



## God is Merciful

Genesis 4:1-15

### God Statement: God has a Plan

**KEY VERSE:** “The Lord himself will go ahead of you. He will be with you.”  
Deuteronomy 31:8 NIRV

## CHECK-IN

**(until 15 minutes after the start of each service)**

*Purpose: To build relationships with families and help parents feel comfortable leaving their child.*

*As parents check-in their child at your classroom, try to welcome them by name to help them feel secure in leaving their child in your care. Once you’ve completed each of the check-in procedures, welcome the child into your classroom and encourage him/her to play with the classroom toys and activities. If you have LITs in your classroom, this is a great time for them to help engage with the kids while you continue checking in the kids.*

*If a child brings money for offering, allow them to put the money in the class offering bank. Thank them for sharing with others.*

*If a child is upset or reluctant to enter the room, encourage him or her by offering toys, books or other fun items. If a child is still upset, let the parents know that we will text them if their child continues to be upset. Then, offer to carry the child into the classroom and try to calm the child with toys or other activities.*

*Use the “Connect” reminder (listed below) to help kids feel comfortable and safe in your class!*

## CONNECT WITH KIDS

*Purpose: Building relationships & prioritizing safety for our youngest children.*

Our goal, first and foremost, when serving babies and young toddlers is to prioritize building trusting relationships and the feeling of safety. We build trust with our littlest kids by meeting needs and helping them learn that church is a secure place where they are loved, known and safe.

**The 4 Ss are a simple way to keep our hearts and minds focused on this:**

When a child feels...(most of the time)

**SAFE:** physically and emotionally

**SEEN:** known and understood

**SOOTHED:** calmed and supported

They can become **SECURE.**

## EXPLORE ACTIVITY

**(10 minutes)**

*The Explore Activity is a chance to get the kids thinking about the upcoming Bible story for the day. Encourage your kids to engage with the activity as they prepare for the lesson.*

### DISCUSS:

In today's lesson, we are going to learn about how God is just and fair. There were two brothers. One wanted to please God and one wanted to please himself.

**SAY:** One of the brothers was a farmer. What does a farmer do?

One of the brothers was a shepherd. What does a shepherd do?

Would you rather take care of a garden or animals?

What is your favorite vegetable that grows in a garden? What is your favorite animal?

### Explore: Sensory Bag

**Supplies:** Sensory Ziploc bag filled with soil, animals, fruits and vegetables

**Directions:** Allow 1-3 kids at a time to come to the bag. Make sure a teacher is watching or holding the bag at all times and children don't tear holes in the bag.

**SAY:** You may explore the outside of this bag. Be gentle and see what you find! We'll take turns. We're talking about two brothers today. One brother was a farmer and one was a shepherd. What does a farmer do? What does a shepherd do? Have you seen this kind of animal before? (Have a conversation about some of the items in the bag.)

## CLEAN UP

(5 minutes)

*Have the children begin cleaning up as you transition into Large Group time. All the toys should be put away by the end of clean up time.*

*Try singing: "Clean up, clean up, everybody do your share. Clean up, clean up, everybody everywhere."*

## LARGE GROUP

(15 minutes)

*After clean up, have your class gather around the story time rug/blanket/squares and Hamilton's house for Large Group time. .*

### WELCOME & PRAYER

Tell the kids you are so excited to have them joining you this morning and give them a brief explanation of Large Group and the expectations of them during this time. After going over the expectations, pray to open large group time.

**Offering – ask:** Did anyone bring money for an offering today? This money is used to help other people. You may put your money in the class offering bank.

## WORSHIP

*Purpose: Engage our youngest children through the power of music!*

Use the Little Kids music videos on Plex to sing some simple songs with your class. To access these videos, go to **Plex > Videos > EC > 2s/3s folder**. Choose some songs to sing.

- Only God Can Do
- He's got the Whole World in His Hands

## READ A BIBLE STORY

*Purpose: Engage our youngest children in a meaningful way by teaching God's word!*

This week, read about a Bible story Genesis 4:1-15

**BIG IDEA: Cain and Abel were brothers. One had a clean heart and one had a heart that did not listen to God. God wants us to listen to Him and give Him our best.**

As you read, try to engage the child(ren) even more by pointing to the pictures as you read, allowing the kids to turn the page or repeating key words and phrases. It's ok if you don't read every word on the page! Kids have very short attention spans (1 minute for each year of age) so try to keep your interactions short and don't get discouraged if a child loses focus!

## BIBLE STORY (5-7 minutes)

### **THIS WEEK'S LESSON: *God is merciful.***

*Using the props and Hamilton puppet, tell the story for the day. Make sure to keep it brief and engaging by asking the kids questions throughout and using Hamilton to keep their attention.*

***Invite Hamilton to come out and see the class. He has a can of soup or veggies or fruit.***

**SAY:** Hi Hamilton. What do you have there? Ooh, some applesauce (*or whatever he is holding*). Did you bring that to give to Feeding Families? ***Hamilton shakes his head no.*** No? ***Hamilton shakes his head no again. Ham whispers in your ear.*** Oh, that's your favorite? You LOVE applesauce (*or whatever he is holding.*) Hmm, it's hard to give up your favorite, isn't it? Well, why don't you think about it while we listen to the story from the Bible.

### **Read the Bible Lesson below.**

**SAY:** Cain and Abel were brothers. See this picture? Here is a sheep. What does a sheep say? That's right. "Baaaa." Here is another picture. These are some vegetables you could grow in a garden. What's your favorite kind of vegetable?

Abel was a shepherd who took care of sheep. What does a sheep say? That's right. "Baaaa." Cain was a farmer who grew vegetables. Abel loved God. Cain didn't listen and obey God. It was time to bring an offering to God so Abel brought God his best sheep. Abel loved God and wanted to bring his best to Him. Cain didn't listen and obey God so he brought some vegetables from his garden. God wasn't pleased with Cain's offering and Cain was angry and sad. Can you show me an angry face? Wow, you look very angry! Cain was sad, too. What does your sad face look like? Mmm. Yes, very sad.

We want to give our best to God. What are some things we could bring to God? ***Let kids answer.*** Those are good things to bring to God. We don't see God but when we give our money to church or bring cans for the families who don't have much food, that makes God's heart happy. What if we brought some broken smashed cans to Feeding Families? Would that make God's heart happy? No, I don't think so. Let's bring our best to God.

Hamilton, what do you think about your applesauce? Want to give it to Feeding Families? ***Hamilton nods "yes" enthusiastically.*** You want to give your best to God? ***Hamilton nods "yes" enthusiastically.*** Good choice. You can drop it in the bin on your way home. Let's tell Hamilton bye. Bye, Hamilton.

### **SAY IT OUT LOUD! (30 seconds)**

*This is the opportunity to remind the children of the God Statement for the day. Even if they struggle to pay attention during the lesson, this part is important to do every week.*

We are learning that God has a Plan! (Have the kids shout it out together multiple times).

### **WORSHIP RESPONSE (2 minutes)**

Worship Response is an opportunity for the kids to apply what they just learned and to respond to what God is doing in their life. *Have the kids sit in a place where they can be still and reflect independently.* Then read through the Worship Response prompts below as you lead the kids through the time.

**SAY:** (Repeated from Bible Story)

We want to give our best to God. What are some things we could bring to God? (Let kids answer). Those are good things to bring to God. We don't see God but when we give our money to church or bring cans for the families who don't have much food, that makes God's heart happy. What if we brought some broken smashed cans to Feeding Families? Would that make God's heart happy? Probably not. Let's bring our best to God. What can YOU bring to God? **Let kids answer.**

### **BLESSING (1 minute)**

*Read the verse and blessing over the kids before closing Large Group. Encourage the kids to stand and open their hands to receive the blessing as a truth that they can take with them this week and hide in their hearts.*

**Friends, may you always remember to bring your best to God. He loves you and cares about your heart.**

## **CLOSING ACTIVITIES**

**(Until parents pickup)**

### **Make: Bring your Best to God**

**Kids will make two hearts. Let them choose their favorite to bring to God.**

**Supplies:** Two paper hearts for each kid. Crayons, stickers.

**Directions:** Let kids decorate two hearts. Encourage them to do their best and put on stickers, too.

**SAY:** Abel brought his best to God.

You made 2 hearts. Which heart do you like the best? Can you give that heart to God?  
Encourage them to stick their best heart on a giant heart with glue stick.

## PLAY!

*Purpose: Engage our youngest children by playing games and having fun!*

While your class can participate in free play for most of the remaining classroom time, please try to lead at least one structured activity with your class. This is a great opportunity to introduce kids to classroom games and encourage interaction and participation with others.

### Suggestions of activities:

- Hide an object and let kids find it
- Name and count parts of the body
- Discuss colors & numbers
- Turn on music and play freeze dance
- Have kids follow simple instructions (hop, sit down, clap, etc.)
- Read a board book
- Build a tower and let kids knock it down
- Play with a ball

## CHECK-OUT

### (end of service)

As parents arrive for check-out, the kids can continue participating in free play. Follow the check-out procedures for your classroom, making sure to send all of the child's belongings (diaper bag, bottle/sippy cup, pacifier, blanket, etc.) with the parent.

Give the parent encouragement about how the child did in your class and say "Bye (child's name)!"