

WEEK 1

LESSON GUIDE

Staycation!

BIG IDEA

God blesses us so we can bless others.

BIBLE

The Call of Abram:

Genesis 12:1-5, 13:1-18; Psalm 89:1-4

LARGE GROUP TIME

It's time for a *Staycation!* . . . We're going on a vacation without going anywhere at all! Our series this month focuses on being at home and the people who make you feel at home. In this week's Bible story, you will hear about how God called Abram to leave his country and lead a new nation. You will also learn how it is important to bless others as God blessed us.

[Consider contacting families and letting kids come to church in their pajamas this month! Give your space a cozy feel with blankets, beanbag chairs, stuffed animals, cushions, and rugs. Play a fun song with a family or house theme as kids arrive. This week, check out "[My House](#)" (Kidz Bop UK).]

WHAT? What are we talking about today?

MUSIC | Worship

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** You can lead kids in worship with any songs of your choice, but here are some suggestions that go along with this month's theme. Make sure you have purchased any licenses required to play or perform these songs. For more information, [read this!](#)
 - "Everyday I'm Blessed" (Crowder)
 - "Big House" (From "A Week Away")
 - "You and Me" (Grow Kids VBS)
 - "My Heart Your Home" (Maverick City Music)
 - "Boundary Line" (Elevation Church Kids)

ACTIVITY | Family Fort

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Split kids into groups of four or five (for smaller groups, you can have kids work in pairs). Provide each group with large sheets/blankets, chairs, cardboard boxes, clothespins, and other fasteners. Give kids ten minutes to build the best fort that fits everyone in their group!

✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** Draw or create a paper tent using butcher paper or something similar and provide a variety of supplies like stickers, decorative tape, stamps, and crayons and have kids decorate the tent together.

- **Have you ever had to stay inside because of a massive rainstorm or a blizzard?** Sometimes when the weather is severe or something wild is happening outside, we need to stay indoors.
- Instead of feeling down, we can be thankful that we are safe inside our homes.
- **What's your favorite thing to do at home when you can't go outside?**

ACTIVITY | Apples to Blessings

- One of the best parts of a Staycation! is family game time!
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** For this activity, you'll need [Apples to Apples Jr. cards](#). Pull out the red cards only. Divide kids into teams and give each team a stack of seven to ten cards. Say the fill-in-the-blank statements below, and have each team pick a card they think is funny to complete the sentence. Each team sends up a representative to the front to read the card they chose. Have the adult leaders vote on which card was the funniest. For added fun, have the kids pick a card before knowing what the statement is!

✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** Consider using pictures cards ([like these](#)) for kids to use instead of Apples to Apples Jr. cards.

- Fill-in-the-blank blessing statements:
 - I feel blessed because I have a hundred _____.
 - I love to bless people with my _____.
 - My family blesses me with their _____.
 - _____ is/are the biggest blessing(s) I've experienced this summer.
 - My dog is so blessed because they have _____.

POLL | Enough To Go Around?

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** As you share the scenarios below, have the kids show how hard it would be for them to share. On a scale of 1-5 (with 1 being easy, and 5 being difficult), have them show their responses with their fingers.

✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Have kids indicate which number represents their response then have them group together with others who chose the same number (make sure you tell leaders to partner with kids who are by themselves). As a group have them discuss why they chose the way they did and what kinds of scenarios might cause them to change their answer.

- Picture this. You wake up in the morning and want a cold glass of milk. There is only enough for one person.
Do you drink or save it for your family member?
- **How easy is it for you to give the remote to a family member and let them pick what you are all going to watch?**
- **How difficult is it for you to share your favorite jacket with a family member or friend?**
- **How hard is it to let someone else play your computer or game, while you sit and watch?**
- **How difficult would it be for you to share the last slice of your ice cream birthday cake when a family member asked if they could have it?**

SO WHAT? *Why does it matter to God and to us?*

SCRIPTURE | Genesis 12:1-5, 13:1-18 (The Call of Abram)

- Hey everyone! I'm so glad you are here for our *Staycation!* story time! Let's watch a little movie together. *[Show video.]*
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Set up for the Bible story as though it's a slumber party! Wear pajamas (have kids come in PJs, too!), and have kids sit on the floor on blankets, cushions, and pillows. Show [this video](#) then continue teaching the story from Genesis 12:1-5, 13:1-18.*
- **Have you ever been playing a game on your computer and your parents called you in for dinner?** In the moment, you might feel frustrated that you have to stop playing your game! Your parents are calling you because they want to bless you with a yummy meal and spend time with you! **It is good to be called in this way, right?**
- God called Abram in a similar way, but to bless him with something more than dinner! God had something amazing planned for Abram, but it was probably really hard for Abram to leave his home and everything he knew. **Can you imagine being asked to leave everything and everyone that is familiar?**
- Even though this would have been really hard, Abram listened to God. It's like God was saying, "I want what is best for you and you don't have to try to figure this out on your own. I will provide for you."
- Blessings are given when someone wants what is best for us. God gives us God's presence — which comes with peace, joy, and hope — so that we have what we need to navigate through each day.
- Not only did God want to bless Abram, but God wanted Abram to blessing to others. God didn't want Abram to hold tightly to the gifts he was being given. God wanted Abram to receive the blessings, but then keep his hands open to share them with others.

BIG IDEA | God blesses us so we can bless others.

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Prepare an empty drawer filled with odds and ends, like post-it notes, paper clips, car keys, and pens. Write the Big Idea on one of the items. Pull out a bunch of items from the drawer until you find the Big Idea. You could also invite a volunteer to come to the front and find it for you.*
 - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** *Preteens might relate to a backpack filled with odds and ends instead so consider filling a backpack with things preteens might usually carry around. Write the Big Idea on a small label and hide it in one of the items and have preteens rummage through the bag one at a time to find the Big Idea.*
 - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** *Make sure you make the Big Idea item stand out very clearly. Use bright colors, stick a bright sticker on it, or tie it with a ribbon.*
- **Who has a "junk drawer" in their kitchen or in their home somewhere?** The junk drawer is that one drawer that seems to hold all of the random items that don't have a proper place. **What kinds of things do you keep in your drawer?**
- *[Act like you are hunting through the junk drawer.]*
- There is always one really important item in the junk drawer that I can never seem to find. *[Take items out and really play this up.]*
- Oh! Here it is! It's our Big Idea for today! **God blesses us so we can bless others!**

VIDEO | Staycation!, Episode 1

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Play this week's episode of [Grow TV](#).*

IMAGE | Home Sweet Home

- Homes come in all shapes and sizes, but no matter what our homes look, feel, smell like, we have one thing in common—we are all part of God’s big family!
- Homes, no matter how big or small, new or old, can be a place where we receive blessings and where we share blessings with others. Let’s look at some pictures from different homes from all around the world.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Show the kids [pictures of different homes](#) from around the world.

ACTIVITY | Living Room Talent Show

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Have kids form small groups. Give each group a piece of paper with a random act of kindness written on it. Have them act out the action on their paper and have the rest of the group guess what it is.
- A random act of kindness is actually not random at all. It should be done on purpose as a way to bless others. We can use everything we have, like the stuff in our house and the gifts and talents God has given us, to make a difference in someone else’s day.

SCRIPTURE | Psalm 89:1-4

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Read Psalm 89:1-4.
- Wow! Here we read more about God’s amazing blessings! We heard about God’s faithfulness, God’s love that stands firm forever, and God’s promise to a kingdom – a perfect home –that will last for all generations!!
- The promise of a forever home was made possible through Jesus, God’s son. When we decide to have a forever friendship with Jesus, we become a part of the family of God.
- Although homes may not always be perfect here, we have the promise of a kingdom coming—a forever home—that will make all the wrong things right. Knowing that promise is coming, gives us hope, and changes the way we live now.
- The thing I love most about this Psalm is that the author says that he will share the good news of these blessings! He is going to tell others about the blessings! That’s what we get to do too! **God blesses us so we can bless others.**

NOW WHAT? What does God want us to do about it?

ACTIVITY | Kindness Jar

- Words can be encouraging and uplifting, but can also hurt and make us feel sad. Today we will decorate a “kindness jar” to use at home with your family. Everyone will go home with a jar full of slips of paper. Today we will decorate the jars together.
 - Write something kind about any family member at any time and place it in the jar. Once the jar is full, share the words of kindness with each other. Sharing kind words is another way we can bless one another.
 - **INSTRUCTIONS:** For this activity, have kids apply a dab of Modge Podge, and place a tissue square on top. Repeat this step until the jar is covered in squares. Go over the covered jar with a layer of Modge Podge. Finally, add a little glitter and ribbon for a finishing touch! For more detailed instructions, check out [this resource](#).
- ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Instead of a jar, consider getting each preteen a 7-day container (something [like this](#)) so that there can be a special word of kindness for each day.

ACTIVITY | Paper Chain Blessings

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Provide each kid with at least 10 strips of colorful construction paper. The strips should be wide enough for them to write on.

✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Have preteens create a paper mobile with funky designs, using paper, twine, paper clips, and other supplies you have on hand.

- **God blesses us so we can bless others**, but sometimes it's easy to forget how God has blessed us. Sometimes it's hard to think of ways we can bless others. Today we're going to make paper chains to help us remember what we're learning during our *Staycation!*
- Paper chains make great decorations for your room! On five slips of paper, you'll write five different ways that God has blessed you. Then on the other slips of paper, you'll write different ways you can bless others!
- Hang your paper chain somewhere at home where you'll see it to remind you that **God blessed us so we can bless others!**

MEMORY VERSE | Galatians 6:10 (NIV)

- **"Let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith."**
- Card games are always a fun part of a *Staycation!*
- Let's look at the words on all of these cards and put them together to form our memory verse.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Display the memory verse on a screen so that the kids see the verse in full. Have them find the words for the verse and put them in order. Mix filler words into the cards that don't match the verse for an extra challenge. Shuffle the deck and have the kids pull out cards one at a time until they have all of the cards needed to complete the verse. **(Don't forget to also check out the memory verse signs — a combination of SEE and ASL — available in your Programming folder or at growcurriculum.org/Galatians6-10.)**

PRAYER

- Dear God, thank you for blessing us. You not only give us good things, but you invite us to bless others with what you've given to us. Let us always remember that you have blessed us so that we can bless others. This is the best way to live. Amen.

SMALL GROUP TIME

DISCUSSION

- Where did God tell Abram to go?
- Who did Abram take with him?
- What was God's promise to Abram?
- Read Psalm 89:1. What is the writer of this Psalm going to do to bless others?
- What do you think it means to bless someone?
- Name some ways you have blessed others.
- How has someone blessed you?

ACTIVITY | Blessing in a Bag

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** For this activity, give each kid a paper bag and have them decorate it with markers. Finish your time by praying together as a group.
- Through the next several weeks in our *Staycation!* you will each be creating a Blessing in a Bag. Each week, you will be asked to bring in a different item that will be put in the bags. At the end of our *Staycation!* we will be giving these bags to help someone in need. Today, we will be decorating the bags with markers.
- After you are done decorating, take some time to pray with your group for the people who will receive these bags. Ask God to help them be aware of God's blessings, even in the hardest of times.
- Next week, please bring in small non-perishable snacks, like a bag of crackers or a container of applesauce.