, and that is what we are!”

- **I John 3:1**

Retelling The Bible Story

SUPPLY LIST:

* Our Father Is Print Piece (provided; print one set of the rectangles with words and plenty of blank rectangles)

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS:

Before small group begins, print and cut the Our Father Is Print Pieces ensuring that you have several blank rectangle pieces per kid and one full set of the words. Mix the blank and word rectangle pieces and place them in piles in various locations around the room. To review the Bible Story, read the provided lesson excerpt aloud pausing when you say Jesus. When you say Jesus, the kids should stand and collect one rectangle and then return to their seats. Remind them to hang onto the rectangles since they will be used during activity time.

Say - I am really happy you're here, and I think we should get started because you're going to be pretty busy for the next few minutes. Today we are celebrating Father's Day. That's right, you heard me! It may not be the actual calendar holiday, but we have a lot to celebrate. I cannot wait to continue the story of how our wonderful mighty counselor Jesus came to Earth. We learned how Jesus is wonderful; we learned how Jesus is our counselor, and we learned how Jesus is mighty so I think today we should look at another aspect of Jesus! Jesus is our HEAVENLY FATHER! Before you arrived, I placed piles of rectangular shaped pieces of paper around the room. I am going to read the Bible Story aloud, and I want you to listen for the name JESUS. When you hear the name Jesus, you should stand and go collect one rectangle. Hold onto the rectangle, you will need it during activity time. We will continue on this way until the story is complete. Let's begin!

-Read the provided lesson excerpt aloud, pausing when you say JESUS to allow time for the kids to collect a rectangle-

Say - Today's Bible Story is found in the book of Matthew, chapter 1. Before Jesus was born, the angel of God had appeared to his mother Mary and told her that God had placed a baby in her tummy. He would be the Savior of the world.

Well, Joseph, Mary's fiancé, was having a difficult time believing this. He wasn't sure how to handle a fiancé who thought she was seeing angels and having God's son. He decided he would just break off his engagement to Mary quietly. He didn't want to bring any shame upon Mary at all. He loved her, but was just very confused about it all.

Well, just when Joseph was going to break off his engagement, guess who appeared to him as well? That's right! The angel appeared to him, also, and told him, “Do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife.” Joseph was a little scared by the angel appearing out of nowhere, I am sure. But he listened very carefully as the angel gave him God's instructions. “She will give birth to a son. You will name him Jesus.”

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Now, you have to understand something. Back in those days, the name you gave to a child was very important. It often carried meaning with it. Joseph had probably already thought about what name he was going to give his first-born son. Now, the angel was telling him that God already had a name picked out. It would have been easy for Joseph to say, “No.” He could have ignored the angel’s instructions and just continued with his plan to break off his engagement with Mary. But that is not what he did at all.

Joseph did exactly as the angel told him to do. He obeyed, even thought it meant that no one else would understand. He obeyed God’s plan even though it was a very hard thing to do. Joseph would become the earthly father of Jesus.

Say - I told you there would be some work involved! That was a lot of ups and downs, and you all did a great job! You can stop collecting rectangles when I say Jesus, but don’t lose them, we will use the rectangles again soon.

Ask - Why do you think Joseph chose to trust God?

-Allow time for the kids to answer; discuss their answers with the group-

Ask - Do you think that was an easy choice to make?

-Allow time for the kids to answer; discuss their answers with the group-

Ask - What do you think might have happened if Joseph did not trust God’s plan?

-Allow time for the kids to answer; discuss their answers with the group-

Game/Activity

SUPPLY LIST:

- * Construction Paper (any color; enough for each kid to have at least one piece)
- * Crayons, markers, or colored pencils
- * Rectangles (from the previous activity)
- * Scissors (for the group to share)
- * Glue (for the group to share)

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS:

Before small group begins, gather the necessary supplies. Once activity time begins, ask the kids who chose the rectangles with words. There were five rectangles with words and hopefully five different kids chose them. If not, ask them to share one with a friend. If all of the rectangles with words were not chosen, hand out the remaining word rectangles. The five kids holding the rectangles with words will be the team leaders. Divide the group into five teams. For this activity, teams will design Father’s Day cards based on the word on their team leaders rectangle. They may use the provided supplies and leftover rectangles to create their original designs. Each team member should create a card. This will be a fun lesson concept reinforcing activity.

Say - During our Bible Story review, you collected rectangles. Who has a rectangle with a word on it?

-Allow time for the kids to answer and pass out any remaining unclaimed rectangles with words-

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Say - You five are now team leaders. I am dividing the group into teams. Each of your teams has been assigned a word based on the rectangle your team leader chose. Your job is to design a Father’s Day card for your Heavenly Father based on your teams rectangle word! You may use the provided supplies including your leftover blank rectangles. Each team member should design a card. Be creative and have fun!

-Allow time for the kids to do the activity-

Ask - Would anyone like to share their Heavenly Father’s Day card?

-Allow time for the kids to share their designs with the group-

Group Sharing

SUPPLY LIST:

- * Heavenly Father Print Piece (provided; print one per kid)
- * Bibles (for the group to share)

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS:

Before small group begins, print and cut the Heavenly Father Print Pieces. Once group sharing begins, give each kid a print piece and begin. Group sharing is focused on encouraging the kids to open up and discuss the lesson concepts and relate those concepts to their life. Help facilitate and guide the discussion time.

Say - I mentioned that today we are celebrating Fathers Day, but this isn’t your average Father’s Day! Today we are celebrating our Heavenly Father’s Day!

Ask - Why is Jesus our Heavenly Father? What does that mean?

-Allow time for the kids to answer; discuss their answers with the group-

Say - Earlier you created Heavenly Father’s Day cards centered on a word. These words are just some of the many attributes we can use when describing our Heavenly Father. One great way to further explore the meaning behind these words is to see what the Bible says. There are scriptures beside each of the words on your paper.

Ask - Who would like to volunteer to look up and read Psalm 107:1?

-Choose a volunteer and allow them to read the verse aloud-

Ask - What does this verse say to you about our GOOD Heavenly Father?

Ask - Who would like to volunteer to look up and read Psalm 86:15?

-Choose a volunteer and allow them to read the verse aloud-

Ask - What does this verse say to you about our FAITHFUL Heavenly Father?

-Allow time for the kids to answer; discuss their answers with the group-

Ask - Who would like to volunteer to look up and read I Samuel 2:2?

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-Choose a volunteer and allow them to read the verse aloud-

Ask - What does this verse say to you about our HOLY Heavenly Father?

Ask - Who would like to volunteer to look up and read Hebrews 4:16?

-Choose a volunteer and allow them to read the verse aloud-

Ask - What does this verse say to you about our Heavenly Father and GRACE?

Ask - Who would like to volunteer to look up and read 1 John 4:16?

-Choose a volunteer and allow them to read the verse aloud-

Ask - What does this verse say to you about our Heavenly Father and LOVE?

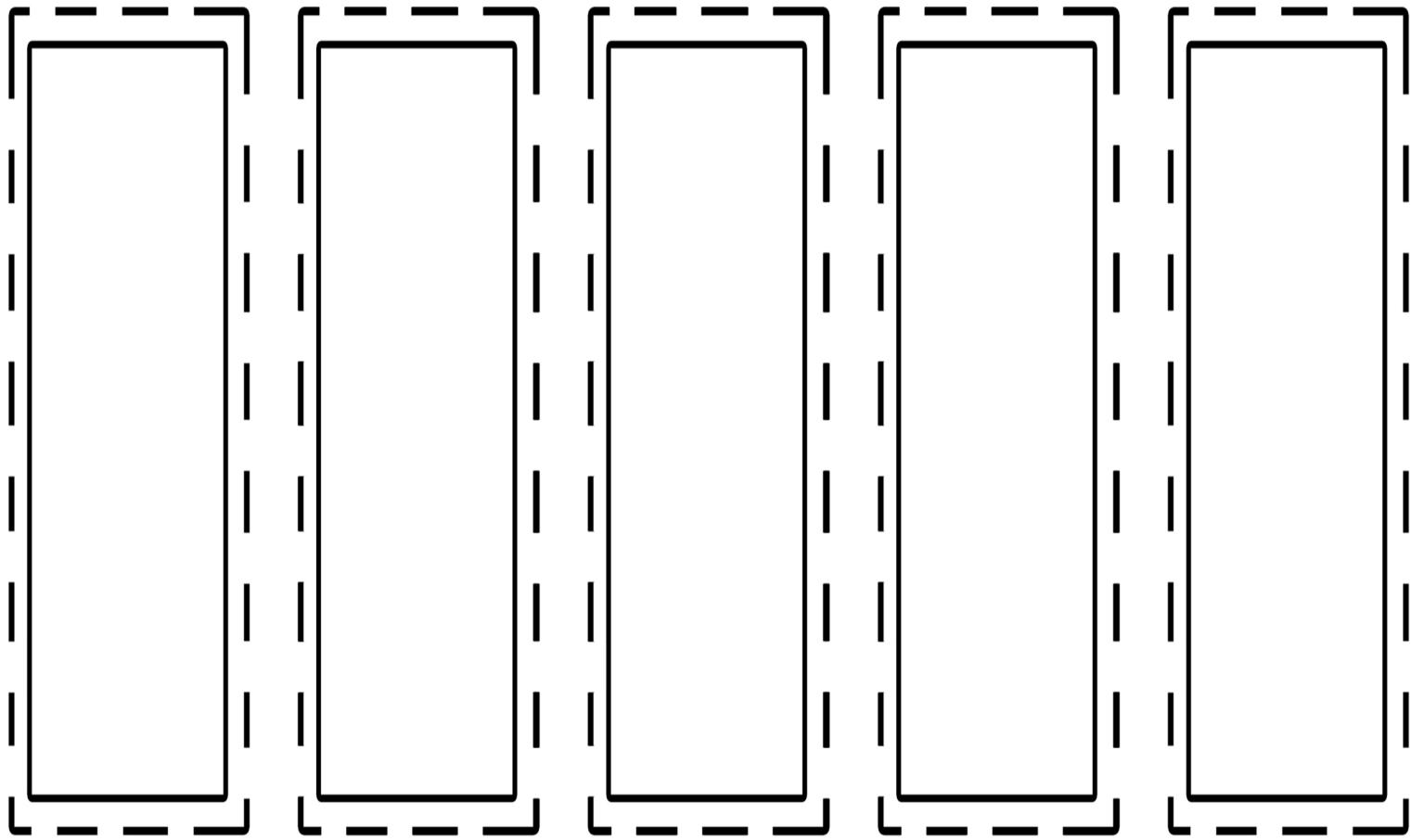
Say - These are just a few ways that we can describe our Heavenly Father. It is great to know that we forever can trust our GOOD, FAITHFUL, HOLY, full of GRACE, LOVING Father!

Prayer Time

Say - I want us to take a few quiet moments and reflect on our awesome Heavenly Father. Thank Him for being in your life and tell Him just how much you love Him. (PRAY)

Closing

Say - Joseph had a lot of big things happening in his life. He was engaged to be married when he found out that his fiancé was expecting a baby. Not only was she expecting a baby, she informed him that an angel had told her about the baby and that the baby wasn't just any baby, he was the son of God. WHOA! That is some major information to digest. Joseph considered walking away from the situation and leaving all of these major happenings behind, but he chose to stay. Joseph received a reminder from God that he could trust his Heavenly Father. The same Heavenly Father that guided Joseph and Mary still guides you and me today. He calls us his own and walks through life with us with a love and dedication that reassures us daily of His presence. Take time during this Holiday season to reaffirm your love and commitment to the Heavenly Father who loves you so much and is committed to you for eternity! Thank you for coming today, I will see you again soon.



GOOD

GOOD

PSALM 107:1

PSALM 107:1

FAITHFUL

FAITHFUL

PSALM 86:15

PSALM 86:15

HOLY

HOLY

1 SAMUEL 2:2

1 SAMUEL 2:2

GRACE

GRACE

HEBREWS 4:16

HEBREWS 4:16

LOVE

LOVE

1 JOHN 4:16

1 JOHN 4:16