

Blessing Bearers

Bible Lesson: Genesis 11:1-9, 12:1-3

PREPARATION

Objective

Students will understand God's plan to bless people so that they will be a blessing to others.

Outcomes

1. Students will understand the purpose of blessing as reflected in Abraham's life.
2. Students will understand the difference between God-centered and self-centered living.

Memory Verse

Psalm 67:1-2 "May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face shine upon us, that your ways may be known on earth, your salvation among all nations."

Directions

1. Draw the sketches of a dog and a cat on an erasable board. Leave room next to each sketch for words of description.
2. Review verses for the "Bible Drill Challenge." Consider how you will relate each to today's theme.
3. Review the "Key Word Wheel" poster. Integrate these words as you notice them in any and all sections of today's lesson. Suggested: "Purpose," "People," "People Moving," and "Proclamation."
4. Read the Bible story references. Pray that God will guide you as you teach and apply this lesson to your unique group of students.



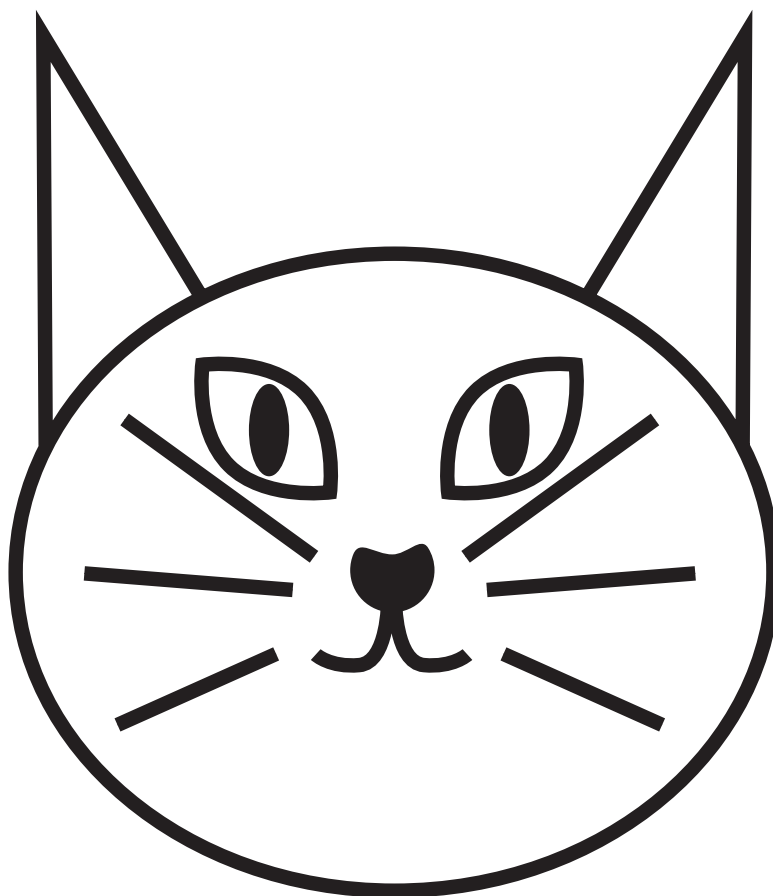
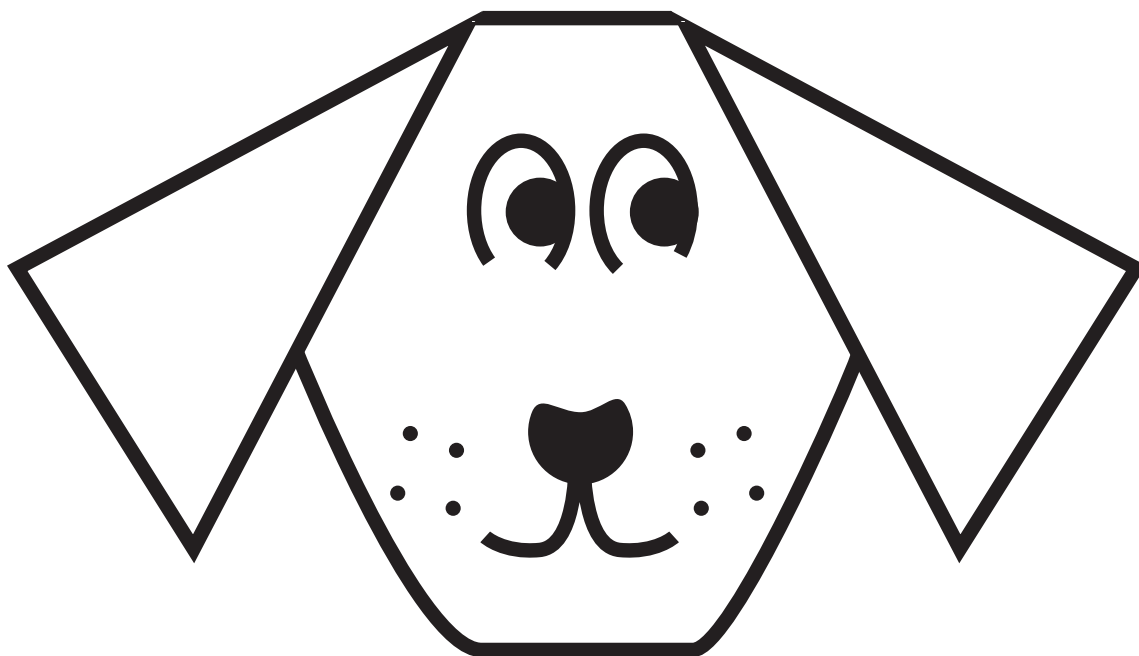
PREPARATION: 45 min.

TEACHING: 28 min.

Materials

- Bibles
- "Dog and Cat Sample" (p. 2)
- "Key Word Wheel" poster (Introduction p. 6)
- "Key Word Cards" (Introduction pp. 7-8)
- chalkboard or dry erase board
- chalk or dry erase marker

Dog and Cat Sample



TEACHING (CORE)

PRE-LESSON ACTIVITY: DOGS AND CATS

Directions

1. Warmly welcome students to discover with you more about God's purpose.
2. Ask, *"How many of you have pets? What is your favorite kind of pet? Why?"* Give every student a chance to respond, if possible. Enjoy the variety of answers.
3. Say, *"Today, we want to think about two common pets, cats and dogs. Both make wonderful pets. Let's discover some truths about these animals to help us understand people a little bit better, including ourselves."*
4. Ask, *"What do dogs do during a normal day?"* Students should offer many ideas (scratch, dig, play fetch, wag their tails, eat, sleep, pant, greet their masters, chew bones, etc.).
5. Ask, *"When you call a dog, does he come to you?"* (yes) Then ask, *"At the end of the day, if you feed a dog, pet a dog, give a dog a home, and care for it, who will the dog think is very important?"* (the master)
6. *"Now let's switch to cats. What do cats do during a normal day?"* Students should offer many ideas (sleep, clean themselves, eat, stretch, scratch, wander, hide, cuddle, etc.).
7. Ask, *"When you call a cat, does he come to you?"* (not always) Then ask, *"At the end of the day, if you feed a cat, pet a cat, give a cat a home, and care for it, guess who the cat will think is very important? – itself!"*
8. As a review, ask, *"Who is the center of a dog's life?"* (the master) And, *"Who is the center of a cat's life?"* (the cat, itself)
9. Say, *"Though both animals make fine pets, the different natures of these animals reminds us of different ways we can choose to live our Christian lives. The difference is in the way we respond to our master. We can choose to live like a dog and be God-centered. Or we can choose to live with attitudes like a cat and be self-centered."* Ask, *"Which kind of believer are you? How do you respond to God?"* Pause for a moment of personal reflection.
10. *"God wants kids and adults to be master-centered. This is in keeping with his purpose ... to help all people everywhere give honor to him. Why? Because he deserves it. He is worthy. Let's learn more about this."*

BIBLE DRILL CHALLENGE

Psalms 67: 1-2 "May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face shine upon us, that your ways may be known on earth, your salvation among all nations."

Directions

1. Give each student a Bible. Invite students to participate in a Bible drill. Say, *"Since the Bible has such an important purpose, we want to get more acquainted with the Bible itself. Today, and over the next several weeks, we will practice finding verses and stories in the Bible that help us understand*

Materials

- erasable board
- sketch of dog and cat

Materials

- Bibles

God's purpose.” (optional: “We will also be practicing to challenge our parents to a Bible Drill Challenge on the last week of our quarter.”)

2. Instruct students to hold their Bibles in a ready position, Bibles closed and held over their heads. Invite students to work in pairs if they are less familiar with their Bibles. Let students warm up for a speed competition by first looking for each item below, one at a time. As you name the item, adding theme-related questions or comments, students will lower their Bibles and quickly try to find what you have named. Say, “*Ready, begin*” after introducing each item.

Genesis 1:1 – “*Who is the main character of the Bible?*” (God)

Any verse with the word “bless, blessed, or blessing” in it

Matthew 18:10-14 – Jesus’ story of the Lost Sheep

Malachi 1:11 (review verse from Lesson 1)

Isaiah 45:22 – (review verse from Lesson 2)

Psalms 67:1-2 – “*A passage about God our master and how we are to respond to him.*”

3. After reading Psalm 67:1-2 aloud, discuss the words together. Ask, “*What does ‘gracious’ mean?*” Guide students to discover that when someone is gracious, they are full of grace, kindness, and goodness. They are generous with you as a person.
4. Ask, “*What does ‘bless’ mean?*” (give something good to someone else) “*What kinds of things can bless you?*” Refer back to the theme part of the lesson. Say, “*We can be blessed by practical items (food, homes, money, toys, games), enjoyment (games, sports, Disneyland), and relationships (love, friendship, family, kindness). We can also be blessed by spiritual blessings, by things that we can’t really touch (forgiveness, grace, joy.). We are even blessed spiritually by our knowledge of Jesus and what he has done to save us from sin.*”
5. “*This Bible passage is a prayer asking God to bless us with many different things.*” Ask, “*Why does God bless us?*” Allow responses. Typically students answer “because we are good” or “because he loves us.”
6. Read the last phrase of the verse 2 aloud: “*your salvation among the nations.*” Say, “*God blesses us so that he will be known on the earth, and people in all nations will hear about his salvation. If we keep all our blessings to ourselves, including our knowledge about Jesus, will others hear about him?*” (No!) “*We must share these blessings. This is what our Bible story is about today.*”

BIBLE LESSON: TOWER OF BABEL AND ABRAHAM’S CALL

Directions

1. Begin by reviewing truths learned in previous lessons. “*We have been learning about the story of the Bible. What’s the beginning?*” Students should answer that God created people to know him. Adam and Eve sinned and chose their own way.
2. “*Today, we will learn about the middle of the story. People continued to*

Materials

- Bible
- “Key Word Wheel” poster (Introduction p. 6)
- “Key Word Cards” (Introduction pp. 7-8)

choose their own way. It became so evil, that in Noah's day, God sent a flood to destroy the earth and everyone on it. He made a way of escape, but only Noah's family took it. Afterwards, God promised never to destroy people again. The rainbow is a sign of this promise."

3. Read Genesis 11:1-9, the account of the tower of Babel, together. Explain, *"As people populated the earth again after the flood, they began to choose their own way. God had told Noah and his descendants to spread out and fill the earth. Instead they stayed together in one small area. In fact, they were building a tower to make a name for themselves."* Ask, *"Were these people God-centered or self-centered?"* (self-centered) *"God saw their proud and selfish ways."*
4. Say, *"At that time, all the people of the earth spoke the same language. God chose to scatter people all over the earth by giving them different languages. No longer could they understand each other."* Ask, *"What do you think it might have been like on that first day?"* Listen for student comments. They should agree there was great confusion.
5. Say, *"Even after people scattered, they continued to choose their own way. Again, this choice caused separation from God."*
6. Say, *"God wanted all these people to know him. He chose to work through a man, Abraham."* Read Genesis 12:1-3 together.
7. Then say, *"God called Abraham to leave his home country and go to a new land. God promised to bless Abraham and make him into a great nation."* Ask, *"How would you feel if God promised this to you?"* Listen for student answers.
8. *"God said he would make Abraham's name great and bless him many ways. Why was God doing this? What was his purpose?"* Again, listen for answers, before reading Genesis 12:3b together. Say, *"God blessed Abraham so that all peoples on earth would be blessed through him."*
9. *"The wonderful thing is that Abraham obeyed. In Genesis 12:4, it says that Abraham left, as the Lord had told him. Even better, Abraham honored and worshiped God."* Read Genesis 12:7-8. *"Canaanites were in the land, observing him. As a result of Abraham's obedience, other people came to know about his God. Was Abraham God-centered or self-centered?"* (God-centered)

IN CLOSING: RESPONSE AND PRAYER

Directions

1. *"Did you know that just as unbelieving Canaanites were watching Abraham as he obeyed and worshiped God, unbelievers watch you every day? When you respond to situations in a God-centered way, you are honoring God and blessing those who observe you. You bless them by giving them a glimpse of what God is like."*
2. At this point, ask students to bow their heads, close their eyes, or get into a prayerful posture. Say, *"At the beginning of this lesson, we learned about two different ways that animals respond to their masters. Think back over the past week. Can you remember a situation where you responded with a*

cat attitude? Take that self-centered response to God in prayer. Ask him to forgive you.” Give students a minute to reflect and pray silently.

3. Then say, *“Now think of that same situation again. How might you have responded or reacted in a God-centered way? Ask God to give you strength and grace to respond differently next time.”*



PRAYER ACTIVITY: IN THE NEWS

Directions

1. Together, look through the paper for examples of God keeping his promise to Abraham. Ask, “*Can you find the country of Israel in any of the headlines or stories?*” Say, “*The people Israel are Abraham’s descendants.*” Ask, “*Did God keep his promise to make him into a great nation?*” (Yes!)
2. Divide students into several small groups. Give each group a section of the newspaper or a news magazine. Direct groups to look through the articles for examples of people being blessed. Notice whether the people shared their blessing, or kept it for themselves. Announce an eight-minute working period.
3. Call groups back together and let them share findings.
4. As a large group, look at any advertisements in the newspaper. “*Do these ads appeal to our self-centeredness or do they encourage us to share our blessings with others.*” Discover together that most mass media does not encourage us to submit to God as master of our lives.
5. Spend some time praying for the nation of Israel. Pray, also, for students to remain strong for God in a world that caters to our self-centered nature.



PREPARATION: 5 min.

TEACHING: 15 min.

Materials

- current major newspaper, Sunday edition
- copies of current national news magazines