

LESSON 59

Abraham: Father to All by Faith

ROMANS 4:1-25



BIBLE TRUTH

ABRAHAM IS THE FATHER OF ALL WHO PLACE THEIR TRUST IN CHRIST

LESSON SNAPSHOT

1. OPENING REVIEW 5 MIN

Use last week’s lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.

2. BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

Read Romans 4:1–25 from the Scriptures or read story 137, “Abraham: Father to All by Faith,” from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

3. OBJECT LESSON 1 10 MIN

Tough-to-Understand Words

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ signs with the following words on one side and the short definitions on the reverse: righteousness (a sinless record), counted (added), faith (belief and trust), flesh (body), justified (declared not guilty)

4. TEACHING/DISCUSSION 10 MIN

Using the teaching points, teach through the lesson for today.

5. OBJECT LESSON 2 10 MIN

Faith

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ two large clean, clear, capped soda bottles
- ✓ spray paint
- ✓ pretzel sticks
- ✓ candy—enough for the class and small enough to fit into the soda bottle

6. SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5 MIN

7. ACTIVITY TIME 10 MIN

Color a Picture

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ coloring page for NT Lesson 59—one for each child
- ✓ markers or crayons

LESSON SNAPSHOT

8. CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

9. BONUS OBJECT LESSON 10 MIN

Something We Cannot See

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ small ball

TOTAL 75 MIN

PREPARING TO TEACH

Abraham is our example of faith—Paul used Abraham, the patriarch of the Jewish faith, to demonstrate that our standing of righteousness before God has always been by faith and not by works. Paul quoted Genesis 15:6 where, after God told Abraham that his children would be as numerous as the stars, the text simply reads, “Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness” (Romans 4:3). Abraham did no work to earn his righteousness; he simply believed God’s promise. Righteousness was God’s free gift.

Abraham is the father of all who would believe—The Jews would have believed Abraham to be their father. They even called themselves the “children of Abraham.” They also believed that circumcision marked their right standing before God. In this text Paul exploded their thinking by pointing out that God counted Abraham as righteous before circumcision. Abraham is the father of all those who have faith, whether circumcised or not—he is the father of all who believe! Later, in the book of Romans, Paul goes a step further and tells us that God’s children are those who are children of the promise by faith, not those who are the natural children of Abraham (Romans 9:7–8). Abraham is not just the father of the Jews but of “many nations” (Romans 4:17).

Abraham believed against all hope—Abraham trusted God’s plan. This is a wonderful picture of our need to trust in Christ. Abraham’s body was as good as dead, just as we are dead in our sins. There was nothing Abraham could do in his own strength to renew his own body so that he could have children. Likewise, there is nothing we can do to work our way to heaven. If Abraham was going to have children, it would have to be the work of God. If we are to be saved, it can only be by a work of God. Abraham believed that God had the power to do what he promised, and we must believe that God has the power to fulfill his promise of salvation through the work of Jesus on the cross. Like Abraham, we have no other hope. We are hopelessly lost in our sin apart from Jesus.

Where Is the Gospel?

How does today's Bible story fit into God's greater plan of redemption?

Paul directly ties Abraham's trusting in God's future redemption with our trusting in God's past work on the cross and through the resurrection. Abraham's faith was "counted to him as righteousness." In the same way, "It will be counted to us who believe in him who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord, who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification" (Romans 4:22, 24–25).

THE LESSON

OPENING REVIEW 5 MIN

Use last week's lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.

BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

Read Romans 4:1–25 from the Scriptures or read story 137, "Abraham: Father to All by Faith," from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

OBJECT LESSON 1 10 MIN

Tough-to-Understand Words

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ signs with the following words on one side and the short definitions on the reverse: righteousness (a sinless record), counted (added), flesh (body), justified (declared not guilty)

Before beginning the lesson, explain to the class that there are several difficult words in today's Bible passage (Romans 4:1–5). Give the signs to four volunteers. Explain to them that when you get to their word in the Bible passage you want them to turn their sign around to show the class what the word means.

Read through the passage, and each time you get to one of the words stop to redefine it for the children. (You may want to underline them in your Bible to help you know they are coming.) Talk about what each word means in the context of the passage as you go along.

When you finish reading the passage, see if the class can tell you the definitions of the words again.

TEACHING/DISCUSSION 10 MIN

Using the teaching points, teach through the lesson for today.

OBJECT LESON 2 10 MIN

Faith

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ two large clean, clear, capped soda bottles
- ✓ spray paint
- ✓ pretzel sticks
- ✓ candy—enough for the class and small enough to fit into the soda bottle

Prior to class, spray-paint the outside of one of the bottles to make it completely opaque. Fill the clear bottle with pretzel sticks and the opaque bottle with candy.

When you get to class place the bottles where everyone can see them. After you have taught the lesson, tell the class that the two bottles are filled with something good to eat. Then ask the class to tell you which bottle best demonstrates faith. (the bottle with the paint) In order to believe there is actually something inside the bottle, a person must have faith in your word as a teacher. Specifically, they need to believe that when you said two bottles were filled with something good to eat, you were telling the truth.

Ask the class the following questions:

- **Just by looking at the bottles, can they tell whether your words are true?**
(No, there is no way to know if your words are true by looking.)

■ **What did Abraham have to believe by faith?**

(Abraham believed that God could make him the father of many nations even though he and his wife were too old to have children.)

■ **Raise your hand if you have faith that there is something good to eat in the clear bottle?**

(Everyone should raise a hand. Then pass out the pretzels.)

Stand up if you have faith that there is something good to eat in the painted bottle? Have each child who is standing come to the front of the room. Give a little candy to each of them as you say, “Today I count your faith as righteousness and I give you this free candy.”)

Have the children sit down and then ask “What did Abraham believe in and what did God give Abraham as a free gift?” (Abraham believed that God could give him a son. God counted Abraham’s faith in God’s plan as righteousness.)

Explain to the class that even though Abraham didn’t know God’s whole plan—that God the Father planned to send Jesus to die for the sins of those who trust in him—he was still trusting in God’s plan to send Jesus. By believing in God’s plan, which included the sacrifice of Jesus, Abraham was therefore trusting in Jesus.

Everyone who is saved must believe by faith in God’s plan. Abraham had faith in a future plan of God. We have faith by looking back at what God did and believing it was for us. We look back to the cross and have faith that Jesus died on the cross for our sins.

SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5 MIN

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult worker.

ACTIVITY TIME 10 MIN

Color a Picture

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ coloring page for NT Lesson 59—one for each child
- ✓ markers or crayons

While the children are coloring, engage them by asking the following questions:

- **Who is praying in the picture?**
(Abraham)

- **Do you remember any part of Abraham's story or the promise God gave him?**
(God promised to give Abraham, who was very old, a son, and make his children more numerous than the stars of the sky. He also said that Abraham's children would bless people from all nations. We know that Jesus was one of Abraham's far-off grandchildren.)

- **Why do you think Abraham prayed to God during his life?**
(Abraham depended on God to guide him and lead him, so he probably prayed for God to help him know what to do.)

- **How are we like Abraham?**
(We need to trust God and believe in him. We need to pray to God for help so we can believe. Faith is a gift we receive from God.)

CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

Pick several children to pray prayers based on the day's Scripture passages.

BONUS OBJECT LESSON 10 MIN

Something We Cannot See

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ small ball

Use this activity to help your class remember that faith means believing in something that you cannot see.

Ask the class the following questions:

- **What is faith?**
(Faith means believing that something you cannot see is true.)

- **What does it mean to place our faith in something?**
(When we believe something is so true that we depend on it for our well-being, we can say we are placing our trust in it. We believe and act on that truth.)

- **Do you believe in air?**
(They will likely say yes.)

- **How do you know that air really exists?**
(They might say that they breathe air. Ask them if they can feel air and then tell them to blow on their hand.)

- **Ask the class if they believe there is gravity.**
(They will say yes. Explain that gravity is the force that draws us to the earth. Show them by dropping a ball. Explain to them that we place our trust in gravity every day. People don't go around grabbing onto things that are fixed to the ground for fear that gravity might not work.)

Use these examples to talk about our faith in Christ. Even though we cannot see God, we believe he is real and we can place our faith in him. We can know he is real by seeing all that God has done around us. The Bible tells us that the creation is evidence of God's existence (Romans 1:20). We also have the testimony of the Bible. We believe in gravity because we learned about it from a reliable source, our school books. We believe in Jesus because we learned about him from a reliable source, the Bible. God's Word is the most reliable source of all.

LESSON 59 - ABRAHAM: FATHER TO ALL BY FAITH

