LESSON 3 **FOR LEADERS**

INVITATION

We invite you to pause, listen, and shift your gaze toward the Father ...

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: We Can Worship God
SCRIPTURE: Exodus 32
WORD OF WONDER: From 2 Timothy 2:13

In every human mind, there is a part that functions like a magnifying glass, bringing whatever we choose into focus and making it appear larger. Did you know God made your mind capable of examining things deeply from every angle? We can place that imaginary magnifying glass over anything!

Let's aim our focus at Exodus 32 now, and as we read, invite the Holy Spirit to highlight whatever is on God's heart for you today. Where does your imagination come alive in this story? Can you see the sights and hear the people in the wilderness? Can you envision their jewelry melting in the fire? What sounds floated up the mountain to Moses as the Israelites disobeyed God? Did he think they were having fun?

We may not carve golden calves anymore, but we all encounter distractions that can seem larger than life and threaten to take our attention from Jesus. What has been attempting to distract you lately?

When this happens, it's natural to be pulled off course for a moment or two, but then what? What will you do with your powerful mind? Let's choose to return our gaze to the face of Jesus. Only God is worthy of worship, and when we place the magnifying glass in our minds upon Him, we will find more goodness, more wisdom, and more to admire than we could ever imagine.

—Nancy Wood Clark

Children's Pastor

Contributor to Wonder Ink

DID YOU KNOW?

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

The Israelites—God's people whom He rescued from slavery in Egypt. God kept all His promises, and the people put their trust in Him and became bonded to Him through the covenant of the law at Mount Sinai.

WHAT?

The covenant at Mount Sinai was similar to a wedding between God and His people. The Israelites immediately broke their vows and cheated on the God who had been faithful to them. They worshiped another god and created a graven image—breaking one of the Ten Commandments.

WHERE?

God led the Israelites out of Egypt and into the desert. They went to the foot of Mount Sinai, which is the same place Moses met God at the burning bush years before. Mount Sinai is also called Mount Horeb in the Bible.

WHEN?

It had been three months since the Israelites left Egypt. As a consequence of their sin, 3,000 people died (Exodus 32:27–28). By the time of Jesus, the biblical holiday of Pentecost was associated with the giving of the law at Mount Sinai.

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY

The Israelites expected their God to be like other gods. God forbade them from making a created image because the exact image of God would arrive in the person of Jesus. When people look at Jesus, they see the God worthy of worship.

Curiosity Activity: My Number One

SUPPLIES: colored paper (1 sheet of each color: yellow, red, green, pink, blue, orange, purple)

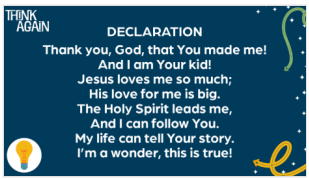
Hold up one finger and ask: **How many fingers am I holding up?** Allow kids to respond. **I'm holding up one finger, and we're going to talk about the number one. It's the first number we say when we're counting. I'm going to show you a color, and you can think of your favorite thing that is that color. I'll go first!**

Hold up the first paper (yellow). Share your favorite thing that is yellow (the sun, lemonade, etc.). Once kids understand the activity, proceed through every color of paper. Pause at each color and allow kids to share their favorite item.

Did you know God is very special? He is my favorite, and I can show Him that by worshiping Him. Do you know what the word *worship* means? Allow kids to respond. ***Worship* means showing that something or someone is the most important to us. The Bible tells us that we should only worship God because He is number one. He's the most important. In today's part of God's big story, we're going to learn about some people who forgot about that. We're learning today that we can worship God!**

Declaring God's Wonder

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: Early Childhood Declaration Slide



Thank You, God, that You made me! *(Kids repeat words and motions.)*
Make prayer hands, then point up to God and to yourself.

And I am Your kid! *(Kids repeat words and motions.)*
Put your hands on your hips.

Jesus loves me so much; *(Kids repeat words and motions.)*
Spread your arms out wide to your side one at a time, then pull them in for a hug around your chest.

His love for me is big. *(Kids repeat words and motions.)*
Hold your arms up high and wide above your head.

The Holy Spirit leads me, *(Kids repeat words and motions.)*
Bring your arms down from above, making a path in front of you.

And I can follow You. *(Kids repeat words and motions.)*
March in place like you're following the leader.

My life can tell Your story, *(Kids repeat words and motions.)*
Hold your hands in front of you like an open book.

I'm a wonder; this is true. *(Kids repeat words and motions.)*
Put your hands up, shake your fingers, and celebrate ("praise hands").

God's Big Story

SUPPLIES: Bible, Bible Story Picture

Bible Time Rhyme

Say the Bible time rhyme (with motions) each week before the Bible story to remind kids that what they're about to hear is part of God's big story.

I open my Bible, and what do I see? *(Hold your hands together, then open your palms, as if opening a book.)*

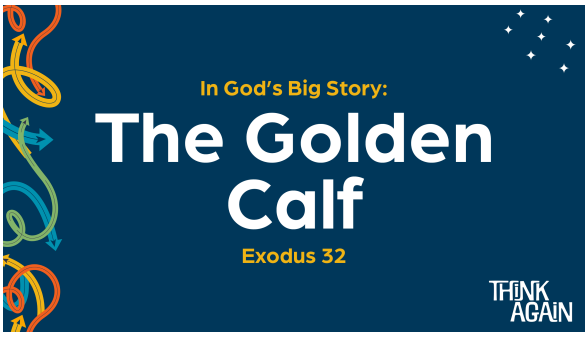
God's big story, waiting for me! *(Point to yourself.)*

Let's hear part of God's big story, which comes from the book of Exodus in the Old Testament in the Bible.

Read Exodus 32:1–4, 7–9, 19–20, 30–34 from the Bible. Use the Bible Story Picture to give the kids a visual depiction as you tell the story.

Watch God's Big Story Video

SUPPLIES: Think Again God's Big Story video! Worship is also available on computer.



Word of Wonder

SUPPLIES: Bible, Think Again Word of Wonder Slide

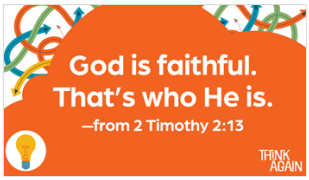
WORD OF WONDER

God is faithful. That's who He is.

—from 2 Timothy 2:13

Display the Word of Wonder Slide. **Our Word of Wonder for the Think Again series is from 2 Timothy 2:13. Let's practice saying the Word of Wonder together.** Open a Bible to 2 Timothy

2:13 and practice the verse with the kids.



Gather the kids in a circle. Review the Word of Wonder with kids by saying it a couple of times, encouraging kids to say it with you.

Our Word of Wonder for this series tells us that God is faithful. In our story today, we saw that God was faithful to His people, even when they were wrong and didn't worship Him. We can learn from this story and make God our number one. We can worship Him and make Him the most important. And He will always be faithful because that's who He is! Let's practice the verse so we can always remember it.

Encourage the kids to do the motions and say the verse with you.

- **GOD—***Point up.*
- **IS FAITHFUL.—***Give two thumbs-up (one on each word).*
- **THAT'S WHO—***Put your arms out in front of you, palms up (one on each word).*
- **HE IS.—***Point up (once on each word).*
- **FROM 2 TIMOTHY 2:13— ***Hold your hands open in front of you, as if holding a book.*

Gather the kids and ask them to sit in a circle. Invite kids to play a game of popcorn by going around the circle and encouraging each kid to say the next word of the verse while popping up. Continue until everyone has had a turn. The group can say the verse a few times.

Make It Inclusive: If there are kids in your group who are unable to pop up, invite kids to raise their hands instead.

Gather kids to discuss these questions:

- **How do you feel knowing God is always with you, even when you make bad choices?**
- **This verse tells us God is faithful, which means He always keeps His promises and stays with us. Because He is faithful, we can trust Him and worship Him. How can you worship God this week?**

Circle Time: Catch the Beat

SUPPLIES: egg shaker/maraca, upbeat worship music (can use the chapel computer or leader phone for music)

Gather the kids into a circle. Give one kid either the egg shaker/maraca. **Today we're learning that we can worship God! We can worship God in many ways. One way of worshiping God is through music. Let's play music while we worship God. While the music is playing, pass the egg shaker/maraca around the circle. If the music stops while you're holding it, you get to answer a question. Talking about God is another way we can worship Him!**

Encourage kids that it is OK if they don't know the answer because leaders and other kids can help! Continue playing until everyone has had a turn or the questions have been answered.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- **Who went up on a mountain to talk to God in today's story?** *(Moses)*
- **What did God's people ask Aaron to make for them?** *(a statue or pretend god to worship; an idol; a golden calf)*
- **How did God feel when He saw what His people had done?** *(God was upset.)*
- **What does it mean to *worship* God?** *(to make Him the most important; to listen to Him and follow His instructions; to know that only He is really God)*
- **How has God been faithful to you?**
- **How can you worship God today?**

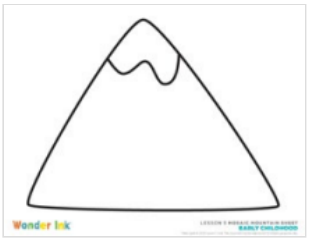
God is always faithful and loves us no matter what. We can worship Him and show Him we love Him too. We can worship God through music, talking, dancing, creating things, or in many other ways.

Craft: Mosaic Mountain

SUPPLIES: construction paper (various colors), paper bowls (1 per 4–5 kids), glue sticks (1 per kid), markers, Mosaic Mountain Sheet (1 per kid)

Ahead of time, cut or tear construction paper into small pieces and put the pieces into paper bowls or plates. Print a Mosaic Mountain Sheet for each kid.

In today's story, we learned that the people promised to worship only God, but they broke their promise. But even when people do something wrong, God stays faithful. Today's Wonder Truth is: WE CAN WORSHIP GOD. We're going to make mountains to help us remember that Moses worshiped God and talked with Him on the mountain, and only God deserves our worship!



Give each kid a glue stick and a Mosaic Mountain Sheet. Encourage kids to write their names on their sheet. Set out the bowls or plates of construction paper pieces. Have kids glue the pieces onto the mountain on their sheet to make a mosaic. After they've covered their mountain, encourage kids to use a marker to draw Moses standing at the top of the mountain.

Game: Balloon Toss

SUPPLIES: inflated balloon, music

Today we're talking about worshiping God. What are some ways we have worshiped God today? Allow kids to respond. **Let's think of other ways we can worship God.** Offer suggestions to help kids brainstorm. **We can worship God through singing, dancing, reading His Word, creating things, and serving other people. We can worship God all day and every day!**
Gather the kids in a circle and give them a balloon. Tell the kids to pass the balloon around the circle while the music is playing. When the music stops, whoever is holding the balloon can share a way to worship God this week. End the activity by sharing how you will worship God this week and challenge the kids to follow through with their ideas.

The Israelites forgot that only God deserves worship. They made the wrong choice and started making something else more important than God, and they gave an idol all their worship, praise, and attention. But we've just talked about lots of great ways we can remember this week to worship God. He is always faithful, and we can worship Him every day!

Make It Inclusive: If this activity seems overstimulating for some kids, consider playing calmer music or have kids pass the balloon around a circle without music. They can share a way to worship God each time they bop the balloon, and leaders can offer suggestions if they need help thinking of something to share.

Prayer and Blessing

Pray with them and thank God for His love and faithfulness.

As we pray, give yourself a hug when I say, "loving" or "love" and lift your hands above your head when I say, "worship." Let's pray and talk to God.

God, thank You for loving (give yourself a hug) and helping us. **We're here to worship** (arms above your head) **You and only You**. **We love** (give yourself a hug) **You. In Jesus' name, Amen.**

Encourage the kids to hold their hands out in front of them, with palms up, as if their hands are open to receive something. Tell them to listen and receive the blessing as you speak it over them.

Blessing: May you know that God is always faithful. He loves you more than anything, and He deserves our worship. May you know God and love Him more and more as you worship only Him.

Closing Game: Hidden Jewels (can play this if you need to fill more time. Can use both rooms to hide coins.)

SUPPLIES: coins

Today we learned from God's big story that we can worship God. God's people became impatient while Moses was on top of the mountain with God. They forgot about God and decided to worship something else that they could see. They created a statue, or idol, out of their shiny things.

Let's play a game to help us remember that even if we can't see if something is still there, that doesn't mean it has disappeared forever! God is always with us, even though we can't see Him.

Hide the coins in the room and challenge the kids to find it. Each time they find it, have the kids say, "We can worship God."