



WEEK 4

ELEMENTARY LESSON OUTLINE



BIG IDEA

God wants to help families heal.

THE BIBLE

Jacob Wrestles with God:

Genesis 32:1-32; 33:1-16 (Matthew 18:22, Ephesians 4:32)

THIS WEEK AT A GLANCE

LARGE GROUP TIME

- **ACTIVITY** | Thumb Wrestling Tournament
- **ACTIVITY** | Broken Puzzle
- **QUESTION** | What are some things that are hard to fix once they are broken?
- **IMAGE** | Broken Heart
- **THE BIG IDEA** | God wants to help families heal.
- **BIBLE STORY** | Genesis 32:1-32, 33:1-16
- **OBJECT LESSON** | Nails in a Board
- **SCRIPTURE** | Matthew 18:22
- **OBJECT LESSON** | Heavy Load
- **ACTIVITY** | Snowball Fight
- **MUSIC** | Worship
- **ACTIVITY** | Finger Wrestling
- **TALK** | Recap of the Month
- **MEMORY VERSES** | Romans 8:28; Psalm 23:1-3

SMALL GROUP TIME

- **DISCUSSION**
 - What did Jacob pray for before he went to meet his brother?
 - What happened the night before Jacob met Esau?
 - Can you share a time when you had to forgive someone?
 - What are some things families need to be healed from?
 - How can God help our families heal?
 - When has God helped you with your siblings or family members?
- **SCRIPTURE** | Ephesians 4:32
- **ACTIVITY** | Mosaic Suncatchers
- **MEMORY VERSES** | Romans 8:28; Psalm 23:1-3



WEEK 4

ELEMENTARY LESSON GUIDE



BIG IDEA

God wants to help families heal.

THE BIBLE

Jacob Wrestles with God:

Genesis 32:1-32; 33:1-16 (Matthew 18:22, Ephesians 4:32)

LARGE GROUP TIME

WHAT? What are we talking about today?

ACTIVITY | Thumb Wrestling Tournament

- Welcome back! We are having so much fun learning about what God wants for families. Today, we're going to hear a story about an interesting wrestling match. **Have you ever done thumb-wrestling wars with your family?** Let's see who the class champion is today.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Have kids pair up with each other. Pairs will have a thumb wrestling match. The winners from each round can continue pairing off and playing until you end up with one winner.*
- **FOR PRETEENS:** *Instead of thumb wrestling, let them have an arm wrestling match, or a leg wrestling match. For instructions about how to do leg wrestling, see your weekly instructions.*
- **FOR KIDS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS:** *Kids without the dexterity to compete in a thumb wrestling contest can do rock, paper, scissors, or even arm wrestling.*
- Last week, we learned about how Jacob had to leave home because he had made his brother Esau so angry when he tricked him. They lived separately for years, but we're going to learn what happened when they saw each other again.

ACTIVITY | Broken Puzzle

- **Have you ever done a puzzle with your family?** Every puzzle is a picture that has been broken into many pieces, and the goal is to put the beautiful picture back together.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Divide the kids into teams of five. Give each team a 25-piece puzzle. Tell them to turn all the pieces upside down and challenge them to work together to put the puzzle together.*

Then, tell them to turn the pieces back over so they are right side up. See which team can put the puzzle together the fastest.

- We might have a beautiful picture in our mind of what a family should be like. Sometimes, that picture gets broken. Relationships can be hurt, but God can help our families and relationships heal.

QUESTION | What are some things that are hard to fix once they are broken?

- Some examples are: a glass, a car, a house, or a broken bone in your body. You all gave great examples of things that are hard to fix. Something else that is hard to fix is a broken relationship.
- **FOR PRETEENS:** Do an activity called *Banana Surgery* with your preteens. For details, see your weekly instructions.

SO WHAT? Why does it matter to God and to us?

IMAGE | Broken Heart

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Show the kids a picture of a broken heart.
- Sometimes our relationships in our families get broken. We learned last week Jacob and Esau's relationship was broken because of Jacob's dishonesty. Jacob had to run away because Esau was ready to kill him.
- Sometimes, family members hurt each other. Sometimes, things happen that hurt our families. Today, we are going to learn about what God can do when our families are hurting.

THE BIG IDEA | God wants to help families heal.

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Each week, do a big reveal (and make it fun) when you announce the Big Idea, like:
 - Ask the kids to give you a drumroll by stomping their feet or patting their laps.
 - Shout the Big Idea, then point to the kids and have them shout it back. (Change it up by using funny voices, different volumes, or inflections).
 - Have a character (either recurring or rotating) come out every week to reveal the Big Idea.
 - Write it on a piece of paper and hide it somewhere in the room. Have the kids go on a "hunt" for it. When it's found, ask someone to come up and read it.
- This week's Big Idea: **God wants to help families heal.**

BIBLE STORY | Genesis 32:1-32; 33:1-16

- We learned last week about Jacob tricking Esau to get his birthright and then tricking Isaac to get Esau's blessing! Jacob was very dishonest, and it hurt his family. He had a bad relationship with his brother for many years. This story sounds like it could have taken place today. Many of us have a hard time getting along with our siblings or family members! Let's read from the Bible to find out what happened to Jacob and Esau.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Look up the story in your Bible and encourage the kids to do the same. Read it!
- After a long time of living separate, the brothers were going to meet up. **Have you ever had a family reunion with family you haven't seen in a long time?** Jacob was worried about meeting his brother because Jacob knew he had stolen Esau's blessing. For years, the two brothers lived separate lives and didn't talk or have a relationship with each other. **Have you ever gotten into a fight with your sibling and had a time where you didn't speak to them for a while? What's the**

longest you've gone without speaking to your sibling?

- **Do you think Jacob felt bad about what he did to his brother?** Jacob prayed and asked God to help him and reminded Him of the promises He had made.
- **What did Jacob do to try to make Esau less angry?** He sent gifts ahead of him to Esau.
- **What happened on the night before Jacob met Esau?** Jacob had a wrestling match with someone he didn't know. He wrestled all night, and then the other person touched Jacob's hip and it hurt him and made him limp. **Do you remember who Jacob was wrestling with?** It was God! **Why do you think God came down to earth to wrestle with Jacob, and why do you think God couldn't overpower Jacob?** It could be that the wrestling was part of what He was teaching Jacob. God changed Jacob's name to Israel, which means, "struggles with God." The next day, after Jacob's wrestling match with God, he met up with his brother for the first time in many years.
- **What happened when Jacob and Esau finally met?**
- Even though Jacob and Esau's family had been broken by lies for many years, God put this family back together through forgiveness. God helped their family heal from some big hurts. Esau forgave Jacob, and they hugged. They had a relationship again.
- **Do you ever feel like Jacob, scared of how your siblings or family members will react to you when you've done something wrong? Do you ever feel like Esau, forgiving family members who have hurt you?** When we have problems in our families or fights with our brothers or sisters or parents, we can choose to forgive and put our family relationships first. We can let God help heal our families.

OBJECT LESSON | Nails in a Board

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Hammer ten nails into a board, explaining that the nails represent things we do that hurt someone else, such as lying or being mean. As the kids share examples of things that hurt our relationship with others, hammer a nail into the board for each example. Use the back of the hammer to pull the nails out. After the discussion, remove the nails and show the kids that the board still has holes in it.*
- **What are some examples of things we do that hurt our relationship with others?**
- Sometimes, we realize we have hurt someone we love and we apologize.
- **Since we apologized, our board should be as good as new, right?**
- It's important to apologize when we're wrong or when we realize we have hurt someone, but we also have to realize that our actions have consequences that may impact or hurt people for a long time.
- When Jacob went to meet Esau, even though he prayed and even though he sent gifts, it didn't change what he had done to his brother.
- Esau still chose to forgive Jacob. When we hurt others, there may still be consequences, but we can ask for and give forgiveness.
- When someone does or says something that hurts your feelings and then they apologize for it, you have to choose to forgive them. It doesn't mean it never happened or that it was okay that it happened. It means, like Esau, you choose to release your anger or frustration and forgive the other person.
- It was important to Esau to have his brother back, so he chose to forgive and have that relationship instead of hanging onto the anger he had many years before.

NOW WHAT? *What does God want us to do about it?*

SCRIPTURE | Matthew 18:22

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Look up the verse and read it!*
- **Do you have a family member or a friend that has upset you again and again?**
- In soccer, when a referee holds up a yellow card, it's a warning you've done something you shouldn't have. If you do it again, the referee holds up a red card and you are out of the game. One warning, and then you're out. In baseball, the batter gets three strikes before they are out, but Jesus has an entirely different approach.
- Peter was asking Jesus how many times he should forgive someone who sinned against him. **What would you think? How many times do you think would be good to forgive someone who keeps doing something to you?** Peter thought seven times was pretty generous. **But do you know what Jesus said?** He told Peter, not seven times, but 70 x 7! That is a whole lot! I don't think Jesus really meant for us to count to 490 and then stop forgiving. I think Jesus was saying, "Just keep forgiving people."
- Remember, forgiving doesn't mean that what they did was okay. And if someone is hurting you, you need to get help right away no matter what. Like with our wooden board and nails, forgiveness doesn't take away the consequences. At the end of the story, Jacob and Esau did not go and live together. They went their separate ways, but they no longer had the hard feelings between them.

OBJECT LESSON | Heavy Load

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Choose an older kid to pick up an empty backpack and put it on. Add large books and heavy items until it is really heavy.*
- **Have you ever had someone say or do something to you that hurt you so bad, you didn't want to forgive them?** Or maybe they didn't ask for forgiveness. When we don't let go of something, we carry the unforgiveness with us.
- Unforgiveness becomes like a big, heavy load we carry around in our hearts. God calls us to forgive others and let go of that. When we choose to forgive, we choose to not carry around the heavy load of a grudge. We can have freedom and we can have relationships with people who have hurt our feelings.

ACTIVITY | Snowball Fight

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Give every kid a piece of paper and a pen or pencil. Have them write or draw one thing that hurts our family relationships. Then, tell them to crumple their papers up. Split the kids into two teams, with a dividing line down the middle. When you say go, they will throw their "snowballs," or papers, to the other side, and they will keep throwing the papers all to the other side. Let them throw for 20-60 seconds, then call out "FREEZE!" They will stop playing and each team will count the number of snowballs on their side. The team with the fewest snowballs wins. Have all the kids toss the snowballs to each other. Have them open the paper and read what's on it with a partner. Then ask them to talk about one way God can help with whatever is written on their paper.*

MUSIC | Worship

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *You can select any songs you'd like, but for this lesson we like, "Forgiven" by Crowder or "You Forgive Me" by Group Publishing.*
- As you sing these songs, think about the forgiveness Jesus offers us. When our families are hurting, He can help them to heal.

ACTIVITY | Finger Wrestling

- Like Jacob had a wrestling match with God, we're going to have a wrestling match, too, but while using our fingers!
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Call two kids to come up front. Tell them to hold hands with each other, with their index fingers sticking out, pointing to the other person. When you say "Go," they will try to see who can be the first one to touch their opponent with their index finger. You can also let the kids play this in pairs. They need to be close in size and height for this game to work.*

TALK | RECAP OF THE MONTH

- This month, we've been talking about families in the Bible and our real families. We've learned that all families are different, and we can trust God with our families. Here's a recap of everything we've learned this month:
 - We learned about Abraham and Sarah having a baby, and that **we can trust God with our families.**
 - We learned about Abraham going up a mountain to sacrifice his son Isaac, and that **God takes care of our families.**
 - We learned about Jacob tricking his brother Esau, and that **God helps us be honest with our families.**
 - And today, we learned about Jacob wrestling with God and then reuniting with his brother, who forgave him. We learned that **God wants to help families heal.**
 - We learned some great Bible stories this month! Now as you go home, look for ways to remember these when you're with your family!

MEMORY VERSES | Romans 8:28; Psalm 23:1-3

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Give every kid memory verse magnets or stickers. Then work on the memory verse together. For ideas on how to do this well, check out the Memory Verse Guide in your Programming folder and give them to your small group leaders, if you'd like.*

SMALL GROUP TIME

DISCUSSION

- **What did Jacob pray for before he went to meet his brother?** (*Peace.*)
- **What was Esau's reaction when he finally saw Jacob?** (*Hugged him and forgave him.*)
- **Can you share a time when you had to forgive someone?**
- **What are some things families need to be healed from?**
- **How can God help our families heal?**
- **When has God helped you with your siblings or family members?**

SCRIPTURE | Ephesians 4:32

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Look up the verse in your Bible and encourage the kids to do the same. Read it!
- **How could a family member be kind and compassionate toward other family members during a fight or disagreement?**
- **How can giving forgiveness help a family heal?**

ACTIVITY | Mosaic Suncatchers

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Give each kid a square of clear contact paper and have them remove the backing. Have the kids place various colors of tissue paper pieces all over the contact paper to create a beautiful pattern. When they're finished, help them put another piece of contact paper (with the backing removed) on top of the design and press the two together. You could also let the kids trace a template, such as a star or a heart, then cut the contact paper into the shape. Punch a hole in the top, string it with ribbon or yarn, tie the top, and let them take their sun catchers home.
- **FOR KIDS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS:** Cut out some construction paper into different shapes: heart, circle, flower. Let them lay them down on the contact paper so they don't have to use small pieces of tissue paper. These will be perfect to lay on the contact paper prior to adding tissue paper. You could pre-tear your tissue paper and put it in different plastic bags for kids to choose from.
- A mosaic is a piece of art or an image made up of small pieces of colored paper, stones, or glass. It starts out as one large piece that is broken into small pieces and then put together to make a new image or piece of art. We're making mosaic suncatchers to remind us that God can take the broken things we do when we mess up and the mistakes we have made and turn them into something beautiful. **How can our mistakes turn into something good?** We can learn from them and become better people.

MEMORY VERSES | Romans 8:28; Psalm 23:1-3

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Give every kid memory verse magnets or stickers. Then work on the memory verse together. For ideas on how to do this well, check out the Memory Verse Guide in your Programming Folder and give them to your small group leaders, if you'd like.