

BIBLE TRUTH 2, LESSON 1: PLANNER/OVERVIEW

GETTING STARTED: Welcome and Opening Songs (*introduce unit and get kids moving with these songs*)

Welcome to Praise Factory: PFI: Praise Factory Investigators Theme Song *PFI NIV Songs 8, Track 1*

Rules to Help Us Worship God and Love One Another: WoGoLOA Classroom Rules Song
PFI NIV Songs 8, Track 2

Big Question Under Investigation: Big Question 8 Songs *PFI NIV Songs 8, Tracks 3,4*

Big Question Bible Verse: 1 Chronicles 16:34 Song *PFI NIV Songs 8, Track 5*

DIGGING DEEP DOWN: Key Concept and Story (*introduce the Bible Truth and tell the related story*)

Bible Truth 2: God Loved His People Before They Loved Him

Bible Truth Hymn: Oh, How I Love Jesus, v.1 *PFI NIV Songs 8, Track 8*

Bible Verse: Ephesians 1:4-6

Bible Verse Song: For He Chose Us *PFI NIV Songs 8, Track 9*

Lesson 1 Old Testament: The Case of the Long-Lived Lavish Love
Ephesians 1; Romans 8; Genesis; Exodus; 1 Kings/ 1 Chronicles; 2 Kings/2 Chronicles; Luke; Acts; Revelation 7:9

TAKING ACTION: Response Activities (*choose from among these activities*)

Snack and Discussion Planner: God's Great Love for His People Shown Through the Cross

ACTS Prayer: Prayer Sheet

Bible Truth Review: Discussion Questions and Game: Rush to Safety

Bible Truth Hymn: Oh, How I Love Jesus, v.1 *PFI NIV Songs 8, Track 8*
Song, Sign Language and Song Game: Mimic Me! **PFI NIV Songs 8 BOOK or ONLINE**

Bible Verse Review: Ephesians 1:4-6 Discussion Sheet and Game: Which Way Did It Go?

Bible Verse Song: For He Chose Us Ephesians 1:4-5 *PFI NIV Songs 8, Track 9*
Song, Sign Language and Song Game: Word Take Away **PFI NIV Songs 8 BOOK or ONLINE**

Story Review: Discussion Questions and Game: What's in the Box?

Case Replay, Jr: Drama Activity for Youngest Children (children do same story actions together)

Case Replay, Sr: Drama Activity for Most Children (children re-tell story with individual parts)

Craft: God's People in Christ

VIPP (Very Important Prayer Person) Prayer Time: Coloring Sheets (back of book) and Game: Ball Roll Review

TAKING IT HOME: Take Home Sheet for Review and Family Devotions

PFI Pronto: Bible Truth 2, Lesson 1 **PFI NIV Prontos 8 BOOK or ONLINE**

The Case of the Long-Lived, Lavish Love by Connie Dever*Ephesians 1; Romans 8; Genesis; Exodus; 1 Kings/ 1 Chronicles; 2 Kings/2 Chronicles; Luke; Acts; Revelation 7:9***Our story is called:****The Case of the Long-Lived, Lavish Love.****As you listen to the story, see if you can figure out:**

1. Whose love was so long-lived? Who did he love?
2. When did his love for them begin? What was so lavish about it?

Our story today starts out before the beginning of time, when there was just God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

God knew them all. All of His people. Abraham and Sarah; Moses, the Israelites; King David and King Manasseh. Peter, and Paul...and many others whose names we don't know. A number too big for our little brains to count. But God could know them all and did know them all--all of His people.

And God didn't just know them when they were born or lived or died. He knew them long before that. Before anything had been created in the heavens or earth. Before the first ray of light shone in the universe or the earth took shape. Before the first dolphin leaped in the ocean or the majestic eagle played upon the wind or a woolly animal munched on a juicy blade of grass. Before wisp of cherubim wing brushed the air or their angelic voices rang out in praise of God. Why even before time itself began. God knew this great number of people, inside and out. And He did not just know them; He loved them with a special love.

You and I know something of love: warm hugs, kind words and hands ready to care for our needs. But even the best that we know of love is only like a tiny drop compared with the depths of God's love for His people.

God's love is full of patience and kindness. He is so slow to anger! When His people sin against Him, He forgives their sins and keeps no record of their wrongs. How completely He looks after them! His love is always protecting them from anything that is not for their good. He rescues them out of dangers and temptations. When they are scared, He quiets them with assurances of His love. And oh, how He greatly delights in them! The Bible tells us that He even rejoices over them with singing. Can you imagine: God singing over you because you bring Him so much joy? That is how it is

between God and His people. Everyone else's love may fail them, but God's love never will.

Now perhaps you are thinking: "Wow! There must be something really special about these people that He chose to fix His special love upon them even before He created the world. I wonder what it is that made them so attractive, so deserving?"

Well actually, there was absolutely NOTHING in Abraham and Sarah; Moses, the Israelites; King David and King Manasseh; Peter, and Paul nor any other of God's people that made them attractive or deserving of His special love. Matter of fact, there was every reason for them NOT to deserve it. Why? Because of something God saw and knew about every single one of them: they were all sinners!

Yep, all these people--like every other single person God would create--would choose to rebel against Him and His good ways. Abraham, He knew, would grow up as a worshiper of idols. He would lie about his wife, Sarah, to an Egyptian king. He put her in danger to keep himself safe! Sarah would only laugh at God's amazing promises to give her a child in her old age.

Moses would murder a man and runaway from the Egyptian leaders rather than accepting his punishment. The Israelites would forget how God had rescued them from the Egyptians and make idols to worship instead.

The best of their kings, David, would murder a man and take his wife. The worst of their kings, Manasseh, would build altars to idols in the Temple to the LORD and make terrible sacrifices to them.

One of Jesus' best friends, Peter, would deny he even knew Jesus to save his own life. Proud Paul boasted in

Story-telling Tips

Ahead of time:

1. Read the Bible verses and story. Pray!
2. Create story cue cards on index cards (or highlight text).
3. Practice telling story dramatically, timing your presentation. Shorten, if necessary to fit your allotted time.
4. Decorate area with story props that help bring your story alive.

During your presentation:

1. Maintain as much eye contact as possible as you tell the story. Point to/use props at important points in the story. Include the kids in your story with a few questions about what they think will happen or words/concepts that might be new to them.
2. Watch the kids for signs that their attention span has been reached. Shorten, if necessary.

his good works as a Pharisee and hated Christians so much that he had them put in jail or killed.

And the rest of God's people were no different. They would all be sinners, too. Far from deserving God's special love, they would deserve His wrath and eternal punishment for their sins.

But back there, before time began, God knew this. And still, it was His will and good pleasure to set His special love upon them. Instead of giving them the punishment they would deserve for their sins, He was choosing to lavish upon them every spiritual blessing—every good thing that God could give to the hearts of people.

How could God do this? Didn't His holiness require their sins to be punished? Yes, it did. So there was only one way to do what He chose to do. He must give them all to Jesus, the Beloved Son of God right there before the beginning. You see, none of God's people would never be able to deserve God's love, but Jesus did. And they would never be able to pay for their sins, but Jesus could.

So, in the most amazing display of love, God the Father gave these people to His Son. He proclaimed them "in Jesus Christ." Jesus would be their substitute. He would change places with them and do for them things they could never do themselves. He would take all the punishment for their sins on the cross, and in exchange, He would give them His standing of perfect holiness before His Father so they could be adopted as His own precious children, and receive all the spiritual blessing that were His. This would be to the praise of God's glorious grace--His love lavished upon undeserving sinners.

As God planned, so all things began. God created His beautiful, perfect world, and placed Adam and Eve in it. All too soon, their perfect relationship with God was broken as they rebelled against Him and His good ways. Death came to them and all people after them, as God's just punishment for sin.

Yet just as He had planned, year after year God's lavish love for His people in Jesus Christ flowed out irresistibly to them. He gave them the Bible to know His truth. He sent the Holy Spirit to work in their hearts, convicting them of their sins and giving them faith to believe. Through Jesus, He saved them from their sins

and filled them with power to live as He wanted them to live. He filled their voices with songs of praise of the wonders of His glorious grace--His love lavished upon undeserving sinners.

Abraham left his father's house and the idols he worshiped. By faith he believed the LORD and went to the land He promised him. Sarah's mocking turned to faith and praise as she became pregnant and gave birth to Isaac at the age of ninety years old!

Moses stood in the presence of the LORD on Mt. Sinai and believed. God gave him such faith in Him that he went back to Egypt to proclaim the greatness of the LORD to mighty Pharaoh himself and command him to let the Israelites go. Many of the Israelites turned away from idols and went back to worshiping the LORD. They trusted Him to lead them in victory against many powerful enemies.

Great king David was known as "a man after God's own heart" because of his great love for the LORD. King Manasseh repented of his sins in prison in Assyria. The LORD forgave him and had him freed to return to Jerusalem and destroy all the idols he once had worshiped. All these men and women lived before the coming of Jesus, yet they looked forward in faith to the day He would come.

Then there were others who lived in Jesus' time. The Lord forgave Peter for denying Him. And by His Holy Spirit, God gave Peter great boldness to proclaim Jesus as Lord. Instead of hiding from suffering, now Peter praised God for a chance to suffer and die for Jesus. Paul confessed himself the very worst of sinners. He counted everything he had been so proud about as garbage compared with knowing Jesus Christ.

The story of God's love didn't stop then. In the thousands of years since Jesus died on the cross and rose to reign in heaven, God has been continuing to work in the hearts of His people, bringing them each to repentance of their sins and faith in Jesus up to this very day. On God's love will go, fulfilling His plan until all His people, over the world, through all time, hear of God's amazing love for them and turn and believe in Him.

How will they hear this good news? Through God's people living today. There is still so much work to be

done; a message to take to every corner of the world that all may hear and come to God.

And what a glorious day it will be when at last, at the end of time, all of God's adopted children will all be gathered together for the first time! All that countless number will praise their wonderful Father who chose to love them; and Jesus, who chose to take their punishment for sin; and the Holy Spirit, who worked in their hearts and gave them the gift of faith. In one loud voice they will sing the praise of God's glorious grace-- His lavish love poured out upon them, just undeserving sinners. A love that began before the beginning of time and will never stop for all eternity.

Cracking the Case:

It's time to answer our Case Questions.

1. Whose love was so long-lived? Who did he love?

The LORD. He loved all of His people.

2. When did his love for them begin? What was so lavish about it?

It began before the creation of the world. He loved them, even though they were sinners who would rebel against Him. He loved them by giving His beloved Son to suffer and die for their sins.

Something for You and Me

Our Bible Truth is:

God Loved His People Before They Loved Him

Our Bible Verse is: Ephesians 1:4-6

"For He chose us in Him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love He predestined us to be adopted as His sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will-- to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves."

What about you and me? Can we be God's precious, adopted children? Can we be part of this great multitude of people loved by Him? Yes, indeed! He promises to adopt as His children all who confess their sins, turn away from and turn to Him in repentance and faith, trusting Jesus as their Savior. Let's praise God for His lavish love towards undeserving sinners. Let's praise Him for making them His precious adopted children and pouring out upon them all the spiritual blessings that belong to His Son Jesus. Let's ask Him to work in our heart that we might turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Let's ask Him to give us boldness to

share the great news of His amazing love to others that they too might turn from their sins, trust in Jesus, and become His precious children, too.

Close in prayer.

Closing ACTS Prayer

A God, we praise You for loving Your people from even before the beginning of the world.

C God, we confess that like all people, we are sinners. We cannot deserve Your love by our own goodness. We need a Savior!

T God, we thank You that even before the creation of the world, You knew Your people and planned to send Jesus to save them from their sins.

S God, we ask that You would work in our hearts that we might turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Make us Your dearly loved, adopted people who will get to love You and know Your love forever.

Special Words

Lavish: Something that is overflowing full of richness and wonderfulness.

ACTS PRAYER ACTIVITY

Use this sheet to write down your ACTS Prayer

Instructions:

Use this sheet to help the children apply the Bible Truth into a prayer. You can use the ACTS provided or even better, have the kids think of their own applications. Also have the children add their personal requests to the prayer, too. Lead the children in the prayer or let them pray sections, with your help. Never force a child to pray! Non-readers can participate by you whispering a section of the prayer into their ear and allowing them to pray it aloud for the group.

ADORATION:

God, we praise You for being the One who loves Your people long before they love You!

God, we praise You for being.....

Add your own Adorations:

CONFESSION:

God, we confess that we are all sinners who have rebelled against You and Your wonderful love. We do not deserve to be Your people, but if we are to be Your people, You will have to save us. We need a Savior!

God, we have sinned against You....

Add your own Confessions:

THANKSGIVING:

Thank You, God for planning to save Your people from even before they were born, even before You created the world! Nothing would stop You from making them Your people!

God, we thank You for...

Add your own Thanksgivings:

SUPPLICATION:

God, work in our hearts. Help us to turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Make us Your people, who love, obey and enjoy You now and forever.

God, we need Your help...

Add your own Supplication:

SNEAKY SNACK

Can you figure out how this snack ties in with our case?

Snack: God's Great Love for His People Shown Through the Cross

Twisted pretzel "heart" laid on top of two stick pretzels made into a cross shape with Teddy Graham "people" around it to symbolize God's love for His people in Christ.

This is only a suggestion. Feel free to modify. Be mindful of allergy issues among your children!

Case Tie-in: From before the beginning of the world, the LORD knew and loved His people. One by one, He has been calling them to turn from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior. Through Jesus, they all can become His dearly loved, adopted people.

SOUL FOOD

Food for thought during snack time

1. What does the snack have to do with the story?

Choose a few questions from the other activity discussion sheets to talk about during this snack time.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

Directions: Read and discuss Bible Truth, using a FEW of the questions. Play game. Feel free to modify the game to fit your children.

God Loved His People Before They Loved Him

Even before God created the world, He loved His people. Even back then, He knew all about them. He knew that they would be sinners like everyone else. He knew they would all rebel against Him and deserve His punishment for their sins.

Yet even though He knew all this about them before even a single one of them was born, He loved them deeply and wanted them to be His people. He chose to set His love upon them in a special way. He chose to send His Son, Jesus, to pay for their sins. He chose that by the Holy Spirit, He would give them faith in Jesus, and through that faith, He would forgive their sins. He would give them each a new heart to love and obey Him. They would be His special people--a countless number from every language and people on earth, who would live to enjoy Him and praise His amazing love forever.

We can know God's love and be His dearly loved people, too, when we turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior.

Understanding the Bible Truth

1. Who did God love even before He created the world? *His people.*
2. What did God know about His people, even back then? *Everything about them. He knew they would all rebel against Him.*
3. What was God's love for His people like? *The deepest of loves.*
4. What did God's people deserve for their sins against Him? *Eternal punishment, just like all other people.*
5. What did God chose to do for His people? *To set His love upon them in a special way. Chose to send Jesus at just the right time to pay for their sins; chose to give them new hearts to love and obey Him; chose to make them His special people.*
6. What are God's people like? *A countless number from every language and people on earth.*
7. What do God's people get to do? *Forever enjoy God's fellowship and sing the praises of His amazing love and mercy.*
8. How can we know God's love and be His dearly loved people, too? *By turning from our sins and trusting in Jesus as our Savior.*

Bible Truth Story Connection Questions

1. Who were some of God's people we learned about in today's story? *Abraham, Sarah, Moses, King David, King Manasseh, Peter, and Paul.*
2. When will all of God's people be gathered together? *Before the throne of God, at the end of time.*

Bible Verse Connection Question

1. What does our Bible Truth have to do with our **Bible Verse: Ephesians 1:4-6**: "For He chose us in Him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love He predestined us to be adopted as His sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will-- to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves."?

Before the beginning, God already knew and loved His countless number of people. He loved them not because of their own goodness, but in Christ. Through the forgiveness of sins He would give to them through His own Son. He made them His sons so that they would live to enjoy His fellowship and sing the praises of His amazing love and mercy forever. And He has done it all because it was His pleasure. It has happened perfectly, because it is His will.

Life Application Questions

1. Can we be God's people, loved long before we have loved Him? How? *Yes! When we confess our sins to God; turn from them; and trust in Jesus as our own Savior.*
2. How does knowing about God's love from before the creation of the world encourage us about people who have not yet trusted in Jesus as their Savior? *We can know that no matter how much they seem to reject the good news of Jesus, God is able to turn their hearts to Him and save them.*

ACTS Questions

1. What is something we can praise God for from this Bible Truth? *Praise God for His Special Love for His people that loved them first.*

2. What are sins we can confess to God because of this Bible Truth?

Confess specific ways that we have not loved God in what we've thought, said and done.

3. What is something we can thank God for because of this Bible Truth?

Thank God for choosing to love His people even though He knew they would rebel against Him.

4. What is something we can ask God for because of this Bible Truth?

We can ask God to work in our hearts that we would want to turn away from disobeying Him and trust in this wonderful Jesus as our own Savior. Ask God remind us each day of the good things He gives us. Ask Him to make us grateful for them and thank Him for them and help us to glorify Him in the way we use them.

The Gospel

1. How could God love His people, even though He knew they would be sinners? What was His great plan? What is the gospel?

God is the good Creator and King of the world. He made people to worship Him and live by His good laws. But we are all sinners who have rebelled against Him. We all deserve death--God's just, eternal punishment for our sins. How terrible! But God has good news for us. In His great mercy, God sent His Son Jesus to earth to save sinners. Yes, Jesus, the perfect Son of God, left His home in heaven and became a man. He lived the perfect life that pleases God. (He's the only one who has ever done that!) He offered it up to God His Father as the perfect sacrifice for sins when He suffered and died on the cross. Then, on the third day, Jesus rose from the dead in victory. He had fully paid for the sins of God's people, so they wouldn't have to! Now all who turn away from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior will receive forgiveness of sins and eternal life with God. They will be His very own special people who will know Him and enjoy Him forever. We can be God's people, too, if we turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as our own Savior.

Game: Rush to Safety

Materials

Construction Paper
CD and CD player
Masking Tape
Small bowl or bag
Bible Truth Questions

Preparing the Game

1. Choose 20+ questions for your game from the Bible Truth Discussion Questions, or make up your own.
2. Write the Bible Truth questions on small thin strips of paper (or make a photocopy of the Bible Truth Discussion Questions and simply cut them into strips) and put them in the bag/bowl.
3. Cut circles about 9" in diameter, enough for every child but one.
4. Tape the circles on the floor around the room.

Playing the Game

Point out the safety spot circles on the floor. Tell the children that you will tell the children to move however you command them to move, such as march, walk, skip, crab crawl, etc. (BUT NOT RUN!!!) when you play the music. But when the music stops, they are to get to a safety spot. Show them that there is one spot too few for them all so that someone will be caught out. The child who has no safety spot picks a question for the class to answer. If the class answers it correctly, then the child is added back into the group. If not, then the child stays out and another safety spot is removed.

Game continues as number of questions, time, and attention span allow.

NOTE: Have the children who are "out" help make up actions for the other children to do, put them in charge of the music, etc. along with you. This will keep them happily occupied as they continue.

Non-competitive Option

Have the child without a safety spot choose a question for the class, but then join the game, even if the class gets it wrong. Add the question back into the bag for further review. Don't reduce the number of safety spots.

Optional TAKING IT TO OTHERS Activity: Quiz Questions

Have the children choose a few of the questions from the game to ask the parents/other children during TAKING IT TO OTHERS time. Help pre-readers by whispering the question in their ear and letting them ask it aloud to the parents/other children. Make sure you read the Bible verse aloud before you ask your questions.

Directions:

1. Write words to song in large print before class.
2. Play the song for the children, helping them follow along on the song sheet.
3. Discuss the song, using a few questions from the discussion sheet. *Don't use them all!*
4. Introduce sign language for key words of your choice from sign language sheet for your song. Use as few or as many as you think the children can learn.
5. Sing and sign the song. Sign language as well as large format lyrics and sheet music are found in the PFI Unit Songbook or online.
6. If desired, play the Song Game.

Optional TAKING IT TO OTHERS Activity: Presenting and Singing the Song

1. Sing and sign the song, encouraging the watching children/parents to join in.
2. Ask the class some of the questions listed below. The Bible Truth Connection Question is particularly good to help them understand how the song ties in with the Bible Truth.

Oh, How I Love Jesus

Verse 1

There is a name I love to hear,
I love to sing its worth;
It sounds as music in my ear,
The sweetest name on earth.

Oh, how I love Jesus,
Oh, how I love Jesus,
Oh, how I love Jesus,

Listen to it on PFI NIV Songs 8, Track 8

Understanding the Song

1. What does is the name the singer loves to hear? *The name of Jesus.*
2. What does the singer love to sing about and what does that mean? *The worth of the name of Jesus. Worth means what is good and valuable about it.*
3. What does Jesus' name mean and how does that tell us of its worth? *It means 'Yahweh saves.' It is of greatest worth because we all are sinners, deserving eternal punishment for our rebellion against God. We never can never save ourselves from this punishment. Only Yahweh, who sent His Son, Jesus to live a perfect life and offer it up on the cross as the perfect sacrifice for sins could do what was needed to save us. Jesus' name tells us of this greatest act of love that Yahweh did for all who would ever turn and trust in Him. There is nothing worth more than the name of Jesus!*
4. What does it mean that Jesus' name sounds like music in the ear? *Not that it sounds like someone singing. It's an expression meaning something is really good news.*
5. What does 'sweetest name on earth' mean? *Not sweet-tasting like sugar. Sweetest also mean the best. Jesus' name is the best name on earth.*
6. What makes Jesus' name the best on earth? *He alone could save sinful people from the eternal punishment they deserve.*
7. What does the singer love Jesus? Why is that so important to him? *Because Jesus first loved him. The Bible tells us that God loved us while we still were sinners, living in rebellion and hatred of Him. He sent Jesus to die for His sinful people before they loved Him. When the Holy Spirit worked in their hearts, they each came to believe in Him, love Him, and turn and live their lives for Him. Without Him first loving us, we would never have chosen to love Him! The singer is so grateful for God's loving him first!*

Bible Truth Connection Question

1. How does this song relate to our **Bible Truth: God Loved His People Before They Loved Him**? *Through Jesus, God loved His people before they loved Him. He loved them while they were still sinners. He loved them even before the creation of the world. This makes God's people so happy! They know that their sinful hearts would never choose God if He had loved them and chose them first. They know without God choosing to send Jesus to save them from their sins, they would never ever know God. This makes the name of Jesus the sweetest name on earth.*

Story Connection

1. How does this song relate to today's story? *When Abraham, Sarah, Moses, King David, King Manasseh, Peter, Paul and the whole great multitude of God's people gather around His throne at the end of time, they will all sing of God's great love for them in Jesus. They will praise Him as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Truly the sweetest name on earth—and in heaven—for through Him God loved them first and chose to pour out His richest blessing on them.*

Bible Connection Question

1. What does this hymn have to do with our Bible Verse: **Ephesians 1:4-6**: "For He chose us in Him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love He predestined us to be adopted as His sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will-- to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves."?

God's people love Jesus because they know that in Him, God loved them long before they loved Him. He even loved them and planned for them to be His dearly loved, adopted children from before the creation of the world. God's people know that even in "scenes of deepest gloom" (hard or sad times) that God's plans stand firm. They do not need to murmur or repine (complain or stay sad) because the Lord is leading them. His plans are good and they are unfailing. God's people can be content because they know that His plans will succeed and one day they will see just what great things He was doing, even through their hardest or saddest of days.

Life Application Questions

1. How can God's people be affected by the message of this song? *They can praise God for loving them first when they were still sinners in rebellion against Him; for loving them even before He created the world. They can thank God for making them His adopted children. They can ask Him to fill their hearts with greater delight in Him and all He's done for them. They can ask Him to help them to live obedient lives that please Him.*

2. How can we become one of God's people? *By turning away from our sins and trusting in Jesus as our own Savior.*

ACTS Questions

1. What is something we can praise God for from this hymn?

Praise God for being the Lover of His people, long before they loved Him.

2. What are sins we can confess to God from this hymn? *That we, like all people, do not love God on our own. We have all chosen to do things our own way. Only through Jesus do any of us ever love God.*

3. What is something we can thank God for from this hymn?

We can thank God sending Jesus to save His people from their sins.

4. What is something we can ask God for from this hymn?

That God would work in our hearts that we might turn from our sins and trust Jesus as our Savior. We can ask Him to fill our hearts with love for Him and with thankfulness for what God has done His people through Jesus.

Gospel Question

1. Why do people not love God? How can anyone be forgiven for their lack of love for God? What is the gospel?

God is the good Creator and King of the world. He made people to worship Him and live by His good laws. But we are all sinners who've rebelled against Him. We all deserve death--God's just, eternal punishment for our sins. How terrible! But God has good news for us. In His great mercy, God sent His Son, Jesus to earth as a man to save sinners. He lived the perfect life that pleases God. (He's the only one who's ever done that!) He offered it up to God His Father as the perfect sacrifice for sins when He suffered and died on the cross. Then, on the third day, Jesus rose from the dead in victory. He had fully paid for the sins of God's people, so they wouldn't have to! Now all who turn away from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior will receive forgiveness of sins and eternal life with God. They will be His very own special people who will know Him and enjoy Him forever. We can be God's people, too, if we turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as our own Savior.

Song Game: Word Take Away

Materials

Sign Language Signs and Song

White board and marker

Eraser

Preparing the Game

1. Write the words to the song on a white board.

Playing the Game

1. After children have learned the song and signs well, then tell the children that you are going to leave out words from the song (that you've learned signs for) and just do the sign in its place.
2. Have the children help you choose a word to take out. Erase the word from the board. Review the sign the for erased word.
3. Sing the song, trying to remember to NOT sing the word and do only the sign.
4. Continue to take out words until all of the words (with signs) have been taken out.

Game continues as number of questions, time, and attention span allow.

choose a FEW questions for discussion, then choose the game and/or music activity

Meditation Version: Ephesians 1:4-6

"For He chose us in Him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love He predestined us to be adopted as His sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will-- to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves."

Shortened Memory/Games Version: Ephesians 1:4,5

"...He chose us in Him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love He predestined us."

Understanding the Bible Verse

1. Who is He? *The Lord.*
2. Who is the "us" that the Lord chose? *Paul is writing this letter to believers who lived in Ephesus. That is the original "us" who is talked about. But it is true of all God's people—all who will ever repent of their sins and trust Jesus as their Savior.*
3. When did the Lord choose His people? *Before the creation of the world.*
4. What did He choose them to be? *Holy and blameless in His sight.*
5. Since we are all sinful people, how can we be holy and blameless in God's sight? *Only through Jesus. That's why God's people had to be CHOSEN to be holy and blameless in His sight. He was choosing that they would repent of their sins and trust Jesus to be their Savior. Jesus is holy and blameless. He never did anything wrong. Only He could be a perfect payment for sin. He chose to suffer and die on the cross to take the punishment for all His people's sins. Then they would be holy and blameless in God's sight.*
6. What does predestine mean? *To chose ahead of time that something will happen, without a doubt.*
7. What did God do out of His love for His people? *He predestined that they would be adopted as His sons through Jesus Christ.*
8. Can girls be sons, too? *Yes. Sons means sons and daughters.*
9. What does it mean to be adopted? *To make someone who isn't born their child, their own child, by law. The parent treats this adopted child as his very own, with all the same love and special good things that he would give a child born to him.*
10. How could God adopt His people? *By their own good works? By their own holiness and blamelessness? No. He could only adopt them through Jesus. They were sinful. Only through trusting in Jesus as their Savior and being forgiven of their sins, could God adopt His people.*
11. What is so good about being adopted and treated as sons of God? *God will forever lavish on His people the same love, wonderful closeness and special good things that He lavishes on His Son, Jesus.*
12. Why did God chose to adopt His people? *It was His own pleasure and will. Nobody made Him do this. He just wanted to. It would be to the praise of his glorious grace, given to His people through Jesus.*
13. What is grace? What is glorious about God's grace given through the One He loves (Jesus)? *Grace is a gift that we don't deserve. God's grace gives His people everything they need to live for Him and to be saved by Him. They could never deserve for Him to do this because they are all sinners. But through Jesus, God's perfect Son, He gives them His grace. It's glorious grace because it shows just how wonderful God is.*
14. Why is Jesus called the One God loves? Doesn't He love us, too? *God's love for Jesus is different than His love for anyone else. That's because Jesus is God's Son and He has always perfectly loved and obeyed God, His Father. God loves His people through Jesus and because of Jesus. They are all sinners who deserve God's punishment, not His love. Out of His amazing love for us, God sent His one and only Son, Jesus, to offer up His perfect life as the perfect payment for their sins. Jesus paid for their sins so that they could all enjoy God's love, as if they had lived as perfect lives as Jesus. Wow!*

Bible Truth Connection Question

1. What does this verse have to do with the **Bible Truth: God Loved His People Before They Loved Him?** *God loved His people long before they loved Him. He loved them and chose to adopt them as His sons, even before He created the world.*

Story Connection Questions

1. How does this verse relate to our story? *Before the beginning, God loved chose Abraham, Sarah, Moses, King David, King Manasseh, Mary, Peter, Paul and a great multitude of others. Even then He knew they would be sinners, yet in love He chose to adopt them as His beloved sons in Jesus.*

Life Application Questions

1. Can we be God's adopted, chosen sons? *Yes! When we confess our sins to God; turn from them; and trust in Jesus as our own Savior.*

ACTS Questions

1. What is something we can praise God for from this Bible Verse?

Praise God for being the Chooser and Saver of His people.

2. What are sins we can confess to God from this Bible Verse?

That we have all turned away from God. We deserve God's punishment, not to be His adopted children! We need a Savior!

3. What is something we can thank God for from this Bible Verse?

We can thank God for sending Jesus to save His people. There is no other way that they could become His dearly loved, adopted people.

4. What is something we can ask God for from this Bible Verse?

We can ask God to work in our hearts that we would want to turn away from disobeying Him and trust in this wonderful Jesus as our own Savior. We can ask Him to make us His dearly loved, adopted children.

The Gospel

1. We are all sinners who could never deserve to be God's people by our own goodness. God knew this from before the creation of the world. What did God plan to do to adopt His people? What is the gospel?

God is the good Creator and King of the world. He made people to worship Him and live by His good laws. But we are all sinners who have rebelled against Him. We all deserve death--God's just, eternal punishment for our sins. How terrible! But God has good news for us. In His great mercy, God sent His Son Jesus to earth to save sinners. Yes, Jesus, the perfect Son of God, left His home in heaven and became a man. He lived the perfect life that pleases God. (He's the only one who has ever done that!) He offered it up to God His Father as the perfect sacrifice for sins when He suffered and died on the cross. Then, on the third day, Jesus rose from the dead in victory. He had fully paid for the sins of God's people, so they wouldn't have to! Now all who turn away from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior will receive forgiveness of sins and eternal life with God. They will be His very own special people who will know Him and enjoy Him forever. We can be God's people, too, if we turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as our own Savior.

Game: Balancing Act

Materials

Bible verse written up in large print so that all can see
 10 or so various balance-able items, per team
 (erasers, plates, rulers, books, shoes, etc.)
 Paper, marker
 2 baskets/boxes per team

Preparing the Game

1. Make copy of the verse per team and cut it apart into as many parts as there are items per team. Number these verse pieces in order.
2. Make a sign per team of the verse. If you have a lot of non- or early readers, write the verse in easy to read print, numbering each word/section that correspond to the sections on the cut-up version of the verse. If your children are all proficient readers, do not write the verse on the poster board, but simply draw lines and number them 1-10, corresponding to the 10 verse pieces.
3. Write down and cut out the numbers used on the verse pieces and put in a little bag or jar.
4. Use masking tape to mark starting line. Tape the verse pieces to the items and make a pile for each team at the far end of the relay area.
5. Place items for each team in a basket and place at each team's starting point. Place the other baskets at the other end of the relay area.

Learning the Verse

Some or all of your children may be non- or early readers. Teach the verse in sections, having them say it after you. Repeat a few times. Add clapping or other movement as they say it.

Directions

1. If desired, lead the children in a discussion of a **FEW** of the most important questions before beginning game.
2. Explain the game to them as follows:
 Divide the children into teams and have them line up at a start line. Have the whole group say the verse together. Then draw a number from the bag. Tell the first person in each line to pick an item from the basket at the starting line. They are to put it on their head, and balance it down to the other end. If they drop the item, they just pick it up and continue from that point. When they get there, they are to put their balanced item in the basket and then say the verse to the leader. The leader will then give them the piece of verse with the number on it that was drawn. The two children then rush back to their team with the verse piece and sit down at the back of the line. When all items have been taken down to the other end and all verse pieces retrieved, have been retrieved, they will then put all the pieces in verse order. If working with less confident readers, point out to them that they can use the sign you made and the numbers in the verse pieces as hints to help them line it up properly. After getting it in order, the team will finish by saying the verse all together. The first team to do so, wins.

Non-competitive Option

Don't divide the children into teams. Have them say the verse together, then have one child retrieve the correctly numbered verse piece for the group. Everyone assembles and says the verse together at the end.

Optional **TAKING IT TO OTHERS** Activity: Quiz Questions

Have the children choose a few of the questions from the game to ask the parents/other children during **TAKING IT TO OTHERS** time. Help pre-readers by whispering the question in their ear and letting them ask it aloud to the parents/other children. Make sure you read the Bible verse aloud before you ask your questions.

Directions:

1. Write words to song in large print before class.
2. Play the song for the children, helping them follow along on the song sheet.
3. Discuss the song, using a few questions from the discussion sheet. *Don't use them all!*
4. Introduce sign language for key words of your choice from sign language sheet for your song. Use as few or as many as you think the children can learn.
5. Sing and sign the song. Sign language as well as large format lyrics and sheet music are found in the PFI Unit Songbook or online.
6. If desired, play the Song Game.

Optional TAKING IT TO OTHERS Activity: Presenting and Singing the Song

1. Sing and sign the song, encouraging the watching children/parents to join in.
2. Ask the class some of the questions listed below. The Bible Truth Connection Question is particularly good to help them understand how the verse ties in with the Bible Truth.

For He Chose Us

For He chose us in Him before the creation,
 Before the creation of the world,
 To be holy and blameless in his sight,
 Yes, he chose us before the creation of the world.
 In love he predestined us to be adopted as His sons,
 Through Jesus Christ,
 With His will and pleasure
 Yes, In love He predestined us.

Listen to it on PFI NIV Songs 8, Track 9

Song Game: Big Voice, Little Voice

Materials

Song
 Sign language signs used in the song printed out onto little cards
 Blindfold

Preparing the Game

None.

Playing the Game

1. Practice the song and signs until the children know them well. Then tell them: "Children, we are going to hide a sign language sign and see if one of you can find it... with a little help from the rest of us!"
2. Choose someone to be "It" and blindfold them. Choose another child to hide one of the sign language cards. When it's hidden, "It" can remove the blindfold and begin to look.
3. The rest of the children will sing the song in a louder voice when "It" gets closer to the hidden sign and quieter when "It" gets further from the sign.
4. When "It" finds the hidden clue, another "It" is chosen and play begins again.

Game continues as number of questions, time, and attention span allow.

Directions: Read and discuss Bible Truth, using a FEW of the questions. Play game. Feel free to modify the game to fit your children.

General Story Questions

1. When did God's love for His people begin? *Before the creation of the world.*
2. What was God's love for His people like? *Patient, kind, forgiving their wrongs, protects, cares, comforts, sings over them with joy.*
3. What was so special about God's people that He loved them like this? *Nothing.*
4. What did God know His people would be like? *Sinful and deserving His eternal punishment.*
5. How could God lavish His people with His love, if His holiness meant their sins must be punished? *He gave them to Jesus. He loved them through Him. Jesus would be their substitute, taking the punishment for their sins, Himself, and giving them His perfect holiness.*
6. Why did God chose to love His people like this? *For the praise of His glory and goodness.*
7. What would Abraham be like? *How would he be changed by God's love? Worshiper of idols; lie to Egyptian king about wife and put her in danger to protect himself; then, received faith from the LORD. Left idols and followed God to a new Promised Land.*
8. What would Sarah be like? How would she be changed by God's love? *Laugh at God's promise of a child in her old age; believe in faith and joy as she became pregnant with Isaac at 90.*
9. What would Moses be like? How would he be changed by God's love? *Murderer and run away from Egyptians. Stand before God on Mt. Sinai and believe. Boldly go back to Egypt to rescue Israelites from Pharaoh.*
10. What would the Israelites be like? How would they be changed by God's love? *Forget the LORD and worship idols. Turn away from idols and worship the LORD.*
11. What would King David be like? How would he be changed by God's love? *Murder a man and take his wife. Convicted on his sins, confess them and ask God for a clean heart.*
12. What would King Manasseh be like? How would he be changed by God's love? *Setting up idols in Temple and making terrible sacrifices to them, doing magic, being dragged away by Assyrians to prison. Repent, be forgiven by the LORD. Released from prison and goes back to remove all the idols.*
13. What would Peter be like? How would he be changed by God's love? *Denies Jesus to keep himself save. Jesus forgives him, Holy Spirit gives him boldness to suffer and die for Jesus.*
14. What would Paul be like? How would he be changed by God's love? *Boast in his good works and imprison and kill Christians. Believe in Jesus and tell everyone that all his good works are garbage compared to knowing Jesus.*
15. What has God done in the lives of millions of His people? *Irresistibly loved them, just like these people.*
16. What is God doing in the lives of His people even today and until the end of time? *Irresistibly loving them, just like these people.*

Bible Truth Connection Questions

1. What does this story have to do with our Bible Truth? *It is the story of how God knew how sinful His people would be, but through His Son Jesus, He chose to love them with His lavish love.*

Bible Verse Connection Question

1. What does the story have to do with our **Bible Verse: Ephesians 1:4-6**: "For He chose us in Him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love He predestined us to be adopted as His sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will-- to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves.?"

Before the beginning, God already knew and loved His countless number of people. He loved them not because of their own goodness, but in Christ. Through the forgiveness of sins He would give to them through His own Son.

Life Application Questions

1. Can we be God's people? *Yes! God promises that He will make anyone who comes to Him, confessing their sins, turning from them and trusting in Jesus as their Savior His people.*

ACTS Questions

1. What is something we can praise God for being that we learned in our story?

Praise God for loving His people from even before the beginning of the world

2. What is something we can confess as sin that we learned in our story?

Confess that like all people, we are sinners. We cannot deserve God's love by our own goodness. We deserve His punishment. We need a Savior!

3. What is something we can thank God for that we learned in our story?

We can thank God for planning to send Jesus to save His sinful people, even before the creation of the world.

4. What is something we can ask God for that we learned in our story?

We can ask God to work in our hearts, helping us to turn away from our sins and trust Jesus as our own Savior. We can ask Him to make us His dearly loved, adopted people who will get to love Him know His love forever.

The Gospel

1. How could God love His people, since they were sinners and He is the holy God? What is the gospel?

God is the good Creator and King of the world. He made people to worship Him and live by His good laws. But we are all sinners who have rebelled against Him. We all deserve death--God's just, eternal punishment for our sins. How terrible! But God has good news for us. In His great mercy, God sent His Son Jesus to earth to save sinners. Yes, Jesus, the perfect Son of God, left His home in heaven and became a man. He lived the perfect life that pleases God. (He's the only one who has ever done that!) He offered it up to God His Father as the perfect sacrifice for sins when He suffered and died on the cross. Then, on the third day, Jesus rose from the dead in victory. He had fully paid for the sins of God's people, so they wouldn't have to! Now all who turn away from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior will receive forgiveness of sins and eternal life with God. They will be His very own special people who will know Him and enjoy Him forever. We can be God's people, too, if we turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as our own Savior.

Game: What's in the Box?

Materials

10-20 Various props or pictures with an association with the story
Paper and Marker
Large box or basket
Story Review Questions

Preparing the Game

1. Choose 20+ questions for your game from the Story Review Discussion Questions, or make up your own.
2. Place the props/pictures in the box.

Playing the Game

Divide the children into two teams. Teams will take turn having one of their members reach into the box and pull out a story prop/picture. He will show it to his team and they will come up with an answer as to how that particular prop relates to the story. A correct answer wins 2 points for the team. The team can double their points if they can also tell something from the story they learned about God or about how He wants His people to live. If the team is unable to come up with an answer, then the other team can give an answer for 1 point. For extra fun, you can add some props/pictures that have nothing to do with the story, making the children eliminate them....or even try to think of way it could be added to the story.

Game continues until all children get to pull out a prop/picture,, or as number of questions, time, and attention span allow.

Non-competitive Option

Have the children sit down in a circle around the box. Have the children take turns pulling props/pictures out of the box for the other children to tell what it has to do with the story.

Optional TAKING IT TO OTHERS Activity: Quiz Questions

Have the children choose a few of the questions from the game to ask the parents/other children during TAKING IT TO OTHERS time. Help pre-readers by whispering the question in their ear and letting them ask it aloud to the parents/other children.

CASE REPLAY ACTIVITIES

Use this guide to review the Case Story and act it out for others to enjoy!

CASE REPLAY, JR: YOUNGEST CHILDREN

Description: The children will act out the story together, everyone doing the same action/sound effect at the same time. This activity is most suitable for kindergarteners.

Materials

The Case RePlay, Jr. script for younger children

Preparation

1. Read through the script and write in the blanks along the side possible actions/sound effects the children could do to act it out.

Instructions

1. Tell the children that they will be re-enacting the story together as you tell it.
2. As you read the script, lead the children in actions/sound effects to do with you.
3. If desired, you can read the script and stop at certain sentences and ask them what a good action/sound effect would be to act out what you just read.
4. Repeat the re-enactment one or two times more.

CASE REPLAY, SR: OLDER CHILDREN

Description: The children act out the story as a three-scene play. You will narrate it using the Case RePlay, Sr. script and they will act it out (no spoken words, for the most part), with each child assuming a different character's role. This activity is most suitable for first grade and up. You will review the story, then practice it a few times before performing it for others.

Materials

The Case RePlay, Sr. script
White board or other large format paper
Costumes and props

Preparation

1. Prepare for the play by choosing costumes and props for each character in the story. Decorate the area with any scenery props.
2. Write the words "Beginning," "Middle," "End" on a large piece of paper/whiteboard with plenty of space under each heading. You will use this paper to help the children think about the story as a three-scene play, as it is presented in the script.

Instructions

1. Tell the children that they will get to act out the story as a three-scene play, with a beginning, middle and end section. Tell them that before they can act it out, they need to think it out. as you narrate it with your script.
2. Take the children's answers as they recount the story, helping them put key incidents in the right order.
3. If desired, when they have filled in their Beginning, Middle, End, read through your whole (real) script, so they hear exactly what you will have them act out.
4. Then tell the children that it's time to practice acting out the story.
5. Assign parts to each child. If you are using costumes, do NOT give them out at this point. They will be a distraction.
6. Have all the children sit on the floor or in chairs on one side of the "stage," then call the characters up in place as their part in the story comes.
7. As you read the script, guide the children in where you want them to move or do to act it out.
8. After going through the whole script once, give out any costumes and props and act out the script once or twice more.

Optional TAKING IT TO OTHERS Activity: Re-enacting the Story

Read the script as the children act out together (younger) or assuming different roles (older) as the other children or the parents watch.

CASE REPLAY, JR--YOUNGER KIDS (KINDERGARTEN) P.2

“Welcome to our play! The name of our story is called: The Case of the Long-Lived Lavish Love.

This is an Old Testament story. It starts out even before God created the world.

And now we present: “The Case of the Long-Lived Lavish Love.”

Scene 1:

Actions:

Before the world was created, God knew and loved all His people with a special love. He knew and loved, Abraham, Sarah, Moses, the Israelites, King David, King Manasseh, Peter, Paul and others. God loved them with the most wonderful of loves. The LORD loved His people this way NOT because they would do anything or be anything that deserved His love. No. He knew even before He created them that they, like everyone else, would be sinful and rebellious.

Scene 2:

Abraham worshiped idols and lied about his wife, Sarah to an Egyptian king. He put her in danger to keep himself safe. Sarah laughed at God’s promises to give her a son because she was an old woman; Moses murdered a man and then ran away to avoid punishment. The Israelites forgot how God rescued them and worshiped idols instead. Good King David murdered a man and took his wife. Bad King Manasseh set up worshiped idols in the Temple, then was dragged off to prison by the Assyrians, Peter, Jesus’ good friend, denied Him to save his own life. Paul was proud in his own good works and tried to kill Christians. All the other of God’s people would be just as bad. They didn’t deserve God’s special love. No! They deserved His eternal punishment. But He still loved them and planned to lavish them with every spiritual blessing. God gave them to Jesus, His own dear Son. Jesus would be their substitute. He would take all their punishment and He would give them His holiness. They would be adopted as God’s children. They could receive all the spiritual blessings that He deserved and they didn’t. He did this to the praise of His name.

Scene 3

As God planned, it all happened. The world was created and all people rebelled against God, deserving His eternal punishment. Yet also as He planned, God’s lavish love flowed out to His people. He gave them the Bible to know truth. He sent the Holy Spirit to work in their hearts, and Jesus to die on the cross to save them. Abraham turned from idols and trusted in the LORD, following Him away to a new, Promised Land. Sarah’s laugh turned to faith and praise when she got pregnant at 90 years old. Moses stood on Mt. Sinai in God’s presence and believed. He went back to Egypt to boldly rescue the Israelites. Many Israelites stopped worshiping idols and turned back to worship the LORD. David was known as “a man after God’s own heart” because of his great love for the LORD. Manasseh confessed his sins to the LORD. The LORD forgave him, freed him from prison. He went back and destroyed all the idols. All these people looked forward in faith to Jesus’ day. In Jesus’ day, Jesus forgave Peter and he went on to boldly suffer and die for Jesus. Jesus appeared to Paul on the Damascus Road. Paul believed and declared that everything about himself he used to boast about was now like garbage compared to knowing Jesus. The same things happened to the countless other of God’s beloved people who have lived in the hundreds of years since...and will continue until they all have turned to the LORD and believed in Him. Then at last, they will all be together in God’s presence, praising Him in one, big voice for His lavish love.

Bible Truth Tie-In:

The Bible Truth we are learning is: **God Loved His People Before They Loved Him.** This story tells us that God knew how sinful His people would be, but through His Son Jesus, He chose to love them with His lavish love.

CASE REPLAY, SR--OLDER KIDS (1ST GRADE AND UP) P.3

"Welcome to our play! The name of our story is called: The Case of the Long-Lived Lavish Love.

This is an Old Testament story. It starts out even before God created the world.

The characters in our story are: Abraham, Sarah, Egyptian King, Moses, Pharaoh, Israelites, David, Man (Uriah) and Wife (Bathsheba), Manasseh, Assyrians, Peter and Paul.

And now we present: "The Case of the Long-Lived Lavish Love."

Scene 1: (Beginning)

Before the world was created, God knew and loved all His people with a special love. He knew and loved, Abraham, Sarah, Moses, the Israelites, King David, King Manasseh, Peter, Paul and others. God loved them with the most wonderful of loves. The LORD loved His people this way NOT because they would do anything or be anything that deserved His love. No. He knew even before He created them that they, like everyone else, would be sinful and rebellious.

Scene 2: (Middle)

Abraham worshiped idols and lied about his wife, Sarah to an Egyptian king. He put her in danger to keep himself safe. Sarah laughed at God's promises to give her a son because she was an old woman; Moses murdered a man and then ran away to avoid punishment. The Israelites forgot how God rescued them and worshiped idols instead. Good King David murdered a man and took his wife. Bad King Manasseh set up worshiped idols in the Temple, then was dragged off to prison by the Assyrians, Peter, Jesus' good friend, denied Him to save his own life. Paul was proud in his own good works and tried to kill Christians. All the other of God's people would be just as bad. They didn't deserve God's special love. No! They deserved His eternal punishment. But He still loved them and planned to lavish them with every spiritual blessing. God gave them to Jesus, His own dear Son. Jesus would be their substitute. He would take all their punishment and He would give them His holiness. They would be adopted as God's children. They could receive all the spiritual blessings that He deserved and they didn't. He did this to the praise of His name.

Scene 3: (End)

As God planned, it all happened. The world was created and all people rebelled against God, deserving His eternal punishment. Yet also as He planned, God's lavish love flowed out to His people. He gave them the Bible to know truth. He sent the Holy Spirit to work in their hearts, and Jesus to die on the cross to save them. Abraham turned from idols and trusted in the LORD, following Him away to a new, Promised Land. Sarah's laugh turned to faith and praise when she got pregnant at 90 years old. Moses stood on Mt. Sinai in God's presence and believed. He went back to Egypt to boldly rescue the Israelites. Many Israelites stopped worshiping idols and turned back to worship the LORD. David was known as "a man after God's own heart" because of his great love for the LORD. Manasseh confessed his sins to the LORD. The LORD forgave him, freed him from prison. He went back and destroyed all the idols. All these people looked forward in faith to Jesus' day. In Jesus' day, Jesus forgave Peter and he went on to boldly suffer and die for Jesus. Jesus appeared to Paul on the Damascus Road. Paul believed and declared that everything about himself he used to boast about was now like garbage compared to knowing Jesus. The same things happened to the countless other of God's beloved people who have lived in the hundreds of years since... and will continue until they all have turned to the LORD and believed in Him. Then at last, they will all be together in God's presence, praising Him in one, big voice for His lavish love.

Bible Truth Tie-In:

The Bible Truth we are learning is: **God Loved His People Before They Loved Him.** This story tells us that God knew how sinful His people would be, but through His Son Jesus, He chose to love them with His lavish love.

God's People in Christ

Description

Children will decorate a doily heart with markers, then glue a cross and people to it.

Materials

8" round (or bigger), white paper doily, 1 per child

If possible, get ones with lots of patterns in the "lace" around the edge. This makes the best decorating.

Red, brown construction paper

International people pictures on following page, printed out on color printer, 1 set per child

Glue sticks

Scissors

Markers, thin tipped, if possible

Preparing the Craft

1. Cut out red heart and cross, using Patterns #1 and #2, one per child.
2. Print out International people pictures on color printer, 1 set per child.
3. Set out other supplies.

Making the Craft

1. Show the sample of the craft you have made.
2. Have the children color in designs around edge of white doily.
3. Glue down heart, then cross on top of heart, in middle of doily.
4. Glue the people around heart shape.

NOTE: For youngest children, or if short on time, you can leave off the decoration of the doily with markers.

Optional TAKING IT TO OTHERS Activity: Craft Presentation

If you are presenting the craft to other children or parents the children can hold up their crafts (or your model craft) and read their Bible Truth Connection answers to explain the importance of the craft.

CASE CRAFT**Discussion Guide****Instructions:**

As the children are settled into making their craft, ask them these questions to help them understand the craft's significance. Use the answers provided to guide the children's answers.

Discussion Questions

1. When did God first love His people? *Even before He created the world!*

2. What was it about God's people that attracted Him to them?

There was nothing in them that attracted God to them and caused Him to love them.

3. Why did God love His people?

It was only because of what Jesus would do for them; and, because it was simply His good will and pleasure to love them, even though they didn't deserve it.

4. What is the Bible Truth that we are learning?
God Loved His People Before They Loved Him.

5. What does our craft have to do with our Bible Truth: God Loved His People Before They Loved Him?

God knew His people would be sinners deserving His punishment, even before He created them. But before He even created the world, He chose to love them, save them and adopt them as His own children through His Son, Jesus Christ.

6. What can this craft help us remember?

We, too, can be God's dearly loved, adopted children, too, if we confess our sins to God, turn away from them and trust Jesus as our own Savior.

TAKING IT TO OTHERS**Craft Presentation****Instructions:**

Have children hold up your model craft/their crafts. Choose five children (or you say) the five sections below to explain the craft's importance.

Presentation:

1. Our craft is: God's People in Christ.

2. When there was nothing but God, before the creation of the world, God loved His people in Christ not because of anything good in them, but because of what Jesus would do for them, and because it was His good pleasure and will.

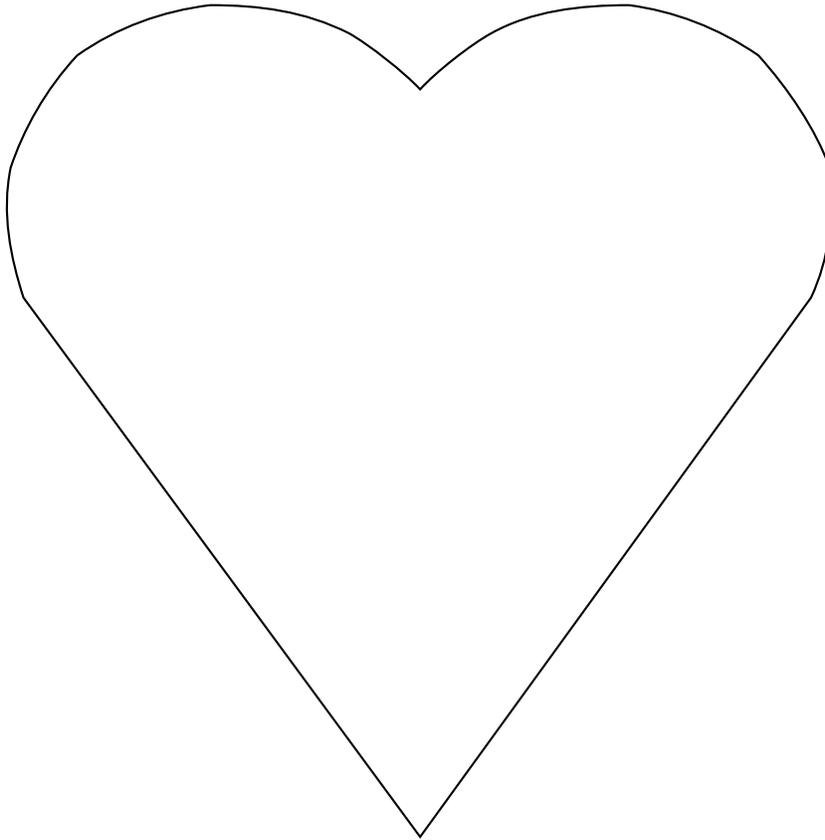
3. Bible Truth 2 is: God Loved His People Before They Loved Him.

4. God knew His people would be sinners deserving His punishment, even before He created them. But before He even created the world, He chose to love them, save them and adopt them as His own children through His Son, Jesus Christ.

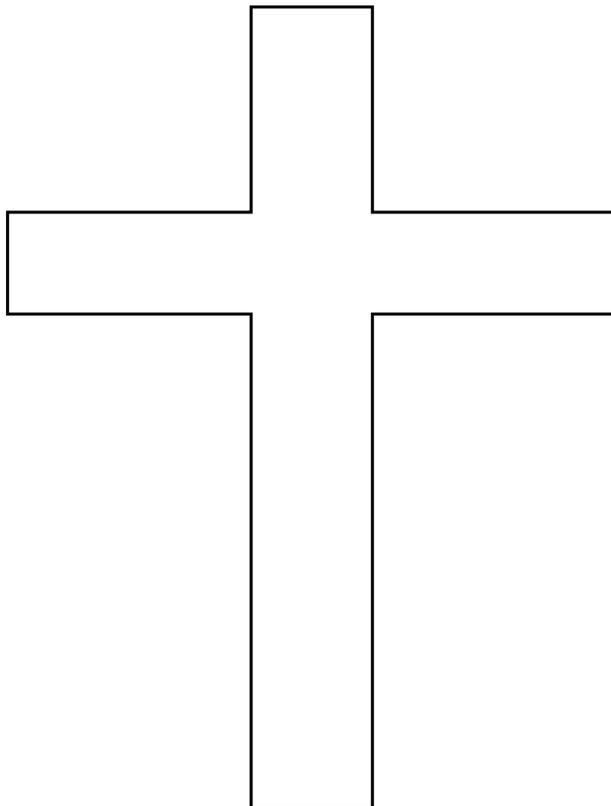
5. Our craft can help us remember that we, too, can be God's dearly loved, adopted children, too, if we confess our sins to God, turn away from them and trust in Jesus as our own Savior.

Note: Even non-readers can participate in presenting the craft, if you will whisper what they are to say in their ear and let them say it aloud for the others to hear.

Craft Pattern #1
Heart



Craft Pattern #2
Cross



Craft Pattern #3

People



BEFORE CLASS:**1. PICK YOUR PERSON**

VIPPs can be anyone in your church! Typically, they fall into 6 categories: Church staff, Elders, Deacons/deaconesses, Special Volunteers (people who aren't paid, but spend a lot of time helping out in particular ways), Supported Workers (aka missionaries), and Church Members.

2. GATHER YOUR FACTS

Use the VIPP Information Sheet to write down the facts about your VIPP. The information on this worksheet is used in the VIPP activities, listed in the "Choose an Activity" section below.

DURING THE ACTIVITY:**1. INTRODUCE YOUR VIPP**

Introduce your VIPP to the children, using the VIPP Information Sheet. Fill in a set of VIPP Clue Cards with the information for your VIPP. If desired, you can even have the actual person come into class for the children to meet.

Need help describing what someone does for the church in a kid-friendly way? Check out the list of common VIPPs on the Praise Factory website in the PFI resources. There are lots of kid-friendly descriptions for common VIPP's, such as pastors, elders, deacons and a lot more.

2. PRAY!

Lead the children in praying for the VIPP. Ask the children if they would like to pray for one of the VIPPs prayer requests. Even non-readers can pray for the VIPP if you whisper the prayer request in the their ear, then let them say it aloud. Never force a child to pray!

3. CHOOSE AN ACTIVITY

There are two activities you can use to help the children learn about the VIPP:

VIPP Clue Cards: These are nine coloring sheets in which children fill in the nine things they learn about the VIPP from the VIPP Information Sheet. Photocopy a set of each child. Use as few or as many of these Clue Cards as you desire.

VIPP Game: This is a game that uses a set of Clue Cards for one or two VIPPs.

Choose a VIPP and fill in his/her information on the VIPP Information Sheet. Fill in a set of VIPP Clue Cards with the information for your VIPP. Tell the children about the VIPP, having them fill in the VIPP Clue Cards with the key facts as they learn them. Write any words the children need to write on a white-board or other piece of paper so they can see how to spell them. Help younger children write these words on their clue cards. Ideas for how to tell the children about many common VIPPs are listed at praisefactory.org with the resources for this Bible Truth.

Optional TAKING IT TO OTHERS Activity: Introduce and Pray for the VIPP

If you are presenting the VIPP to other children or parents you can assign children to hold up the 10 clue cards and say what each card tells about the VIPP. (Or, you can have the children hold them up as you tell what each one means.) Then lead the children in praying for the VIPP.

Game: Ball Roll Review

Materials

Information Sheet for one VIPP
 2 Set of Clue Cards
 Ball
 8 8.5" x 11" Manilla Envelopes
 Tape
 Pen and Markers
 2 Boxes

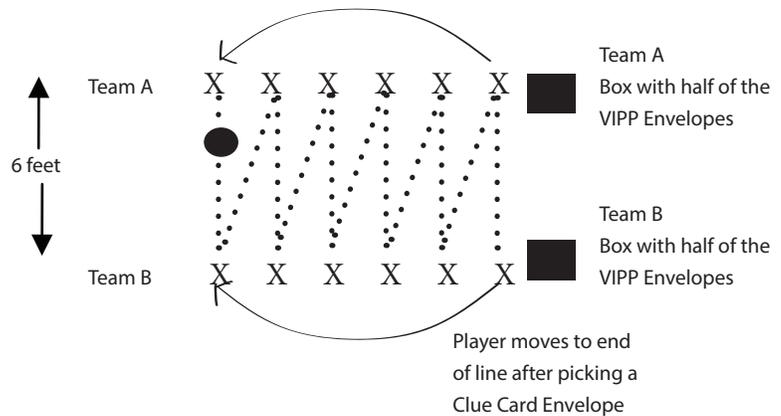
Preparing the Game

1. Fill in one set of clue sheets for the VIPP you are using.
2. Tape the other (blank) set of Clue Cards to the outside of the manilla envelopes.
3. Put the filled-in clue cards in the corresponding envelope.
4. Put half the Clue Card Envelopes in one box and the other half in the other box. These are the Team A and Team B Boxes.

Playing the Game

Reveal: Tell the children about the VIPP, showing them your filled-in clue cards as you tell about them.

Review: Have the children break into two even groups and sit down on the floor facing each other, with about a 6' spread between the 2 lines (see diagram above). For Round 1, Give the ball to the first child in Team A and have them roll it across to the child on Team B directly across from them. Then, that Team B child rolls it back across to the next child on Team A, etc. all the way down the line to the last child on Team B. The last child to get the ball will then pick a Clue Card envelope out of their team's box. They (or the teacher) will tell the group and the Clue Card category by looking at the picture of the Clue Card on the outside of the envelope. Have the children try to remember the VIPP's answer to the category. If the class gets it right, the category is "retired". If they get it wrong, then it gets put back in the pile of category envelopes. The child who picked the Clue Card, then takes their place at the other end of the line. They begin Round 2 by rolling the ball to the first person on Team A, etc. This time, the ball will end up with the last child in the Team A line. ending with the last child in the other line, who gets up and chooses a clue from their Clue Card box. Continue until all the clues have been chosen/answered correctly.



VIPP INFORMATION SHEET

VIPP NAME:

WHAT VIPP LOOKS LIKE

Man or Woman? _____

Hair color? _____

Eye color? _____

FAVORITE ANIMAL

FAVORITE FOOD

FAVORITE FREE TIME ACTIVITY

WHAT VIPP DOES DURING WEEK

VIPP GROUP OF SERVICE:

Church Member

Deacon

Elder

Church Staff

Special Volunteer

Supported Worker
(Missionary)

3 WAYS VIPP SERVES CHURCH
