

Lessons:

GOD IS

A WORD OF FELLOWSHIP

In the Fall of 2012 a group of saints serving in the church in Irvine began to labor on compiling lessons that would match the vision and burden presented in the book *Raising Up the Next Generation for the Church Life*. This burden came out of some fellowship by the leading brothers to move our church practice into many districts. We also decided that each district should have their own children's meeting according to this view.

As we read and studied the fellowship in the book concerning the way to carry out the children's work in the church life, we made some adjustments to the way we had been taking. We decided to have only three levels: elementary, intermediate, and advanced. Then we began to prepare materials for these three levels accordingly.

In our prayer, fellowship, and coordination we were led to prepare lessons along several basic lines: 1) There is a God; 2) The beauty and wonder of creation; and 3) The preciousness of humanity, with aspects of character, and the law included. We then began to compile materials that would assist us in carrying out this vision in our locality.

After some lessons were prepared and we were ready to have a new beginning in our children's work, we had some sessions to fellowship with the parents and train the serving ones to prepare and perfect them on how to give these lessons to the children. Formerly, the lessons we used were very full with a lot of information. Those lessons did not need very much prayer, fellowship, preparation, or coordination because so much information had been provided. According to Brother Lee's fellowship, he suggested a half a page of points was all that is needed. We adapted this style as we compiled our lessons. Therefore the serving ones needed some training on how to take these small lessons and make them into something they could use in the children's meeting.

After the training of the serving ones, we began our new way. It has now been over two years of serving in this way with the children and we are convinced that this is a good way to take. We've been enjoying some unexpected blessing in that our young people are much more active and useful in the children's work than ever before. The children themselves are much better cared for in a family atmosphere rather than in a Sunday School-type children's meeting.

These lessons were prepared to meet a local need according to the fellowship of the leading ones in the church in Irvine. Since we live in the Body, care for the Body and fellowship freely in the Body of Christ, we felt to open up our website to any who would like to benefit from our labor. However, we have no intention to promote these lessons, nor do we feel that they are the best. Also, we are not intending for all the churches to follow our pattern, nor do we think that this is "the way" and the other way is not good or correct. We were burdened to meet a local need.

We also would hope that if you do want to access these lessons for your church's use, you should also carefully read the Introduction Section as well as the chapters (10-16) in the book *Raising Up the Next Generation for the Church Life* to become very familiar with the view that is presented there. If after using these lessons you would want to comment on them please do so. We would treasure any input from the saints and churches who access and use these lessons. They are still somewhat a "beta" test and need constant improving. May the Lord bless this labor and raise up the next generation of children in the churches to meet His need.

The Coordinating Brothers

THE BURDEN BEHIND EACH LEVEL OF LESSONS

These lessons are prepared for use with three different levels of children. The elementary level is for the children between five and seven years of age, the intermediate level is for the children between seven and nine years of age, and the advanced level is for the children between nine and twelve years of age.

With each level there is a specific burden we wish to impress into the children. If the serving ones in each level are clear about the burden for the children in their level the same lessons can be useful for all ages of children.

The main burden regarding the elementary level is to *inspire* the children. While the children are young we want to leave them with deep impressions concerning the existence of God, creation and proper humanity. Concerning every topic with this particular age, we want to inspire them. Concerning God, we want to inspire them concerning His existence. In the lessons on creation, we want to inspire them concerning the wonders of creation. When we come to the lessons on the topic of proper humanity, we want to inspire them to be that kind of person with such a high humanity as we describe in our lessons.

The main burden regarding the intermediate level is to inspire the children, plus *encourage* them in their behavior to attempt to live up to the positive virtues and character examples that are being presented to them. As they grow older, they will begin to experience some weaknesses and failures regarding their living up to such a high standard as our lessons suggest. With this level we still want to inspire them deeply concerning what we tell them. Every lesson should leave deep impressions and inspire them very much. Yet, we know that they are beginning to experience failures. So, in addition to inspiring them, we also need to encourage them to continue to try to live such a life as we describe. This level is for us to inspire and encourage them.

When the children reach the advanced level we, again have to change our way of teaching them. Every lesson continues to inspire them, but we understand at this level, the children are experiencing many more failures and weaknesses and are not able to live such a proper life. We pray that the convicting Spirit would use our lessons to bring them to the full realization that they are unable to meet such a high demand and are subdued to the point that they realize their need for the Lord's redemption and life. The teachers as nursing mothers are wisely bringing them to this realization through the lessons and are watching them to see when is the best time to share something concerning sin and salvation to them.

Although we are providing these lessons as a guide and a help to the serving ones, we would never want them to be used in a routine curriculum-type of manner, i.e., just following the schedule, instead of carefully following the children's need and the Spirit's leading. May the faithful seeking of the Lord's fresh burden for the children and His moment by moment supply be the standard in the sharing of God's Word to the children!

Regarding the practical applications provided in the lesson - PLEASE keep in mind that they are only offered as suggestions to help the saints in their preparation. They are not meant to direct or

limit the ways in which the focus of the lesson can be applied. The serving ones should never feel compelled to cover everything included on the lesson and should be free to adjust the burden to meet the need of your children. The saints are encouraged to pray and contact the Lord to receive His burden and guidance in teaching and applying the lesson. Fellowship with other saints, and inquiring of the children themselves, may also bring out many helpful applications.

December, 2014

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Topic: God is (1): God is the Creator

Elementary:

Verse: “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Genesis 1:1).

Focus: God is the Creator. He is the One who created the heavens, with all the stars, and the earth, with all the living things.

Practical Application: Bring pictures of God’s creation and of things made by man. Have the children say which things were created by God and which were made by man.

Song: “Who made the world so big and round?”

Intermediate:

Verse: “All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him not one thing came into being which has come into being” (John 1:3).

Focus: Creation is not haphazard; God planned and designed creation. Things did not come into existence by chance.

Practical Application: Bring a bag filled with Lego pieces or Popsicle sticks. Have the children take turns to shake the bag and then look inside the bag to see if anything was built (made).

Advanced:

Verse: “The burden of the word of Jehovah concerning Israel. Thus declares Jehovah, who stretches forth the heavens and lays the foundations of the earth and forms the spirit of man within him” (Zechariah 12:1).

Focus: There is a good order in God’s creation. He made the heavens for the earth, the earth for man, and man for God.

Heavens→Earth→Man→God

Practical Application: There is a purpose in the way God created the universe. The earth is just the right distance from the sun so that it would not be too hot or cold for man. Everything man needs for his existence is provided by God’s creation. All of creation is for man. Then who is man for? Man is for God!

Topic: God is (2): God Your Creator

Elementary:

Verse: “I praise You, for I am awesomely and wonderfully made...” (Psalm 139:14).

Focus: God made us in a special way.

Practical Application: Talk about different parts of our body (eyes, ears, nose, mouth, hands, feet) and how wonderful they are in what they can do.

Song: “Wonderf’ly, Wonderf’ly”; “Why was a cup made?”

Intermediate:

Verse: “But rather, O man, who are you who answer back to God? Shall the thing molded say to him who molded it, Why did you make me thus? Or does not the potter have authority over the clay to make out of the same lump one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?” (Romans 9:20-21).

Focus: We were molded (created) by God. Man has a unique image like no other creature.

Practical Application: Ask the children, “Can you imagine that some people believe that we come from monkeys?” Have them point out how man is different from a pig or a monkey. All animals were created (molded, shaped) according to their kind. For example, dogs are molded like dogs and monkeys are molded like monkeys. God formed man from the dust of the ground to have God’s image and likeness. Therefore, man was created according to God’s kind and not according to any other kind of animal.

Advanced:

Verse: “And God said, Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of heaven and over the cattle and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth” (Genesis 1:26).

Focus: God made us in a special way to be a vessel that one day we would contain Him.

NOTE: The burden is on the fact that man is a *container*, not so much on the content. Physically we contain food, psychologically we contain knowledge.

Practical Application: With the children, consider how certain items are created with the purpose to contain something. Ask them what kind of interesting containers or vessels they can think of. Bring modeling clay and have the children form a vessel.

Topic: God is (3): God is Omniscient (Knows all things)

Elementary:

Verse: “But even the hairs of your head are all numbered” (Matthew 10:30).

Focus: God knows all things.

Practical Application: Talk about how God knows all about the physical things, the hairs on your head, the numbers of stars in the sky, etc. Ask the children if they know how many stars are in the sky, how many hairs are on their head. God knows the answers to these questions. Bring a clear container filled with jelly beans (or another item) and ask the children if they know how many jelly beans are in the container.

Song: “My Father knows before I ask, He knows just what I need.”

Intermediate:

Verse: “And there is no creature that is not manifest before Him, but all things are naked and laid bare to the eyes of Him to whom we are to give our account” (Hebrews 4:13).

Focus: God knows what we do. Others (parents, teachers, etc.) may not see all that we do, therefore they do not know, but God sees everything and therefore knows everything.

Practical Application: Ask the children, “Do your parents always know whether or not you took another cookie? Do your parents always know if you took something from someone?” God knows.

Advanced:

Verse: “Because if our heart blames us, it is because God is greater than our heart and knows all things” (1 John 3:20).

Focus: God knows our heart. God not only knows the things we do but also knows what we think and what is in our heart.

Practical Application: Ask the children, “Does anyone know what you speak under your breath? Does anyone know if you really love or hate someone? Does anyone know what you are thinking?” God knows.

Topic: God is (4): God is Omnipotent (All-powerful)

Elementary:

Verse: “It is He who made the earth by His power” (Jeremiah 51:15a).

Focus: God is so powerful that He created the universe.

Practical Application: Talk to the children about how a plant sprouts. For us it takes a lot of work to help fruits and vegetables to grow. But God only had to say a word (Gen. 1:11). Bring pictures (waves, waterfall, wind, etc.) of things in God’s creation which show God’s power.

Intermediate:

Verse: “And the sun was still, And the moon stayed, Until the nation avenged themselves of their enemies” (Joshua 10:13a).

Focus: God is so powerful that He can make the sun stand still and heal people with a word.

Practical Application: Give examples of how God is all-powerful. Ask them, “Can you stop time?” God can and He did (Joshua 10). “Can you heal people just by a touch or by a word?” Jesus did (Matthew 8).

Advanced:

Verse: “And looking upon them, Jesus said to them, With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible” (Matthew 19:26).

Focus: We are limited and unable to do so many things, but God is able.

Practical Application: Ask the children, “Can you stop lying? Can you stop not wanting what others have? Can you love everyone? Are you always right? Can you stop sinning?” Tell them that with us so many things are impossible but to God they are possible. Tell the story of the rich man in Matthew 19:16-26.

Topic: God is (5): God is Omnipresent (Everywhere)

Elementary:

Verse: “Where shall I go, away from Your Spirit, And where shall I flee from Your presence?” (Psalm 139:7).

Focus: God is everywhere.

Practical Application: Ask the children, “Can your parents be in two rooms at the same time? What if you need your mom and your brother or sister needs her at the same time? Can your teachers be everywhere in the classroom to help all the children at the same time?” Our God is everywhere and He can help us wherever we are.

Intermediate:

Verse: “Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the blazing furnace of fire” (Daniel 3:17a).

Focus: God is everywhere so He is always with us.

Practical Application: Even when we are in a situation at night or at school we may feel like we are all alone, God is with us to help us. No matter where we are we can pray to God. Have the children name different places on the earth they have visited and ask them if God can hear their prayers in that place. Tell the story from Daniel chapter 3. Even when we are in a situation where no one can help us, God is with us to help us.

Advanced:

Verse: “Can a man hide himself in secret places, So that I will not see him? declares Jehovah. Do I not fill the heavens and the earth? Declares Jehovah” (Jeremiah 23:24).

Focus: God is everywhere and He sees what we do and where we go even though our parents may not know.

Practical Application: Our friends may encourage us to go to certain places and to do certain things. We may think that if our parents don’t know, we will be fine. But God is everywhere, and He will know. We sometimes try to hide the things we have done wrong or hide from our parents when we know we have been naughty. Even though there might be a place where we can go that our parents will not find us, there is no place to hide from God and nothing is hidden from God.

Topic: God is (6): God is Love

Elementary:

Verse: “God is love” (1 John 4:8b).

Focus: God loves all the little children of the world.

Practical Application: Bring a book about children from around the world. Although children come from different countries, speak different languages, dress up differently, have different hair, eye, and skin colors, each one is special to God and God loves them just as God loves you.

Songs: “Jesus’ love is sweet and wonderful.”

“Jesus loves the little children.”

“Jesus loves me, this I know.”

Intermediate:

Verse: “But Jesus said, Allow the little children and do not prevent them from coming to Me” (Matthew 19:14a).

Focus: God’s nature is love, and therefore His love is unconditional. God loves everyone, even the unlovable ones.

Practical Application: We love those who love us but what about those who are mean to us or different from us? God loves everyone including ones who are not like us or those who do not always obey Him.

Advanced:

Verses: “Having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the uttermost” (John 13:1b). “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son” (John 3:16a).

Focus: When God loves men (the world), He loves them to the uttermost. His great love causes Him to give His only begotten Son to die for man so that man’s sin can be forgiven.

Practical Application: We may love our brother or sister but would we give him or her our favorite toy? How about someone who doesn’t like us or someone we don’t like? Would we share something precious with them?

Topic: God is (7): God is Light

Elementary:

Verse: “And God said, Let there be light; and there was light” (Genesis 1:3).

Focus: God is light and He *created light* for us to see, move, and live. Light is very important, for without it, plants, animals and men cannot survive.

Practical Application: Try walking around a room with the lights off. Then turn the lights on. See the difference? Talk about the plants. What happens if there is no light?

Songs: “God said, ‘Let there be light.’”

“The earth became as dark as night....”

“The sun, the moon, the stars for light....” (Hymns, Jr. #23 stanzas 2 & 4)

Intermediate:

Verses: “Walk as children of light...and do not participate in the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather even reprove them” (Ephesians 5:8b, 11). “For you are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness” (1 Thessalonians 5:5).

Focus: God’s nature is light; there is no darkness in Him. Everything about Him is bright and clear, and nothing He does is shady or deceptive.

Practical Application: Ask the children, “How do you feel inside when you cheat in school or lie to your parents? Do you want others to know that you cheated or lied?” This is darkness. “How do you feel inside when you tell the truth or when you help someone in need?” This is light.

Song: “This little light of mine.”

Advanced:

Verse: “God is light and in Him is no darkness at all” (1 John 1:5b).

Focus: Light exposes and light heals. We should always listen to our conscience. We should not hide or be afraid when we are exposed by God’s shining light.

Practical Application: When we rebel or show anger towards our parents, we feel like we are in darkness and feel bad about our actions. God’s light will shine on what we have done wrong. His shining within us makes us feel bad inside. We should quickly confess our wrong to God and apologize to the people we wronged. As long as we are willing to tell Him about our shortcomings and sins, God as light will shine in us and take away the darkness.

Songs: “God is light and in Him there is no darkness at all.”

“There’s a part inside of me.”

Topic: God is (8): God is Holy

Elementary:

Verse: “There is none holy like Jehovah...” (1 Samuel 2:2a).

Focus: There is no one else like God. He is holy, that is, unique, set apart, uncommon, and different from everything else in a special way.

Practical Application: Show examples of things that are “special” or “different.” Set out several dirty, old pennies, and one bright, shiny, new penny; or some dirty, rough rocks, and one shiny, smooth stone.

Intermediate:

Verse: “Even as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world to be holy and without blemish before Him in love” (Ephesians 1:4).

Focus: God is holy and God’s people were chosen to be holy. That means we are also set apart, uncommon, different from everything else around us. We cannot always do what “everyone else” does.

Practical Application: Try mixing oil and water—they do not mix. As God’s holy people, we cannot mix ourselves with unholy things. We should be different from other children who do bad things or use bad words. The children can discuss examples of other things that we cannot do because we are set apart.

Advanced:

Verse: “But according to the Holy One who called you, you yourselves also be holy in all your manner of life; Because it is written, ‘You shall be holy because I am holy.’” (1 Peter 1:15-16).

Focus: God is holy and things related to God are also holy, e.g., God’s word, God’s people, etc. As God’s people, we should be holy and everything related to us should also be holy, e.g., what we say, what we do, where we go, what we want. We should realize that we should be set apart, different, as God is, in all these areas.

Practical Application: Discuss examples of things in “all our manner of life” that may make us “unholy” such as video games full of violence, killing, and war; books with evil characters like demons, zombies, sorcerers; music with inappropriate words; certain kinds of speech.

Topic: God is (9): There is Only One God

Elementary:

Verse: “I am Jehovah and there is no one else; Besides Me there is no God” (Isaiah 45:5a).

Focus: There is only one God—Jesus Christ. Other things are not God. Only Jesus Christ is God.

Practical Application: The children could be shown several items, a stuffed animal, a statue, a picture, and asked questions such as whether the item could be God, would they pray to it, bow down to it?

Song: “Our God is living” (from Daniel CD)

Intermediate:

Verse: “We know that an idol is nothing in the world and that there is no God but one” (1 Corinthians 8:4b).

Focus: An idol is an object or an image of something that is worshipped like God. But idols are not God and we should not worship anything other than God.

Practical Application: Things that apparently represent God, such as a cross, an image, a figurine, a statue, etc., are also considered idols. These idols are dumb—they cannot hear, speak or answer any requests. But God is a living person so God’s children can pray to Him without these things. He hears our prayers and He can answer them.

Advanced:

Verses: “And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Him whom You have sent, Jesus Christ” (John 17:3, memory verse). “To the only God our Savior through Jesus Christ our Lord be glory, majesty, might, and authority before all time and now and unto all eternity. Amen” (Jude 1:25, supporting verse).

Focus: There are not many gods or other gods. Other religions claim to believe in a god BUT the Bible tells us that there is only one true God and He is Jesus Christ. God wants people to know Him as the only God and not to have any other gods.

Practical Application: In a family there is only one father and mother. Ask the children, “How would your father and mother feel if you called someone else your father or mother? How would you feel if your brother or sister chooses someone else to be their brother or sister?”

Topic: God is (10): God is Righteous

Elementary:

Verse: “And you shall do that which is right and good in the sight of Jehovah so that it may go well with you...” (Deuteronomy 6:18a).

Focus: Whatever God does is right; for God to be righteous means that God is right in what He does. If God makes a rule, then that rule is right and God follows that rule. If God says something is wrong, then it is wrong.

Practical Application: Doing the right thing vs. doing the wrong thing game. Come up with 10 scenarios and ask the children what would be the right/wrong thing to do. For example, if someone dropped a dollar out of his pocket, is it right for us to keep it or for us to give it back to that person?

(The song below may be too advanced for very little children).

Song: Verse 3 of “I have my very own conscience”:

My mommy baked some cookies / And said I could have two,
But when she wasn't looking / Guess what I wanted to do? (Take 3!)
But my conscience says, No, / My conscience says, No,
My conscience says, No, no, no, no, no,
My conscience says, No, / My conscience says, No, / My conscience says, No.

Intermediate:

Verse: “In order that by two unchangeable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie...” (Hebrews 6:18).

Focus: God is righteous in all that He does and says. It is impossible for God to lie and whatever He promises, He will do.

Practical Application: Tell a story showing how wrong it is for someone to say that he or she is going to do something and then not do what he or she promised. God would never do this because He is righteous. Consider telling the story in 2 Kings 7:1-20 where the leprous men realized they were not doing what is right.

Advanced:

Verse: “Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne” (Psalms 89:14).

Focus: God is righteous in all that He does. In relation to us, God being righteous means that when we are told to do something but do not do it, then there are consequences.

Practical Application: Illustrate how at school there are rules for proper behavior in the classroom and that when the rules are not followed there is a righteous consequence. Ask them if it would be right for the teacher to enforce the rule on some but not the others.

Topic: God is (11): God is the Eternal God

Elementary:

Verse: “Do you not know, Or have you not heard, that the eternal God, Jehovah, the Creator of the ends of the earth...” (Isaiah 40:28a).

Focus: God is eternal, He has no beginning—God does not have a birthday and no one made God. Everyone and everything has been made by God. He has always existed and will always exist. He will never stop existing.

Practical Application: Bring physical objects (or pictures) and have children name the maker to demonstrate that everyone and everything has a source. But no one made God!

Intermediate:

Verse: “Before the mountains were brought forth, And before You gave birth to the earth and the world, indeed from eternity to eternity, You are God” (Psalms 90:2).

Focus: God exists from eternity to eternity and He does not depend on anyone or anything for His existence. We are not eternal; we must depend upon many things outside of us for our existence. Especially, we can always depend upon God.

Practical Application: Throughout history, all great leaders have come and gone (have been born and have died). We cannot depend on any leaders because one day they will not be here for us. We can depend on God because He has always been and will always be.

Advanced:

Verse: “Do you not know or have you not heard that the eternal God, Jehovah, the Creator of the ends of the earth, does not faint and does not become weary? There is no searching out of His understanding” (Isaiah 40:28).

Focus: Contrast the human life, which is temporal, with the divine life of God, which is eternal. Bring up that human life has a definite beginning and a definite end, but God’s life has no end. Also point out that the human life grows old and gets weak, but God’s life never grows old and has no weakness.

Practical Application: Ask the children, “How old is the oldest person that you know? Is that person in good health? Can he/she play soccer with you in the same way as your friends can?” God will never grow old or weak!

Topic: God is (12): God is to be Honored

Elementary:

Verse: "...for those who honor Me I will honor..." (1 Samuel 2:30b).

Focus: We should honor God because He is God and He loves and cares for us.

Practical Application: Honoring God in the children's meeting. For example, when we sing to God, we should sing with our whole heart and not be talking or playing with our friends.

Song: "Honor, honor, honor."

"There is one God."

Intermediate:

Verse: "Now to the King of the ages, incorruptible, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen" (1 Timothy 1:17).

Focus: To honor someone is to respect them and to regard them as precious (cf. Heb. 2:9, note 2). We honor God because He is precious and important to us. Honoring is a matter of attitude and not merely outward obedience.

Practical Application: We must honor our parents because by honoring them, we honor God as our source. For example, if our parents ask us to clean our room, we might obey by doing it but what is our attitude?

Song: "Now unto the King immortal."

"Round and round the mountain."

Advanced:

Verses: "Honor Jehovah with your substance And with the first fruits of all your produce" (Proverbs 3:9). "You shall not take the name of Jehovah your God in vain, for Jehovah will not hold guiltless him who takes His name in vain" (Exodus 20:7).

Focus: We should honor God by listening to our conscience. When our friends are doing something wrong, we should not go along with it.

Practical Application: Sometimes our friends may use the Lord's name in a vain, swearing way. We should not adopt this kind of behavior. We honor God by not talking lightly or disrespectfully about Him.

Topic: God is (13): God is to be Thanked

Elementary:

Verse: “It is good to give thanks to Jehovah And to sing psalms to Your name, O Most High” (Psalms 92:1).

Focus: We should have a thankful and appreciative heart towards God because everything and everyone around us is given to us from God.

Practical Application: Use illustrations of things that we love and for which we should be thankful to Him (e.g. strawberries, sunshine, etc).

Songs: “Good morning, Lord Jesus.”
“Always rejoice.”
“This is the day.”

Intermediate:

Verses: “I will give much thanks to Jehovah with my mouth, And in the midst of the multitude I will praise Him” (Psalms 109:30). “Giving thanks at all times for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to our God and Father” (Ephesians 5:20).

Focus: Being thankful to God involves our heart. Sometimes we may not get what we want but everything is the best that it can be and that we should thank God for His arrangement.

Practical Application: Ask the children, “When you lose a game, are you thankful in your heart or are you angry? When receiving a gift from someone, are you thankful in your heart or are you complaining about the gift?”

Songs: “It’s a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord.”
“I will enter His gates.”
“Singing, praying, praising, thanking.”

Advanced:

Verses: “In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you” (1 Thessalonians 5:18). “And whatever you do in word or in deed, do all things in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him” (Colossians 3:17).

Focus: Being thankful to God involves our heart. We should thank Him and the people around us who provide for us.

Practical Application: Ask the children, “When your parents forbid you to watch a certain movie or go to a friend’s house, are you thankful in your heart for your parents or are you upset?” Consider using practical examples of people who have less than they do to illustrate the point. See who can list the most things to thank God for in 1 minute. (As they do this, help them to avoid a boastful attitude.

Topic: God is (14): God is Good

Elementary:

Verse: “Give thanks to Jehovah, for He is good; For His loving-kindness is forever” (Psalms 136:1).

Focus: God is good because He is kind and cares for us. God is good because He knows our needs and provides for them.

Practical Application: God gave us food because He knows that we get hungry. God gave us parents because He knows we need them to protect us, keep us safe, and love us. Have the children name some good things that God gives us.

Song: “God is so good.”

Intermediate:

Verse: “Beloved, do not imitate the evil, but the good. He who does good is of God; he who does evil has not seen God” (3 John 1:11).

Focus: Because we were created in God’s image and likeness and because God is good, we also have good in us, such as being kind, caring, and helpful to others. God made us to do good. Therefore, we feel happy inside when we do something good and we are not happy when we do something wrong.

Practical Application: Ask the children, “When your mother is bringing a lot of groceries into the house, do you help her or do you continue playing with your toy? How do you feel when you help your mother?” Have the children name good things that they can do for their parents.

Song: “It’s a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord.”

Advanced:

Verse: “And Jesus said to him, Why do you call Me good? No one is good except One—God” (Mark 10:18).

Focus: There is One in the universe who is good—God. God is good in His heart, in His motives, in His ways, and in His will for us. We should always have the assurance that God is good towards us. No one and nothing apart from God is good.

Practical Application: Give practical examples how parents are good to their children but the children may not think so. Possible examples can be learning to play the piano, going to school, doing homework instead of watching TV, not staying up late, eating healthy food, etc. Ask the children if they do good things all the time to illustrate that only God is (always) good.

Topic: God is (15): God is the I Am (Jehovah)

Elementary:

Verse: “And God said to Moses, I AM WHO I AM. And He said, Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, I AM has sent me to you” (Exodus 3:14) - memorize the underlined.

Focus: God’s name is Jehovah, which means, I am Who I am. God’s name being “I AM” means that He simply “is,” He just exists. Everyone and everything exists because of someone, and because of some things outside of them (water, food, etc.), but no one helped God exist or made God exist. *Emphasize the self-existing aspect of God.*

Practical Application: Talk about one of their toys. Does it just always exist or does it exist because someone has made it?

Intermediate:

Verses: “Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is coming” (Revelation 1:4b). “Jesus said to them, Truly, truly, I say to you, Before Abraham came into being, I am” (John 8:58).

Focus: God’s name is Jehovah, which means, “I AM WHO I AM.” God’s name being “I AM” means that He always exists. Our God not only existed in the past, is existing now, but also will exist forever. God exists with no beginning and no ending. *Emphasize the ever-existing aspect of God.*

Practical Application: Before we were born, before our parents/grandparents were born, before the earth and heavens were made, before the animals were created, God was already there. Here is a chair. Can we say it was always here? Can we say it will last forever?

Advanced:

Verse: “And God said to Moses, I AM WHO I AM. And He said, Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, I AM has sent me to you” (Exodus 3:14).

Focus: God’s name being “I AM” also means He is everything. As the self-existing and ever-existing One; He is also the God who can be whatever we need.

Practical Application: When we feel scared, God will say, “My name is ‘I Am’ and I am your protection.” When we are worried, God will say, “My name is ‘I Am’ and I am your peace.” When even mom and dad cannot help us, God can be whatever we need. Have the children list things that God could be as the “I am” to them.

Topic: God is (16): God is Living

Elementary:

Verse: “The living God, who made heaven and earth and the sea and all things in them” (Acts 14:15b).

Focus: God is living and we can see this reflected in the living things He created. Because God is living, the earth is filled with many living things.

Practical Application: Have the children name ten things that are living. Show pictures or short video clips of animals that are full of life, like a puppy or kitten.

Intermediate:

Verse: “And when he had come near the den, he shouted to Daniel with a sad voice; the king responded and said to Daniel, O Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to deliver you from the lions?” (Daniel 6:20).

Focus: Because God is living; He can hear us and help us.

Practical Application: Ask the children, “What if fell into a river and could not swim? Would you call out to a robot or a doll (something man-made) to help you, or would you ask for help from a person?” In a similar way, some people worship idols and ask them for help, but they could never help because they are dead. By contrast, because God is living, if we ask Him for help, He hears us and can help us.

Advanced:

Verses: “For they themselves report concerning us what kind of entrance we had toward you and how you turned to God from the idols to serve a living and true God” (1 Thessalonians 1:9). “But if I delay, I write that you may know how one ought to conduct himself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and base of the truth” (1 Timothy 3:15).

Focus: We are drawn to what is living, but should avoid what is dead.

Practical Application: What do we do when you see something dead? We avoid it. What about if something or someone is full of life? We go to it; that person or thing draws us. Tell the story of Lazarus from John 11. Lazarus was dead, but Jesus raised him from the dead because He was full of life. As a result of Jesus raising Lazarus, many people were drawn to the Lord Jesus. Because God is living, people are drawn to Him and give their lives to follow and serve Him.

Topic: God is (17): God is True

Elementary:

Verses: “But Jehovah is the true God; He is the living God” (Jeremiah 10:10a). “...serve a living and true God” (1 Thessalonians 1:9b).

Focus: Our God is true and living. He is real and genuine, not fake or pretend.

Practical Application: Give several illustrations to compare what is true and what is fake, like real dollar bills and pretend paper money (which one can you use to buy things at the grocery store?); a toy fire truck versus a real one (which one can really spray water and put out fire?). God is not pretend or fake. He is true and living.

Intermediate:

Verses: “Righteous and true are Your ways” (Revelation 15:3b). “True and righteous are Your judgments” (Revelation 16:7b).

Focus: God is true and righteous in His ways and in His works. To be true is to be genuine, sincere, honest, trustworthy and faithful.

Practical Application: Ask the children, “Do you act the same way in private (at home, towards your parents and siblings) and in public (in school, with your friends)? Are you the same inside out?” God is always true in His inward principles and in His outward actions.

Advanced:

Verses: “And He said, Write, for these words are faithful and true” (Revelation 21:5b). “And he said to me, these words are faithful and true” (Revelation 22:6a). “But let your word be, Yes, yes; No, no” (Matthew 5:37a).

Focus: God is true and faithful in His word. There is nothing deceptive, false, hypocritical or erroneous in everything He says. Every word that He says is true and will come to pass.

Practical Application: We don't always mean what we say. If someone would record all the words we say even for a day and play them back, we would all be embarrassed. When the Lord was on earth, some men watched Him closely, hoping to catch Him in His speech (Mark 12:13; Luke 11:54, 20:20) but they never found any falsehood or inconsistency in His words. His words were always true and unchanging. How many times have we promised to do something and then end up not doing what we promised to do?

Topic: God is (18): God Wants to Reveal Himself

Elementary:

Verse: “For the invisible things of Him...have been clearly seen since the creation of the world” (Romans 1:20a).

Focus: God has revealed Himself to us through creation. When we look at the things around us we can see what God is like and they tell us there must be a God who made all these things.
Example: God is a loving and caring God who provides light, water and food for us to live.

Practical Application: Have the children name things in creation that reveal what God is like. What things are big, mighty, or beautiful; what gives light? Bring in a real flower or plant; show the children what beauty is. Bring other real objects to show forth God’s attributes.

Intermediate:

Verse: “You search the Scriptures, because you think in them you have eternal life; and it is these that testify concerning me” (John 5:39).

Focus: God has revealed Himself to us through His speaking. What He has spoken has been recorded in the Bible so that we can know God.

Practical Application: By reading the Bible we can know God. Encourage them to read the Bible everyday with their parents. Reading a biography of someone in history causes us to know that person. Read a small biography (or portion thereof) of a famous person (George Washington, Johnny Appleseed, Helen Keller, etc.).

Advanced:

Verse: “And confessedly, great is the mystery of godliness: He who was manifested in the flesh” (1Timothy 3:16a).

Focus: God wants us to know Him. He firstly revealed Himself through creation. He then revealed Himself to us by His Word (the Bible). Then one day the invisible God became a man so that we could see Him and know Him more. When we read about the life of Jesus, we see God being expressed in a man and being so approachable.

Practical Application: Read the story in Luke 7 where the Lord was moved with compassion and had pity on the widow. This story shows how the Lord was a real man living on the earth with real feelings and emotions, yet He was also God.

Topic: God is (19): God is Merciful

Elementary:

Verse: “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall be shown mercy” (Matt. 5:7).

Focus: God is full of mercy. God will do things for us even if we do not deserve it.

Practical Application: Give an example of a time when a parent shows mercy to a child. For example, a child might receive \$1 each week for doing his/her chores on time. One week the child might forget to do the chores on time. The child deserves to be punished and not receive \$1 for that week. The child’s parents might show mercy by allowing the child to do their chores and still receive 50 cents instead of a \$1.

Intermediate:

Verses: “And He did not allow him, but said to him, Go to your house, to your own people, and report to them what great things the Lord has done for you, and how He has had mercy on you” (Mark 5:19). “Or he who exhorts, in that exhortation; he who gives, in simplicity; he who leads, in diligence; he who shows mercy, in cheerfulness” (Rom. 12:8).

Focus: Since our God is merciful, we should also show mercy towards others.

Practical Application: When someone at school takes something from you, instead of reporting them right away to the teacher, you give them a chance to return the item to you. If your brother or sister plays with your favorite toy without asking, you can show them mercy by giving them a chance to put the toy back instead of telling your mom or dad.

Advanced:

Verses: “So then it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy” (Rom. 9:16). “But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us” (Eph. 2:4).

Focus: To be merciful means to be shown compassion and forgiveness when it is not deserved. Even though God does not have to be merciful towards us, He chooses to be merciful because He loves us.

Practical Application: Give an example in the children’s life when they were shown mercy when they didn’t deserve it such as when they forget to do their homework but are given an extension to turn it in, or when they do not finish their chores on time and are given an extension instead of being punished.

Topic: God is (20): God is Wise

Elementary:

Verse: “To the only wise God through Jesus Christ, to Him be the glory forever and ever. Amen” (Rom. 16:27).

Focus: God is wise. He knows how to do everything in the best way.

Practical Application: God designed our body in the best way. Our eyes were placed above our nose—this shows God’s wisdom so that we wouldn’t sneeze into our eyes. God was wise to give us knees so that we could bend our legs--it would be very difficult to climb stairs without knees. God also made us with a mind to know Him and a heart to love Him.

Song: I’m so wonderfully made.

Intermediate:

Verse: “In whom all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden” (Col. 2:3).

Focus: God is wise in how He deals with man. He knows just what we need. What He does for us in His wisdom is the best.

Practical Application: In order for a person to be a good judge he has to go to school, study the law, and be a top lawyer. He has to know a lot and gain a lot of experience before he is qualified to make proper judgments. God did not need to go to school or learn from His experience because God is wise. He knows all and sees all. In God’s wisdom, He arranged everything in our situation exactly for us to give us what’s best. God placed you in the family that is just right for you. Who your parents, siblings, teachers, companions are show God’s wisdom in what He does and how He arranges things.

Advanced:

Verse: “O the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and untraceable His ways!” (Rom. 11:33).

Focus: God is wise and is able to accomplish what He wants to. He has a goal and knows the best plan to work out that goal. Since God’s goal involves man, there’s a purpose for why man lives. We are not here by chance but by God’s wise design.

Practical Application: Have you ever wanted to build or create something but didn’t quite know how to do it? Have you ever wished you had a second chance to do something over differently? The children can discuss their experiences. These experiences can be contrasted with God’s wisdom to accomplish anything He wants to do.

Topic: God is (21): God is a God of Compassion

Elementary:

Verses: “Remember Your compassions, O Jehovah, / And Your acts of kindness, for they are from of old” (Psalm 25:6). “Jehovah is gracious and righteous, / Indeed our God is compassionate” (Psalm 116:5).

Focus: Because God is compassionate, He has an inward feeling of pity when we are in distress and desires to help us and save us from our distress.

Practical Application: If you are walking in the park and find a baby bird that has fallen out of its nest, how would you feel? Could you walk away? Most likely you would feel sorry for the baby bird. You would feel concerned that it cannot fly or find food. You would want to find a way to return the baby bird to its nest so that its mother could help it. Something in you does not want to walk away until you have helped the baby bird. All these feelings are feelings of compassion. God has these same feelings when He sees us in need.

Intermediate:

Verse: “It is Jehovah’s loving-kindness that we are not consumed, / For His compassions do not fail” (Lamentations 3:22).

Focus: See Elementary Focus. God is compassionate and His compassions do not fail. Any compassion we have is limited, but God’s compassion never fails.

Practical Application: At school we might see a child sitting by himself at recess. Inside we might feel sorry for him that he has no friend and decide to sit and talk with him so that he would not be lonely. The next day, we might not have the same feeling of compassion for him because we prefer to play with our own friends. This happens because our compassion fails. What if you had a puppy that fell in a muddy puddle every morning before school starts? Would you have compassion on your puppy and wash it before you go to school? Would you get tired of washing the puppy every day? Would you eventually get mad at the puppy and decide not to wash it? There will never be a day when God’s compassion fails.

Advanced:

Verse: “He is able to exercise compassion toward the ignorant and erring since he [the high priest, not God] also is encompassed with weakness” (Hebrews 5:2).

Focus: God is compassionate and He understands what it is like for us. When God saw that man was sinful and couldn’t save himself, God became a man so that He could die in our place for our sins to be forgiven. Because He lived as a man He understands what it is like to be tempted, yet He never sinned. Therefore, no matter what we have done we should never be afraid to come forward to find God, because He is a God of compassion.

Practical Application: If we have never been in “someone else’s shoes” it is hard for us to have compassion on him or her. Perhaps we never thought about smiling or saying hello to a new kid at school. One year your parents might move to another city and you will become the new kid in the class. You will know what it is like to not know anyone, to not have any friends at school, and to not have anyone say hello to you. Now that you know what it is like, you will have compassion whenever there is a new kid in your class.

Topic: God is (21): God is a God of Encouragement

Elementary:

Verse: “Be strong, and let your heart be encouraged, all you who hope in Jehovah” (Psalm 31:34).

Focus: Our heart is encouraged when we hope in Jehovah. Sometimes when things are difficult we become discouraged and we want to give up. Our God encourages us to not give up.

Practical Application: It is not easy to learn new things. For some it is hard learning to tie shoelaces or to hit a baseball. When we find things difficult to do we want to give up, but our parents or coach will encourage us to keep trying and not give up. God is the same. He encourages us to keep trusting in Him and to not give up.

Intermediate:

Verse: “On the day that I called out, You answered me; You encouraged me with strength in my soul” (Psalm 138:3).

Focus: God is a God of encouragement. We should learn to call out (pray) to God when things discourage us. Over the centuries God’s people have called out to Him in difficult times and God has given them hope.

Practical Application: Tell the story from 1 Kings 19:1-18 of how Jehovah encouraged Elijah when Jezebel threatened to kill him for being a prophet of God. The angel of Jehovah came and fed him in the wilderness two times and Jehovah spoke to him in a gentle, quiet voice. God also told him that he was not the last prophet left in Israel because God had preserved 7,000 who did not bow their knees to Baal.

Advanced:

Verse: “Now the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to be of the same mind toward one another according to Christ Jesus” (Romans 15:5).

Focus: God is a God of encouragement for His people. He is able to give us hope even when it appears that there is no hope. God has encouraged many people through the promises He made us in His Word.

Practical Application: Consider telling the story of Daniel, that when he was in captivity he knew God’s Word, so he knew that God had promised that after 70 years the children of Israel would return to the good land from their captivity. This promise encouraged Daniel to pray three times a day. Another example is in Luke 2:25-39. When the nation of Israel was in a desolate state, Simeon and Anna were encouraged when they saw Jesus as a baby because they knew the promises about the coming of the Christ written in the Old Testament. When we read the Bible today we get encouraged. The Bible declares to us a God who cares for His people and who is faithful concerning His promises to them. How encouraging God is!

Topic: God is (22): God is a God of Endurance

Elementary:

Verse: “Now the God of endurance and encouragement...” (Romans 15:5a).

Focus: Endurance means to persist, to not give up when something becomes difficult. God is a God of endurance. He does not give up and He never fades away. He is always there!

Practical Application: How many times have we started a chore or our homework and have given up before we finish? Sometimes when we are asked to tidy our room we might begin enthusiastically to tidy our room, but begin to tire after 5 minutes when we see how much more work we still need to do to get our room tidy. When God starts something, He finishes it and He never fades or tires.

Intermediate:

Verse: “And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the endurance of Christ” (2 Thessalonians 3:5).

Focus: Endurance is to withstand and continue in any kind of environment, to work in any kind of condition, and to take any kind of opportunity. God has been working with man for 6,000 years. Regardless of what is happening on the earth, God has continued to work out His plan for man even when man rejects Him and is in a bad condition.

Practical Application: The early settlers of the West had to travel across America and face many different kinds of environments: extremely cold winters and hot summers. They also had to face all kinds of conditions: hostile people, droughts, famines, and illness, as well as take any kind of opportunity that came to them. Many gave up and returned home, but some endured all the way to the end, until they had crossed over snowy mountains and dry deserts, and arrived on the west coast.

Suggested Story: Read a short story about the life of a family on the Oregon Trail or tell the story of Ernest Shackleton and the ship Endurance (see next page).

Advanced:

Verse: “Looking away unto Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down on the right hand of the throne of God” (Hebrews 12:2).

Focus: Endurance is not merely to be patient, but to have the ability to endure suffering in tribulation, whether pressure, oppression, persecution, poverty, or any kind of trial. The Lord Jesus lived for 33.5 years. As a child He had to endure poverty (He was the son of a carpenter) and oppression (He lived in a despised place). When He was carrying out His ministry to redeem fallen sinners, He was despised and suffered persecution from people. Ultimately, He had to endure the death of the cross, which was considered a shameful way to die in those days. Yet if He did not endure these things He would not have accomplished redemption by dying in our place to take God’s judgment of sin for us. Thank the Lord that He did not give up.

Practical Application: Have the children read the description of the Lord's life of sorrow in Isaiah 53 and also the account of His being judged and crucified in Matthew 26:57-27:44. Have the children list the things that the Lord Jesus endured in order to die for their sins on the cross.

ENDURANCE: Story of Survival, Story of Success
by Jim M. Allen

More than 80 years ago, on December 7, 1914, Ernest Shackleton and a crew of 28 men aboard the ship **Endurance** entered the pack ice off the continent of Antarctica. Their goal? To be the first party to trek across the continent on foot. It was a goal they would never achieve.

Nearly a century later, the tale of **Endurance** remains one of the most fascinating examples of human triumph in the face of adversity.

The **Endurance** would sail, through the ice, for just over a month until January 18, 1915 when the ship was trapped in the crushing ice of the Antarctic pack. Despite the efforts of the crew, **Endurance** would remain lodged in the ice for the next nine months.

The thick ice of the Antarctic pack pressed constantly, threatening to crush **Endurance** to splinters. That threat forced the crew to abandon ship in October 1915. From now on the party would live on the ice. One month later, the ship sank, stranding the crew -- with minimal stores and three short-boats -- on the drifting pack ice. The men survived for the next six months, killing seals, penguins, and ultimately their own sled dogs for food.

In April 1916, the 28 men spotted an island on the horizon. The ice floor broke just enough, allowing them to put to sea in some of the roughest waters on Earth. Seven days later they landed on the uninhabited and inhospitable Elephant Island. Far from regular shipping lanes, Shackleton knew the chances of a rescue from their location were nonexistent. They may be on land but they were far from safety, and even farther from home. On April 24th he set sail, with a crew of five men, for the populated island of South Georgia -- *800 miles away*.

They sailed for 17 days, navigating by sextant, fighting their way through storming high seas of freezing water and they made it. They reached South Georgia Island! The weather and their own condition forced them, however, to land on the uninhabited side of the island. Shackleton and two other men were forced to trek on foot across the island. In 36 hours they traversed 22 miles across the glacier-clad, thousand-foot high mountains to reach the whaling port of Stromness on May 20, 1916.

His attempts to rescue his crewmen left behind on Elephant Island would not be successful until August 30, 1916, a full 22 months *after* they'd initially set out. Remarkably, all 28 men survived the ordeal.

Topic: God is (23): God is Faithful

Elementary:

Verse: “But the Lord is faithful, who will establish you and guard *you* from the evil one” (2 Thessalonians 3:3).

Focus: God is faithful to care for His people. God knows what we need and He is always faithful to provide us with what we need (not necessarily what we *want*). If we need something, we should ask God to provide it for us.

Practical Application: If we have a puppy, we need to be faithful to feed and care for it. Sometimes we may forget to feed the puppy or take it out for a walk. We forget because we are not faithful. God never forgets because He is faithful.

A true story: A young boy was given the responsibility to feed the chicken’s everyday in the evening before he ate his dinner. One evening as the family sat down together for dinner, the young boy was asked if he had fed the chickens. The boy answered “no” because he had forgotten. His parents told him that he could not eat his dinner unless he fed the chickens. The boy had to leave the table and go outside in the dark to feed the chickens. From this the boy learned that he had to be faithful to do his chores when he was supposed to do them.

Intermediate:

Verse: “God is faithful, through whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord” (1 Corinthians 1:9).

Focus: God is faithful to His word. Whatever God promises to do He does it at the time that He promises.

Practical Application: How many times have we promised to do something and then forgot to do it or did it after the promised time? Do we always do our chores at the time they are supposed to be done or do our parents have to remind us to do our chores? In the Old Testament, God promised to bring His people back from Babylon after 70 years and He was faithful to do it. In eternity past God chose us to be His people. In time God is faithful to call out all those whom He has chosen.

Advanced:

Verse: “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9).

Focus: God is faithful to His word. He can never change His mind and go back on what He has promised. Sometimes we will make a promise and then renege because we are not faithful.

Practical Application: God has made us a promise that when we confess our sins to Him, He will forgive us of every sin that we confess. No matter how naughty we have been, or how many wrongs we have committed, as long as we confess to God, He is faithful according to His word to forgive us.

Topic: God is (24): God is Forebearing

Elementary:

Verse: “Let your forbearance be known to all men. The Lord is near” (Philippians 4:5).

Focus: To be forbearing is to show reasonableness and consideration when dealing with others. It is to be gentle, lenient, and sweetly reasonable. God is forbearing and we should be forbearing with others.

Practical Application: At school you might be paired with someone to do an art project. That person may not be very good at drawing or cutting out shapes. Someone with forbearance would not get upset with him or her for coloring outside the lines or cutting things out crookedly, but would understand that the person needs time to learn how to color within the lines or cut out shapes correctly. A forbearing person would help the other person learn how to do those things and willingly correct any mistakes he or she made without complaining.

Intermediate:

Verse: “Or do you despise the riches of His kindness and forbearance and long-suffering, not knowing that God’s kindness is leading you to repentance?” (Romans 2:4).

Focus: Forbearance is refraining from enforcing something that is due. It is to not make others do something for you or give something to you especially when they don’t have the way or the means.

Practical Application: When a new kid who has never played soccer or baseball joins a team, the other team members must show forbearance to the new kid. They should not expect that he or she learns to play in just one game and they should not expect the new kid to be as good as they are.

Advanced:

Verse: “Whom God set forth as a propitiation place through faith in His blood, for the demonstrating of His righteousness, in that in His forbearance God passed over the sins that had previously occurred” (Romans 3:25).

Focus: Forbearance is to show reasonableness, considerateness, and consideration in dealing with others and not being strict in claiming one’s legal rights. For over 6,000 years God has shown forbearance towards man. He has been full of understanding about man’s condition, limitation and need.

Practical Application: Tell the story in Matthew 18:23-31. One day if you made a mistake, which caused \$100,000 damage to someone’s house, would you have the money to fix it? The person whose house was damaged has the right to request that you pay for the damage right now or he will take you to court and ask for you to be put in jail. To do this would not be forbearing. God knows that man could not pay his debt for sin and has shown forbearance to sinful man. God even sent His Son to die for our sins to pay the debt which we could not pay.

Topic: God is (25): God is full of Grace

Elementary:

Verse: "...Jehovah gives grace and glory" (Psalm 84:11).

Focus: "God is full of grace" means that God comes to help us when we cannot do what He wants us to do.

Practical Application: At home your parents might ask you to clean up a mess in the living room before guests come over. Sometimes, if the job is too big for us, our parents will come and help us clean up the mess that they asked us to clean up. This is an example of grace. God being grace means that God comes to us to help us do what we cannot do.

Intermediate:

Verse: "But the God of all grace, He who has called you into His eternal glory in Christ Jesus..." (1 Peter 5:10a).

Focus: Our God is the God of all grace. This means that there is no situation or time where God could not be grace to help us.

Practical Application: Our parents might need our help to prepare some food to take to someone who is in the hospital. Some days you might be willing to help, but not on other days. Are you willing to help when you have a test at school the next day, when you are not feeling well, or when you are playing with your friends? We may be limited in when we help others, but our God is always able to be grace to us in all situations. There is never a time when God as grace will not reach us to help us.

Advanced:

Verse: "For the law was given through Moses, grace and reality came through Jesus Christ" (John 1:17).

Focus: Grace is seen when God gives man what he needs to meet what God demands. Grace is not merely something that God does for us or gives to us, but it is God Himself. We all need God as grace.

Practical Application: One day the children on your street might be playing outside. You want to join them but you cannot until all your homework is finished. The math homework for that day is very difficult and you do not know how to complete one of the problems. No matter how much you try, you cannot solve the problem. Then your mom comes into the room and sees that you need help with your homework. She sits down and shows you how to solve the math problem. Your mother's coming to you was grace coming to you. Grace is not just the answer to the math problem, but your mother's coming to help you figure out the answer. This is how God is grace to us—He Himself comes to us to help us. The Bible says God's grace came through Jesus Christ.

Topic: God is (26): God is Great

Elementary:

Verse: “For You are great, and You do wondrous deeds; You alone are God” (Psalm 86:10).

Focus: God is great in size and power. There is nothing bigger in this universe than God. Because God is great there is nothing that He cannot do.

Practical Application: Compare the sizes of different animals. Which one is the largest? Which one is the most powerful? Ask the children which animal they would consider to be the greatest. Slowly increase the size of the things being compared, from large animals to large buildings, mountains, the Grand Canyon, cities, countries, continent, the earth, etc. Illustrations should be measured according to the kid’s ability to understand the relative size. Emphasize that God is so great that He encompasses everything in the universe and He is greater than everything in the universe.

Song: "My God is so big, so strong and so mighty...."

Intermediate:

Verse: “Great is Jehovah, and much to be praised; / And His greatness is unsearchable” (Psalm 145:3).

Focus: Everything about God is great (abundant). With God there is no limit to His love, power, mercy, kindness, etc. Our human love, power, mercy, kindness, etc. is limited.

Practical Application: Ask the children how many times they can forgive their siblings or friends who have wronged them, in order to expose how limited their love is compared to God’s. Ask the children if they feel comfortable being around beggars or handicapped. Then emphasize that God is so great (broad) that He loves everyone and can be with anyone. In the Bible we see that He can be with young or old, male or female, rich or poor, handicapped, moral or sinful people, etc. (e.g. Nicodemus, Samaritan woman, little children, blind, lame, leprous, tax collectors, etc.).

Advanced:

Verse: “And they sing the song of Moses, the slave of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and wonderful are Your works, Lord God the Almighty!” (Revelation 15:3a).

Focus: Everything that God does is great. He does not do things in a small, half-hearted way.

Practical Application: Look at how great a job God did in His creation of the heavens and the earth. God is also great in His care and salvation of His people. In the Old Testament, God did a great thing in bringing His people out of Egypt to the good land. In the New Testament, God showed His great love (Eph. 2:4) in sending His Son to die for us so that He could give us a great salvation (Heb. 2:3).

Topic: God is (27): God is a God of Hope

Elementary:

Verse: “Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing” (Romans 15:13a).

Focus: God is our hope and He fills us with joy and peace in times of hopelessness.

Practical Application: Tell the story of Daniel’s three friends. Describe how hopeless the situation was and how Daniel’s three friends trusted in God. Because God was their hope, they were joyful and at peace.

Intermediate:

Verse: “For I know the thoughts that I think about you, declares Jehovah, thoughts of peace and not for evil, to give you a latter end and a hope” (Jeremiah 29:11).

Focus: God gives us hope by having the plans for our future.

Practical Application: Ask the children what are the “what if’s” that bothers them (“What if you were lost?” or “What if you forgot to bring home your homework?”). Ask them what are some plans that people make to try to be safe in times of hopelessness (earthquakes, fires, etc.). Many people try to plan for a secure future but do not have the ability to bring it about. God knows our future and is planning it better than anyone else, even ourselves. God gives us such a hope.

You can also consider using the story of Ruth to illustrate how God is hope.

Advanced:

Verse: “My soul, wait in silence for God alone, / For my expectation is from Him” (Psalm 62:5).

Focus: When our hope is in God, we don’t have to be anxious for tomorrow and we can rest in Him.

Practical Application: Ask the children what are some things they may worry about when they go to bed at night (tests, performances, sports games, competitions). How do they feel when they think about these things? Encourage them to pray to God with their parents or by themselves. When we realize the hope we have in God and trust in this hope, we know tomorrow is taken care of by Him. We can then find rest from our worries and anxiety.

Topic: God is (28): God is Impartial

Elementary:

Verses: "...He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good and sends rain on the just and the unjust" (Matthew 5:45b). "And opening his mouth, Peter said, In truth I perceive that God is not a respecter of persons" (Acts 10:34).

Focus: God is impartial to all men; He does not play favorites. God loves and cares for ALL men. We should not judge people based on their appearance, speech, nationality, etc.

Practical Application: Illustrate how we all look a little bit different from one another. Some have short hair, some have blond hair, some have pale skin, etc. Although we all look different, that does not mean that we cannot be friends with each other. We should be warm and friendly to those who appear to be different from us. The illustration can be photos of people with different appearance or stories that illustrate the same point.

Intermediate:

Verse: "Where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all and in all." (Colossians 3:11).

Focus: God is impartial toward our social status. Similarly, we should not judge people based on their social status.

Practical Application: Illustrate how we all have different backgrounds and upbringings. Use everyday examples of different professions and common perceptions about them. For example, inquire how many people would disrespect a janitor or a trash collector because of his/her job; then speak about how we should show everyone the proper respect. Find a story that may illustrate a person being disrespected because that person was perceived to be in another social class when the same person is actually someone honorable.

Advanced:

Verses: "Who desires all men to be saved and to come to the full knowledge of the truth" (1 Timothy 2:4). "God so loved the world..." (John 3:16a).

Focus: God is impartial to everyone in the world and desires all people to know the truth. Impart the feeling that God desires everyone to be saved and to know the truth regardless of his/her apparent condition. (This lesson can be used as a bridge to lead the children to salvation).

Practical Application: Illustrate that God would want everyone to know the truth. Ask the children who they think deserves to know God or know the truth. Have a discussion with them.

Topic: God is (29): God is a Jealous God

Elementary:

Verse: "...for I, Jehovah your God, am a jealous God." (Exodus 20:5)

Focus: We belong to God. For God to be jealous over us is for Him to want us to love only Him as God and no one else. For God to be jealous over us is also for God to watch over us to guard and protect us so that no one would take us away from Him.

Practical Application: Ask the children to name things that are precious to them. What if there was another child in their neighborhood who liked to steal or break other children's toys. If they were playing outside one day with their favorite toy, what would they do when they see that mean child coming towards them? Would they just let the child take or break their toy? Would they feel happy if the child took or broke their toy? They would most likely be very watchful and protective of their favorite toy and guard it from being damaged. This means that they are being jealous over their toy. God is also very watchful and protective—jealous—over us.

Intermediate:

Verse: "For you shall not worship any other god; for Jehovah, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God" (Exodus 34:14).

Focus: God desires that we would love God and not make friends with His enemy. God loves us and knows that His enemy can hurt us, so He is jealous over us if we make friends with His enemy.

Practical Application: At school you might have a very special friend whom you love very much. There also might be someone at school who does not like you and does not treat you very nicely. How would you feel if that person who didn't like you tried to take your friend away from you, or tried to turn your friend against you, or even tried to get your friend to do things that you know are wrong? You would be right to be jealous over that friend in wanting to do all that you could to protect him or her from the person who did not have a good intention towards him or her. This is how God is with us.

Advanced:

Verse: "For I am jealous over you with a jealousy of God; for I betrothed you to one husband to present you as a pure virgin to Christ" (2 Corinthians 11:2).

Focus: God is jealous over us like the jealousy of a husband over his wife. God cannot tolerate it if our heart is divided or unfaithful. Other gods may rival God in our heart and try to take our heart away from loving God, but it is NOT okay with God if we have other gods. God is like a husband who would not tolerate it if his wife called someone else her husband.

Practical Application: Are we always faithful to God? How about on the Lord's Day morning when it is time to go to the meeting? Are we happy to go to the meeting to show God that we love Him more than anything else on the earth? Or are there other things that we would rather be doing on Lord's Day morning? An idol is a false god, but it is not limited to just a statue of a false god or something physical/tangible that we worship. It could be anything in our heart that we love more than God. What are some things that we could love more than God? How do you think God feels about those things?

Topic: God is (30): God is a God of Joy

Elementary:

Verse: "...In Your presence is fullness of joy; / At Your right hand there are pleasures forever" (Psalms 16:11).

Focus: Joy is the character of God. God is the God of happiness, joy, and pleasure and not a sullen, joyless God. Our joyful God wants us to be joyful people.

Practical Application: Ask the children what some of their favorite things to do with their parents are, for example, going to the beach, hiking, reading books together, playing games, etc. Point out that it is their parents' presence that causes those things to be enjoyable. Those things will not be as enjoyable if we do them by ourselves. Sometimes our parents may not be happy with us because we displease them. But our parents' desire is to have an enjoyable time with us always. This is also God's desire for us.

Intermediate:

Verse: "May the glory of Jehovah endure forever! May Jehovah rejoice in His works!" (Psalm 104:31).

Focus: Our joyful God delights in and rejoices in the works of His creation because they express God's glory and His divine characteristics (power and wisdom).

Practical Application: Ask the children what their favorite places are or what their favorite animals are, for example, Grand Canyon, polar bear, dogs, cats, etc. Ask them how they feel when they go to beautiful places or watch and play with animals. The Word says that God is pleased with what He created such as waters flowing, seasons changing, grass growing, birds nesting, lions roaring, the sea teeming with creatures, natural wonders (Grand Canyon, Niagara Falls), stars, and planets. What a joy all these things must bring to the Lord! God shares His joy of creation with us. We should appreciate it, care for it and not purposely damage it (litter, hurt or kill creatures, etc.).

Advanced:

Verses: "And God saw everything that He had made, and indeed, it was very good" (Genesis 1:31). "And do not be grieved for the joy of Jehovah is your strength" (Nehemiah 8:10b).

Focus: God's greatest joy is with people of all different colors: white, yellow, black and all different languages. In all of creation we are God's favorites. God delights in you and me.

Practical Application: No one enjoys being alone. We are the most joyful when we are with people who love us and care for us. Many times we experience joy when someone we love comes into our presence. As God's people we enjoy God's presence, which brings us joy. This is why we have joy when we are in children's meeting or when the saints visit our home. What do you think makes God joyful? When we sing (make a joyful noise) with a joyful heart, when we care for people who are different from us, when we obey our parents and teachers, etc. We should delight in people because God delights in people.

Topic: God is (31): God is Long-suffering

Elementary:

Verse: “Jehovah is long-suffering and great in power” (Nahum 1:3).

Focus: To be long-suffering is to be patient towards people, even those who persecute you. It is to continue showing kindness to someone who is not kind to you, with the hope that one day they would be nice to you in return. God is long-suffering because even though many people do not believe in Him or speak bad things about Him, God continues to show kindness to people with the hope that one day they would believe in Him.

Practical Application: On your first day at school you meet many new children in your classroom. At first, one of the children may not be very kind or nice to you. You might decide that they will not be your friend and you would not be kind or nice back to them. That is to NOT be long-suffering. To be long-suffering would be to continue being friendly with that classmate with the hope that one day he or she will become your friend.

Intermediate:

Verse: “You also be long-suffering; establish your hearts because the coming of the Lord has drawn near” (James 5:8).

Focus: To be long-suffering is to endure mistreatment. The Lord Jesus has endured much mistreatment from people. We need to follow the pattern of the Lord Jesus and be long-suffering towards people. We do not forsake the troublesome ones, but bear them in love.

Practical Application: We all probably know someone who is not nice to us. We want them to be our friend but they reject our friendship and are even mean to us. We should not abandon them or be mean back to them. But with long-suffering we should bear their mistreatment of us and continue to be friendly to them with the hope that one day they will be our friends. Ask the children if they have a story about how the first time they met someone they didn't like them or vice versa but after a while they got to know the other person and that person eventually became one of their very good friends.

Advanced:

Verse: “The Lord does not delay regarding the promise; as some count delay, but is long-suffering toward you, not intending that any perish but that all advance to repentance” (2 Peter 3:9).

Focus: The Lord Jesus in His long-suffering has withheld His judgment of the sinful people for centuries. The sinful people mock the Lord's long-suffering towards us as a delay, tardiness, or slackness. We should regard the Lord's long-suffering to be because he desires to give all men his salvation. instead of thinking that his long-suffering is a delay.

Practical Application: In eternity past God chose you to be one of His believers. In time you were born nearly 2,000 years after the Lord Jesus lived, died, resurrected and ascended to the heavens as the Lord of all. The Lord has the right to come back at any time to judge the sinful people on the earth, as He has promised to do. It is for salvation to you that the Lord has not come back yet. This has given you time to be saved. A farmer is long-suffering over his land with the hope that it

will bring forth much harvest. Each year a farmer will suffer much hardship in tilling the ground, sowing the seed and keeping the ground until there is a crop. Some years the crop will not be so big but the farmer does not abandon the land. He will continue each year to work the land through all kinds of hardship in anticipation of a harvest.

Topic: God is (32) God is a God of Peace (1)

Elementary:

Verses: “Therefore say, I now give him My covenant of peace” (Numbers 25:12). “If possible, as far as it depends on you, live in peace with all men” (Romans 12:18).

Focus: God is a God of peace. God’s Word shows us how to have peace with God and other people. Like God we can maintain peace with others by using proper words and gestures.

Practical Application: Give examples of how we can live in peace with others by using words such as “thank you,” “sorry,” and other polite expressions. Conversely, we should not use coarse or demeaning language towards another person. Our words can hurt other people’s feelings and cause problems. For example, don’t call someone “stupid” or “ugly”.

Intermediate:

Verses: “And let him turn away from evil and do good; let him seek peace and pursue it” (1 Peter 3:11). “So then let us pursue the things of peace and the things for building up one another” (Romans 14:19).

Focus: As a God of peace, God’s words and actions bring peace to people. We should not pick on people or cause problems for people. We should pursue peace and not retaliate with evil intentions.

Practical Application: Ask the children how they would live in peace with their siblings. Illustrate with daily examples such as taking our siblings’ things without asking; or blaming them for our problems; or having a quarrel with them about small things, etc. Conversely, they can choose to not be angry when someone does something wrong to them; they can choose not to retaliate. Illustrate with a story that highlights the nobility in pursuing peace even when someone wants to start a fight.

Advanced:

Verse: “Pursue peace with all men and sanctification, without which no one will see the Lord” (Hebrews 12:14).

Focus: As the God of peace, our God has restored peace with man, even with those who were His enemies. When we are in a conflict with others, we cannot have peace and we should seek to restore peace.

Practical Application: Discuss with the children concerning a time when they said or did something they shouldn’t have to a friend or family member. Were they peaceful and happy inside when they thought about the person? Did they look forward to seeing that person again? What about when they did something that they knew hurt someone? What if the other person did not retaliate? Did they have peace? How would they pursue peace in those situations? Illustrate with your own experience if appropriate. Use a story that can touch their conscience regarding not being right with someone or some matter and not having peace.

Topic: God is (33): God is a God of Peace (2)

Elementary:

Verse: “Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen” (Romans 15:33).

Focus: As the God of peace, God brings peace to people. In God’s family there is peace.

Practical Application: Talk about how in a family someone might be the peacemaker between two siblings. Sometimes just the presence of a person walking into a room can cause two people to stop fighting. In God’s family, He is the One who causes peace among the brothers and sisters. This is why we are peaceful when we are with the saints.

Intermediate:

Verse: “And the peace of God, which surpasses every man’s understanding, will guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:7).

Focus: The God of peace can bring peace and calm our hearts when we are troubled.

Practical Application: Everyone gets nervous about tests at school or if they have to move to a new neighborhood. Whenever we are troubled in our hearts or thoughts, we can speak to God about what troubles us. Many times after praying to God we are no longer troubled but at peace, because God gives our heart His peace. One time a little girl moved with her family to a new country. She was afraid that when she got to the new country she would not have any friends. After praying about this with her parents, the little girl was peaceful in her heart about moving. After arriving in the new country she quickly made some new friends.

Advanced:

Verse: “The things which you have also learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things; and the God of peace will be with you” (Philippians 4:9).

Focus: The God of peace is a reward for His people. When we live a life that is right with God and right in the way in which we deal with others, the God of peace will be with us.

Practical Application: Discuss how that with family and friends if we are careful to practice the proper way in speaking and dealing with one another the reward for our practice is peace. If we are not careful in our speaking and dealing with others we will lose the peace among our family members or friends. The same is true between God and us. If we are careful in the way we speak and live then the God of peace will be with us. But if we are not careful with our speaking and actions then we will be bothered in our conscience and lose the inward peace. When this happens we need to quickly restore the peace by confessing and repenting to God for what we did or said and also to apologize to the person we did or said those things to. Ask the children if they were able to live in peace with their family and friends last week. If the peace was broken ask them how it was restored.

Topic: God is (34): God is Prudent

Elementary:

Verse: “Which He caused to abound to us in all wisdom and prudence” (Ephesians 1:8).

Focus: Prudence means acting with care for the future. In whatever God does, He acts carefully and thoughtfully.

Practical Application: We should act carefully when we do certain things. For example, in the kitchen, we have to be prudent or careful not to touch the stove. When we go up stairs, we have to be prudent by holding on to the railing. When we cross the street, we have to be prudent and not run, but hold on to an older person’s hand.

Intermediate:

Verse: “Indeed, days are coming, declares Jehovah, when I will raise up David a righteous Shoot; and He will reign as King and act prudently...” (Jeremiah 23:5a).

Focus: God was prudent in the way He planned out our lives and then acted on that plan. He didn’t do things quickly or without forethought.

Practical Application: The focus of prudence is how we carry something out. Do we do it quickly, rashly, or do we do it carefully, according to a plan decided beforehand? A possible example: Suppose we wanted to build a tree house. How would we do it? Would we quickly rush out and start hammering boards onto a tree? Or would we make some plans, measure the wood, think about safety, etc.? An activity could be for them to make plans for building or making something. We could also tell the story of Joseph prudently storing up grain to prepare for the famine in Egypt.

Advanced:

Verse: “And the Lord said, Who then is the faithful and prudent steward, whom the master will set over his service to give them their portion of food at the proper time?” (Luke 12:42).

Focus: Just as God is prudent in dealing with us, we also should be prudent in dealing with others.

Practical Application: We should be prudent in choosing our close friends and in deciding what to do with them. First, we have to consider who our close friends should be. We have to consider whether or not they are good students, are respectful to their teachers, and what kind of people they are. Then, we have to be prudent in what we do with them. If they ask us to do something or go somewhere, we should not immediately say yes. We should act carefully and check with our parents. That way we are protected and safe.

Topic: God is (35): God is Kind

Elementary:

Verse: “Give thanks to Jehovah, for He is good, / For His loving-kindness is forever” (1 Chronicles 16:34).

Focus: To be kind is to do good things for people out of our love or mercy for them. God is kind because He provides people with what they need to live whether they are good or bad. In His kindness He causes the rain to fall and the sun to shine both on the righteous and the unrighteous (cf. Matthew 5:45).

Practical Application: Have the children list the things that God has provided for people to live on the earth: air, sunshine, rain, fruit trees, etc. Have the children describe ways that they could be kind to a new boy or girl at school or in the children’s meeting.

Intermediate:

Verse: “But love your enemies, and do good and lend, expecting nothing in return... and you will be sons of the Most High; for He is kind to the unthankful and evil” (Luke 6:35).

Focus: To be kind is to do good things for people without being asked and/or without expecting anything in return. God loves man. Even though man has disobeyed God many times, God in His kindness still cares for man and provides him what he needs continuously.

Practical Application: Talk to the children about how their parents are kind to them even when they are naughty. Sometimes when our parents discipline us we think they are not being kind to us. Actually, even though we deserved to be punished our parents still show kindness to us by not withholding their love and affection toward us and by continuing to provide for us.

Advanced:

Verse: “But when the kindness and the love to man of our Savior God appeared” (Titus 3:4).

Focus: It is the kindness and the love of our Savior God that caused Him to save us from our sins and make us different from others.

Practical Application: Tell the story of Nabal and Abigail in 1 Samuel 25. Nabal was not kind whereas Abigail was kind to David. In Mark 5:34, there is also the story where Jesus showed kindness to the woman who touched Him.

Topic: God is (36): God is Severe (strict and serious)

NOTE: This lesson should be taught after the lesson on “God is Kind”. The lesson is necessary for the children to understand that God means what He says in His word, especially about consequences.

Elementary:

Verse: “Behold then the kindness and severity of God...” (Romans 11:22).

Focus: God is both kind and severe (strict). When God says something He means it. God has His way that He wants things done. We must follow God’s way and not our own way.

Practical Application: Children must follow the way their parents want things done in their home. Children cannot leave their clothes wherever they want, they must put them in the closet. They cannot draw with crayons wherever they want or speak improperly to their parents or stay up as late as they want. Even though their parents love them and are kind to them, the parents will not be lenient with their children when they do things that are forbidden. When children do something that is forbidden the parents will not ignore it, but they will be severe, very strict, about the rules.

Intermediate:

Verse: “Jehovah has severely chastened me...” (Psalm 118:18).

Focus: Like loving parents, God is both kind and severe. God loves His people and cares for them. In His care He knows that it will spoil us if He lets us get away with disobeying Him. Therefore, God will be severe (strict and serious) in disciplining His people. If God says there is a certain punishment for disobeying Him, then He will punish those who disobey Him according to what He said.

Practical Application: When children disobey their parents they will many times beg for “one more chance.” If a parent continually lets the child have “one more chance” they will spoil the child because the child will never learn that there must be consequences for their actions. Eventually the child will do worse and worse things. But if the parents are both kind and severe when it comes to punishment, this will help the child to learn NOT to do certain things. Come up with a list of situations and have the children state what the consequences would be. For example: What would happen if someone were caught stealing, lying, talking in class when the teacher is talking, or if a person brought something not allowed to school?

Advanced:

Verse: “Behold then the kindness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but on you, the kindness of God...” (Romans 11:22).

Focus: God is severe in His judgment. If you commit an offense there will be consequences regardless of the size of the offense. Just one offense, regardless of the size, makes us guilty.

Practical Application: A punishment for an offense is the same regardless of the person who commits the offense. Suppose there was a boy at school who was not a very good student and regularly bullied other children. One day he brought something that was illegal (like a weapon) to

school. This act is very serious, and usually he would be suspended. Now suppose a straight-A student brought something illegal to school. Should he or she be suspended as well? Yes. The rule should be enforced in the same way, regardless of the student. God views our offenses the same way and judges them severely, strictly.

(Feb. 6, 2015)