

A CALL TO ACTION

Abram
Genesis 12:1–9
2091 BC

OVERVIEW

BIBLE TRUTH

God calls us to follow Him.

BIBLE VERSE

I trust in You, O LORD. Psalm 31:14

LEARNER GOAL

I can share that I am God's forgiven and beloved child, called to follow Him.

LAW & GOSPEL

In our sinful fear and doubt, we do not trust God to lead us and do what He promises.

God is faithful and carries out His promises, giving us faith in and through Jesus to trust and follow Him.

SCRIPTURE SNAPSHOT

Abram responds to God's calling as he leaves his idolatry and homeland to follow the true God. Abram takes his wife, Sarai, and nephew Lot as they journey to the land of Canaan. The Lord's appearance prompts Abram to build an altar, celebrating God's promise to give this land to his descendants.

LESSON PREP

BASIC Read Genesis 12:1–9 and study notes in *The Lutheran Study Bible*.

MORE TIME Read “Apologetics Helps” on the back page in preparation for the “Live” section.

IN DEPTH Read the Third Article of the Apostles' Creed, its explanation, and related questions in *Luther's Small Catechism with Explanation* (2017).

SUPPLY LIST

FOR THIS LESSON

- Whiteboard or large sheets of paper
- Dry-erase markers or markers
- Masking tape (if using large paper)
- Sticky notes

FOR EVERY LESSON

- Student copies of *Defend Journal*
- Bibles
- Pens
- Shareable images from digital resource center
- Supplies for bonus activities



LEADER NOTE

Get moving! Divide your space in half and ask youth to vote with their feet by standing on a side, saint or sinner.



DEFEND JOURNAL

Hand out journals and turn to Lesson 4.



BONUS ACTIVITY

Practice doing the right thing with “Stand Up.”



LEADER NOTE

Ask one or two scribes to write blessings and promises while you lead.

LAUNCH

WALK-IN QUESTION

Do you consider yourself a sinner or a saint?

SAINT AND SINNER

Name a local or national celebrity, such as a musician, politician, actor, scientist, or social-media star. Ask youth to say if they consider that person a saint or a sinner, and why. Continue with several other celebrities, letting students name people too. Last, name yourself.

SAY The truth is, we are all sinners. But God makes us saints in Jesus.

PRAY Heavenly Father, every day we sin against You and others. But You called us to be Your children, taking away our sin for Jesus’ sake. Help us live according to Your will. In Your name we pray. Amen.

LEARN

READ “THE BIG PICTURE” AND TALK IT OUT

▷ Do you think Abram was a good choice to become “a great nation”? Why or why not?

DISCUSSION POINTS

- Humanly speaking, no. Abram wasn’t a great choice. He was a sinner.
- God chose Abram out of mercy.
- If we’re being honest, we’re not great choices to be called by God to be His children either. But He calls us just the same, out of mercy and love for us.

LEARN ABOUT “ABRAM’S CALL”

Take turns reading **Genesis 12:1–9** aloud. List promises and blessings on a whiteboard or paper sheets.

▷ Put yourself in Abram’s sandals. Would you have obeyed God’s call? Why or why not?

▷ What promises did God make to Abram? How did He keep these promises?

DISCUSSION POINTS

- Promises: I will show you where to go; make you a great nation; bless you; make your name great; make you a blessing; bless those who bless you, curse those who dishonor you; bless all the families of the world in you; give this land to your offspring.
- Fulfillments: God led Abram and showed him where to go; He made a great nation (the Israelites) through Abram; God blessed all the families of the world by giving the Savior, Jesus, from Abram’s line (Matthew 1:1); God gave the land of Canaan to the Israelites after the exodus.

▷ Read **Galatians 3:26–29**. How have we received the promises that God gave to Abram?

DISCUSSION POINTS

- In Christ, we are God’s children through faith. In Baptism, we put on Christ and receive forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38).
- God gave the Savior, Jesus, through Abram’s family line as a fulfillment of His promises to bless Abraham, make him a great nation, and bless all the families of the earth.

LIVE

DISCUSS “CALLED”

Turn to the journal section “Called.” Hand each learner a sticky note and give them a few minutes to consider the question in their journal and below. Ask them to write a response to the question on a sticky note and then stick it on a wall. Let youth walk around and read the different responses. Have them come together again, and ask volunteers to share what they feel God has called them to do. Use the discussion points below to encourage youth as you remind them that they are loved and called by God to be His and to follow Him.

► **What has God called you to do?**

DISCUSSION POINTS

- God calls all people to believe in Him (John 3:16).
- God calls believers to live differently than the rest of the world. Abram gave up the idols that his father worshiped in Haran and worshiped and obeyed God only. We are also called to worship and obey God and His Word (see 1 Peter 1:1–15).
- God calls us to follow Him. Jesus said, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows Me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life” (John 8:12).
- God calls us to trust in Him. Proverbs 3:5–6 says, “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.”

CONSIDER “SINNER, SAINT”

► **What does it mean for Christians to be both saints and sinners?**

DISCUSSION POINTS

- All people are sinners, born sinful, separated from God, dead in sin, and unable to change our condition (Romans 3:23).
- God makes us saints, forgiving our sin and saving us from death and the devil through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. God saves us by grace through faith in Christ, a gift of God (Ephesians 2:8; Romans 3:24–26).
- We live in the tension of being both sinners and saints.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Check for understanding by asking youth to finish this sentence: **God has called me to . . .** Thank those who share.

LEAVE

Read the Bible Verse aloud from the *Defend Journal*:

I trust in You, O LORD. Psalm 31:14.

Close with prayer, making sure to include concerns youth shared in this lesson.



CHRIST CONNECTION

God gave our Savior, Jesus, through Abram’s family, fulfilling His promises to bless all the families of the earth. Jesus gave His life on the cross to pay for our sins. In Him, we receive the gifts of forgiveness of sin and eternal life.



LEADER NOTE

Use “Apologetics Helps” on the back of this leaflet for support as you discuss this question and related topics of interest.



BONUS ACTIVITY

Use “Dig Deeper” to explore key sinner/saint Scripture references.



SHAREABLE DOWNLOAD

Connect with youth before and after the lesson using shareable images from the digital resource center.

APOLOGETICS HELPS

DEFEND THE FAITH

Abram came from a city called Ur, located in what is today Iraq. In Ur, people worshiped other gods. Abram's father also worshiped false gods. God called Abram away from that land to go "to the land I will show you" (the future Promised Land), and Abram obeyed God.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

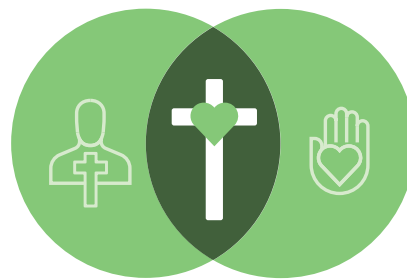
► Whom does God call today?

- God calls all people to believe and be saved. See John 3:16.
- Not everyone who is called (invited) accepts God's invitation to be His. See Matthew 22:1–14, the parable of the wedding feast. "For many are called, but few are chosen" (v. 14).
- John 1:12–13 says, "To all who did receive Him [Jesus], who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God."
- As children of God, we are called to live differently than the world. Abram gave up the idols that his father worshiped in Haran and worshiped and obeyed God only. We are also called to worship and obey God only. (See 1 Peter 1:1–15.)

► How can we know the Bible is true?

The Bible is true because Jesus is truth. Jesus said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me" (John 14:6). The Holy Spirit inspired authors to write eyewitness accounts, history, prophecy, and hymns (2 Peter 1:20–21). God preserved these accounts so we can know His love in Jesus (John 20:31).

Archaeology and ancient historical accounts affirm the Bible's history, places, and people.



CONNECTING IDENTITY & CALLING

IDENTITY: WHO AM I?

God has called me into His family through Christ, who made me a fellow heir with Him in the kingdom of heaven.

CALLING: WHY AM I HERE?

I can live each day as God's child, loving Him and serving my neighbor.

GROWING IN FAITH FOR LIFE

See how this lesson builds on learning for each age.

ADULT

I can draw connections between how Abraham was called by God and how we're called into God's story of salvation through Christ.

YOUTH

I can share that I am God's forgiven and beloved child, called to follow Him.

ELEMENTARY

I understand that I am God's child and that He calls me to follow Him.

EARLY CHILDHOOD

I know God calls me to be His child and promises to bless me.

BONUS ACTIVITIES

DIG DEEPER

5–10 minutes

Read **Romans 7:15–25** and talk about what it means to live in the tension of being both a sinner and a forgiven saint.

STAND UP

10–15 minutes

Guide youth in role-play. What do they do when someone wants them to do something they know isn't right? How can they stand up for what they believe?

KNOW A SAINT

15–20 minutes

Read about a saint of faith in *Celebrating the Saints* by William Weedon. Talk about how God uses ordinary, sinful people like you and me to share His Gospel with the world.