

Preach My Gospel, Lesson 1, Heading 1 “God is Our Loving Heavenly Father”

God is Our Loving Heavenly Father

Preparation: Obtain two objects that are similar, yet different, such as different-size balls, types of shoes, pictures of baby animal and mother animal. Also locate a picture of a child and a picture of Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ, such as The First Vision (GAK 403). Hide the objects and the pictures in the room before Family Home Evening. Prepare flannelboard pictures.

Opening Song: “My Heavenly Father Loves Me”

~We are God's children (see Acts 17:29)

Who are you? Do you know? You know your name, and you know you belong to our family here on earth. We love you. You are special to us. You are also special to Heavenly Father. He is the father of your spirit. You lived with Him in heaven before you came to earth. Everyone born on the earth is a child of Heavenly Father.

You do not remember living with Heavenly Father, but you are His child.

Read Psalm 82:6

“The most High” means Heavenly Father.

Do you have the same color eyes as Mommy? Is the color of your hair like Daddy? Children often are very much like their parents.

Read Genesis 1:27.

To be created in His image means that you look like your Heavenly Father. It also means you can become like Him.

Help your family members understand the qualities they have because they are sons and daughters of God. Take turns locating the objects and pictures and then matching them. Discuss how the balls, although different in size or color or purpose, also have similarities. They are round, they roll, they bounce, etc. Discuss the other objects. Discuss the differences and similarities we have with Heavenly Father and the Savior.

~God loves us and will help us make right choices.

How do you know that your earthly parents love you? (They give us food, a place to live. They teach us to choose the right.)

How can you know that Heavenly Father loves you? (the beautiful earth, the scriptures, Jesus Christ, the living prophets, and our families.)

How can we show Him that we love Him?

President Gordon B. Hinckley taught that we can show our love to our Heavenly Father as we speak to Him in prayer and keep His commandments. When we do

this, President Hinckley promised: "He will watch over you and guide you and protect you. He will bless you in your schoolwork and in your Primary. He will bless you in your home, and you will be a better boy or girl. ... Never forget, my dear young friends, that you really are a child of God who has inherited something of His divine nature, one whom He loves and desires to help and bless" (*Friend*, May 2003, 6).

How do you think Heavenly Father feels when we are sad?

How do you think He feels when we do what is right?

Do you think He wants to help you? Why? (because He wants us to return home to Him)

~Through Jesus Christ, we can live with God again (see John 3:16-17).

Tell the following story, with flannelboard pictures.

One night Danny's family went to the park to play for a while. Danny was 3 years old, and really excited to ride on the swings. While he was going really high on a swing, he could see the whole playground. He could see a tall slide that children were zooming down. It looked so fun! Danny decided to get off the swing and go see what it was like to go down the slide. As he climbed up the ladder he started to feel scared about how high it was. When he got to the top of the slide, he felt so scared that he did not want to slide down. He was too afraid to go back down the ladder. He didn't know what to do. Danny was stuck! Just as he was about to start crying, he saw his big brother Jacob running towards him. Jacob had seen that Danny was stuck and came to help him. Jacob climbed up the ladder and helped Danny onto his lap, then they slid down together. Danny was so happy he had Jacob for his big brother.

Everyone will die someday. But Heavenly Father sent someone to help us! Just like Jacob helped his little brother who was stuck on the slide, Jesus Christ came to help us get back to Heavenly Father. He made it possible for us to live again. He gave His life upon the cross for us, and three days later He was resurrected. Because He did this for us, each of us will be resurrected. He is our Savior.

He also suffered to pay for the things we do wrong while we're here on earth. He suffered so greatly that He bled from every pore. He suffered that punishment for our sins so we would not have to suffer if we will repent.

Bear testimony of Heavenly Father's love for us and plan for us to return to His presence.

Closing Song: "A Child's Prayer"

Sources:

Sheila E. Wilson, "Sharing Time: I Am a Child of God," *Friend*, Jan 2004, 15

Vicki F. Matsumori, "Sharing Time: I Am a Child of God," *Friend*, Mar 2003, 18

Margaret Lifferth, "Sharing Time: I Am a Child of God," *Friend*, Feb 2005, 16

Sydney S. Reynolds, "Sharing Time: Savior and Redeemer," *Friend*, Apr 1999, 13

Lds.org

Sugardoodle.net

Flannelboard Pictures

(note: if you ever find the original story or a good picture for frightened Danny at the top of the slide, let me know—this is one of my favorite stories for teaching young children about the Atonement)

