

CHRISTIAN ACADEMY OF EDUCATION AND FORMATION JCL
40 DAYS OF FAST AND PRAYER

AGES 11 – 16 YEARS OLD

Genesis

Lesson 1: In the Beginning

LESSON OBJECTIVES

Goals

1. To give students an overview of the book of Genesis
2. To help students understand the recorded account of the creation of the heavens and the earth
3. To inspire students to link their creation to their identity in Christ

Topics:

Creation, Self-worth, Worthiness

Scripture Memorization

Genesis 1:1

OPENING PRAYER (5 to 10 minutes)

GROUP BUILDING (10 minutes)

As we begin our study of Genesis today, we're going to discuss creation. God is a creator. He made us to be creative. I'm wondering if you have ever created anything.

General Discussion:

- What's the coolest thing you have ever made?
- When did you make it?
- What did people say about your creation?

GETTING STARTED (5 minutes)

Creation Quiz

(Ask the following questions to see how much your students know about Genesis 1 & 2 before you begin.)

- What was the name of the Garden where God placed man? (*The Garden of Eden.*)
- From what did God make Adam? (*The dust of the earth.*)
- From what did God make Eve? (*Adam's rib.*)
- On which day of creation did God make man? (*The sixth day.*)
- What did God create on the third day? (*The sea, dry ground, and vegetation.*)

Whether you answered none, three, or all five correctly, we have a lot to learn about the creation account from Genesis 1 & 2. More importantly, we will learn more about ourselves and how we should live.

Let's get to it!

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DIGGING IN (30 minutes)

Read Genesis 1:1-2

Discussion Questions:

1. What did God do in the beginning? (*He created the heavens and the earth.*)
2. What existed before that? (*Nothing, only God.*)
3. Who or what made God? (*No one, nothing.*)
4. What was the condition of the earth at first? (*It was formless and empty.*)

Read Genesis 1:3-31

Discussion Questions:

1. What did God create on the first day? (*Day and night.*)
2. What did God create on the second day? (*The sky.*)
3. What did God create on the third day? (*The sea, dry ground, and vegetation.*)
4. What did God create on the fourth day? (*The sun, moon, and stars.*)
5. What did God create on the fifth day? (*The fish and birds.*)
6. What did God create on the sixth day? (*The land animals and human beings.*)

Re-read Genesis 1:27-31

Discussion Questions:

1. What was different about the way God created man and woman? (*They were made in His image.*)
2. What is humankind in charge of? (*The rest of creation.*)
3. What did God say about everything He made (see verse 31)? (*It was "very" good.*)

(At this time, have everyone silently read Genesis 2. Give them about five minutes to do so. Then ask the following questions:)

Genesis 2

Discussion Questions:

1. What is different in this account of creation? (*It reads more like a narrative rather than a list. Also, it includes more detail than chapter 1.*)
2. What does God provide for Adam? (*A woman.*)
3. What is the unusual way in which woman is formed? (*She is formed from the man's rib while he was in a deep sleep.*)

There's lots of stuff we didn't talk about, such as the naming of the animals, God resting on the seventh day, and much more. However, there are some basic, foundational conclusions that we can draw from these two chapters.

- The Bible teaches us that God created the heavens and the earth.
- God created everything either from His Word or from the earth.
- God said that His creation is very good.

MAKING IT REAL (20 minutes)

The next question is this: why does that matter?

Read Revelation 4:11

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Discussion Questions:

1. What is God worthy of receiving, according to this verse? (*Glory, honor, and power.*)
2. Why is He worthy of these things according to this verse? (*Because He created all things, and in Him they have their being.*)

God didn't just create everything and set it loose to run on its own. He is the source of our being still.

Read Colossians 1:15-17

Discussion Questions:

1. How does it change you to know that God created you through Christ?
2. What does it mean to you that Jesus is the source of your being now?
3. If your identity is founded in this reality, how should it change how you view yourself?

Many people don't understand that God created them. With that realization absent—they live a life of depravity. They hurt themselves, they hate themselves, and they hold on to things they shouldn't. When people are convinced they were randomly created, worthless, animalistic in nature, it makes sense that they will have a low view of themselves. However, if they are convinced that God created them, then they can be inspired to live differently.

You can live differently.

God created you. He holds you together to this day. He said you are "good."

Workbook Activity (10 minutes)

Things I Don't Like About Myself

Have students write 4-5 things that they don't like about themselves. These can be physical things, situational things, past memories, or reasons for feeling worthless. The rest of this activity will take some courage. Ask students to read some of their items aloud. Invite the rest of your group to respond to whatever is read by saying:

"God made you. You matter."

You may have to jump start it, but hopefully it will begin to sink in for the students that God does not make mistakes. He created them. They are valuable.

CLOSING PRAYER (2 minutes)

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Lesson 2: The First Gospel

LESSON OBJECTIVES

Goals

1. To give students an overview of the book of Genesis
2. To help students understand how salvation through Jesus was the plan even in the Garden of Eden
3. To challenge students to respond to the Gospel of Christ

Topics:

Deception, Gospel, Guilt, Iniquity, Salvation, Sin

Scripture Memorization

Genesis 3:15

OPENING PRAYER (5 to 10 minutes)

GROUP BUILDING (15 minutes)

All Messed Up (Object Talk) [Click here](#)

GETTING STARTED (2 minutes)

Today, we're going to talk about how humankind became disconnected from God and damaged. Ever since then, people have been trying to put things back together. However, we can't. We need someone to fix us. We cannot fix ourselves. The story about how all of this got started is found in Genesis 3. Let's turn there and start digging in.

DIGGING IN (30 minutes)

Read Genesis 3:1-4

In this passage, we read about the temptation of Eve (and, by extension, Adam) by the serpent. However, there may be some things you've never thought of:

Discussion Questions:

1. What question does the serpent ask Eve? (*Did God really say you couldn't eat of any tree in the garden?*)
2. Was this question the truth or a lie? (*A lie...God did not say that.*)
3. What is Eve's response? (*She tells the truth, that there is only one tree off limits.*)
4. What lie does Eve add in verse 3? (*That they are prohibited from touching it.*)
5. What is the serpent's response? (*You won't die! God just doesn't want you to be like Him!*)

In four verses, there are several lies, exaggerations, and misrepresentations by Eve and the serpent. At the root of every temptation (and sin) is a lie. It has always been that way.

Read Genesis 3:6-7

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Discussion Questions:

1. What does Eve do when she observes the fruit? *(She eats some.)*
2. With whom does she share it? *(Her husband, Adam.)*
3. Where has Adam been all this time? *(Right there with her.)*
4. Why do you think Adam remained silent? *(Allow for answers.)*
5. What happened to Adam and Eve once they ate? *(Their eyes were opened and they realized they were naked.)*
6. What did they do in response? *(They covered themselves with fig leaves.)*

Therefore, in just seven verses, we have the temptation, sin, and the fall of man. From this moment on, sin enters the world. In addition, from this moment on, the way humankind responds to sin develops. That's what we will read about next.

Read Genesis 3:8-13

Discussion Questions:

1. In response to their sin, what do Adam and Eve do? *(They hide.)*
2. When God confronts their sin, what do they do? *(They blame someone else.)*
3. Why do you think God addresses Adam first in verse 9? *(Allow for answers.)*
4. What is Adam's response? *(He was afraid of God.)*
5. Who does Adam blame for eating of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil? *(Eve-- "the woman you gave me.")*
6. Who does Eve blame? *(The serpent.)*

It seems that from the start, sin causes people to take no responsibility for their own actions. The truth is that sin is a choice by a person who chooses to believe a lie instead of the truth of God. There are consequences anytime this happens.

Read Genesis 3:14-20

Discussion Questions:

1. Who is given a consequence in this passage? *(The serpent, Eve, and Adam.)*
2. What is the serpent's punishment? *(Crawl on belly, eat dust, get a head crushing, etc.)*
3. What is the woman's punishment? *(Pain in childbirth, trouble with her husband.)*
4. What is the man's punishment? *(The ground is cursed, work full of toil, death.)*

There are consequences to all our sin. We don't get away with any of it. However, God is not harsh with the man and woman. He also protects them.

Read Genesis 3:21-24

Discussion Questions:

1. What does God do in this passage to/for the man and woman? *(He makes garments, banishes them from the garden, and doesn't allow them to return.)*
2. Why does God banish them, according to verse 22? *(So they don't eat again from the tree of life and thus live forever in their sinful state.)*

It seems that God's mercy is present even in His own judgment. If Adam and Eve had stayed in the garden, they would have eaten of the tree of life. Having eaten of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, this would have caused them to live forever in their sin. Therefore, God banishes them so that his plan to redeem humankind and creation can begin to take shape.

MAKING IT REAL (20 minutes)

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Now let's think about how this story is also our story. We all are tempted. We all sin. There are consequences. There is judgment. But, there is also protection and salvation promised by God.

Having studied this account of Adam and Eve and the fall of humankind to sin, let's make some connections to our own lives. We want to answer three REALLY important questions as we make this real. As we go through these questions, it will be helpful to make some notes about how they apply to your own lives. (Space is provided in the student workbook.)

QUESTION 1. With What Do You Cover Up?

Read Genesis 3:6-7 (again)

General Discussion:

- What is some sin that you are guilty of hiding?
- What are some ways you hide that sin?
- Why do you think your reaction is to hide your sin and keep it a secret?

God has given us the knowledge of good and evil. It's called our conscience. Often, this is our "eye-opening" experience. But, our reaction to cover up sin says something about all of us--we know God is good and we are not.

QUESTION 2. Where Do You Hide?

Sometimes we don't just hide our sin. We hide ourselves.

Read Genesis 3:8-9 (again)

General Discussion:

- What question does God ask in this verse? ("*Where are you?*")
- Who do you avoid when there is sin present in your life?
- Do you feel like going to church when you know there is sin in your heart?
- Why do you think sin causes you to focus more on yourself and avoid others?

God is asking (maybe even asking some of you today), "Where are you?" He is asking this not because He doesn't know where you are, but because He desperately wants you to run to Him instead of away from Him.

QUESTION 3. Will You Let God Save You?

Read Genesis 3:15 (again)

You may have missed this verse when we read it at first, but theologians believe this is the First Gospel. Way back in the book of Genesis, God puts into motion His plan to redeem the world through Jesus Christ.

General Discussion:

- God says He will put "enmity" between the serpent and the woman and between her offspring and the serpent's. What do you think "enmity" means? (*Enmity means being actively opposed or hostile towards someone or something.*)
- This verse says the serpent will strike the heel of the woman, and the woman will crush the head of the serpent. What do you think this means?

This pronouncement of the First Gospel is a picture of the relationship between Satan (the serpent) and Jesus, a descendant of Eve through the line of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

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- How has Satan continued to strike at the heel of humankind?
- How has Jesus crushed the head of the devil?

You see, while Satan still tempts us, he has no victory over us. Through the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, the devil has been defeated. By trusting Jesus, Satan cannot control us. We don't have to hide from God. We don't have to cover up our sin. By having a relationship with Jesus, we trust Him in our failures as we do our obedience.

That's why this third question is the most important. Whether or not you will let God save you makes all the difference. If you find yourself covering up sin or hiding from God, you need to trust Jesus instead. He will save, and when He saves, He saves us once and for all!

CLOSING PRAYER (2 minutes)

Genesis

Lesson 3: Lessons from the Flood

LESSON OBJECTIVES

Goals

1. To give students an overview of the book of Genesis
2. To help students understand that these ancient scriptures still speak to us today
3. To challenge students to obey, become saved, worship, and trust in God's promises

Topics:

Covenant, Judgment of God, Obedience, Promises, Saved

Scripture Memorization

Genesis 9:8-9

OPENING PRAYER (5 to 10 minutes)

GROUP BUILDING (15 minutes)

Two By Two (Game)

Have the students get into groups of two. Call the pairs of students "Two by Two" groups, since Noah took animals two by two into the ark. The same "Two by Two" groups will get together at other times during the lesson.

After the students pair up, have each "Two by Two" group try to be the first to complete a particular task. Following are some suggestions:

- Have each student remove the laces from his or her shoes. The first group to lace each other's shoes is the winner.
- Scatter individual socks around the room. The group finding and folding the most correct pairs of socks wins.
- Scatter playing cards face down around the room. The first group to find a pair in the same suit color

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wins.

- Tie the legs of each member together, and then have the groups attempt to be the first to complete a stunt.
- Think of your own creative idea.

Give the winning "Two by Two" group a prize, such as a pair of Twinkies or some other treat that comes in sets of two.

GETTING STARTED (10 minutes)

Today we're going to talk about Noah. But there's much more to this story than animals hopping on an ark two by two.

Let's see how well you can do with a little Noah and the Ark trivia. Work together in your "Two by Two" groups. Write your answers down first and then I will reveal the correct answer.

- How old was Noah when he entered the ark? (*600 years old, see Gen. 7:6.*)
- Who closed the ark door? (*God, see Gen. 7:16.*)
- For how long did the waters flood the earth? (*One hundred and fifty days, see Gen. 7:24*)
- How many times did Noah send forth a bird from the ark? (*Four, a raven once and a dove three times, see Gen. 8:6-12*)
- How long were Noah and his family on the ark? (*One year and ten days, see Gen. 7:11, 8:14-15.*)

How did everyone do? Great job!

DIGGING IN (30 minutes)

As mentioned before, there is more to learn from the story of Noah than animals coming two by two. Today, we will study four important lessons that we can glean from this story.

Read Genesis 6:9-22

Discussion Questions:

1. What kind of man was Noah according to these scriptures? (*He was a righteous man.*)
2. What do you think made him that way? (*He was blameless and walked with God.*)
3. What did God tell Noah to do? (*Build an ark.*)
4. What were some of the ways God said to do it? (*See verses 14-16.*)
5. What was Noah supposed to take with him? (*His family, two of every kind of creature, and food for all.*)
6. What was Noah's response, according to verse 22? (*He obeyed God.*)

The first lesson we can learn from the flood story is this: Noah obeyed God and we should, too.

Read Genesis 7:13-24

Discussion Questions:

1. How long did the waters flood the earth? (*150 days.*)
2. What happened from the time the flood started until it ended? (*Everyone and everything on earth died.*)
3. Who was saved from death? (*Only Noah and those on the ark were spared.*)

The second lesson we learn from this story is that God saved Noah, and He can save us too.

Read Genesis 8:15-22

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Discussion Questions:

1. When God told Noah to come out of the ark, what did Noah do? (*He came out.*)
2. What was the next thing Noah did? (*He built an altar and offered a sacrifice to God.*)
3. What was God's response to their worship? (*It pleased Him.*)

The third big lesson from this section of Scripture is that Noah's response to God was one of worship, and God deserves our worship too.

Read Genesis 9:8-17

Discussion Questions:

1. What does God establish with Noah? (*He establishes a covenant with Noah, his descendants and all living creatures.*)
2. What are the terms? (*That God will never destroy humankind again in this way.*)
3. What was the sign of this? (*A rainbow in the sky.*)

The last lesson we take from this narrative is that God made a promise, a covenant, with Noah.

MAKING IT REAL (20 minutes)

The flood narrative is not just about Noah. We can learn from it, too. By taking the lessons from Noah's story, we can be encouraged that God does not change and that He desires to have a relationship with us.

LESSON ONE: WE SHOULD OBEY GOD

Read Acts 5:32 and 2 Thessalonians 1:8

Discussion Questions:

1. What does the Lord promise to those who obey Him? (*His Holy Spirit.*)
2. What happens to those who do not obey? (*They are judged.*)

Okay, let's look at these verses in a more personal way.

General Discussion:

- How often do you obey God?
- Where do you draw the line of obedience?
- Would you obey God if He called you to do something crazy, like build an ark?

LESSON TWO: GOD HAS SAVED US

Read Ephesians 2:8

Discussion Questions:

1. How are we saved? (*Through grace.*)
2. Why does God save us this way? (*This is a tough one to answer, but challenge students to think about it.*)

God did not save Noah because Noah built an ark. God saved Noah because He wanted to do so, and He wants to save us too.

LESSON THREE: RESPOND TO GOD WITH WORSHIP

Read Romans 12:1-2

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Discussion Questions:

1. Worship happens in light of God's what? (*His mercy*)
2. How should we worship according to these verses? (*By offering our bodies as a living sacrifice.*)
3. What does this mean? (*Allow for answers.*)

Noah built an altar; put an animal on it, and God was pleased. God is calling us to build an altar and put ourselves on it.

LESSON FOUR: GOD MAKES A PROMISE WITH US

God's covenant with Noah was that He would not destroy the earth in the same manner. Then, God gave the rainbow as a sign of this covenant.

Read Luke 22:20

Discussion Questions:

1. With what does Jesus seal His new covenant? (*With His own blood.*)
2. Why is this significant? (*Allow for answers.*)

The old covenant was sealed with a rainbow. Our promise is sealed with Christ's own blood. How does it make you feel that God the Father would make this promise to you and seal it with the death of His own Son?

Let's get back into our "Two by Two" groups one last time. Please do the following:

- Discuss with your partner which one of the four lessons we covered means the most to you and why.
- Share at least one specific prayer request about yourself with your partner.
- Finally, spend a few minutes in prayer for each other.

CLOSING PRAYER (2 minutes)

Genesis

Lesson 4: Father Abraham

LESSON OBJECTIVES

Goals

1. To give students an overview of the book of Genesis and the story of Abraham
2. To inspire students with the story about Abraham's great faith
3. To connect students' faith to the faith of their forefather, Abraham

Topics:

Abraham, Believing, Faith, Promises

Scripture Memorization

Romans 4:16

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OPENING PRAYER (5 to 10 minutes)

GROUP BUILDING (10 minutes)

Father Abraham

Who remembers the song, "Father Abraham" from your childhood? It doesn't matter if you grew up at church or not, and it doesn't matter how old you are right now. We're going to sing that song! Everybody stand up!

(Lead the group in a fun rendition of "Father Abraham.")
It goes like this:

Father Abraham had many sons,
And man sons had Father Abraham.
And I am one of them,
And so are you,
So let's just praise the Lord!

(After this stanza, you name a part of the body, such as "right arm." Then you sing the song again, this time waving your right arm. After each stanza, add another part of the body to the list. Do this until you're all moving around, waving all the parts of your body, spinning around, and singing the song together. Some high-school students go crazy over this, so don't think your group is too old. Have fun!)

GETTING STARTED (10 minutes)

General Discussion:

- How many of you knew that song? How many of you did not? How many of you are tired?
- What do you think that song means? Who is "Father Abraham"?
- What do you know about Abraham from the Bible?

Today, we're going to talk about Abraham, also known as Abram. As we continue our study of Genesis, we'll see that Abraham's faith is one that can inspire our own. By the end of our study, you'll know exactly why the song calls him "Father Abraham."

DIGGING IN (30 minutes)

Read Genesis 12:1-8

This is not the first time we hear about Abram in the Bible. Some genealogies in earlier chapters mention him. However, this is the first time his story really picks up.

Discussion Questions:

1. What did God want Abram to do? (*Leave his country and go to the land that God showed him.*)
2. What did God promise Abram before he left? (*That He would make him a great nation, a blessing, etc.*)
3. How did Abram obey the Lord? (*He took everything he had and went to the place God requested.*)
4. What did Abram do along the way? (*He worshipped God.*)
5. What did God promise about the land He showed Abram? (*That He would give it to Abram's descendants.*)

Let's find out how Abram's faith is described in the New Testament book of Hebrews.

Read Hebrews 11:8-12

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Discussion Questions:

1. What verbs are attached to Abraham's faith in these verses? (*Obedied, went, lived, etc.*)
2. According to verse 12, what resulted from Abraham's and his wife's, Sarah's, faith? (*His descendants were as numerous as the stars in the sky.*)
3. Who are Abraham's descendants? (*The Jewish nation.*)

You may know that Jews call Abraham their forefather. However, it is also true that Abraham is our father--not in bloodline but in faith. In other words, we are his descendants because of his faith. We are the result of the promise God kept with Abraham.

MAKING IT REAL (25 minutes)

Read Romans 4:1-17

Discussion Questions:

1. Who is Abraham the father of "in the flesh"? (*The Jewish nation.*)
2. What did Abraham do that caused God to credit him with righteousness? (*He believed Him.*)
3. According to verse 9, does this promise apply only to the Jews? Explain. (*No, it applies to all people, both the "circumcised" and the "uncircumcised."*)
4. What did Abraham's righteousness come by, according to verse 13? (*By faith.*)
5. How does God's promise come to us? (*By faith.*)
6. Knowing this, who is Abraham the father of according to verse 16? (*All of us!*)

The promise of God way back in Genesis 12 came true. Abraham is the father of many nations—not just the Jewish nation, but also every nation—to everyone who believes in Christ.

General Discussion:

- When you think of what Abraham did by faith, what is the first thing that comes to mind? (*Allow for discussion*)
- Do you believe you could act in faith in this way? (*Allow for discussion*)
- What are some ways you have acted in faith? (*Allow for discussion*)
- When it comes down to it, what is faith? (*Believing God, trusting God, etc.*)
- When we have faith, what do you think God does? (*Allow for discussion*)
- What are some verbs that need to be attached to your faith? (*Witness, stand out, love, study, leave, serve, etc.*)

You see, by faith, Abraham went. We need to do something, too. In doing so, we please God by walking the example of our forefather Abraham.

CLOSING PRAYER (2 minutes)

Genesis

Lesson 5: Promise Keeper

LESSON OBJECTIVES

Goals

1. To give students an overview of the book of Genesis and the story of Abraham
2. To remind students that God always keeps His promises
3. To inspire students to be willing to trust God completely

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Topics:

Promises, Trust

Scripture Memorization

2 Corinthians 1:20

OPENING PRAYER (5 to 10 minutes)

GROUP BUILDING (7 minutes)

We're going to play kind of a silly game, called "Pinky Swear." Although it is just for fun, it will help bring truth later in our lesson.

Pinky Swear (Game)

Instructions:

Find a partner and latch pinkies (small fingers). A "pinky swear" is something kids sometimes do to show they are serious about keeping a promise. However, in our game, partners will take turns saying things that are either true or false.

If you think your partner is lying, then release pinkies. Then they must reveal whether or not they are telling the truth.

If you think your partner is telling the truth, keep your pinkies locked. Go back and forth a few times. You can say stuff about yourself, share any facts you know, or even say stuff like, "there's a spider behind you!"

Play for about 5 minutes. Be sure to mix up stating truths and lies, and see who can trust whom.

GETTING STARTED (10 minutes)

General Discussion:

- Can you think of a time when you were a child and someone made you a promise he or she didn't keep? Who would like to share their experience?
- How does it make you feel when someone breaks a promise?
- On the other hand, how do you feel when someone makes a promise and keeps it?

Today, we're going to talk about a time when God made a promise. Although sometimes His people found His promises hard to believe and even far-fetched, God always keeps His promises and proves Himself true.

DIGGING IN (25 minutes)

Read Genesis 15:1-6

Discussion Questions:

1. What does God promise Abraham? (*That he will have a son.*)
2. In addition to having an heir, what does God say about Abraham's descendants? (*They will be as numerous as the stars in the sky.*)
3. What was Abraham's response to this promise? (*He "believed the Lord".*)

This was not the first time God made this promise, and it will not be the last. In Genesis 12, when He

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called Abraham to leave Ur, Abraham was childless and 75 years old. Yet, God stated that his descendants would be many (see Genesis 12:2-7).

He repeats the promise in Genesis 15:5 again in Genesis 17. Here, we learn that Abraham is 99 years old (see Genesis 17:3, 24). God made a promise to Abraham, and He swore by Himself that it would be so (see Hebrews 6:13).

Read Genesis 21:1-7

Discussion Questions:

1. What did God do according to verse 1? *(He did what He promised.)*
2. Can you think of a promise that God made that did not come true?
3. How old was Abraham when Isaac was born? *(100)*
4. How long did Abraham have to wait for God's promise to come true? *(Twenty-five years.)*
5. What does this say about Abraham's faith? *(Allow for answers.)*

Read Genesis 22:1-12

Discussion Questions:

1. What did God ask Abraham to do? *(Sacrifice his son.)*
2. How do you think this request made Abraham feel?
3. What did Abraham do? *(He obeyed God and did what He said to do.)*
4. What statements does Abraham make that indicates he has faith in God? *("We will come back to you" and "God will provide a lamb," etc.)*

MAKING IT REAL (25 minutes)

General Discussion:

- Imagine you are Abraham. God promises you at the age of 75 you will have descendants. Now you are 99, and God, having not yet delivered on His promise 24 years ago, again promises you the same thing. What are you thinking? How do you feel? How confident are you in God and His promise right now? *(Allow for answers.)*
- Do you think Abraham ever wanted to give up? *(Indeed, there was the Hagar/Ishmael incident in Genesis 16 where Abraham and Sarah try to make God's promise come true their own way.)*
- Now, stop pretending to be Abraham and just be yourself. What promises has God made you? *(Allow for answers.)*
- Do you ever feel like the promises God made are not happening? *(Allow for answers.)*
- How can you even know something is a promise of God? *(Students need to be guided into a certain understanding of this last question. Promises of God come true through His Word. If the students don't arrive to this conclusion on their own, be sure to point it out to them.)*

It doesn't matter what God has promised--it will come to pass! In fact, the promises of Scripture concerning us, that we can be saved and that we are called to belong to Jesus, already have!

Read 2 Corinthians 1:18-22

Discussion Questions:

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1. What do you think these verses mean?
2. How are God's promises all made "Yes" in Christ? (*God's promises are concluded in Christ.*)
3. If we have Jesus in our lives, what other promises do we need to come true? Does anything else really matter?

We have a promise of greater things to come, such as joy-filled living, eternal life with Jesus, and unshakeable love from the Father. What else could we need?

General Discussion:

- If God has kept His promises, how should we then live?
- What lesson can we learn from Abraham about trusting God?
- God has proven Himself to us by keeping His promise. Is there anything specific in which we should not entrust to Him?

I want you to get back with your partners and lock pinkies for a pinky prayer. Let this be a reminder that when God makes a promise, He keeps it. As I pray, keep those pinkies locked.

CLOSING PRAYER (2 minutes)

Lord and Savior Jesus Christ,
We thank You for being a God who keeps His promise.
Thank You that in Jesus, those promises have been fulfilled.
Please help us to trust You, no matter what.
Help us to follow You, no matter the cost.
May we keep our promise to You as You have kept Yours to us.
Amen.

Genesis

Lesson 6: (Lack of) Faith of Our Fathers

LESSON OBJECTIVES

Goals

1. To give students an overview of the book of Genesis and the descendants of Abraham
2. To help students learn from the mistakes made by their spiritual forefathers
3. To inspire students to commit to a life of honesty

Topics:

Deception, Honesty, Lying, Truthfulness

Scripture Memorization

Ephesians 4:25

OPENING PRAYER (5 to 10 minutes)

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GROUP BUILDING (10 minutes)

This game has very little to do with today's study, but it is fun! First, find a place where making a mess is not a big deal.

Play a game of egg toss, or water balloon toss. To play, partners stand across from each other about 3 feet apart and toss the object back and forth, each time trying time to catch the object. After each successful turn, the two take one giant step backwards, and toss the object again. See which pair of students can make it the farthest without breaking their egg or balloon.

GETTING STARTED (5 minutes)

- Have you ever met a completely honest person?
- What does an honest person look like?

Today, we're going to talk about three guys who had a mess on their hands, but it wasn't an egg or a water balloon. The mess they had to deal with was because of deceit. Call it what you want -- fibbing, lying, white lies, dishonesty, or untruth. It is a big deal in the Bible, and it should be a big deal for us. By the time we're finished, I hope you are committed to being a more honest person!

DIGGING IN (20 minutes)

This lesson might just as well be called "Liar, Liar, Pants On Fire," because we are going to talk about three men; Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; who were filled with deceit. Many times when we read the Bible, we are reading about what to do. Today, we'll be studying what not to do.

ABRAHAM'S DECEIT

Read Genesis 20:1-10

Discussion Questions:

1. How did Abraham say he was related to Sarah, his wife? (*He said she was his sister.*)
2. How was Abimelech informed of Abraham's lie? (*God appeared to him in a dream and told him.*)
3. What was Abimelech's response? (*He was afraid of God and confronted Abraham.*)

ISAAC'S DECEIT

Read Genesis 26:1-11

Discussion Questions:

1. What did Isaac say to Abimelech about Rebekah? (*He said that she was his sister.*)
2. How does Abimelech learn of this lie? (*He saw Isaac kissing Rebekah, his wife.*)
3. What was Abimelech's response? (*He confronted Isaac.*)
4. Do you think Abimelech remembered Abraham doing the same thing? (*Allow for answers*)

JACOB'S DECEIT

Read Genesis 27:1-38 (You may want to split this long passage up between two or three people.)

Discussion Questions:

1. What was Jacob's lie? (*He pretended to be Esau.*)
2. Why did he do this? (*To get a blessing from Isaac.*)
3. Why was this scheme successful? (*Isaac was old and could not see very well.*)
4. Who helped Jacob with his scheme? (*Rebekah.*)
5. How did Isaac learn of Jacob's deceit? (*Esau told him.*)

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Though Jacob's deceit was no worse, it was more complicated. He had to put on a costume, fix a meal quickly, and lie directly and repeatedly to his father.

General Discussion:

- Do you think it was an accident that this father, son, and grandson, committed the same sin?
- Do you think Isaac knew about Abraham's lie? What about Jacob knowing about Isaac's lie?
- Do you think the wives remembered what their husbands did?
- How did one sin of dishonesty contribute to even more dishonesty?
- How do you think dishonesty affects people?

MAKING IT REAL (35 minutes)

In this particular case, we should not be like Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Instead, we should live honest lives. Take a moment and consider these two questions. How many lies do you think you have told in your life? How many times do you think you've been lied to?

Read Ephesians 4:25

Discussion Questions:

1. What command is in this verse? (*To put off falsehood.*)
2. Instead of lying, what should we do? (*Tell each other the truth.*)

TRUTH AND LIES (Activity)

Part 1

Pass out several index cards or scraps of paper to your students. Have them make up one fake lie about themselves and write it on a card. They do not need to include their name, just "I" statements. For example, "I make straight A's in school." Give them a few minutes to generate these lies. Then, collect them and mix them up. Either read them aloud, or have students take turns reading different cards. Then discuss the following questions.

Discussion Questions:

- How did you feel as you wrote those lies?
- How did you feel as your lies were read aloud?
- These were fake lies—they did no harm. Some were perhaps funny. How are real lies different?

Part 2

Pass out more index cards or scraps of paper. This time, have the students write down things about themselves that are true. Give them a few minutes, collect the cards, and read them as before. Then discuss the following questions.

Discussion Questions:

- Did you feel differently as I read the true statements? How so?
- Do you feel differently knowing that what was read was true? Why do you feel that way?
- Do you prefer the truth to lies?

The truth is, sometimes the truth hurts. However, the truth does not hurt as badly as lies do. We could all tell stories of how lies have hurt us, but let's not dwell on that. Instead, let's dwell on telling the truth.

Discussion Questions (Continued):

3. Would you agree that telling the truth is better than lying? Why/why not?
4. What is one way you can remind yourself to be more honest?

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5. What can you do after a lie to make it right?
6. Are there any lies you can think of that you've told recently that you could correct by repenting and asking someone for forgiveness? Make a note of any right now.

CLOSING PRAYER (2 minutes)

Genesis

Lesson 7: The Story of Joseph

LESSON OBJECTIVES

Goals

1. To give students an overview of the book of Genesis and the story of Joseph
2. To expose students to the good, yet difficult, life of Joseph
3. To inspire students to live a life of integrity in spite of the trials he or she may encounter

Topics:

Difficulties, Hardship, Integrity, Joseph, Trials

Scripture Memorization

Psalm 27:12

OPENING PRAYER (5 to 10 minutes)

GROUP BUILDING (10 minutes)

What Would Be Harder?

(Ask your group which one of two things would be harder. Your students will not always agree, which is fine, but it will get them thinking about the tough stuff that sometimes comes our way. Have the students hold up either one finger or two fingers to indicate which would be hardest for them.)

1. Would it be harder for you to 1) sprint up ten flights of stairs, or 2) jump from a 40-foot high-dive into water?
2. Would it be harder for you to 1) swallow a grape whole, or 2) chug a warm glass of milk?
3. Would it be harder for you to 1) swim 5 miles, or 2) run 10 miles?
4. Would it be harder for you to 1) move to a new town, or 2) stay in the same town all your life?
5. Would it be harder for you to 1) tell a friend who wanted you to do something wrong, "NO!" or 2) confess to your parents that you did something wrong?

GETTING STARTED (10 minutes)

(Have the students complete the following workbook activity on their own. If you are not using the workbook, hand out paper and pencils. Then, write the five questions on the board. Encourage the students to give serious thought before answering the first question, as they will expound on their answer later in the lesson.)

Workbook Activity

Tough Stuff (Part 1)

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Take a few moments and write down your answers to the following questions:

- What was the hardest thing that ever happened to you?
- What made it so difficult?
- How did you feel during this time?
- What did you do to overcome it?
- What did you learn from it? How were you different afterward?

In our lesson today, we will see that Joseph endured many hardships, but God used those things for good.

DIGGING IN (25 minutes)

Ask different students to read each passage one at a time and then describe what happened to Joseph.

Genesis 37:4 *(Joseph's brothers hated him.)*

Genesis 37:24 *(His brothers threw him in a cistern and stole his prized coat of many colors.)*

Genesis 37:28 *(His brothers sold him into slavery.)*

Genesis 37:36 *(Joseph's captors sold him to Potiphar as a slave.)*

Genesis 39:7-11 *(He was tempted repeatedly by Potiphar's wife.)*

Genesis 39:13-17 *(He was wrongly accused and framed by Potiphar's wife.)*

Genesis 39:19-20 *(He was falsely imprisoned.)*

Genesis 40:22 *(He was forgotten in prison.)*

Discussion Questions:

1. How do you think Joseph made it through all this time? What kept him going?
2. What do you think his attitude was like? Do you think he was always positive?
3. What can we learn from Joseph's perseverance through trials?
4. How does the worst thing that happened to Joseph stack up to your hardest thing?

Ranking ourselves against Joseph is not very important. What really matters is that we realize how we can learn from him. Although it is hard to tell, when skipping through Joseph's story like we did, many years passed and Joseph endures trial after trial. Yet in the end, his attitude is good and his life is a testimony to God's provision.

As Joseph said himself, "You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good..." (Genesis 50:20)

MAKING IT REAL (25 minutes)

Now, let's look at what the Bible has to say about all of us today.

Read James 1:2-4

Discussion Questions:

1. What do you think this verse means?
2. How does it relate to Joseph's story?
3. How do you think it is that trials make us stronger?
4. What do you think it would be like to be "complete" and "not lacking anything"? Does that mean we would be perfect?

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God tries to help you mature. He doesn't just swoop down out of Heaven and wave a wand in front of your face to do it. He uses life—real life—which can be hard, tough, and sometimes downright gut-wrenchingly painful! Sometimes, He uses wrongs done to us. Sometimes, He uses our foolish choices. God can redeem anything! Therefore, while He may not cause the bad things to happen to us, He can certainly use them in spite of us!

Have your students pair up with each other and then give them 10 to 15 minutes to complete the following activity.

Workbook Activity

Tough Stuff (Part 2)

Reflect back on what you listed earlier as the "hardest thing" that ever happened to you. Then, find a partner and share answers to the following questions with each other.

- How do you think that event made you into a strong person?
- Do you feel like you persevered through that trial or gave up? What was the end result?
- Looking back, how do you see God using that situation for good?

CLOSING PRAYER (2 minutes)