

Esau Sells His Birthright

Elementary Lesson



Theme: God helps us make good choices.

Scripture: Genesis 25:19-34

Memory Verse: “Then Jacob gave Esau some bread and some lentil stew. He ate and drank, and then got up and left. So Esau despised his birthright.” Genesis 25:34 (NIV)

Get Ready: Click [here](#) to get your complete supply list for this lesson.

The Children’s Sermon:

You’ll Need:

- “[Birth Certificate](#)” handout (1 per child)
- Fine-tipped markers

Do This:

Say: In today’s Bible lesson, we’re learning about the surprising story of a man named Esau. Esau was a twin, and he made a really poor choice that affected his entire life. Why? All because he was hungry! But before we dive in, let’s talk about an important piece of Esau’s story. It’s something called “birthright.”

Invite a few kids to share their ideas about what a birthright is.

Say: Your birthright is what you’re born with or born into. Some things that are considered a birthright are your family’s name and your family relationships. It can include your family’s reputation. It includes property, such as your house, car, or livestock. Your birthright is a big deal—it represents what you can claim as yours in the world.

If you were born during Bible times—and even in some cultures today—and you were born first, you might have a more valuable birthright than your younger siblings.

Hand a “Birth Certificate” and a marker to each child.

Say: We’re going to think about *your* birthright now. As we talk, you’ll fill out more and more of your Birth Certificate. For starters, write your first, middle, and last name on your certificate. (Allow time.)

Your name is perhaps your most important birthright. Your parents chose it for you and it usually sticks with you forever. No one can take away your name unless you make that choice.

Esau had a twin brother named Jacob. Esau was born first. Jacob was born holding onto his brother's heel.

Now take a look at your birth certificate. Write your birth date. (Allow time.) Now, think about your birth order. Were you born first like Esau, second like Jacob, or somewhere else in line? List that on your certificate. (Allow time.)

What things are part of your birthright? Your family's house, money, belongings, pets, cars, toys, you name it. List a couple of those things on your birth certificate. (Allow time.)

Remember: Esau was born first. He would inherit the most, including property, houses, money, and livestock. Esau wouldn't have to worry about these things. But then, something happened.

One day, Esau came in from the fields where he'd been hunting. He was very hungry. You know what that's like! Jacob was cooking up a tasty stew and bread when Esau came in, and it must have smelled wonderful. Esau naturally wanted some of the tasty food.

Jacob, who was born second, whose birthright was much smaller than his brother's, said, "I'll give you this food if you sell me your birthright."

Esau didn't even hesitate. He said, "I'm so hungry I'll die; what good is my birthright?" And he agreed to sell his birthright to his brother right then for a bowl of stew, bread, and a drink. That's almost like giving away all your possessions for a combo meal!

Now, take another look at your birth certificate. Would you trade any of those things for one meal? (Allow children to respond.) It's true: Esau made a very poor choice. Let's ask God to help us make good choices.

Pray: God, thank you for giving us the freedom to make our own choices. Thank You most of all for guiding us toward making good choices and for helping us when we ask. Please stand beside us when we face tough choices and help us make good decisions. In Jesus' name, amen.

Bible Memory Verse: "So Esau despised his birthright." Genesis 25:34 (NIV)

Food for Thought

You'll Need:

- Permanent markers
- Disposable bowl (1 per child)
- Plastic spoons (1 per child)

Do This:

Say: **Today, we're going to practice our Bible memory verse in a fun way. Remember, Esau gave away his entire birthright for a single meal. Our verse is, "So Esau despised his birthright." What do you think "despise" means in this verse?**

To say that Esau "despised" his birthright is like saying he treated it with total disgust or disregard. He hated his birthright. Esau valued his birthright so little in that moment that he traded it for a single meal!

Give each child a spoon and bowl. Have them follow these steps.

- Write the Bible memory verse on the inside bottom of your bowl.
- Use your spoon to cover parts of the verse and repeat it until you've learned it.
- Raise your spoon when you know the verse.

After everyone (or almost everyone) raises their spoon, have everyone say the verse aloud together.

Encourage kids to take home their Bible memory verse bowls and spoons as a reminder of Esau's choice.

Virtual Lesson Tip: Food for Thought

You can do this with your entire family.

Interactive Scripture Experience: Genesis 25:19-34 Choices, Choices

You'll Need:

- Bible
- [“Choices, Choices”](#) handout, cut into strips (1 strip per child)

Get Ready: If you have more than 10 kids, make extra copies of the handout and cut apart the strips. Each child will need one strip.

Do This:

Say: **In today’s Bible lesson, Esau made a very poor choice and foolishly gave up his birthright to his brother for a single meal.**

Read aloud Genesis 25:29-34.

Say: **Esau had a choice to make, and he messed up. We’re going to play a game where we make choices, too. Let’s see whether we make good choices...or mess up.**

Here’s how to play.

- Give each child a slip and say the item on it is secret. Explain that there are really good items out there...and not-so-good items.
- Kids can’t reveal what item they have during play, even after trading. They must simply move on with their new item.
- If someone doesn’t want to trade, they say, “I choose what I have.”
- Give kids three to five minutes to attempt to trade items. They can attempt to trade as many times as they want to.

Give a 30 second warning. When time’s up, have kids share the item they ended up with.

Ask:

- **How do you feel about your choices?**
- **What helped you choose whether or not to trade with someone?**
- **If you’d known what items you were getting, would you still choose the same trades?**

Say: **In our activity, you got to make a choice, even though you didn’t have all the information about what you were choosing. Esau knew what he was choosing, and he still chose poorly.**

Ask:

- **When have you made a poor choice?**
- **What can we learn from Esau’s choice?**

Say: **Let's remember to ask God for help to make good choices this week.**

Virtual Lesson Tip: Choices, Choices

You can play this game with your entire family.

“A Steal of a Meal” Video Lesson

You'll Need:

- [“A Steal of a Meal”](#) video lesson
- Something to play the video

Show kids the video.

Afterward, ask:

- **What did you learn about our choices from this video?**
- **Is there a choice you're facing now that you could use help with?**

Say: **We all face choices each day. Some don't mean much, and some are a big deal. God puts lots of good people around us who can help. And most of all, God wants us to turn to Him for guidance and wisdom when we need help or we're facing a tough choice.**

Trail Snack Stew

You'll Need:

- In separate bowls, you'll need:
 - plain popped popcorn
 - M&Ms candies
 - stick pretzels
 - Cheerios cereal
 - Raisins
 - mini marshmallows
- Resealable bags
- Spoons
- Sanitizing hand wipes

Get Ready: Set out the bowls with snack items and hand wipes. Place a spoon in each bowl.

Do This:

Have kids follow these steps to make their Trail Snack Stew.

- Clean your hands.
- Take a resealable bag.
- Point out the ingredients you want to include in your personal “Trail Snack Stew.”
- Hold open your bag while the teacher spoons in your chosen ingredients.
- Enjoy!

Say: **In today’s Bible lesson, we learned that Esau made a poor choice by selling his birthright for a bowl of stew. But God wants us to make good choices. And He won’t leave us alone to figure things out. He gives us trustworthy adults to ask for help. He gives us the Bible to learn from. And God is always here, ready to help.**

Virtual Lesson Tip: Trail Snack Stew

You can do this with your entire family.

Thataway Game

You’ll Need:

- An activity area with obstacles you can arrange, such as chairs, boxes, tables, and more

Get Ready: Set up an obstacle course.

Do This:

Explain to kids that they’ll be playing a game called “Thataway.”

Explain that kids must travel through the obstacle course. Anytime they come to an obstacle, they must figure out how to get over the obstacle or under it, depending on what it is.

Play until everyone has made it across the finish line.

Afterward, ask:

- **What was it like to get over or under the obstacles together?**
- **How do you think this game is like or unlike what it was like for the twins Esau and Jacob, who struggled against each other?**

Virtual Lesson Tip: Thataway Game

You can do this with your entire family.

Our Choices Make Us Craft

You'll Need:

- ["Esau Sells His Birthright"](#) How-to Video
- White bulletin board paper
- Various colors of construction paper, tissue paper, and wrapping paper (The more varied the colors and designs, the better.)
- Scissors
- Glue sticks
- Black marker

Do This:

Have kids follow these steps to create an "Our Choices Make Us" Collage to hang in your room.

Choose one child in your class to lie down on the bulletin board paper in a high-five pose (with fingers spread).

Use the black marker to trace the child's outline onto the paper, creating an empty person-shape giving a high-five.

Invite kids to choose how they'll fill the outline of the person using glue sticks and torn or cut pieces of the different types of paper and glue sticks.

Have them take turns filling the shape while also making individual choices about the types of paper they use and where they put them.

Once the shape is filled, write “God helps us make good choices” at the bottom and hang it on your wall near the door where kids can give your “Choices” person a high-five when they enter the room.

Say: **Our choices matter, just like Esau’s choice mattered in his life. Our high-five friend is made up of a whole bunch of small choices we all made, and it’s a reminder that good choices matter.**

Virtual Lesson Tip: Our Choices Make Us Craft

You can do this with your entire family.

Choice Prayer

Do This:

Say: **Today, we’re going to choose how we pray and thank God. I’m going to give you some choices about how you’ll pray now.**

- **Where in the room do you want to pray? Go there now.**
- **Do you want to stand, sit, kneel, or lie down to pray? Do that now.**
- **Do you want to keep your eyes open or closed to pray? Do that now.**
- **Finally, what do you want to pray about? Think about that for a moment and give me a thumbs-up when you’re ready.**

Once everyone’s given a thumbs up, say: **God is always ready to hear from us, whether we need his help making a big choice or we just want to chat with him. He’s our friend and he cares deeply about us.**

Time to Praise God

You’ll Need:

- Song: "I Have Decided to Follow Jesus"

[Words and music](#) (pdf)

[MP3 Piano Accompaniment](#)

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Do This:

Say: **God gives us the freedom to make our own choices, but He's always here to help us when we face tough choices. Let's sing "I Have Decided to Follow Jesus" to praise God for loving us and guiding us to make good choices.**

Lead children in singing "I Have Decided to Follow Jesus."

If You Have Extra Time...

Use these activity sheets to fill in any time and keep kids learning.

[Esau Sells His Birthright Crossword](#)

[Esau Sells His Birthright Decoder](#)

[Esau Sells His Birthright Word Search](#)

Complete Supply List:

- [Fine tipped markers](#)
- [Plain popped popcorn](#)
- [M&Ms candies](#)
- [Stick pretzels](#)
- [Cheerios cereal](#)
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- [Resealable bags](#)
- [White bulletin board paper](#)
- Various colors of [construction paper](#), [tissue paper](#), and [wrapping paper](#)
- [Glue sticks](#)

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At-Home Lesson

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Scripture: Genesis 25:19-34

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