God keeps his promises.

Bible Verse
“The Lord always keeps his promises; he is gracious in all he does” (Psalm 145:13b).

Growing Closer to Jesus
Children will
- learn that God will always do what he promises,
- understand that keeping promises is important,
- see that God kept his promises to care for Noah during the Flood, and
- explore the difference between good and bad promises.

Teacher Enrichment

The Bible Basis

**God gives Noah a sign of his promise.**

Once the 40 days of flooding stopped, it took almost a year for the water to recede sufficiently for Noah and his family to leave the ark. It’s interesting that one of the birds that Noah sent out to see if the earth was getting dry returned with an olive leaf. The olive branch has come to symbolize peace. Perhaps in the time of Noah, it symbolized a new peace between God and his creation.

Notice that Noah had a method for testing to see if the earth was dry, but God told him when it was dry (Genesis 8:13-15). God was taking care of Noah and his family, just as he had promised. When Noah and his family came out of the ark, no one had to tell Noah to worship God. Noah knew that God had done what he had promised in saving them through the ark, and Noah was grateful.

In Genesis 9:12-16, God again demonstrated his love for Noah. God made another promise, signified by the rainbow. The rainbow will always remind us of God’s promise to Noah and the fact that God always keeps his promises!

Prayer
- Read Revelation 4:3.
- How is the rainbow description of God on his throne in heaven another visible reminder of his faithfulness to keep promises?
- Pray: Lord, you are faithful to keep your promises. Help me reflect your goodness and keep my promises, too, by…
Lesson 5

Before the Lesson

- Collect items for the activities you plan to use, referring to the Classroom Supplies and Learning Lab Supplies listed in the chart.
- Make photocopies of the “Growing Together” handout (at the end of this lesson) to send home with your children.
- Pray for your students and for God’s direction in teaching the lesson.

This Lesson at a Glance

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<td><strong>Welcome</strong>—Receive a warm welcome from the teacher, and make name tags.</td>
<td>“Tree Name Tags” (p. 23), scissors, markers, tape</td>
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<td><strong>Attention Grabber</strong></td>
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- Make photocopies of the “Growing Together” handout (at the end of this lesson) to send home with your children.
- Pray for your students and for God’s direction in teaching the lesson.
Welcome

SUPPLIES: “Tree Name Tags” (p. 23), scissors, markers, tape

- Greet each child individually with an enthusiastic smile.
- Thank each child for coming to class today.
- As children arrive, ask them about last week’s “Growing Together” activities. Use questions such as “What kinds of paper animals did you make?” and “How did your family live for God?”

- Say: Today we’re going to learn that God keeps his promises.
- Hand out the name tags children made during Lesson 1, and help children attach the name tags to their clothing. If some of the name tags were damaged, or if children weren’t in class that week, have them make new name tags using the photocopiable handout.
- Tell the children that the attention-getting signal you’ll use during this lesson will be blowing the bird whistle. Ask children to respond by raising their hands. Rehearse the signal with the children, telling them to respond quickly so you’ll have plenty of time for all the fun activities planned for this lesson.

Attention Grabber

■ But You Promised!

SUPPLIES: none

Move classroom furniture away from the walls.

Gather the children on one side of the room. Say: Let’s have a race! The first person who takes tiny steps to walk around and touch every classroom wall and then gives me a high five might get a trip to the moon. Ready? Go!

After the race, congratulate the winner. Have the children give him or her a standing ovation.

Then look in your purse or wallet and say to the winner: I’m sure glad I didn’t promise to give you that trip because I don’t have enough money to pay for it. Would you take a handshake instead?

Shake the winner’s hand.

Ask: • I told you all that the winner might get a trip to the moon. Do you think it makes a difference that I didn’t say, “I promise to give the winner a trip to the moon”? Why or why not? (Yes, what you say doesn’t count unless you promise; no, you said you were going to give a trip to the moon, and that’s as good as a promise.)

Say: Tell a partner about a time someone kept a promise to you and a time someone didn’t keep a promise to you. Give children a few minutes to share. Then have volunteers share with the class.

Ask: • How do you feel when someone doesn’t keep a promise to you? (Bad; angry; upset; sad.)

- Why is it important to keep promises? (It’s important so people know you’re telling the truth; so people trust you; so you don’t make people sad.)

BIBLE POINT

God gives Noah a sign of His promise.

Teacher Tips

It’s important to say the Bible point just as it’s written in each activity. Repeating the Bible point over and over will help children remember it and apply it to their lives.
Hands-On Bible Curriculum—Grades 1 & 2
Lesson 5

**BIBLE VERSE**

• How do you make sure someone will keep a promise? (I make people swear to keep their promises; I remind them of their promise; I just have to trust them.)

Say: Our Bible verse for today comes from Psalm 145:13b, and it tells us that ▶ “The Lord always keeps his promises; he is gracious in all he does.” When someone is gracious, that means that person is very kind. God is kind, and ▶ God keeps his promises. We never have to wonder about it. If God says he’s going to do something, he’ll do it. Today we’re going to learn about a time God kept his promise.

**BIBLE POINT**

**Bible Exploration & Application**

### The Rain Came

**SUPPLIES:** Bible, masking tape

Before class, use masking tape to section off a rectangular area of floor space that’s just big enough for you and the children to squeeze into and sit down.

Put the *bird whistle* next to you so it’ll be ready to use at the end of the story. When everyone has squeezed into the rectangle, say: First, let’s talk about what we’ve learned during the last several weeks.

Ask:

• What’s your favorite thing about what we’ve learned in the last few weeks? (I liked learning that God loves me; I liked making the creatures; I liked the games; I liked the snacks.)

• How have you lived for God during the last week? (I was nicer to my brother; I helped clean the house; I didn’t talk back to my dad.)

• What do you remember about God’s love? (God will love me even when I mess up; God loved Adam and Eve even when they are the fruit.)

• What did you learn about creating things? (God created everything; God made people more special than animals; creating things takes work.)

Open your Bible to Genesis 7:17. Say: This week our story comes from Genesis, the first book in the Bible. Last week Noah told us what it was like to build the ark and gather all the animals inside it. Do you remember how it started to rain just as he finished his story? Well, let’s pretend that when it started raining during Noah’s story last week, it also started raining right here where we live and has been raining ever since. Let’s pretend it’s been raining so hard all week long that you couldn’t go outside at all, not even to go to school.

Let’s make some rain sounds. Have everyone start rubbing the palms of their hands together. And let’s pretend that this area we’re sitting in is the ark. Every time you hear me say a wet word like “water” or “rain,” say “Spoosh!” to sound like a water splash. Try that with me...Spoosh! Good!

Ask:

• Who knows how long it rained after Noah and his family got on the ark? (A long time; 40 days; 40 days and 40 nights.)

Say: Rain poured down for 40 days and 40 nights. That means in our pretend game that it not only rained here all last week but it also is going to keep raining this week and the next week and the next week and the next week and the next week after that, too.
Let’s make some storm sounds. Have the children start gently slapping their thighs to make louder rain sounds. Have several children make the sound of thunder by slapping their thighs louder and drumming the floor with their fists. After a minute of heavy thunderstorm activity, calm the storm by blowing the bird whistle and waiting for children to raise their hands.

Ask: • What would it be like if it rained all last week, all this week, the week after that, the week after that, and then the week after that? (There’d be a lot of water; things would flood; we’d have to stay inside.)

• How do you think Noah and his family felt, living in the ark for so long? (I bet they wished the sun would come out; I think they got tired of it.)

• What do you think they did while it rained? (Maybe they taught the animals tricks; maybe it took so long to take care of the animals that they couldn’t do anything else; I bet they got bored.)

Say: Living in the ark didn’t end after the rain stopped. The Bible tells us it rained so much that the entire world was flooded. Even the tallest mountain in the world was covered by lots of water. But God remembered his promise to Noah and his family. God promised to keep them safe during the flood, and he did.

After the rain stopped, the water started to go down. It took a long time for the water to go away. After a while, the water went down enough that the tops of the mountains stood out of water like little islands. The ark came to rest against one of those mountains.

Noah took one of the big black birds, called a raven, and sent it out to find dry land, but the raven just flew back and forth. Then Noah sent out a dove to look for dry land. A dove is a small bird, like a pigeon. Give a child the bird whistle, and have him or her “fly” the bird around the room looking for dry land. Have the rest of the children make “waves” by fluttering their fingers above their heads. There wasn’t a dry spot for the dove to land, so Noah reached out and took the bird back into the ark. Have the child return the bird whistle to you.

One week later, Noah sent the bird out again. Send out another child with the bird whistle. Have the children make smaller waves by fluttering their fingers on a level with their shoulders. This time the dove brought back an olive leaf, so Noah knew the ground was almost dry. One week later, Noah sent out the dove again. Send out another child with the bird whistle. Have the children make symbols for dry land by holding their hands together at an angle to form mountains. But this time the dove didn’t return to the ark. Noah knew the ground was dry. Have the child return the bird whistle to you.

God told Noah to let all the animals out of the ark so they could start living in the world again. Altogether, Noah and his family and the animals lived in the ark for one year and 10 days.

When Noah got off the ark, the first thing he did was build an altar, where he offered sacrifices to thank God for taking care of him. This made God happy. God promised to never again destroy the world with a flood. God said, “I am putting my rainbow in the clouds as the sign of the agreement between me and the earth. Floods will never again destroy all life on the earth. When I see the rainbow in the clouds, I will remember my promise.”

Since Noah and the animals left the ark, we’ll leave our ark, too. Allow kids to spread out.
Ask: • **How did God keep his promise to take care of Noah?** (God kept the ark from sinking; God kept the animals from attacking Noah; God made sure they were safe throughout the storm.)

• **What did God say would remind him of his promise not to make another flood?** (He would put his rainbow in the clouds; he would see the rainbow and remember.)

Say: **God keeps his promises.** God promised to take care of Noah and his family, and he did—even through the storm. After the storm, God promised to never destroy the world with a flood again. And God has kept that promise. Let’s find out what God has promised us.

### God’s Promises to Me

**SUPPLIES:** Bible, “Promises” handouts (*p. 66*), scissors

Before class, photocopy the “Promises” handout, cut out the slips, and hide them around the room. You’ll need one slip for each child. Make a few extra slips in case children can’t find the hidden slips during the hunt.

Say: **God keeps his promises.** Let’s find out what God has promised each of us. I’ve hidden some promises around the room. Hunt for them—they’re printed on little slips of paper. As soon as you find one, come back here and sit with me.

Give the children two or three minutes to find the slips. Help children read their promises. Have children form small groups with those who found the same promise. Instruct each small group to work together to read aloud the promise and come up with a way to act out how God keeps that promise to us. For example, if one group’s promise is “God promises to be with me,” one child could “shadow” another group member to act out the idea of children never being alone. Circulate among the groups and help them. Have each group read aloud its promise and act it out for the rest of the class.

Ask: • **Why does God keep his promises—couldn’t he break them if he wanted to?** (God could probably break promises if he wanted to, but he doesn’t want to; God keeps his promises because he’s good; God keeps his promises because he never lies.)

• **Why do you think God promises to do all these things for us?** (Because he loves us; because he wants to take care of us since he created us; because he thinks we’re special.)

Say: **God keeps his promises** because he cares for us and loves us. God has made many promises to us—each promise is important to God. We can count on God to do what he says.

The greatest promise God has made to us is the promise of eternal life through Jesus Christ. If we believe in Jesus and put our trust in him, God promises that we can live with him forever in heaven someday. What a wonderful promise!

Now let’s listen to some stories and decide how well we might do at making and keeping promises, too.
Making Promises

SUPPLIES: Bible, tape, scissors

Before class, cut the fake fur into four pieces.

Tape the checkered mat between two classroom chairs so the mat forms a “curtain” that hides the chair seats. Put the curtain on the far side of the room, away from where the children are gathered. Form four groups, and give a piece of fake fur to each.

Say: God keeps his promises. We can follow his example and keep our promises, too. But it’s a good idea to be careful about the kinds of promises we make because there are some things we can’t do and there are some things that get us into trouble.

Let me read Ecclesiastes 5:5 to show you what the Bible says about making and keeping promises.

Read Ecclesiastes 5:5 aloud, and then ask:

• What is better than making a promise you can’t keep? (To say nothing; not to make the promise at all.)

• What kinds of promises do you think wise people might make? (Easy ones; ones they could keep.)

Say: I’m going to read aloud several stories. In your group, you must decide whether the person in the story should make a promise or not. There’s one rule: Everyone must give an opinion.

Each time I read a situation, a different group member should act as the “fur keeper.” The fur keeper has two responsibilities. First, he or she must make sure all the group members say what they think. Second, when your group has made a decision, the fur keeper will cast your group’s vote by hopping up and putting your fur piece behind the checkered curtain. If you want the person in the story to make the promise, put the fur down unfolded behind the curtain. If you don’t want the person to make the promise, put the fur down folded one time over. Be careful not to let us know which way you’re putting down the fur piece. Any questions?

Read aloud the following situations. After each one, have children discuss and cast their vote. Lift up the curtain and tally the vote. Ask each group:

• Why did your group vote the way it did?
• Why should [shouldn’t] the person in the story make this promise?
• What’s going to happen if the person makes [doesn’t make] the promise?

Situation 1:

Samantha and Michael are good friends. They are next-door neighbors and are in the same class at school. One day, Michael was excited because he’d made plans to play with his new video game after school. But while they were walking to school that morning, Samantha said, “Michael, you’re my best friend. Will you promise to help me with my spelling this afternoon so I can pass my test tomorrow?” Should Michael make this promise?

Situation 2:

Ashley and Madison are super kickball players and best friends. Every day at recess, they rush outside so they can be first in line to kick the ball. One day, the teacher asked Madison to take a message to the office, so Madison asked Ashley to promise to save her a place in line. But there is a rule against holding places. Should Ashley promise to save Madison a place?
Situation 3:
Jacob and Adrian like to walk home from school through a field near their neighborhood. One day, they found a metal box. Jacob put his favorite baseball card in the box. Adrian put in the most beautiful rock from his rock collection. Then they buried the box. Jacob asked Adrian to promise never to dig up the box. Jacob said, “If you dig up the box, our friendship will be over.” Should Adrian promise not to dig up the box?

After all the situations have been read and discussed, ask:
• What’s the difference between a good promise and a bad promise? (A good promise will help people; a bad promise will get you into trouble.)
• If you make a bad promise, should you keep it? (Yes, you should keep a promise no matter what; no, if you keep a bad promise, you’ll just make things worse.)

Say: **God keeps his promises.** But God is careful to make only good promises. We need to keep our promises, too. But we need to make good decisions about the promises we make. Good promises will help others. Bad promises will hurt us or someone else.

Collect the checkered mat and fake fur for use in later lessons.

HANDS-ON BIBLE

Say: **God has been showing people his love for thousands and thousands of years. He even sends us a reminder of that sometimes.**

Ask: • What is something God sends to remind us he loves us? (Family; everything we need; a rainbow.)
• How else do we know God loves us? (He says so in the Bible; God promises that he loves us, and God keeps his promises.)

Help kids find Genesis 9 in their Hands-On Bibles. You’ll need a paper plate half for each child, coloring or painting supplies, construction paper, yarn, scissors, and tape. Help kids follow the instructions in the “I Promise!” activity in their Hands-On Bibles. As kids are working, say:

**To help us remember a promise God made and that God loves us, he sends a rainbow every now and then. We can show God we love him by making promises. When you make your promises on your raindrops, remember that they are promises of love to God.**
God Gives Noah a Sign of His Promise

Closing

The Rainbow

SUPPLIES: white paper or newsprint, tape, markers or crayons

Ask: What are some things you learned today? (I learned that God makes and keeps promises; I learned about Noah and the storm.)

Tape several sheets of white paper or newsprint together to form a large banner. Spread the banner on the floor. Hand out markers or crayons, and have children work together to draw a large rainbow.

While the children are working, have them tell you about times God has kept promises to them. If children can’t think of anything, ask them about answered prayers or times they felt God’s love or protection.

When the banner is complete, hang it from the ceiling with tape. Stand in a circle, positioned so that only one child is standing directly under the banner. Walk around in the circle while you sing the following song to the tune of “Jesus Loves Me.”

SING

When I’m looking at the sky
And see a rainbow way up high,
I’ll think of what the Bible says:
“God will keep his promises.”

When you’ve sung the song, stop walking and have the person standing under the rainbow shout out one promise God has made. If children can’t think of any ideas, remind them of the promises from the “Promises” handout.

Sing the song again. Sing enough verses of the song to give everyone a turn under the rainbow.

Then say: Let’s say thank you to God because God keeps his promises.

Pray: God, thank you for always keeping your promises. Remind us to keep our promises, too. In Jesus’ name, amen.

Growing closer to Jesus extends beyond the classroom.

Photocopy the “Growing Together” handout (at the end of this lesson) for this week, and send it home with your children. Encourage children and parents to use the handout to plan meaningful activities on this week’s topic. Follow up the “Growing Together” activities next week by asking children what their families did together.

Live it!

X-tra impact

To make these sun catchers, you’ll need newspaper, white paper, crayons, cooking oil, paintbrushes, tape, wax paper, and cleaning supplies. Give each child a sheet of white paper. Have the children use bright crayons to color rainbows. Tell children to press hard as they color and to fill up the entire page with their drawings. Then have children outline their drawings with a black crayon. While children are working, talk about the promises God has made and how he keeps them.

Next, have children brush a thin layer of cooking oil all over their papers and set them on newspaper to dry.

Next week tape the pictures in the window to catch the light like stained glass. Have children roll the pictures up on pieces of wax paper to take home.
# Promises

Photocopy enough of these promise slips to give each child one. Cut out the slips, and hide them around the classroom before class begins.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>God promises to be with me. (Deuteronomy 31:6)</th>
<th>God promises to answer my prayers. (1 John 3:22)</th>
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Etc.

Remind your child that you promise to love him or her forever. Put an “I Love You” sticker in his or her lunch box. Attach an iron-on happy-face patch to the inside of his or her jacket. Or weave a colorful ribbon or piece of fabric in with a shoestring on his or her favorite tennis shoes.

Talking to God

Serve honey and biscuits as a special celebration of God’s many good promises in the Bible. Read aloud Psalm 119:103: “How sweet your words taste to me; they are sweeter than honey.” Have each family member explain why he or she thinks God’s promises in his Word are sweeter than honey. Then spend time as a family thanking God for all his promises.

Growing Up

Encourage your child to be responsible. Explain that agreeing to do something is the same as making a promise. Together choose several tasks that your child will agree to do on a steady basis. Your child could bring in the mail, set the table, straighten the living room before bedtime, or do yardwork on the weekend. Also agree on consequences when tasks aren’t completed.

Promise Pals

Play “I Promise.” Think of a promise you could make; for example, promising to let your child eat ice cream for breakfast every day for a week. If your child decides it’s a good promise, he or she hugs you. If your child decides it’s not a good promise, he or she tickles you. Then turn it around and have your child think of promises to make. End the game with several good promises so things settle down before sleep time.