

KIDS of INTEGRITY

Adaptability



Coping with unwelcome change can be hard, especially if it's a big change like moving home, changing schools or losing a friend. Help kids adjust with the fun ideas in this lesson.

These Bible stories and activities will help kids to:

- hand their worries, sorrow or disappointment over to God
- focus on all the blessings they still enjoy
- trust God to bring good out of their situation.

You'll also find this lesson helpful for kids who resist change in their routine or insist on having things their way.

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Scripture verses in this lesson are quoted from the English Standard Version.

Parents' prayer

This section will help you prepare for this lesson by talking to God about your own need to become more resilient in the face of change and hardships.

If you prefer to personalize your prayer, read through the additional verses provided under "Scripture-guided prayer" for direction and inspiration.

Sample prayer

Sovereign Lord, sometimes life can seem like a bad dream, full of unexpected or unwanted changes. When I become overwhelmed with suffocating sorrow, hopelessness, loneliness, all-consuming disappointment or despair, may I look at the sky as a reminder that You established Your faithfulness in heaven itself and that Your faithful love stands firm forever (Psalm 89:2). Please hold me in Your fatherly arms and whisper words of comfort from Your Word: "For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven," "He changes times and seasons," "It is the purpose of the Lord that will stand" (Ecclesiastes 3:1, Daniel 2:21, Proverbs 19:21). In You my heart rejoices, because I trust in Your holy name. Thank you for assuring me of Your everlasting love. It gives me hope – for today and for tomorrow (Psalm 33:21-22, Jeremiah 29:11).

As the great I Am, I know You will always be more than enough for me. Even though I know this, when there is unwelcome or unexpected change in my life, I find my faith is stretched. Please forgive me for forgetting to trust You and for questioning Your ways. My desire is to be moulded and shaped to be like Jesus! I have tasted that You are good! Please help me to remember that You can use challenges to help me grow. In all of this, I want to learn to hold on to You, instead of life's comforts (1 Peter 2:2-3, Psalm 73:23).

Likewise, when life threatens to "rock" my children _____ and _____, my prayer is that they will trust You as their rock, believing that You work for the good of those who love You (Romans 8:28). May You, the God of hope, fill _____ and _____ with joy and peace as they put their trust in You, so that they may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit (Romans 15:13). On the

days when _____ and _____ sense that change is approaching and they start to fear that things will never be the same, I pray that You will give my children Your peace. If anxiety or doubt creep in, please remind them to make David's prayer their own saying, "When I am afraid, I put my trust in You" (Psalm 56:3). Even in the throes of their emotions, please inspire _____ and _____ to seek You so that their faces radiate joy, despite the unknown that lies ahead. Please answer _____ and _____'s prayers and deliver them from all their fears (Psalm 34:4-5).

During times of upheaval and unrest, may our family take comfort in the fact that You, the Lord, do not change (Malachi 3:6). Though the turmoil in our lives makes it feel as though the earth is giving way and the mountains are falling into the sea, we choose to make You our refuge and to trust You for strength. We know You are our ever-present help in trouble (Psalm 46:1-3). Thank you for the peace that accompanies knowing that even though life's changes are beyond our control, nothing – even monumental troubles and hardships – can separate us from Your love (Romans 8:35). You have been good to us! We trust in Your unfailing love. Please remind us to rejoice in our salvation and give us strength to sing praise to You – even when life goes sideways (Psalm 13:5-6). Amen.

Scripture-guided prayer for parents

Read and pray through one or more of the selected Scriptures under each heading. Focus on listening to God and allowing His Spirit to direct you as you pray.

Character focus

Begin by thanking God for being your rock, your counsellor and your comforter in times of change.
Psalm 23:1-4 | Psalm 89:1-2 | Isaiah 40:21-26
Isaiah 42:16 | Romans 11:33-34

Heart search

Acknowledge where you lack peace or faith in relation to life change.
Deuteronomy 1:29-33 | Proverbs 3:5-7 | Jeremiah 6:16
Jeremiah 10:23 | Matthew 14:22-33

Gratitude

Thank God for ways you have seen your family trust God and experience peace in the midst of difficulties.

Family requests

Ask God to help you and your children trust in Him when life is comfortable and when life is uncomfortable.

Psalm 25:4 | Psalm 32:8 | Psalm 37:3-4
Psalm 143:8 | Isaiah 48:17

Kids talk with God

These sample prayers all begin with "Dear God," but you may use any other names of God your children are comfortable with, (i.e. Father God, Lord Jesus, Heavenly Father, Abba Father, etc.)

If your children are ready to pray original prayers, you may wish to use the Bible verses provided under "Scripture-guided prayer for children."

Sample prayers

Dear God, I'm worried about _____.
Would You please be with me and give me courage and comfort? Amen.

Dear God, I'm missing _____ (the person, place or item that has been "lost" through change) right now.
Please send Your Holy Spirit to be my comforter.
Amen.

Dear God, I feel _____ about _____.
(moving, losing a loved one, changing schools). Thank you for caring about me and my feelings. Amen.

Dear God, I just want things to go back to the way they used to be, but I know that can't happen. Please be with me and be my comforter. Amen.

Dear God, I know You have been sad too. Thank you for being with me in my _____ (pain, loneliness, disappointment etc.). Amen.

Dear God, I'm so afraid of _____ (name the change). Please send Your perfect love to get rid of my fear of _____. Thank you. Amen.

Dear God, thank you for being my Rock. Everything else may change, but I know that You are always the same (Malachi 3:6a). Amen.

Scripture-guided prayer for children

Read through one of the selected Scriptures under each heading and help your children pray based on the verse you read. Encourage them to listen to God and allow His Spirit to guide them as they pray.

Character focus

Begin by thanking God for being your comforter and guide during times of change.

Psalm 32:8 | Isaiah 48:17 | Malachi 3:6a

Heart search

Acknowledge times when you have trouble accepting change or trusting God.

Proverbs 3:7 | Jeremiah 6:16 | Jeremiah 10:23

Gratitude

Thank God for the times when you have seen your family trust God.

Family requests

Ask God to help you live confidently, trusting Him to care for you.

Psalm 23:1-4 | Proverbs 3:5-6 | Psalm 143:8

Speak a blessing

Encourage your children throughout your lesson by supporting them when they are facing hard things. Simple statements like these mean a lot to your child.

- I'm here for you, and God is too. You are never alone.
- We can pretend that we are holding God's hand. The Bible says that no matter where we go, God's hand is there too, holding us and guiding us (Psalm 139:9-10).
- I feel pretty shaky right now too. Isn't it great that we can trust God to be our Rock?
- I know that _____ has been hard for you. I'm proud of you for trusting God to help you be strong / to help you adjust.

- Change is hard for me too. Let's encourage each other to trust that God has great things ahead for us.
- Thank you for choosing to look for things to thank God for, even though life is hard for you right now.

Memory verses

Memorizing Scripture with your children helps God's Spirit bring about lasting change. Choose a verse that your children can learn in a pre-determined period of time and aim to review the verse at least once every day.

Psalm 18:1 "I love You, O Lord, my strength."

Psalm 33:21 "For our heart is glad in Him, because we trust in His holy name."

Psalm 34:4-5 "I sought the Lord, and He answered me and delivered me from all my fears. Those who look to Him are radiant, and their faces shall never be ashamed."

Psalm 55:22 "Cast your burden on the Lord, and He will sustain you; He will never permit the righteous to be moved."

Psalm 143:8 "Let me hear in the morning of Your steadfast love, for in You I trust. Make me know the way I should go, for to You I lift up my soul."

Nahum 1:7 "The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; He knows those who take refuge in Him."

Matthew 6:33-34 "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble."

Romans 8:35,37 "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? . . . No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us."

Romans 15:13 “May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.”

Romans 8:28 “And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to His purpose.”

Philippians 4:11b “I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content.”

1 Peter 5:6-7 “Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time He may exalt you, casting all your anxieties on Him, because He cares for you.”

Kick-off craft

Plan to do this kick-off craft early in your lesson on adaptability. You will work with your children to make a “feelings flags” centerpiece.

Feelings flags

Directions

You will need the following supplies:

- a vase or plant pot
- white glue
- paintbrushes
- tissue paper in various colours
- drinking straws or wooden skewers
- strips of white paper
- decorative marbles, stones or sand.

Here’s how to make your centerpiece:

- 1 Paint the surface of your pot with glue, then take turns gluing pieces of tissue paper on the vase. Share a favourite memory or something you are thankful for each time you glue on a piece of tissue.

- 2 Once the pot is covered in tissue, set it aside to dry.
- 3 Take the straws or skewers and attach pieces of white paper to make a number of white flags
- 4 For each flag, draw a face on one side of the flag to represent a negative emotion. Then, on the other side of the flag, draw the opposite emotion. For example, one flag might show a sad face on one side, and a joyful face on the other side. Another flag might show “worry” and “peace,” and yet another might show “anger” and “patience.”
- 5 When the vase is dry, fill it with marbles, stones or sand, then place your flags in the vase.
- 6 When you sit down together for a meal, talk about the events of the day and ask your kids if they have difficult feelings they would like to “give over” to God. For example, they might have seen a dog in the neighbourhood that reminded them of the dog your family lost. Or they might have walked by the house of a friend who recently moved away. With each idea shared ask, *Which flag reminds us to give these feelings over to God?* Take time to pray and ask God to help you deal with any difficult feelings you have, and to provide His comfort. Encourage your kids to be really honest with God about their feelings (see some prayer ideas in the “key concepts” section). Also take time to thank Him for the bright spots in your day and for His blessings in your lives.

Key concepts

In Psalm 18:6 David says, “In my distress I called upon the Lord; to my God I cried for help. From His temple He heard my voice, and my cry to Him reached His ears.” David handed over his worries and fears to God by praying about them. In just the same way, when we cry out to God, He hears us. It’s okay to talk to God about our difficult feelings. David always talked with God about his feelings and found reasons to praise, even when he was going through hard times.

If you wish, take some time to coach your kids in honestly expressing their feelings to God. At the same time

though, help them understand that God loves them so much, He wants them to focus on the good things in life, rather than choosing to nurture a negative attitude. Here are some sample prayers to help you guide your kids:

Dear God, I really need to talk to You about my feelings.

Follow with one of these statements:

I'm so scared right now, it makes it seem like You are very far away.

I'm so angry right now! I'm mad at the whole world!

I have so much hurt inside me. It feels like a heavy weight in my heart and it makes me wonder if You have forgotten about me.

Add one of these statements:

I need Your help. I'm sorry that I tried to handle this on my own.

I'm sorry that in my anger, I forgot about You. I really do need You.

I have had a bad attitude toward this change. I'm sorry that I have not trusted You more.

Please forgive me for holding on to my _____ (hurt, anger, fear, disappointment, sadness) instead of taking it to You.

Please forgive me for blaming You for _____.

Conclude with one of these statements:

I am just so sad that I don't even know what to pray. Can You hold my heart in Your hands and help me trust You that things will get better.

I just want things to go back to the way they were, but I know I can't have it that way. Please give me hope that things will be better soon?

Even though I am scared, I want You to help me trust You.

I get upset when things don't go my way. Please help me to have self-control, even when I am upset.

I know Your plans for my life include really good things for me. Please help me to accept things as they are right now and trust You even though I am (worried, angry, upset, scared, sad).

I am not looking forward to _____ but I want to have an attitude that pleases You and to be willing to do what You want me to do.

Please forgive me for holding on to my _____ (hurt, anger, fear, disappointment, sadness) instead of taking it to You.

End with:

Thank you for loving me and caring for me.

Bible stories

Choose one or more Bible stories that are appropriate for your children.

Moving without a van

Read Genesis 12:1-9.

Questions for discussion

1. How would you feel if your parents said you had to pack up everything, leave your home, and go on a long hiking and camping trip until you found a new place to live? Would it be exciting or scary?
2. Would you whine and complain and try to convince your parents not to leave the home you're in now?
3. How do you think Abram and Sarai felt when God told them to move to a different country?
4. Why do you think Abram and Sarai went?

Key concepts

God told Abram to leave the place he was living (Haran) and establish a new home in another country. Although God promised that He would bless Abram and his family in their new home, it was probably still hard for Abram and Sarai to trust God and leave all that was comfortable and secure. Moving home back then was a much bigger ordeal than it is now. They did not have moving vans or vehicles to carry their belongings. They had to travel on foot or ride on animals. While they travelled they lived in tents. Life for Abram and his family would have turned into a very long hiking and camping trip! When they got to a place called Bethel, the Bible says Abram built an altar and called on the name of the Lord.

At times when we are facing challenges or when the future seems scary, we can follow Abram's example and "call on the Lord" in prayer. Although our life may sometimes change a lot, God is always with us.

Imaging our life as a storybook that God is writing can help us accept change. Sometimes, in the middle of a story, things go badly for the main character. But usually, by the end, things turn out well. With God, we can always trust that He's planning for our life story to turn out well. Abram and Sarai faced many challenges in their life together, but their story turned out well in the end too.

God cares and has the answers

Note: This is a continuation of Abram's journey introduced in the first Bible story, "Moving without a van." You may want to explain that Sarai was Abram's half-sister, meaning that Abram and Sarai had the same father but different mothers (Genesis 20:12).

Read Genesis 12:10-20.

Questions for discussion

1. Why did Abram leave Canaan to go to Egypt?
2. What was Abram afraid of?

3. What did Abram and Sarai do to protect themselves?
4. What happened when the Egyptians noticed that Sarai was beautiful?
5. How did God take care of this problem?
6. Do you ever start to worry and forget to let God take care of your problems?
7. Can you think of a Bible verse that can remind you to trust God, even when you're afraid?

Key concepts

Even though Abram was a man of great faith, he still had trouble trusting God sometimes. It's easy for anyone who is uncertain or afraid to forget to let God take care of their problems. When we face difficulties, we often think we need to solve things on our own, but God watches over us and has solutions that we could never dream up ourselves. When things seem like they are beyond our control we can pray and ask God to give us comfort and courage. We can also choose a Bible verse that reminds us to trust God, then read it over and over again. God didn't quit caring for Abram when Abram was afraid and God won't give up on us either.

Relevant Scripture

Psalm 56:3 "When I am afraid, I put my trust in You."

Psalm 56:11 ". . . in God I trust and am not afraid. What can man do to me?"

Isaiah 12:2 "Surely God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid. The Lord, the Lord Himself, is my strength and my defense; He has become my salvation."

God changes names sometimes

Read Genesis 17:1-6.

Questions for discussion

1. What did God change Abram's name to?
2. What does the name Abraham mean?

Read **Genesis 17:15-17**.

3. What did God change Sarai's name to?
4. What blessing did God promise for Sarai?
5. Why do you think God changed Abram and Sarai's names?

Read **Genesis 18:11-14**.

6. What did Sarah do when she heard God was going to allow her to have a baby?
7. What did God reply?

Read **Genesis 21:1-7** and **Matthew 1:1-17**.

8. Can you tell me what the happy ending of this story was?

Key concepts

God changed Abram's name to Abraham, which means "father of many" (Genesis 17:5). Sarai's name was changed to Sarah. The blessing that God promised Sarah was that she would have a baby. Sarah had a hard time believing that she and Abraham (who were both very old) would have a child of their own. God replied very directly with a question: "**Is anything too hard for the Lord?**" (Genesis 18:14).

The very happy ending for this story is that Sarah and Abraham did have a baby boy. They named their baby Isaac and he had children, and the children grew up and had children, and those children grew up and had children, and that continued over and over for a long time. The big blessing God gave Sarah and Abraham was that they became the great, great, great, great, (many greats!) grandparents of Jesus!

God changed Abram and Sarai's names to reflect the purposes and plans He had for their lives.

Note: At this point, if you wish, consult with one another and choose a special, loving nickname for each person in your family, a nickname that points to the talents

and special abilities God has given each person and that might even hint at the plan God has for their life.

Relevant Scripture

Genesis 18:14 "**Is anything too hard for the Lord?**"

Jeremiah 29:11 "**For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.**"

Singing in a sad place

Note: Before you begin, explain to your children that Paul and Silas had been telling people the good news about Jesus and how they could have their sins forgiven. This bothered some men and they dragged Paul and Silas before the authorities. They told the authorities lies about Paul and Silas, saying they were encouraging the people to follow customs that were against the Roman law (Acts 16:16-21). As a result, Paul and Silas were beaten severely, then thrown into jail.

Read **Acts 16:25-36**.

Questions for discussion

1. What happened to Paul and Silas before they were put in prison?
2. During the night, what did Paul and Silas do?
3. Who was listening?
4. Next, there was a big surprise! What happened?
5. Why did the jailer pull his sword out?
6. Who stopped the jailer from killing himself?
7. What did the jailer do next?
8. Did this story have a happy or a sad ending? Why?

Key concepts

Before Paul and Silas were put in prison they were badly beaten. Once in prison, they were tied up with heavy chains on their legs. They would not have been very comfortable sitting there, all chained up, bleeding and bruised. Instead of whining or complaining or getting mad at God, they chose to

pray and sing songs of praise to God. The Bible tells us that the other prisoners were listening as Paul and Silas sang and prayed.

When the jailer saw that the prisoners were freed by the earthquake, he pulled out his sword and was going to kill himself. (He knew that if all the prisoners escaped, he would be killed anyway for not doing his job well enough). Paul called out and stopped the jailer. He told him to put his sword away, because all the prisoners had stayed, even though their chains had fallen off. The jailer was so surprised that he asked Paul and Silas how he could be saved. Paul and Silas told him, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household” (Acts 16:31).

The happy ending to this story is that the jailer, instead of killing himself, found new, eternal life by believing in Jesus. He took Paul and Silas to his home, bandaged up their wounds, and his whole family decided to follow Jesus and be baptized. After this happened, the authorities allowed Paul and Silas to go free.

Even though it is hard to find reasons to thank God in difficult situations, God can bring good out of what seems like a desperate and dreadful situation. It takes real courage to trust and praise God when life seems hopeless, but Paul and Silas did. Their story is a good one to remember during hard times because it reminds us to praise God, even when we face difficulties.

David’s horrible, no good, really bad day – or week

Read Psalm 77.

Questions for discussion

1. Have you ever had a day when you felt like everything and everyone were against you?
2. What did David say that lets us know he was really upset?
3. How do we know that David felt like God was far away?
4. Even though he was feeling down, what do verses 11-12 say that David decided to do?

5. What are some of God’s mighty acts that David remembered?
6. Can you think of any other amazing things God has done?
7. What mighty acts of God could you think about when you feel as though God is far away?

Key concepts

When we read Psalm 77, we can tell that David was going through a very hard time because David said things like, “I cry aloud to God for help . . . In the day of my trouble I seek the Lord . . . my soul refuses to be comforted . . . I am so troubled that I cannot speak.” David was even wondering if God still loved him. He wondered if God had rejected him, or forgotten to be kind to him.

Even though David was feeling as though God was ignoring him, he decided to think about the amazing things God had done in the past. David thought about God’s holiness and greatness, and about how God did an amazing miracle that was of immense importance for David’s nation of Israel. It happened when the Israelites were slaves in Egypt. God led them to freedom by splitting the Red Sea in two so the Israelites could run across to the other side. They were able to escape the Egyptians and live no longer as slaves, but as free people.

If we start to wonder if God has forgotten us or is mad at us, we can do as David did and praise God for all the wonderful things He has done. Even though, at times, it might seem as though God is silent or far away, that’s not the truth. God is still with us and will never stop loving us.

Relevant Scripture

Deuteronomy 4:31-34

Isaiah 49:13-16 “Sing for joy, O heavens, and exult, O earth; break forth, O mountains, into singing! For the Lord has comforted His people and will have compassion on His afflicted. But Zion said, ‘The Lord has forsaken me; my Lord has forgotten me.’ ‘Can a woman forget her nursing child, that she should have no compassion on the son of her womb? Even these may forget, yet I will not forget you. Behold, I have

engraved you on the palms of My hands; your walls are continually before Me.’ ”

Faithfulness in times of struggle

Read Ruth 1:1-11,14-21.

Questions for discussion

1. Do you know what the name “Mara” means? (*Mara means “bitter,” whereas Naomi means “pleasant.”*)
2. Why did Naomi tell her friends to call her “Mara”?

Read Ruth 2:1-7 and Ruth 4:13-17.

3. Who did God bring into Naomi and Ruth’s life to help them?
4. What was it about Ruth that impressed Boaz so much?
5. After Ruth and Boaz married, who else did God bring into Naomi’s life?
6. After her grandson Obed was born, do you think Naomi still thought of herself as “Mara” (bitter) or as “Naomi” (pleasant)?
7. If you find yourself feeling like God doesn’t care for you anymore, which Bible verse can you use as a reminder that God will never forget you or leave you?
8. Baby Obed grew up to become the grandfather of King David. Can you guess who Obed was the great, great, great, (many greats) grandfather of? (*Jesus*)

Key concepts

Naomi and Ruth went through a time of great sadness and discouragement when they lived in Moab. Despite everything, they continued to trust and worship God. Their story is a wonderful story to read because we get to see how God worked out an amazing plan for Ruth and Naomi through Boaz. Not only did God provide a righteous and generous man for a husband for Ruth, He allowed Ruth and Boaz

to have to a baby boy named Obed, a grandson for Naomi.

In the end, other women in Bethlehem praised God and encouraged Naomi by saying how blessed she was (Ruth 4:14). When Obed grew up, he became the grandfather of David who eventually was chosen by God to become king of Israel. Obed was also an ancestor of Jesus.

As discouraged as Naomi was at the start of her story, and as much as she felt God had forgotten about her, we know that He never did stop loving and caring for her. At times, we too may feel so sad or lonely that we are sure God has forgotten us. If this happens, we can remember this story of how God cared for Ruth and blessed Naomi, in spite of Naomi’s bitterness and disappointment.

Relevant Scripture

Deuteronomy 31:8 *“It is the Lord who goes before you. He will be with you; He will not leave you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed.”*

Isaiah 49:13-16

Jesus cries with His friends

Read John 11:1-4,14,17-37.

Questions for discussion

1. If you have a big problem, who do you usually talk to?
2. Who did Mary and Martha want to talk to when Lazarus became ill?
3. What do you think that says about Jesus’ friendship with Martha, Mary and Lazarus?
4. Why do you think Jesus didn’t hurry, but waited two days before He went to see Lazarus?
5. Why do you think Jesus cried when He saw Mary and her friends weeping?
6. Can you think of a time when you felt like no one understood how sad you were?

7. Do you think Jesus cares about your sadness, just like He did about Mary's?

Key concepts

The Bible tells us that when Jesus saw Mary and the others weeping over the death of Lazarus, He was deeply troubled and He cried too (John 11:32-35). Even though Jesus already knew that He was going to raise Lazarus from the dead, He wept to see everyone feeling so sad.

From reading this story, we know that Jesus understood the sorrow His friends felt over losing a beloved friend and family member. When life gets hard, many people like to go and talk with a trusted friend or family member. We can be comforted by sharing our sorrows with other people. This story of Lazarus lets us know that when we are in pain, Jesus cares about our sadness and will comfort us too.

Foolish faith – or not?

Read Hebrews 11:1-2,6-12,23-34.

Questions for discussion

1. Do you think there were often big floods in the region where Noah built the ark?
2. Did Abraham know anything about the land God was sending him to?
3. When Moses' parents sent him floating down a river in a basket, did they have any idea where he was going to end up?
4. Did Moses know what was going to happen to the Israelites when he obeyed God by leading them out of Egypt and into the desert?
5. Were these people of faith wise or foolish?
6. Who does the Bible say we should imitate?

Key concepts

Having faith means being sure that God is who He says He is and that He will do what He has promised to do. Even though we can't see into the future to see what God has planned for our lives, we need to follow Him, trusting that His plans for us will be good.

This is exactly what Paul wrote about in Hebrews 11. He lists many people who followed God in faith. Even though they didn't know exactly what God had planned for them, they trusted Him anyway and were careful to follow God's instructions.

When we go through hard times, we can find encouragement through reading what the Bible says about God. Hebrews 13:5-8 says God is the same yesterday and today and tomorrow and that He will never leave us or forsake us.

Relevant Scripture

Hebrews 13:5-8 *“Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for He has said, ‘I will never leave you nor forsake you.’ So we can confidently say, ‘The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?’ Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.”*

Creative discipline

Our parenting instincts tell us to discipline a child who is being unruly or disobedient – not a child who is hurting. Even so, a child who is in emotional pain caused by change or loss needs “discipleship discipline,” which means helping your child take their pain and worry to God in prayer. The suggestions here will help both the child who is struggling and the child who is rigidly refusing to accept change.

For a child who is fearful, worried or anxious:

See the “creative discipline” section of the **courage** lesson

For a child who refuses to cooperate:

See the “creative discipline” section of the **cooperation** lesson.

For a child who is choosing to be inflexible:

See the ideas later in this section.

For a child who needs comfort for loss or pain:

Biblical basis

Philippians 4:6-7 “Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

Suggested disciplinary action

Read Psalm 139:9-12 in the English Standard Version or as it is paraphrased in *The Message*. Here’s how the verses appear in both cases:

Psalm 139:7-12 (ESV) “Where shall I go from Your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from Your presence? If I ascend to heaven, You are there! If I make my bed in Sheol, You are there! If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there Your hand shall lead me, and Your right hand shall hold me. If I say, ‘Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light about me be night,’ even the darkness is not dark to You; the night is bright as the day, for darkness is as light with You.”

Psalm 139:7-12 (*The Message*) “Is there anyplace I can go to avoid Your Spirit? to be out of Your sight? If I climb to the sky, You’re there! If I go underground, You’re there! If I flew on morning’s wings to the far western horizon, You’d find me in a minute – You’re already there waiting! Then I said to myself, ‘Oh, He even sees me in the dark! At night I’m immersed in the light!’ It’s a fact: darkness isn’t dark to You; night and day, darkness and light, they’re all the same to You.”

Review the discussion questions, then work with your child to re-write the truth of Psalm 139:9-12, making it applicable to the situation your child is having difficulty with. Here are two examples of how you might re-write Psalm 139:9-12:

For fear or anxiety associated with change:

“If I go to another city or even to the other side of the world, You will still be with me there, holding my hand and guiding me. If I get worried and think about how much moving scares me, I can ask You to shine Your light like a great big flashlight and take my fear away.”

For grief or pain:

“If I run upstairs and hide in my closet, You are there with me, holding me close. If my heart feels so heavy with hurt and the darkness of my pain is closing in around me so that I cannot handle it, I know You are with me and I know You care. You can even shine Your light into the deepest and saddest parts of my heart and make them light again.”

Questions for discussion

1. Could God find you if you hid under your bed?
2. If you dug a tunnel underground, would God see you there?
3. Is there anywhere you can run to to get away from God? How about if we travelled all the way to the other side of the world?
4. What if we went outside on a very dark night wearing dark clothing? Could God still see us?
5. Have you ever been afraid of the dark?
6. Is God scared of the dark?
7. What does the Bible say about God and darkness?
8. If your bad feelings are like scary darkness, which ones would you want God to take away?

Affirmation

Post your child’s personalized version of Psalm 139:9-12 in a visible location so you can refer to it in the future.

As often as necessary, pray with your child based on Romans 15:13 and 2 Corinthians 12:9-10. Acknowledge that you are too weak to handle the trial you are facing on your own. Thank God that life’s difficulties remind you that you need Him. Thank Him for being a God of power and strength and courage who shares His Spirit with those who are weak.

Relevant Scripture

Romans 15:13 “May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.”

2 Corinthians 12:9-10 “But He said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is made perfect in weakness.’ Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.”

For a child who is choosing to be inflexible:

A child who is insisting that they know better than their parents (as to what is best for them) is also insisting that they know better than God, who gave them their parents. Their obstinacy is like that of the Israelites while on their way to the Promised Land. Explain to your child that insisting on having their own way is like insisting on living in Egypt as a slave instead of going along with God’s plan of living free in the Promised Land.

Biblical basis

Psalms 32:8-9 “I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with My eye upon you. Be not like a horse or a mule, without understanding, which must be curbed with bit and bridle, or it will not stay near you.”

Zechariah 7:12 “They made their hearts diamond-hard lest they should hear the law and the words that the Lord of hosts had sent by His Spirit through the former prophets. Therefore great anger came from the Lord of hosts.”

Suggested disciplinary action

Read the story of the Israelites’ escape from Egypt found in Exodus 12:31-42 and Exodus 14. Then read about the Israelites’ discontent in the desert and their plea to return to Egypt. You’ll find this account in Numbers 14, or see the shorter script in the Bible story “Long ‘time out’ in the desert,” found in the **Thanksgiving** lesson.

Let your child know that if they are going to be stubborn about going their own way instead of the way you are asking them to go, you will have no choice but to have him or her live in “slavery.” Begin by removing all luxuries, such as treats or special privileges. Have your “slave” help with meal preparation, house cleaning, laundry and any other appropriate chores.

As soon as your child decides to accept the changes you have instituted for his or her life, they can be “set free.”

Affirmation

Proverbs 3:7 “Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord, and turn away from evil.”

Pray together and thank God that your child is willing to do things God’s way (obeying his/her parents and following God’s plan for their life) instead of remaining in “slavery” to sin. Thank God, too, for His promise of blessing for children who obey their parents (Ephesians 6:1-3).

Relevant Scripture

Proverbs 3:5-6 “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make straight your paths.”

John 8:31-36 “So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in Him, ‘If you abide in My word, you are truly My disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.’ They answered Him, ‘We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it that You say, “You will become free”?’ Jesus answered them, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin. The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.’”

Ephesians 6:1-3 “Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ‘Honor your father and mother’ (this is the first commandment with a promise), ‘that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land.’”

Hands-on options

These fun ideas require very little preparation, making it easy for you to share some simple but memorable lessons with your kids. Choose just one or two ideas that will appeal to your children.

The art of enjoying change

science with a twist

Have fun making some “changeable artwork” using milk. The results are spectacular!

You will need a flat-bottomed pie dish (or something similar) for each of your children plus milk, food colouring in at least three different colours, dish soap, and toothpicks or cotton swabs. (Don't use low-fat or skim milk.)

- 1 First, do a demo for your kids. Prepare two flat dishes by pouring milk into each one to a depth of about 5 mm or 1/8 of an inch.
- 2 Next, squeeze a drop of food colouring on the surface of the milk. Take other colours and continue spacing drops of food colouring across the milk until there are eight to ten different drops of colour.
- 3 Do the same with the second bowl of milk. Now set this bowl aside and leave it untouched. This will be your comparison bowl.
- 4 Returning your attention to the first bowl, coat the end of a toothpick with dish soap, then dip it in the centre of one of the drops of food colouring. Continue to dip the toothpick into each drop of food colouring and watch as the colours “explode” into various shapes and mix together to form new colours. (Dish soap both reduces the surface tension in the milk and “pushes” the fat in the milk around the surface, facilitating movement within the milk.)

Questions for discussion

- Which bowl of milk has been more interesting to watch? Why?
- How are the bowls like our lives?
- When is life change fun and exciting, like this experiment?

- How are our lives like the seasons: spring, summer, winter and fall?
- Is life ever like this second bowl of milk, with not much change happening?
- Would you like to dip a toothpick into this second bowl of milk now?

Key concepts

Life change can feel threatening, but it can also be exciting. Just as the seasons of nature change and make life interesting, the changes in our lives keep us from getting bored. Some people prefer lots of change while others prefer less change. We know the “art of enjoying change” when we view changes as part of God's plan for our lives and trust that He loves us and will always be with us.

Relevant Scripture

Deuteronomy 31:6 “Be strong and courageous. Do not fear or be in dread of them, for it is the Lord your God who goes with you. He will not leave you or forsake you.”

James 1:17 “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.”

Life is like a crazy carpet ride

physical activity

Take your kids tobogganing or to a water slide! On the way home, use the questions for discussion to open up a conversation on trusting God when life becomes unpredictable.

Questions for discussion

- Which sled run or water slide was your favourite?
- Which do you prefer: a sled that you can steer, or one that does not have a steering wheel?
- Which do you think would be scariest: riding with your eyes closed, or with them open?
- What kind of routines do you do every morning?
- Are there any other kinds of routines you follow almost every day?

Key concepts

The familiar things we do each day are called “routines.” Routines are comfortable because they make life predictable: we know what to expect. Not knowing what lies ahead can make us uncomfortable or even frightened.

Trusting God is like riding down a toboggan run with a parent who is steering the sled, or like sliding down a water slide with your mom or dad. Most kids feel safer when a parent is with them. Another name we use for God is “Heavenly Father.” He is always with us. We can feel comfort and peace, even when life gets “slippery,” because we know that God is in control of our lives and the entire universe.

Note: After your discussion, pray and thank God for knowing and planning the future. Let Him know that you are willing to go along for the ride.

Relevant Scripture

Jeremiah 10:23 “I know, O Lord, that the way of man is not in himself, that it is not in man who walks to direct his steps.”

Jeremiah 29:11 “For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.”

Baby, we were made for change

drama / role play

In this activity, you’ll dress up like a baby, and have your kids care for your needs. Then you’ll discuss some of the changes babies go through in their first few years of life, and why those big changes are so important.

First, assemble a box of clothing and accessories and let your children dress up as mom or dad.

Next, dress yourself up and pretend you are a baby, or have your spouse or another adult play the baby role.

Talk “baby talk” while your kids:

- feed you a bottle or spoon feed you applesauce
- “burb out” your tummy gas

- prop you up when sitting on the couch so you don’t topple over
- change your “diaper” (a towel around your waist)
- change your bedcovers
- read books to you
- try to teach you simple words
- rock you to sleep.

Use the questions for discussion to help your children think about all the ways a baby changes during their first few years of life. (*Starting out drinking milk, then slowly learning to eat soft food from a spoon, then growing teeth and learning to chew food; learning to roll over, crawl, sit up, stand up, walk, run, talk; learning to use a potty.*)

After your discussion, emphasize to your kids that God means for all of us to grow and change, and although change is not always comfortable, it is a necessary part of growing up.

Close the lesson by thanking God for planning families where parents take care of their kids, teaching them everything they need to know until they are all grown up and ready to live on their own.

Questions for discussion

- What are some of the things a baby learns to do in the first few years of life?
- Did you like it when Mom/Dad acted like a baby? Why or why not?
- Did you enjoy being the parent?
- What would the world be like if no one ever grew up?
- What do you think is the hardest part about growing up?
- What do you most look forward to about being grown up?

- In Deuteronomy 6:4-7, what does the Bible say parents should teach their children?

Note: To extend this activity, find some books or movies that show animals caring for and training their young.

Relevant Scripture

Deuteronomy 6:4-7 “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.”

Luke 2:52 “And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man.”

Choose your own adventure

drive time / any time

Help kids learn to view change as an adventure rather than a frightening journey by telling your own “choose your own adventure” story, or by reading one from a book.

If you decide to tell your own story, have your children help you choose characters and a setting, and give your children the opportunity to direct the story by making choices.

For example, you could begin by saying:

Braeden was so excited. His mom told him he could have a friend over for the afternoon.

Then pause and ask: *Who should he invite over?*

Continue with: *The plan was to go to the park or to go swimming.*

Pause and ask: *Which activity did Braeden and his friend choose to do?*

As you continue telling the story, blend a conflict into the storyline, letting your kids come up with a resolution. Finish by reviewing the questions for discussion and your choice of the Bible verses listed here.

In closing, pray together and ask God to help you make wise choices and be willing to follow His plans, even when they seem a little scary! Ask God to help you trust Him just like many of the characters in the Bible did. Your prayer can be based on one of the Scripture verses included here.

Sample prayer:

Dear God, please give us ears that are tuned in to listen to Your voice and help us to be willing to follow the directions You give us. We don't want to be like sheep who end up lost and on the wrong path. We want to live life following Your plans, not our own (Isaiah 53:6). Amen.

Questions for discussion

- Can you think of a story in the Bible where someone had to trust God in a scary situation?
- How is life like a “choose your own adventure” story?

Key concepts

Life is a lot like a “choose your own adventure” story because life is full of choices. If you ask Him, God will help you make choices that lead you to live out an exciting “life story” that He has planned for your life.

God has written thousands of amazing stories. The Bible is full of them! When you know those stories well, they help you know the right choices to make – the kinds of choices that please God.

Relevant Scripture

Proverbs 3:5-7 “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make straight your paths.”

Psalm 16:11 “You make known to me the path of life; in Your presence there is fullness of joy; at Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.”

Isaiah 53:6 “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned – every one – to his own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.”

Note: This activity fits well with the story “Moving without a van” from the **Bible stories** section of this lesson.

Life is a sweet treat

fun with food

Bake some “surprise cookies” or “surprise buns” that have something unexpected in the middle.

You will need a batch of cookie dough or bread dough, some fruit – such as apples or pears with a sprinkle of cinnamon, or dried fruit like figs and apricots – and some soft candies or chocolate.

Wrap chunks of fruit or candy inside the cookie dough or bread dough to form bite-size treats. Bake the cookies or buns, then have fun guessing what’s inside before you eat them.

Note: As a simple alternative, buy a box of chocolates of different flavours, then sample them without referring to the flavour guide.

Key concepts

Life is full of surprises. Some people enjoy being surprised and others prefer to always know what lies ahead. Whatever your preference may be, the best way to respond to a surprise is by thanking God for the good gift of life – even when it surprises you.

Relevant Scripture

James 1:17 “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.”

Sweet and sour candies

drive time / any time

Mix some sweet candies, such as jujubes, in a bag together with some sour candies. Have your kids close their eyes as they choose a candy from the bag.

Talk about how life sometimes seems disappointing when something happens that we don’t like, or we have to make a change that we don’t like. Explain that sometimes circumstances that seem “sour” to us at first can still turn out to be okay.

Next, take turns listing aspects of life that involve change. Help your kids practice “looking on the bright side” by listing some of the positive aspects of those life changes.

Pray together, giving thanks to God that He is with you at all times. Ask Him to help you see the sweetness in life circumstances that seem sour at first.

Explain that when you choose to thank God for less-than-ideal circumstances, even these times can seem much brighter. Finish by singing a song of thanks and praise to God.

Relevant Scripture

Deuteronomy 31:6 “Be strong and courageous. Do not fear or be in dread of them, for it is the Lord your God who goes with you. He will not leave you or forsake you.”

Ephesians 5:18b-20 “. . . be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ . . .”

Psalm 42:11 “Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise Him, my salvation and my God .”

Wet chick, dry chick

physical activity

Play a game of tag using a garden hose. Or if it’s wintertime, play tag with snowballs. Afterwards, talk about the value of taking refuge in God.

Here’s how the game works:

Gather an assortment of umbrellas or plastic shields of some kind, such as a large bucket or lid, then spread the shields around your yard. As long as your children are out running around, you can spray them with the hose. But they’re “safe” or “home free” whenever they shelter under one of the water shields.

If you're playing snow tag, make some "home free" snow forts and place plastic shields around your yard.

Follow up your game by watching a nature video showing a mother duck or hen covering her chicks under her wings, then use the questions to guide your discussion.

Close by praying this prayer with your kids:

Dear God, sometimes when change happens or I am upset, I feel mad at You and I want to run away or hide from everything. Please remind me that You never want to hurt me and that the best place for me to be when I have pain or sadness is close beside You. I want to be a willing chick – one who runs to You for protection and comfort! Amen.

Questions for discussion

- What is an umbrella for?
- How are a mother duck's wings like an umbrella?
- What could happen to a duckling if it refused to hide under its mother's wing?
- Do you think the duckling feels less safe or more safe hiding under its mother's wing?
- Who wants to comfort us when we are upset?

Key concepts

When we are sad, angry or hurting in any way, God wants to offer us comfort! The important question is, will we let Him, or will we be stubborn and sullen and choose to go it alone?

Relevant Scripture

Psalm 91:1-4 "He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say to the Lord, 'My refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust.' For He will deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the deadly pestilence. He will cover you with His pinions, and under His wings you will find refuge; His faithfulness is a shield and buckler."

Luke 13:34 "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to

it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not!"

Isaiah 40:11 "He will tend His flock like a shepherd; He will gather the lambs in His arms; He will carry them in His bosom, and gently lead those that are with young."

The tail doesn't wag the dog

any time

Do you have a child in the family who likes to call the shots, perhaps even to the point that your family's life revolves around what they want? Gently send your power hungry or manipulative child the message that "the tail doesn't wag the dog."

Find a friendly, even-tempered dog you can use for your object lesson. While the dog is wagging its tail, gently hold the tail to stop it from wagging. Now gently move the tail back and forth. Can you make the whole dog's body "wag" back and forth just by wagging its tail?

Use the questions for discussion to explain that God expects parents to train their children, and He expects children to obey their parents.

Questions for discussion

- Who is the boss, the tail or the dog?
- Who is the leader in your family?
- Who is Dad or Mom's leader?
- Why is it not a good idea for a child to try to lead their family?

Note: For more on this topic, see the Kids of Integrity lesson on obedience.

Relevant Scripture

Proverbs 22:6 "Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it."

Isaiah 45:11-12 "Thus says the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, and the one who formed him: Ask Me of things to come; will you command Me concerning My children and the work of My hands? I made the

earth and created man on it; it was My hands that stretched out the heavens, and I commanded all their host.’”

Colossians 3:20 “Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord.”

Green stick versus dry stick

getting into nature

Pop a pair of garden sheers in your pocket, then take your kids out for a walk in a forested area.

Have your kids gather some dry sticks off the ground that are about the width of a pencil, while you prune a green branch from a tree. Choose a branch that’s also about the width of a pencil.

Let your kids try breaking the sticks, as well as your green branch. (Hopefully the green branch will be much more flexible than the dry sticks and harder to break.)

Explain that sometimes people can be like dry sticks. Another term we use for them is “rigid” because they refuse to bend or adapt to changes in their routine. When things don’t go the way “dry stick” kinds of people want, they may pout, refuse to play or even have a tantrum.

On the other hand, people can also be like the green stick. They’re much more flexible in their attitude. They are willing to participate in games and activities suggested by others, and they don’t mind trying new things and new ways of doing things. “Green stick” kinds of people are pleasant to be around because they are easy going, cooperative and willing to try new activities or games. They are also more willing to adapt to unexpected changes in life.

As you continue your walk, or on your drive home, share these examples with your kids and let them decide whether the person in the story is being like a dry stick or a green stick:

- Tanya likes to play hockey on the driveway. One day her dad suggested they try kicking a soccer ball or throwing a baseball around instead. Tanya refused, saying the only sport she ever wants to play is hockey.

- Richard enjoys drawing and colouring so his parents have offered to pay for art classes for him. Richard isn’t sure if he will like painting and drawing in front of a teacher, but he agreed to try the classes anyway.
- Jenny loves white bread, but her mom said that their family was going to start eating brown bread instead, because it’s healthier. Now every time Jenny sees the whole grain bread on the table, she complains about how much she hates brown bread.
- Jody and Danny’s parents were planning a family vacation in Mexico. But a few weeks before they were to leave, the family’s plans had to change and they visited an uncle and aunt in Alberta instead. Jody was disappointed, but tried to think about how visiting their uncle and aunt could still be fun. Danny, on the other hand, pouted the entire holiday and whined about how much he wished they were at the beach instead.

Relevant Scripture

Psalm 23:1-3 “The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for His name’s sake.”

Proverbs 19:20 “Listen to advice and accept instruction, that you may gain wisdom in the future.”

1 Peter 2:25 “For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.”

Using your windshield wipers

drive time

While you’re driving in heavy rain, pull over and turn off the windshield wipers. Let your kids observe how the view through the windshield becomes completely obscured by the rain.

Explain to your kids how experiencing strong emotions (such as grief, anger, fear, worry and even excitement), can obscure our view so that we don’t always think clearly or make good decisions.

Next, invite your kids to suggest scenarios where they might find themselves in a “rainstorm” of emotions.

Now read Psalm 118. Impress on your children that, even though David was in great trouble and distress, he still started and ended the psalm by praising God and talking about God’s never ending love. In the midst of it all David drew comfort from reminding himself that God was with him.

Next, turn on your windshield wipers to clear the view again.

Continue your discussion, impressing on your kids that the best way to make a “cool decision in a hot seat” is to talk to God. We can ask Him to be our windshield wipers so we manage our emotions well. He can help us see clearly so we don’t hurt others when we are feeling bad. And He can help us not get “stuck” in our tears of sadness, disappointment or frustration; He clears the view for us so we can see how to keep moving ahead and find our way through hard times and difficult emotions.

Relevant Scripture

Psalm 118:5-6 “Out of my distress I called on the Lord; the Lord answered me and set me free. The Lord is on my side; I will not fear. What can man do to me?”

Me and you in a chocolate fondue

fun with food

Let your kids help you prepare a chocolate fondue, and use it as a metaphor to help your children understand how God uses tough times to refine us.

Find and follow your favourite chocolate fondue recipe. As you add “bricks” of chocolate, pretend the chocolate chunks are bricks of gold.

While you and your kids watch the chocolate melt, talk about how gold is heated up to high temperatures to burn off any impurities and improve the quality of the gold. The heat makes the gold pure.

In the same way too, the “fire” or the stove top are like the difficulties we face in life. As we experience

trials, God wants to use our discomfort to teach us to trust Him.

When life gets hard we can be tempted to:

- feel sorry for ourselves
- lose hope in God
- get angry and blame others for our circumstances
- have a bad attitude
- refuse to believe that any good can come out of the situation.

However, that’s not how God wants us to respond. Instead, God wants us to keep a hopeful and joyful attitude and remember that He is with us. In that way, we cooperate with God so He can use our trials to make us pure, like refined gold.

We know exactly when it is time to take the chocolate off the stove, so it doesn’t burn. So it is with God: He knows exactly how much “heat” we can handle.

As you enjoy your fondue together as a family, share a simple summary of the story of Job, a man who loved God even when God allowed all kinds of dreadful things to happen to him. Follow up by asking the questions for discussion.

Questions for discussion

- What do you think Job meant when he said in Job 23 “My foot has held fast to His steps; I have kept His way and have not turned aside”?
- What do you think Job meant when he said, “I have treasured the words of His mouth more than my portion of food”?
- Job said that although he knew God was at work, Job couldn’t see Him. Have you ever wondered if God is really with you?

- Job also said that God was testing him so he could “come out as gold.” What kind of a problem could make you feel like God was testing you?
- Has there ever been a time when you thought life was getting too hard for you to handle?

Relevant Scripture

Job 23:8-12 “Behold, I go forward, but He is not there, and backward, but I do not perceive Him; on the left hand when He is working, I do not behold Him; He turns to the right hand, but I do not see Him. But He knows the way that I take; when He has tried me, I shall come out as gold. My foot has held fast to His steps; I have kept His way and have not turned aside. I have not departed from the commandment of His lips; I have treasured the words of His mouth more than my portion of food.”

Proverbs 17:3 “The crucible is for silver, and the furnace is for gold, and the Lord tests hearts.”

Recommended resources

For a list of children’s stories that reinforce the theme of this lesson, consult the home page for the **adaptability** lesson at Kidsofintegrity.com.