

HEART OF WORSHIP

LESSONS FROM THE LIFE
OF ABRAHAM



HEART OF WORSHIP

MONTHLY PREPARATION GUIDE

UNIT 7 - PreK

This month's unit, *Heart of Worship*, teaches kids about worship by examining four events in the life of Abraham. Throughout Scripture, God clarifies the primary purpose of believers: to worship God by loving Him with our whole being. Over the next four weeks, we will consider what Abraham, the Old Testament father of our faith, has to say about living out this high calling.

WEEK 1

LESSON MATERIALS: Puzzle Piece (one per class), Plastic Disposable Cups (24 per 3-5 students), Timer, *Old Testament Altar Activity Page* (1 per class), Pretzel Sticks (3-4 per child), Large Marshmallows (4 per child), Jellybeans or Gummy Bears (3 per child), Graham Crackers (5-6 per child), Icing, *Sample Altars Activity Page*

WEEK 2

LESSON MATERIALS: Puzzle Piece (1 per class), Black Construction Paper (1 per child), *Abraham Activity Page* (1 per child), Scissors, Glue Sticks, Markers or Crayons, Cotton Balls, White or Yellow Paint, Scrap Paper

WEEK 3

LESSON MATERIALS: Puzzle Piece (one per class), Hardcover Books of similar size and weight (1 book per 4 children), *Serving is Worship Activity Page* (1 per child), Pencils (1 per child), Markers or Crayons

WEEK 4

LESSON MATERIALS: Puzzle Piece (1 per class), Laptop Computer (1 per class), Construction Paper (1 per child), *Joyful Abraham Activity Page* (1 per child), Glue, Scissors, Markers or Crayons, Various Craft Items (Tissue Paper, Paint, Glitter Glue, Fabric Pieces, etc.)

ABRAHAM BUILDS AN ALTAR FOR GOD

BIBLE PASSAGE

Genesis 12:1-8 (ICB)

BIG IDEA

God wants us to worship Him with all of our hearts.

FOCUS VERSE

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment.” Matthew 22:37-38 (NIV)

LESSON MATERIALS

| Puzzle Piece | Plastic Disposable Cups | Timer | *Old Testament Altar* Activity Page | Pretzel Sticks | Large Marshmallows | Jellybeans or Gummy Bears | Graham Crackers | Icing | *Sample Altars* Activity Page |

GREET — 15 MINUTES

Connection questions to ask as the children arrive:

- What is something you love to do?
- What have you learned about worshipping God?

WORSHIP — 10 MINUTES

Say, “This month is all about worship! We will be learning about different ways of worshipping God, but for now, let’s worship Him with our voices. Let’s sing together.”

PRAY — 5 MINUTES

Pray with the class before beginning the lesson.



ROUTINE, ROUTINE, ROUTINE! BY FOLLOWING THE SAME ROUTINE EVERY WEEK, YOU’LL CREATE A PREDICTABLE STRUCTURE THAT WILL IMPROVE CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT.

SAMPLE PRAYER: “God, thank You for Your love and kindness. We are thankful that You are here. Help us be more like You every day. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”

REVIEW — 5 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | Puzzle Piece |

BACKGROUND: Say, “Who enjoyed last month’s lessons about the Garden of Eden? Do you remember talking about how God worked everything out for Adam and Eve’s good? Well, this week, we’re going to

read in God's Word about something that happened a very long time after Adam and Eve. Sin had spread throughout the whole earth, and yet God saw a man who loved and trusted Him with his whole heart. That man was Abram [his name later changed to Abraham]. Studying his life will help us understand what it means to have a Heart of Worship! First though, who wants to put up this week's puzzle piece?"



INSTEAD OF ASKING FOR VOLUNTEERS TO POST THE PUZZLE PIECE, WRITE THE CHILDREN'S NAMES ON POPSICLE STICKS AND RANDOMLY DRAW ONE EACH WEEK. IF A CHILD DOESN'T WANT TO HELP IN THIS WAY, CHOOSE ANOTHER STICK. KEEP EXTRA POPSICLE STICKS ON HAND SO YOU ARE ABLE TO ADD NAMES FOR NEW CHILDREN AND VISITORS.

TRANSITION: Say, "Let's play a game to get us started."

ENGAGE – 10 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | Plastic Disposable Cups (24 per 3-5 students) | Timer |

Say, "Who wants to learn a new game? Today, we will be playing, *Build it Up!* We're going to see who can build the tallest tower out of plastic cups."

GAME GOAL: To be the team that builds the tallest "cup tower" in the allotted time frame.

HOW TO PLAY:

1. Divide your students into groups of 3-5 students. Give each group 24 cups.
2. Set the timer for 10 minutes.
3. When you say, "Go!" have each team work together to build the tallest cup tower possible in the allotted time.
4. Once the time is up, evaluate which free-standing tower is the tallest.
5. Adjust the time limit as needed. Play again if time allows.



BE PREPARED TO HELP THE CHILDREN WITH IDEAS OF HOW THEY CAN STACK THE CUPS. ONCE THEY SEE YOU DO IT, THEY WILL GET THE HANG OF IT.

TRANSITION: Say, "You might be wondering what a game like this has to do with a lesson about worship. We'll get to that soon, but first, let's review what the word worship means." Explain that we worship God when we put Him first (before our own desires) and when we show Him respect. You can share the following video to help the children understand what it means to worship: <https://youtu.be/jhjXv0yKZZA>

LEARN – 10 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | *Old Testament Altar* Activity Page (1 per class) |

Say, "Today, we are going to learn about a special way that Abram worshiped God. Now, remember that a long time ago, people worshiped in different ways than we do. However, let's see what we can learn from this story about Abram." Read Genesis 12:1-8 (ICB).

¹ Then the Lord said to Abram, “Leave your country, your relatives and your father’s family. Go to the land I will show you.

² I will make you a great nation, and I will bless you. I will make you famous [or well-known]. And you will be a blessing to others. ³ I will bless those who bless you. I will place a curse on those who harm you. And all the people on earth will be blessed through you.”

⁴ So Abram left Haran as the Lord had told him. And Lot went with him. At this time Abram was 75 years old. ⁵ Abram took his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot and everything they owned... ⁶ Abram traveled through that land. He went as far as the great tree of Moreh at Shechem. The Canaanites were living in the land at that time. ⁷ The Lord appeared to Abram. The Lord said, “I will give this land to your descendants.” So Abram built an altar there to the Lord, who had appeared to him. ⁸ Then Abram traveled from Shechem to the mountain east of Bethel. And he set up his tent there. Bethel was to the west, and Ai was to the east. There Abram built another altar to the Lord and worshiped him.

Say, “In today’s story, when Abram wanted to worship God, he built Him something special.”

Ask, “What did Abram build for God? [Wait for responses.] Abram built not one but two altars to the Lord. [Show the *Old Testament Altar* Image.] These altars were probably small structures [like mini-towers] made of stone. Abram built these altars to honor God and remind himself of the Lord’s promises. God did not ask Abram for the altars; however, Abram’s response shows how much he loved and honored God. Did you know that God wants us to worship Him too? We don’t need to build Him an altar, but God does want us to worship Him with all of our hearts.”

JOINING TO JESUS

Jesus taught us to love God with all of our hearts. In fact, Jesus said that this is the greatest (most important) command: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart with all your soul and with all your mind.” (Matthew 22:37)



TALK WITH THE KIDS ABOUT HOW THEY CAN HONOR GOD WITHOUT BUILDING A PHYSICAL ALTAR. FOR EXAMPLE, WHEN GOD ANSWERS OUR PRAYERS, WE CAN DRAW A PICTURE OR CREATE AN ART PROJECT TO PRAISE HIM FOR HIS POWER AND GOODNESS. OR, WE MAY WRITE A LETTER OR SING A SONG TO GOD, THANKING HIM FOR HIS FAITHFULNESS. THERE ARE SO MANY WAYS WE CAN CREATIVELY HONOR AND WORSHIP GOD!

TRANSITION: Say, “Just like Abram, **God wants us to worship Him with all of our hearts.**”

DISCUSS — 10 MINUTES

Say, “Let’s talk about our story together.”

1. How does God want us to worship Him?

Response: **God wants us to worship Him with all of our hearts.**

2. God told Abram that He would bless him, make him great, and give him land. What did Abram do when God promised these things?

Response: Abram believed God, and he worshiped Him by building altars.

3. Worship is more than singing. How else can we worship God?

Response: Answers will vary. However, mention that worship can include building something for the Lord. Although we don't typically build altars, we can create things (like artwork, music, etc.) that glorify God. We are going to build something at the end of our lesson today.

4. How do we know that Abram had a heart of worship?

Response: God did not tell Abram to build an altar. Abram decided to do it on his own!

5. Jesus gave us the Greatest Commandment: "Love the Lord God with all of your heart, with all of your soul, and with all of your mind." What do you think this verse has to do with today's story?

Response: Answers will vary. However, take this opportunity to remind the children that God wants us to worship Him with all of our hearts.

6. What do we learn about God from our story?

Response: **God wants us to worship Him with all of our hearts;** God saw Abram's heart for worship; God deserves our worship; God cares about our hearts, etc.

TRANSITION: Say, "Great discussion! Remember, **God wants us to worship Him with all of our hearts.**"

RESPOND — 10 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | Pretzel Sticks (3-4 per child) | Large Marshmallows (4 per child) | Jellybeans or Gummy Bears (3 per child) | Graham Crackers (5-6 per child) | Icing | *Sample Altars* Activity Page |



PLEASE MAKE SURE YOU HAVE NO FOOD ALLERGIES IN YOUR CLASSROOM BEFORE BEGINNING THIS SNACK/CRAFT. (EVERY TEACHER SHOULD HAVE EMERGENCY INFORMATION ON FILE.) IF YOU PREFER NOT TO MAKE AN EDIBLE CRAFT, YOU CAN USE LEGOS, POPSICLE STICKS, POM-POMS, PLAY-DOH, ETC. TO CREATE THE ALTARS.

Say, "We are going to build an altar. Not a real one, but we are going to make something that looks like one."

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Have the materials out and let children be creative in how they build their altar. You could make one with them, so they see an example (see the *Sample Altars* Page), but make sure they know their altar doesn't have to look like yours.
2. Explain that we don't know for sure what Abram's altar looked like, so we will use our imaginations.

TRANSITION: Say, "Abram built an altar because he loved God. **God wants us to worship Him with all of our hearts** too!"

MEMORIZE — 5 MINUTES

Say, "Having a heart that loves to worship God is so important; in fact, loving God is Jesus' greatest [most important] commandment. Let me read this month's verse to you. Then, we will practice the actions, and finally, you can try it by yourself."

**"Love the Lord your God [cross your arms over your chest] with all your heart [make a heart with your hands] and with all your soul [point to your belly] and with all your mind [point to your head]. This is the first [hold up a number one] and greatest commandment."
Matthew 22:37-38 (NIV) (hold your hands out like a book)**

CHALLENGE QUESTION: Engage your kids by asking the following question: "What are three ways we can love God?"

REFLECT — 5 MINUTES

Say, "We can't make someone have a heart for worship. Do you remember how Abram built the altar because He loved God? God wants that same kind of love from us, and He is willing to help us become the kind of people who worship Him with all of our hearts. Let's ask Him to do that now."

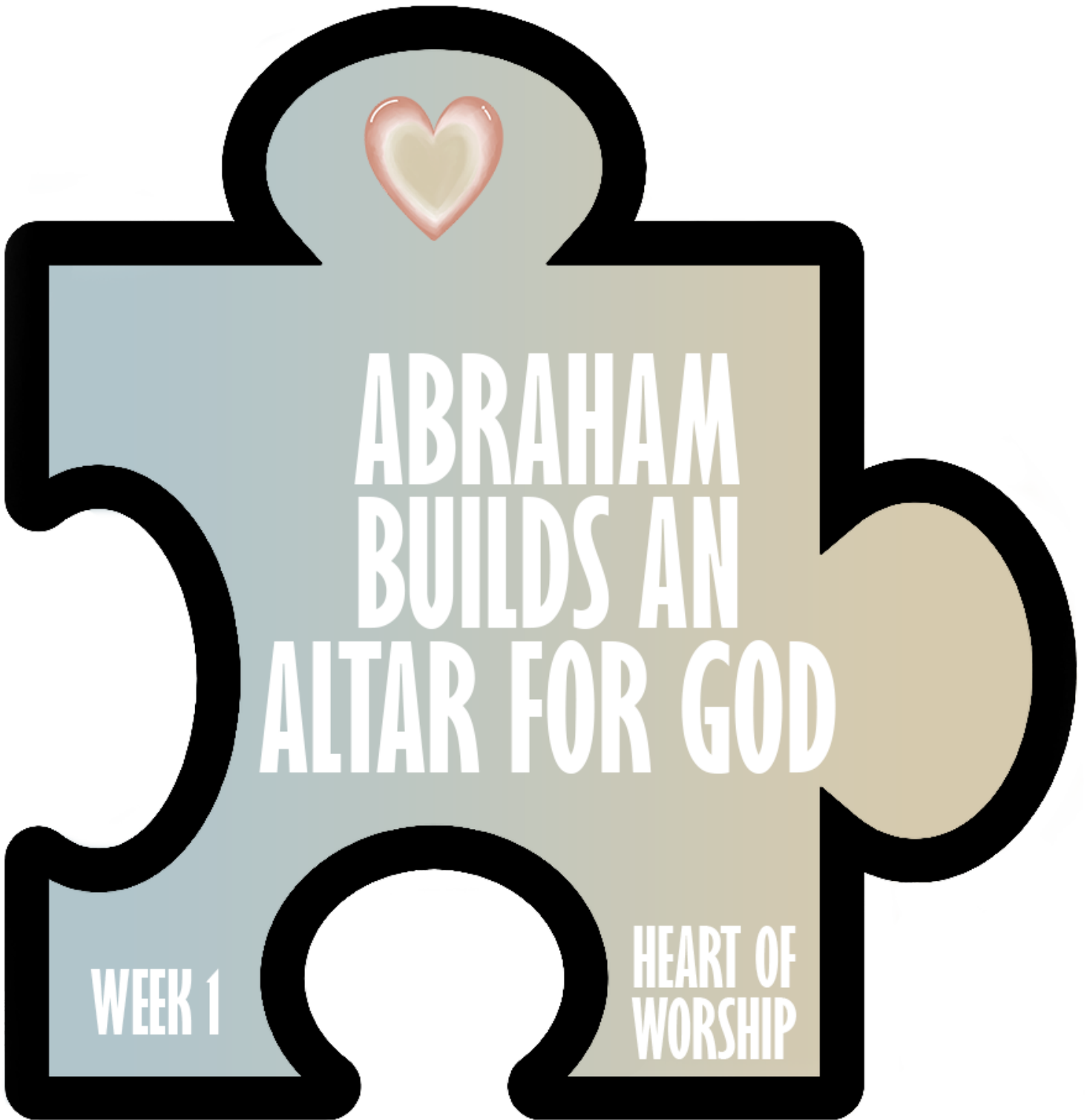
SAMPLE PRAYER: "Oh God, we love You! Give us hearts of worship, and help us love You most of all! In Jesus' name, Amen."

RELEASE — 5 MINUTES

Do you have extra time? If so, ask these additional questions about the story:

1. Do you think it was easy for Abram to leave his family and friends and move to a new place? Have you ever moved? How did you feel?
2. What was your favorite thing about today's story?

When parents arrive, please give them a copy of the monthly Parent Guide (downloadable).



OLD TESTAMENT ALTAR



SAMPLE "ALTARS" VISUAL



ABRAHAM BOWS DOWN TO GOD

BIBLE PASSAGE

Genesis 17:1-8 (ICB)

BIG IDEA

God wants us to worship Him with all of our hearts.

FOCUS VERSE

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment.” Matthew 22:37-38 (NIV)

LESSON MATERIALS

| Puzzle Piece | Black Construction Paper | *Abraham* Activity Page | Scissors | Glue Sticks | Markers or Crayons | Cotton Balls | White or Yellow Paint | Scrap Paper |

GREET — 15 MINUTES

Connection questions to ask as the children arrive:

- How do you know if someone loves Jesus?
- What is your favorite dance move?



IF THE KIDS FEEL COMFORTABLE, HAVE THEM SHOW YOU THEIR FAVORITE DANCE MOVES.

WORSHIP — 10 MINUTES

Say, “This month, we are learning that worship includes anything we do to show God we love Him. Before we hear today’s lesson, let’s show God how much we love Him with our voices. Will you join me in singing to the Lord?”

PRAY — 5 MINUTES

Prayer is the foundation for ministry. Pray that God will open the children’s hearts and minds.

SAMPLE PRAYER: “God, we need Your help. Would You please open our hearts so we can know You and love You? In Jesus’ name, amen.”

REVIEW — 5 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | Puzzle Piece |

BACKGROUND: Say, “This is the second lesson in our *Heart of Worship* series. Who, from the Bible, did we talk about last week? [Wait for responses.] Right! We heard about Abram [or Abraham]. We can learn a lot

about worshipping God from Abram's life because he loved the Lord so much. Remember, **God wants us to worship Him with all of our hearts!**" Hang up the next puzzle piece.

TRANSITION: Say, "Guess what time it is? It is game time!"



DRAW OUT A SHY CHILD OR A CHILD WITH SPECIAL NEEDS BY ASKING THEM TO POST THIS WEEK'S PUZZLE PIECE. SOME CHILDREN WOULD LOVE TO DO THESE KINDS OF TASKS, BUT ARE NERVOUS ABOUT VOLUNTEERING.

ENGAGE — 10 MINUTES

Say, "Today's game is called, *Follow the Leader*. Let me show you how to play!"

GAME GOAL: To listen closely to and model the leader's actions. (Note the special lesson connection at the end.)

HOW TO PLAY:

1. Choose a child to be "the leader." Line the other children up behind the leader.
2. The leader will then move around the room as the group follows. The children should mimic the leader's actions as they go. Encourage the leader to incorporate funny movements as they walk.
3. Any child who does not correctly follow the leader is "out" of that round. After a few minutes of play, allow another child to lead.
4. Finally, as the game is winding down, you (as the teacher) take the lead. *End the game by bowing down to the ground.* Pause and say, "What am I doing now?" Don't move on until one of the children acknowledges that you are "bowing."

VARIATION: If you have very young children, lead the game yourself for the whole time. Additionally, you can stand facing the children (instead of in a line), so they can easily see your movements.

TRANSITION: Say, "Great job! Hopefully, this game helped prepare your minds for today's lesson. Who remembers the very last thing we did in the game? Right! We used our bodies to bow down. Let's find out what that has to do with worshipping God!"

LEARN — 10 MINUTES

Say, "This month, we are learning about worship. Many people think worship is only about singing to God, but it's much more. For example, last week, we heard about Abram building altars to honor God. Abram was worshipping when he did that. Be listening for what Abraham does to worship God in today's Bible story." Read Genesis 17:1-8 (ICB).

¹ When Abram was 99 years old, the Lord appeared to him. The Lord said, "I am God All-Powerful. Obey me and do what is right. ² I will make an agreement between us. I will make you the ancestor of many people."

³ Then Abram bowed face down on the ground. God said to him, ⁴ "I am making my agreement with you: I will make you the father of many nations. ⁵ I am changing your name from Abram to Abraham. This is because I am making you a father of many nations. ⁶ I will give you many descendants. New nations will be born from

you. Kings will come from you. ⁷ And I will make an agreement between me and you and all your descendants from now on: I will be your God and the God of all your descendants. ⁸ You live in the land of Canaan now as a stranger. But I will give you and your descendants all this land forever. And I will be the God of your descendants.”

Say, “When God spoke to him, Abraham [formerly Abram] did something interesting with his body to show the Lord honor and respect. What did he do? Right! He bowed down. Can you show me how you think Abraham bowed? That’s great!” Note that God changed Abram’s name to Abraham in verse 5.



WHEN WE THINK OF “BOWING,” WE OFTEN THINK OF A “PROPER BOW” WHERE YOU SLIGHTLY TILT YOUR HEAD AND UPPER BODY. THIS WAS NOT HOW ABRAHAM BOWED. ABRAHAM BOWED TO THE GROUND WITH HIS FACE FLAT AGAINST THE DIRT (GENESIS 17:3). MODEL BOTH BOWS TO SHOW THE CONTRAST.

Ask, “Why do you think Abraham worshiped God this way? [Wait for responses.] Abraham responded out of a heart of worship! As he bowed down, Abraham was showing God how much he loved Him and wanted to obey Him. [In Bible times, bowing was a common way to show honor or respect.]

“Did you notice that God did not tell Abraham to fall on his face? Instead, Abraham did it because he recognized that God was amazing and awesome. When we feel lots of love for God or think about how incredible God is, we should worship Him too. The Bible says we should worship God with our whole selves: our minds, hearts, and bodies. [Point to your head, chest, and entire body as you cover this point.] In this story, we see Abraham worshiping with his body as he bows to the ground. Abraham shows us many ways to worship God.”

JOINING TO JESUS

“God made a wonderful promise to Abraham when He said kings would come from his family [Genesis 17:6]. Did you know that God was hinting at Jesus? Even though it was a long time after this story happened, God kept His promise to Abraham. Jesus, the King of Kings, came from the family line of Abraham. How amazing is that?”

TRANSITION: Say, “**God wants us to worship Him with all of our hearts.** We can do that by using our bodies – our hands, arms, legs, etc. - to worship Him.”

DISCUSS – 10 MINUTES

Say, “I’d love to hear what you think about our story! Let’s see how you can answer these questions.”

1. How does God want us to worship Him?

Response: **God wants us to worship Him with all of our hearts.**

2. In today’s Bible reading, how did Abraham worship God?

Response: Abram bowed down to God.

3. Worship is so much more than singing. What are some other ways you can worship God?

Response: Answers will vary.

4. Who do you think God was talking about when He told Abraham, “Kings will come from you?”

Response: Most importantly, God was referring to His Son, Jesus, the King of Kings!

5. Name some things about God that make you want to worship Him.

Response: Answers will vary.

6. What do we learn about God from our story?

Response: **God wants us to worship Him with all of our hearts**; God saw Abram’s heart for worship; God receives worship in many ways; God deserves our worship; God cares about our hearts, etc.

TRANSITION: Say, “Do you remember how God wants us to worship Him? [Wait for responses.] Right! **God wants us to worship Him with all of our hearts.**”

RESPOND — 10 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | Black Construction Paper | *Abraham* Activity Page | Scissors | Glue Sticks | Markers or Crayons | Cotton Balls | White or Yellow Paint | Scrap Paper |



USE WASHABLE PAINT, AND IF YOU PAINT OFTEN, INVEST IN INEXPENSIVE SMOCKS THAT CAN BE KEPT IN THE CLASSROOM.

Say, “This month, we are learning about loving and worshiping God. In today’s Bible lesson, we saw that we can worship God with our bodies like Abraham did when he bowed to God. Now, we’re going to create a picture that will help you remember that **God wants us to worship Him with all of our hearts.**”

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Give each child a piece of dark construction paper, an *Abraham* Activity Page, scissors, a glue stick, and markers or crayons. Make other materials (cotton balls, white or yellow paint, scrap paper, etc.) available to the entire class.
2. First, have the children color then cut out the *Abraham* from the Activity Page. Next, they should glue the image to their paper to look like he is bowing before God.
3. Then, have the children color or paint the picture around the image. Remind them that God told Abraham his descendants would be more than the stars in the skies. Ask the kids to color or paint stars on their page.



EXPLAIN THAT IN THE PASSAGE, THE WORD “DESCENDANTS” REFERS TO ALL OF THE CHILDREN, GRAND-CHILDREN, GREAT-GRANDCHILDREN, ETC. THAT ABRAHAM WOULD HAVE.

TRANSITION: Say, “You can hang this picture in your room as a reminder that, like Abraham, we have been created to worship God.” (Occasionally, keep the children’s art, and hang it in the classroom as a reminder of what you’re learning about God.)

MEMORIZE — 5 MINUTES

Say, “Jesus said that the most important thing we can do is to love God with our whole selves. So let’s take some time to practice this month’s memory verse about loving [and worshiping] God.” First, say

the verse a few times to the children, then recite the verse together, and finally, have the kids try it by themselves.



SAYING, THE VERSE FIRST, RECITING IT TOGETHER, THEN ALLOWING THE KIDS TO SAY IT IS A TEACHING STRATEGY CALLED "I DO, WE DO, YOU DO."

“Love the Lord your God [cross your arms over your chest] with all your heart [make a heart with your hands] and with all your soul [point to your belly] and with all your mind [point to your head]. This is the first [hold up a number one] and greatest commandment.”
Matthew 22:37-38 (NIV) (hold your hands out like a book)

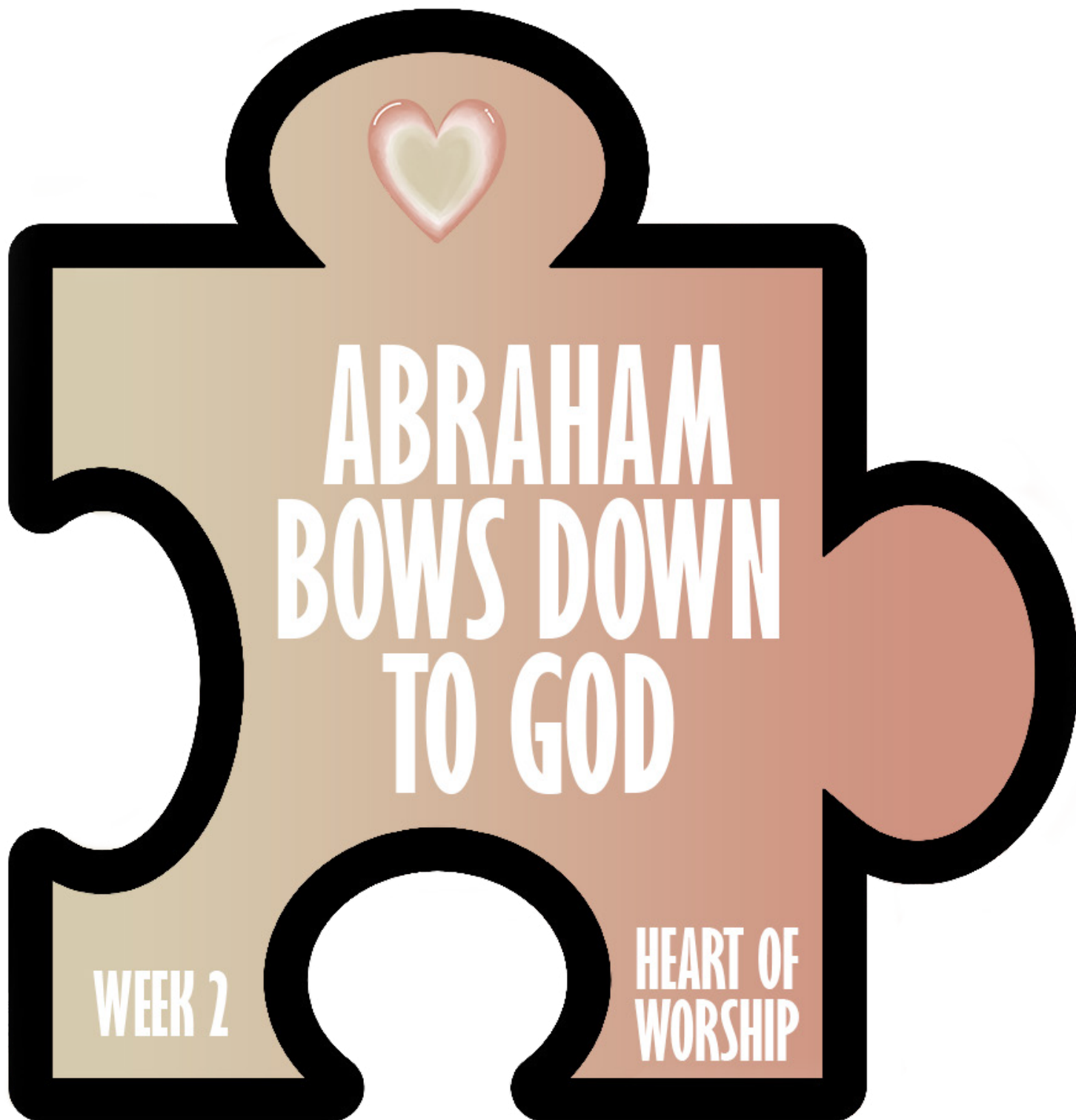
REFLECT — 5 MINUTES

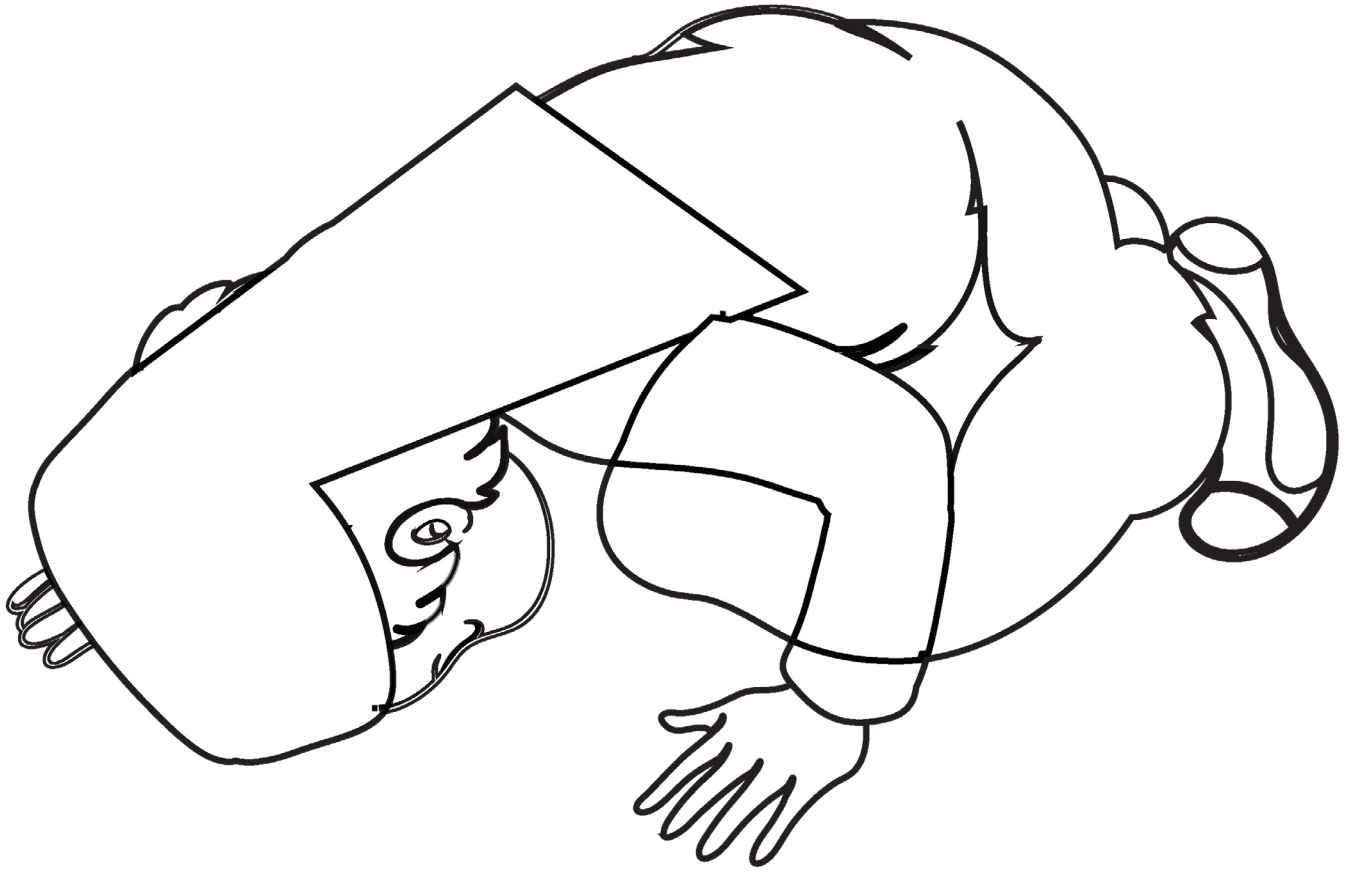
Say, “Abraham is a great example of what it means to have a heart of worship. He built altars to the Lord and bowed before Him. Abraham did this to show God love and honor. Who can tell us some of the reasons we worship God? [Wait for responses.] Great! Now, let’s pray and ask God to give us hearts of worship.”

SAMPLE PRAYER: “Oh God, thank You for stories, like Abraham’s, that teach us how to worship You. Give us hearts that will worship and love You most of all. Thank You, Jesus. Amen.”

RELEASE —

If you have time remaining, sing some of your group’s favorite worship songs and give the children an opportunity to show God how much they love Him. If you are left with just one child waiting to be picked up, take that opportunity to get to know them a little better.





ABRAHAM SERVES GOD

BIBLE PASSAGE

Genesis 18:1-10 (ICB)

BIG IDEA

God wants us to worship Him with all of our hearts.

FOCUS VERSE

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment.” Matthew 22:37-38 (NIV)

LESSON MATERIALS

| Puzzle Piece | Hardcover Books | *Serving is Worship* Activity Page | Pencils | Markers or Crayons |

GREET — 15 MINUTES

Connection questions to ask as the children arrive:

- What are some ways you show your family that you love them?
- Has someone made you feel loved this week? How did they do it?

WORSHIP — 10 MINUTES

Helping our children cultivate hearts of worship is one way we disciple them. Fortunately, the transformation of their hearts isn't our job. It's God's. (Deuteronomy 30:6) The Holy Spirit is the One who changes and grows us into mature believers who increasingly love God more than anyone or anything else. However, one thing we can do is let our children see us seeking, loving, and worshiping God ourselves.



TEACH THE CHILDREN TO ASK GOD TO CHANGE THEIR HEARTS
AND MAKE THEM PEOPLE WHO LOVE TO WORSHIP HIM.

PRAY — 5 MINUTES

Start the lesson with prayer. Thank God for attentively listening to every word we speak.

SAMPLE PRAYER: “Lord, thank You for hearing us. I’m grateful You are always listening. Today, please help us love and understand Your Word as we seek to become more like Your Son, Jesus. Amen.”

REVIEW — 5 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | Puzzle Piece |

BACKGROUND: Say, “This month, we have been studying the life of Abraham to learn how we can better

worship God. First, we learned that Abraham built altars to God, and we discovered that we can worship God by making things for Him too. In the second lesson, we saw that Abraham bowed to the ground in worship when God spoke to him. When God ‘wows’ us, we should respond in worship! Sometimes that will mean using our bodies [by bowing, raising our hands, etc.] to honor God.

“Another important thing we see in these stories is that Abraham worshiped God because he loved Him. God wants the same from us. **God wants us to worship Him with all of our hearts.** Now, let’s start our third lesson in our *Heart of Worship* lessons. Who would like to put up this week’s puzzle piece?”

TRANSITION: Say, “Now that we have reminded ourselves about what we have learned so far, let’s play a game.”

ENGAGE — 10 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | Hardcover Books of similar size and weight (1 book per 4 children) |

Say, “This week’s game is called, *Run and Serve!* Raise your hand if you are good at running. Great! You will be running a lot for this game, but that’s not all you’ll be doing. Are you ready to find out how to play?”

GAME GOAL: To be the first team to win the relay by running to the other side of the room while balancing a book like a tray.

HOW TO PLAY:

1. Evenly divide everyone into groups of four, and line them up on one side of the room.
2. Give each group one book.
3. When you say “go,” the first person from each team will run to the other side of the room and back as quickly as possible while holding their book like a tray. (Their hands and fingers must be flat under the book. They may not grip it.)
4. If the book falls, the child will grab the book, return to the starting line and begin again. Once the first child successfully returns to their team, they will pass the book to the next relay runner, who will repeat the process.
5. The first team to finish the relay wins.
6. Replay as time and interest allows.

MODIFICATION: If the game finishes too quickly, make the relay teams larger, take the kids outside for a longer race, or play several rounds.



REMEMBER TO HAVE A PLAN READY FOR CHILDREN WITH EXCEPTIONAL NEEDS WHO STRUGGLE WITH CERTAIN MOVEMENTS, OR KIDS WHO JUST DO NOT WANT TO PLAY. THINKING OF WHAT CAN HAPPEN AHEAD OF TIME WILL HELP YOU BE PREPARED!

TRANSITION: Say, “Great job playing *Run and Serve!*” Did you notice how you were holding the book like a tray? When I see someone carry a tray like that [demonstrate it with one of the books], it makes me think of a restaurant server who brings me food. Well, today’s Bible story is about a time when Abraham ran and served. Doesn’t that sound surprising? Well, let’s see what this story is all about!”

LEARN – 10 MINUTES

Say, “In our *Heart of Worship* series, we have discovered that worship is more than singing. Worship is about showing love, honor, and respect to God. Abraham did this in a few ways: he worshiped God by building altars, and he worshiped with his body when he bowed to the ground. Now, our story is going to teach us another way Abraham worshiped God. Be listening for what Abram does this time.” Read Genesis 18:1-10 (ICB).

¹ Later, the Lord again appeared to Abraham near the great trees of Mamre. At that time Abraham was sitting at the door of his tent. It was during the hottest part of the day. ² He looked up and saw three men standing near him. When Abraham saw them, he ran from his tent to meet them. He bowed facedown on the ground before them. ³ Abraham said, “Sir, if you think well of me, please stay awhile with me, your servant. ⁴ I will bring some water so all of you can wash your feet. You may rest under the tree. ⁵ I will get some bread for you, so you can regain your strength. Then you may continue your journey.” The three men said, “That is fine. Do as you said.”

⁶ Abraham hurried to the tent where Sarah was. He said to her, “Hurry, prepare 20 quarts of fine flour. Make it into loaves of bread.” ⁷ Then Abraham ran to his cattle. He took one of his best calves and gave it to a servant. The servant hurried to kill the calf and to prepare it for food. ⁸ Abraham gave the three men the calf that had been cooked. He also gave them milk curds and milk. While the three men ate, he stood under the tree near them.

⁹ The men asked Abraham, “Where is your wife Sarah?” “There, in the tent,” said Abraham.

¹⁰ Then the Lord said, “I will certainly return to you about this time a year from now. At that time your wife Sarah will have a son.”

Say, “It is clear: **God wants us to worship Him with all of our hearts.** Abraham worshiped in an interesting way in this story. Did you notice what He did?”

Ask, “In today’s Bible story, how did Abraham worship the Lord? [Wait for responses.] Abraham ran out to meet these men of God and served them his very best food. Verse one says that ‘the Lord again appeared to Abraham.’ Although we can’t be entirely sure who these men were, Abraham knew they were visitors from God, and he responded to them by bowing. [Take a moment to review last week’s lesson by discussing that worship often includes the use of bodies – bowing, kneeling, or raising our hands.]

“What else did Abraham do for these men? Yes! In verses 6-9, we see that Abraham and his wife, Sarah, prepared a fantastic meal for their surprise guests. Did you know that we can worship God by serving Him and others? [Pause to discuss what it means to serve. Use real-life examples to help the children understand this concept.]

“This month we’ve been memorizing Matthew 22:37. [Read the verse aloud.] If we read a little further, we

see the Lord's following command: 'Love your neighbor as you love yourself.' Jesus teaches that after loving God, the next most important thing we can do to honor [worship] Him is to love others.

"God wants us to worship Him with all of our hearts! We do that by serving Him and others every day. This means that we put others' needs ahead of our own. In other words, we should look for ways to be kind and help others. Abraham didn't hesitate to give his guests the very best he had. He gave them rest, food, water, and his time. What are some ways you can give God and others the very best you have?" (We can serve God by helping at home, praying, singing to Him, learning about the Bible, telling others about Jesus, etc.)

JOINING TO JESUS

"We can worship God through service. When Jesus came to Earth, He did not ask people to serve Him [even though He deserves it]. Jesus came to serve God [Matthew 20:28] and people. Jesus served God and others as He healed the sick and taught His followers about God's wonderful plan for them. However, His biggest act of service was when He gave His life by dying on the Cross. Jesus is our best example of a true worshiper!"

TRANSITION: Say, "Abraham worshiped God with His whole heart, and **God wants us to worship Him with all of our hearts** too. Serving is just one of the many ways that we can worship God!"

DISCUSS – 10 MINUTES

Say, "Who is ready to talk about our story some more?"

1. How does God want us to worship Him?

Response: **God wants us to worship Him with all of our hearts.**

2. What are some ways we've seen Abraham worship God?

Response: Abraham worshiped God by building altars, bowing, and serving Him and others.

3. Why do you think God considers service to Him and others an act of worship?

Response: When we worship God, we show Him that we love and honor Him most of all. When we serve the Lord and others, we put Him and the people He sends our way above ourselves.

4. Read Matthew 25:40. What does this verse have to do with today's lesson?

Response: This verse reminds us that when we love others, we are also loving God.

5. Jesus is our perfect example of how to live as Christians. What do we learn from Jesus about serving others?

Response: Jesus, God's perfect Son, came to serve God and us. He healed and taught, but Jesus' greatest act of service was on the Cross.

6. What special message did the Lord have for Abraham? (Reread verse 10.)

Response: The Lord told Abraham that God would give him and his wife, Sarah, a son. Note that Abraham (100 years old) and Sarah (90) were too old to have children.

7. What have you learned about worship over the past few weeks? Name one way you will worship God by serving others this week.

Response: Answers will vary.

8. What do we learn about God from our story?

Response: **God wants us to worship Him with all of our hearts**; God wants us to serve Him and others; God deserves our worship; God loved Abraham's worship because it came from his heart, etc.

TRANSITION: Say, "The thing I most want you to remember is that God wants us to worship Him with all of our hearts."

RESPOND — 10 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | *Serving is Worship* Activity Page (1 per child) | Pencils (1 per child) | Markers or Crayons |



THE *SERVING IS WORSHIP* ACTIVITY PAGE IS 2 PAGES TO BE PRINTED FRONT AND BACK. BE SURE TO MAKE ENOUGH COPIES FOR EACH CHILD BEFORE CLASS BEGINS.

Say, "We know that **God wants us to worship Him with all of our hearts**. In today's story, we learned that Abraham worshiped God by serving his guests his best meat, fresh bread, and milk! He also gave them a place to rest. We may never have guests quite like Abraham's, but we can still serve and love the people God brings into our lives. Let's do an activity that will help us remember that we can worship God by serving others."

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Give each child a *Serving is Worship* Activity Page, a pencil, and markers or crayons.
2. On the side of the *Serving is Worship* Activity Page that says, "Abraham Served God By..." the kids will choose and draw three ways that Abraham served his guests (giving food, water, rest, etc.).
3. On the side that says, "I Can Serve God By..." have the children draw three pictures illustrating how they can serve God this week. Have them color their drawings.



IF THE KIDS CANNOT THINK OF WAYS TO SERVE GOD, SPEND A FEW MINUTES BRAINSTORMING TOGETHER.

TRANSITION: Say, "Today's story gives us an example of how we can worship God by loving others. Don't forget: **God wants us to worship Him with all of our hearts**."

MEMORIZE — 5 MINUTES

Say, "It is memory verse time! Who is ready to practice this month's verse?" Say the verse together and release the kids to practice it with a partner.

"Love the Lord your God [cross your arms over your chest] with all your heart [make a heart with your hands] and with all your soul [point to your belly] and with all your mind [point to your head]. This is the first [hold up a number one] and greatest commandment."
Matthew 22:37-38 (NIV) (hold your hands out like a book)

CHALLENGE: Reciting the verse with a partner is a fun way to have the children work on their memorization and build relationships. Pair kids who don't know each other well. If you have a broad age range, pair older children with younger children. This is a great way to encourage older children to lead and serve their classmates.

REFLECT — 5 MINUTES

Say, "Abraham is a great example of someone who had a heart of worship, and God blessed him because of it. Abraham worshiped by building altars, bowing before the Lord, and serving God and others. Pick one of these things Abraham did and tell me why it is an act of worship."

SAMPLE PRAYER: *"God, thank You for giving Your people hearts of worship. Thank You also for giving us Your Word so we can learn how to worship You better. We love You! In Jesus' name, Amen."*

RELEASE — 5 MINUTES

If you have time remaining, replay the ENGAGE game with different teams.



ABRAHAM SERVED GOD BY...

DRAW AND COLOR THREE WAYS THAT ABRAHAM WORSHIPED GOD BY SERVING HIS GUESTS.

I CAN SERVE GOD BY...

DRAW AND COLOR THREE WAYS THAT YOU CAN WORSHIP GOD BY
SERVING OTHERS.

ABRAHAM LOVES GOD MOST OF ALL

BIBLE PASSAGE

Genesis 22:1-13 (ICB)

God wants us to worship Him with all of our hearts.

FOCUS VERSE

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment.” Matthew 22:37-38 (NIV)

LESSON MATERIALS

| Puzzle Piece | Laptop Computer | Construction Paper | *Joyful Abraham* Activity Page | Glue | Scissors | Markers or Crayons | Various Craft Items |

GREET — 15 MINUTES

Connection questions to ask as the children arrive:

- Do you have rules at home? If so, can you tell me about some of them?
- Is there a rule that you don't like very much or that doesn't make sense to you? If so, why?

WORSHIP — 10 MINUTES

When we sing in worship, it's easy to move through a song without thinking about its words. So ask the kids what distracts them from worshipping God when we sing. (Explain that distractions keep you from doing things you need to do. Share some of your common distractions.)

Authentic worship comes when we are aware of the greatness of God and take delight in Him. God is most glorified when we find our joy in Him – that's the beauty of true worship. So, before you begin singing, encourage the kids to pay attention to the words they are saying. Challenge them to think about our great God and let that transport them to a place of gratitude, joy, and worship.

PRAY — 5 MINUTES

Pray and invite God into your day and your lesson.

SAMPLE PRAYER: *“Father, be with us today. Send Your Holy Spirit to guide our conversation and all the words we speak. Help us know and love You more. In Jesus' name, Amen.”*

REVIEW — 5 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | Puzzle Piece |

BACKGROUND: Say, "Today is the final day in our lessons about having a *Heart of Worship*! Other than God, who have we been learning about this month? [Wait for responses.] Right! Abraham! We have been looking at how Abraham worshiped the Lord. Do you remember how Abraham built altars to God, bowed down when the Lord spoke to him, and served God's men? All of these things were acts of worship. Time and time again, Abraham's worship showed his love for God! Well, we have one more *Heart of Worship* story to hear, but now, let's hang the puzzle piece for this week."

TRANSITION: Say, "Let's play a game that will help us get our minds and hearts ready for today's story!"

ENGAGE — 10 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | Laptop Computer (1 per class) |

Say, "So, the game we are going to play is called *Listen and Obey*! Are you ready to try it?"

GAME GOAL: To listen and obey the actions as they are announced.

HOW TO PLAY:

1. Begin with everyone standing an arm's length apart from one another.
2. Say, "This week we're going to play some fun music, and you're going to follow the directions called out while standing right where you are. Are you ready?"
3. On your laptop computer, play a YouTube clip for the kids to view and follow. ("Dana's Music Playground: Follow the Leader" is a great choice.) Or you could play some of your favorite upbeat worship music, and call out the commands yourself for the children to follow.
4. Examples of commands include running in place, hopping, crawling, spinning in a circle, etc.
5. The children should obey the actions as they are announced.
6. Replay as time and interest allows.

CHALLENGE: If the children become bored, add a competitive element to the game by occasionally yelling "FREEZE!" When they hear that command, the children must immediately stop. Anyone who moves before you give the next instruction is out of that round.

TRANSITION: Say, "Great job playing *Listen and Obey*. Why do you think we played this game today? Hmm... Let's find out together."

LEARN — 10 MINUTES

Say, "Today's story is about a hard moment in Abraham's life. It is also a story about worship. I'll tell you what I mean in a minute, but first, let's read from God's Word."

Read Genesis 22:1-13 (ICB)

¹ After these things God tested Abraham's faith. God said to him, "Abraham!" And he answered, "Here I am." ² Then God said, "Take your only son, Isaac, the son you love. Go to the land of Moriah. There kill him and offer him as a whole burnt offering. Do this on one of the mountains there. I will tell you which one."

³ Early in the morning Abraham got up and saddled his donkey. He took Isaac and two servants with him. He cut the wood for the sacrifice. Then they went to the place God had told them to go. ⁴ On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place in the distance. ⁵ He said to his servants, “Stay here with the donkey. My son and I will go over there and worship. Then we will come back to you.”

⁶ Abraham took the wood for the sacrifice and gave it to his son to carry. Abraham took the knife and the fire. So Abraham and his son went on together. ⁷ Isaac said to his father Abraham, “Father!” Abraham answered, “Yes, my son.” Isaac said, “We have the fire and the wood. But where is the lamb we will burn as a sacrifice?” ⁸ Abraham answered, “God will give us the lamb for the sacrifice, my son.” So Abraham and his son went on together. ⁹ They came to the place God had told him about. There, Abraham built an altar. He laid the wood on it. Then he tied up his son Isaac. And he laid Isaac on the wood on the altar. ¹⁰ Then Abraham took his knife and was about to kill his son.

¹¹ But the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven. The angel said, “Abraham! Abraham!” Abraham answered, “Yes.” ¹² The angel said, “Don’t kill your son or hurt him in any way. Now I can see that you respect God. I see that you have not kept your son, your only son, from me.” ¹³ Then Abraham looked up and saw a male sheep. Its horns were caught in a bush. So Abraham went and took the sheep and killed it. He offered it as a whole burnt offering to God. Abraham’s son was saved.

Say, “This story is surprising, isn’t it? I believe God still has something to teach us from it. So let’s talk about it and listen to what God wants us to hear.”



THIS IS A CHALLENGING PASSAGE OF SCRIPTURE, AND IT MAY RAISE LOTS OF QUESTIONS FOR CHILDREN. ASSURE THEM THAT GOD NEVER PLANNED FOR ABRAHAM TO KILL ISAAC, AND GIVE THE KIDS AN OPPORTUNITY TO ASK QUESTIONS BEFORE YOU MOVE FORWARD. TRY TO ANTICIPATE QUESTIONS SO YOU CAN HAVE PREPARED ANSWERS. FOR EXAMPLE, THEY MAY ASK A LOT OF QUESTIONS ABOUT ISAAC SINCE THEY WILL IDENTIFY WITH THE CHILD IN THE STORY AND WILL WANT TO KNOW HOW HE FELT. WAS ISAAC SCARED? DID HE UNDERSTAND WHAT WAS GOING ON? ALLOW THE HOLY SPIRIT TO SPEAK THROUGH YOU.

“At the beginning of today’s reading, Abraham is given the worst news ever. God commanded Abraham to kill his son, Isaac. Even though this would have been the hardest thing in the world for Abraham to do, he obeyed God.

“You’re probably wondering, ‘Why would God ask Abraham to do such a thing?’ Well, God was asking Abraham to show Him if he loved Him most of all. Now Abraham knew God was good, and he believed he could trust Him. [The Bible also says that Abraham believed the Lord would bring Isaac back to life if he did kill him. See Hebrews 11:17-19. You can mention Lazarus or Jesus as examples if they say they don’t understand what this means.] However, obeying God at this moment was still very scary.

“Guess what? Abraham was right! God is good, and we can trust Him. God stopped Abraham from killing Isaac at just the right time, and the Lord provided a sheep for Abraham to use instead.

“Who thinks they know what Abraham’s greatest act of worship was? Because Abraham loved God most of all, he was able to obey God even when it was hard. When we trust and love God more than anyone or anything, we will be able to worship Him with our WHOLE hearts. Aren’t you grateful that God loves us? Let’s ask Jesus to help us love and worship Him most of all.”

JOINING TO JESUS

“Hundreds of years after Abraham lived, another man walked up a hill with wood on His back. That man was Jesus. God sent His only Son to be the sacrifice we all need. And Jesus willingly died for us. He did what no other person could ever do. Because He is God’s perfect Son, He defeated sin once and for all.”

TRANSITION: Say, “In today’s story, we see how Abraham worshiped God with His whole heart. Let’s talk a little more about what it means to love God most of all.”

DISCUSS – 10 MINUTES

Say, “Let’s discuss our story.”

1. How does God want us to worship Him?

Response: **God wants us to worship Him with all of our hearts.**

2. Why did God ask Abraham to sacrifice his son, Isaac?

Response: God was giving Abraham the chance to show that he loved the Lord most of all.

3. Did God really want Abraham to kill his son?

Response: No! God hates killing. One of His 10 Commandments is “You shall not kill.” (Exodus 20:13)

4. How did Abraham show God how much he loved Him?

Response: Abraham obeyed and trusted the Lord, even when it did not make sense.

5. Can you tell me about a time when it was hard for you to obey God?

Response: Answers will vary.

6. Jesus also worshiped God by obeying Him. How was Jesus obedient to God’s plan?

Response: Jesus “humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross.” (Philippians 2:8).

7. What have you learned about worship over the past few weeks?

Response: Answers will vary. Remind the children that genuine worship comes from our hearts. We long to worship God because we love Him and find our joy in Him.

8. What have you learned about God over the past few weeks?

Response: **God wants us to worship Him with all of our hearts;** God always provides; God is good; God wants us to obey Him; God deserves our worship; etc.

TRANSITION: Say, “I want you to remember that **God wants us to worship Him with all of our hearts.** I’m so glad we have such a good, kind and faithful God to worship and obey.”

RESPOND — 10 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | Construction Paper (1 per child) | *Joyful Abraham* Activity Page (1 per child) | Glue | Scissors | Markers or Crayons | Various Craft Items (Tissue Paper, Paint, Glitter Glue, Fabric Pieces, etc.) |

Say, “**God wants us to worship Him with all of our hearts.** We can worship Him with joy because God is good, and He loves us! Now, we’re going to create a picture of what ‘Joyful Abraham’ might have looked like at the end of today’s story.”

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Give each child a piece of construction paper, a *Joyful Abraham* Activity Page, and markers or crayons. Also, provide scissors, glue sticks, and various other craft items for the class.
2. First, have the children color the *Joyful Abraham* Activity Page. Then, with help from an adult, they should cut out their picture of Abraham and glue it onto their construction paper.
3. Finally, instruct the children to use the available craft items to finish decorating their pictures. Remind the kids that Abraham loved God most of all, and when we put God first, He makes us happy.

TRANSITION: Say, “Abraham’s story reminds us that **God wants us to worship Him with all of our hearts.**”

MEMORIZE — 5 MINUTES

Say, “It is time to keep memorizing this month’s verse! We memorize verses to put them in our minds and hearts so the Holy Spirit can remind us of God’s truth when we need it. We are storing God’s Word in our hearts [Psalm 119:11]. Let’s do this now!” Ask for volunteers to lead this week’s recitation of Matthew 22:37-38.

“**Love the Lord your God** [*cross your arms over your chest*] **with all your heart** [*make a heart with your hands*] **and with all your soul** [*point to your belly*] **and with all your mind** [*point to your head*]. **This is the first** [*hold up a number one*] **and greatest commandment.**”
Matthew 22:37-38 (NIV) (*hold your hands out like a book*)

CHALLENGE: Add some fun to your memorization practice by having the kids change their voices every time they say the verse. For example, the kids can use a British accent, a robot voice, a high-pitched voice, a baby voice, or a deep voice.



PRE-PRINT 3-4 SIMPLE PICTURES THAT REPRESENT SECTIONS OF THE MEMORY VERSE. (EXAMPLES FOR THIS MONTH INCLUDE A HEART, AN IMAGE OF JESUS, OR AN ARROW POINTING TO A PERSON’S HEAD.) CHALLENGE THE CHILDREN TO PUT THEM IN ORDER. THIS IS A GREAT MEMORIZING TECHNIQUE TO INCORPORATE IN WEEKS 3 OR 4 OF ANY UNIT.

REFLECT — 5 MINUTES

Say, “Abraham had a heart of worship. He did not worship because he ‘had’ to; He worshiped because he loved God with his whole heart, mind, and soul. How has learning about Abraham’s story helped you worship God?”

SAMPLE PRAYER: *“Thank You, Lord, for helping us worship You in many different ways. Make us be the kind of people who worship You because we love You most of all. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”*

RELEASE —

If you have extra time, replay the ENGAGE game or review the big idea for the month: **God wants us to worship Him with all of our hearts.** Ask the kids the following questions to deepen their understanding:

1. *Why do you think God wants us to worship Him with ALL of our hearts?*
2. *What have you learned about worship this month?*



ABRAHAM
LOVES GOD
MOST OF ALL

WEEK 4

HEART OF
WORSHIP

