God wants us to trust and obey him.

Bible Verse
“Trust in the Lord with all your heart” (Proverbs 3:5a).

Growing Closer to Jesus
Children will ■ learn that sometimes God wants us to give up things,
■ go on a treasure hunt to find some precious treasures,
■ help Pockets choose to obey God, and
■ realize how important it is to obey God.

Teacher Enrichment

Bible Basis
■ God tests Abraham’s faith.

Genesis 22:1-18
The story may seem horrifying—what kind of God would command a parent to sacrifice a child? But if we examine the text, we can take comfort in knowing that God never intended for Abraham to sacrifice Isaac. The whole event was designed to test Abraham; it was a chance for him to show how far he would go in obeying God.

Abraham’s faith in God and his willingness to obey are truly amazing. Not only was he willing to sacrifice his son, but he maintained faith that somehow his son would be returned to him. He said to his servants, “We will come right back” (Genesis 22:5). Somehow Abraham was confident that in spite of this command, God would preserve Isaac. And Isaac, too, showed faith. He submitted to being placed on the altar in obedience to God’s command. Abraham passed the test, and God averted the death of Isaac.

Prayer
• Read Hebrews 11:17-19.
• Has God ever asked you to do something that seemed scary at first? How did you respond?
• Pray: Lord, help me and the children I teach to trust and obey you, even when…

Before the Lesson
■ Collect the necessary items for the activities you plan to use. Refer to the Classroom Supplies and Learning Lab Supplies columns to determine what you’ll need.
■ Make photocopies of the “Today I Learned…” handout (at the end of this lesson) to send home with your children.
■ Pray for the children in your class and for God’s direction in teaching the lesson.
This Lesson at a Glance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What Children Will Do</th>
<th>Classroom Supplies</th>
<th>Learning Lab Supplies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Welcome Time</strong></td>
<td><strong>Welcome!</strong>—Receive name tags, and be greeted by the teacher.</td>
<td>“World Name Tags” handout (p. 27), markers, tape or safety pins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Let's Get Started</strong></td>
<td><strong>Option 1: My Favorite Things Box</strong>—Decorate a box with pictures of their favorite things.</td>
<td>Box, glue sticks, magazines, safety scissors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Option 2: Faith Leap</strong>—Take a big &quot;faith leap&quot; to beanbags.</td>
<td>Beanbags</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Option 3: Sand Pictures</strong>—Make sand pictures to remind them of God's promise to Abraham.</td>
<td>Sand, colored chalk, plastic bags, pie tins, newspaper, glue sticks, paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Pick Up Our Toys</strong>—Sing a song as they pick up toys, and gather for Bible Story Time.</td>
<td>CD player</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bible Story Time</strong></td>
<td><strong>Setting the Stage</strong>—Find precious “jewels” around the room, and talk about their special things.</td>
<td>Shiny wrapping paper, scissors, Favorite Things Box from Option 1, CD player</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Bible Song and Prayer Time</strong>—Sing a song, bring out the Bible, and pray together.</td>
<td>Bible, construction paper, scissors, CD player, basket or box</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Hear and Tell the Bible Story</strong>—Learn from Genesis 22:1-18 how Abraham obeyed God even when it was hard.</td>
<td>Beanbag</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Dress Up and Drama</strong>—Act out the story of Abraham and Isaac on the mountain using special props, and think about what it's like to obey.</td>
<td>Wooden or plastic blocks, stuffed animal, tape, chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Do the Bible Story</strong>—Play a game that rewards the good choice to obey.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Closing</strong></td>
<td><strong>Pockets' Precious Things</strong>—Help Pockets learn to give up precious things to help others.</td>
<td>Baby toy, tape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>God's Precious Treasure</strong>—Share about God giving up Jesus for us, and then sing a song.</td>
<td>Favorite Things Box from Option 1, Bible, CD player</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*See the end of this lesson for extra-time ideas and supplies.
Welcome Time

Welcome!

SUPPLIES: “World Name Tags” handout (p. 27), markers, tape or safety pins
• Bend down to make eye contact with children as they arrive.
• Greet each child individually with an enthusiastic smile.
• Thank each child for coming to class today.
• As children arrive, ask them how they put last week’s lesson into practice. Ask questions such as “When did you trust God this week?” and “What promises did God keep to you this last week?”
• Say: **Today we’re going to learn that God wants us to trust and obey him.**
• Hand out the world name tags children made in the first lesson, and help them attach the name tags to their clothing. If some of the name tags were damaged or if some of the children weren’t in class that week, have them make new name tags using the photocopiable handout.
• Direct children to the Let’s Get Started activities you’ve set up.

Let’s Get Started

Set up one or more of the following activities for children to do as they arrive. After you greet each child, invite him or her to choose an activity.

Circulate among the children to offer help as needed and direct children’s conversation toward today’s lesson. Ask questions such as “When do you have to share your favorite things?” or “What’s it like to give up something special such as an animal or a favorite toy?”

**Option 1: My Favorite Things Box**

SUPPLIES: box, glue sticks, magazines, safety scissors

Set out magazines, glue sticks, safety scissors, and a large box. Have the children cut out pictures of their favorite foods, toys, cars, animals, colors, or clothes and glue them on the box. As children work, discuss what it would be like to live without those things. Tell them they’ll hear a story about a time when God asked Abraham to give up his most favorite thing in the whole world. Set the box aside to use later in the lesson.

**Option 2: Faith Leap**

SUPPLIES: beanbags

Set several beanbags near a wall. Allow children to decide how far away from the wall they think they can jump, and then place a beanbag at that spot. Have the children stand at the wall and leap to their beanbags. If they make it, have them move their beanbags farther from the wall. Talk about how trusting in God is like taking a giant leap and trusting that we’ll land safely. Explain that sometimes God asks us to do things that require a bigger leap of faith, like putting the beanbags farther than we really think.

It’s important to say the Bible Point just as it’s written in each activity. Repeating the Bible Point over and over throughout the lesson will help kids remember it and apply it to their lives.

If you don’t have plenty of old magazines, allow children to draw their favorite things on scrap paper and glue their drawings to the box.
we can jump. As kids are jumping, have them share times when it’s been difficult to trust God, such as when they’ve been scared, when someone they love was sick, or when a parent lost his or her job. Tell children that they’ll hear about a big thing Abraham had to trust God for.

**Option 3: Sand Pictures**

**SUPPLIES:** sand, colored chalk, plastic bags, pie tins, newspaper, glue sticks, paper

Before class, make colored sand by pouring one cup of sand into a sealable plastic bag along with a chunk of brightly colored sidewalk chalk. Shake and mix the two until your sand is brightly colored, too. Make two or three colors of sand, and set each one in a pie tin on a newspaper-covered table.

Allow children to make sand pictures by running a glue stick across a sheet of paper and then sprinkling colored sand over it. Show children how to carefully dump the excess sand back into the pie tin. As kids work, remind them that God promised Abraham that he would have more relatives than there is sand on the seashore. Explain that today’s story will show God wants us to trust and obey him.

When everyone has arrived and you're ready to move on to the Bible Story Time, encourage the children to finish what they're doing and get ready to clean up.

**Pick Up Our Toys**

**SUPPLIES:** CD player

Lead children in singing “Pick Up Our Toys” (track 2) with the CD to the tune of “Skip to My Lou.” Encourage the children to sing along as they help clean up the room.

If you want to include the names of all the children in your class, sing the song without the CD and repeat the naming section. If you choose to use the CD, vary the names you use each week.

**SING**

We will pick up our toys.
We will pick up our toys.
We will pick up our toys
And put them all away.

There’s [name] picking up toys.
There’s [name] picking up toys.
There’s [name] picking up toys,
Putting them all away.

(Repeat.)
God Tests Abraham’s Faith

Bible Story Time

Setting the Stage

SUPPLIES: shiny wrapping paper, scissors, Favorite Things Box from Option 1, CD player

Tell children you’ll clap your hands to get their attention. Explain that when you clap, the children are to stop what they’re doing, raise their hands, and focus on you. Encourage children to respond quickly so you’ll have time for all the fun activities you’ve planned.

Before class, cut odd-shaped “jewels” out of shiny wrapping paper or crumpled aluminum foil, and hide them around your room. You’ll need one hidden jewel for every student in your class.

Form a circle and say: I’ve hidden some special jewels around the room. Let’s take a minute and see if we can help each other find them. If you find a paper jewel, bring it back to the circle and wait for the rest of us to join you. Ready? Let’s hunt for treasure!

Help students find the paper treasures, and then return to the circle. When everyone is seated, say: Let’s go around and share something that we truly treasure in real life. It may be your family, a toy, a pet, or a special friend.

When everyone has shared, ask:

• Why is that so special to you? (Because I love my mom; my dad is fun to play with; I can’t sleep without my teddy bear; my dog is my friend.)

• What if I told you to give that special thing to me? (I’d cry; I wouldn’t want to; I’d be sad; I wouldn’t know what to do.)

Say: Our families and these other things are all very special and important to us. They’re our precious treasures. But for now, I’d like you to give your jewel treasure to me. I’ll keep them all in this special box. Bring out the Favorite Things Box made during Option 1, and have kids place their jewels in the box.

Thank you so much for obeying me! You each get a star stamp for trusting me. Stamp each child’s hand with the star stamp.

God gives us special treasures because he loves us. God wants us to trust and obey him. Today we’ll learn about Abraham’s precious treasure and hear about a time when God asked him to give up that most special thing. You’ll see how Abraham trusted and obeyed God.

Play the song “With All Your Heart” (Proverbs 3:5a) (track 20) on the CD. Lyrics can be found at the back of your teacher guide. Play it a second time, and encourage the children to sing along with the CD.

Bible Song and Prayer Time

SUPPLIES: Bible, construction paper, scissors, CD player, basket or box

Before class, make surprise cards for this activity by cutting construction paper into 2x6-inch slips. Prepare a surprise card for each child, plus a few extras for visitors. Fold the cards in half, and then stamp the star stamp inside one of the surprise cards. Bookmark Genesis 22:1-18 in the Bible you’ll be using.
Have children sit in a circle. Say: **Now it's time to bring me the Bible marked with today's Bible story. As we sing our Bible song, I'll pass out the surprise cards. Don't look inside your card until the song is over.**

Lead children in singing “Read God’s Book” (track 3) with the CD, to the tune of “The Muffin Man.” As you sing, pass out the folded surprise cards.

**SING**

Now it's time to read God's Book,
Read God's Book, read God's Book.
Now it's time to read God's Book.
Let's hear a Bible story.

(Repeat 3x.)

After the song, say: **You may look inside your surprise cards. The person who has the stars stamped inside his or her card will be our Bible person for today.**

Identify the Bible person, and have the rest of the children clap for him or her. Ask the Bible person to bring you the Bible. Help the Bible person open the Bible to the marked place and show children where your story comes from. Then have the Bible person sit down.

Say: [Name] was our special Bible person today. Each week, we'll have only one special Bible person, but each one of you is a special part of our class! Today we're all learning that **God wants us to trust and obey him.**

Let's say a special prayer now and ask God to help us obey him. I'll pass around this basket. When the basket comes to you, put your surprise card in it and say, “God, help me to obey you.”

Pass around the basket or box. When you've collected everyone’s surprise card, set the basket aside and pick up the Bible. Lead children in this prayer: **God, thank you for the Bible and all the stories in it. Teach us today that you want us to trust and obey you. In Jesus’ name, amen.**

### Hear and Tell the Bible Story

**SUPPLIES:** beanbag

Bring out the Learning Mat: Abraham. Have children gather around the Learning Mat, near the picture of Abraham and Isaac building an altar. Say: **Our Bible story comes from the book of Genesis in the Bible. Our Learning Mat shows us pictures of our Bible story.**

These past few weeks we've been talking about a man named Abraham. Before we talk about today's amazing story, let's see how much you remember about Abraham. Bring out a beanbag and give it to a child. **Toss the beanbag onto the Learning Mat. Then tell me something you remember about the picture it lands on.** Allow each child to toss the beanbag and then tell about the pictures. When everyone has had a turn, toss the beanbag onto the picture of Abraham and Isaac building an altar.

**Isaac is an important part of today's story. Many years went by, and he grew from that tiny baby (point to the picture from the previous lesson) into a boy. Abraham loved his little boy so much! To feel how much he loved Isaac, give yourself a big hug. Now give your neighbor a big hug. That's a lot of love! Isaac was Abraham's most precious treasure.**
One day God told Abraham to take Isaac to a special place and offer him as a sacrifice. Remember, Abraham loved Isaac very much. Give yourself a big hug to remember how much he loved his son. He didn’t want to give Isaac up, but Abraham obeyed God and took Isaac on a long journey to Mount Moriah. Let’s take a little journey to see what that was like. Lead the children on a journey around the room. You may have them pretend to hike or climb stairs, since Abraham and Isaac climbed a mountain.

Then come back to the Learning Mat and sit down.

Say: Whew! Abraham and Isaac traveled for three whole days before they arrived at Mount Moriah. Our Learning Mat shows us a picture of them building an altar. As they built it, Abraham knew that soon he’d have to give up his precious son.

Ask: • How do you think Abraham felt when he built the altar? Explain. (Sad because it was for Isaac; scared because he didn’t know what to do.)

Say: When the altar was built, Isaac asked Abraham, “We have the fire and the wood, but where is the sheep for the burnt offering?” Abraham said, “God will provide a sheep for the burnt offering, my son.” Give yourself another big hug to remember Abraham’s love for Isaac. Abraham obeyed God and laid Isaac on the altar. Just then an angel said, “Abraham! Abraham! Don’t hurt the boy! Now I can see that you trust God and won’t even hold back your only son.”

Ask: • How do you think Abraham felt when he heard that? (Happy; glad; excited; surprised.)

Say: I’ll bet Abraham hugged his precious son when he heard that! So give your neighbor a big hug, too! Well, Abraham looked up and saw a ram caught in the bushes. A ram is a male sheep. So he went and made the ram his sacrifice. God had provided a new sacrifice, because Abraham had obeyed.

Ask: • Why do you think God tested Abraham this way? (So he’d know if Abraham loved him; because he wanted Abraham to obey; I’m not sure.)

• Has God ever asked you to do something hard? Explain. (Yes, because I’m supposed to be nice to my sister; yes, when we had to have our dog put to sleep.)

Say: God may not ask you to do something as hard as Abraham had to do. But whatever he does ask us to do, God wants us to trust and obey him. Now let’s pretend what it might have been like for Abraham and Isaac on the mountain.

Dress Up and Drama

SUPPLIES: wooden or plastic blocks, stuffed animal, tape, chair

Before class, tape the crepe paper streamer pieces to the back of a chair, creating the “thicker” for the story.

Form a circle. Give each child a small wooden or plastic block.

Say: Abraham and his son Isaac went up a big mountain. On the mountain, Abraham built an altar from bricks to show that he obeyed God. Let’s build an altar to remember the story of Abraham and to remember that God wants us to trust and obey him.
Guide children in taking turns adding a block to the middle of the circle to build an altar. As children add their blocks, direct them each to say, “I’ll obey God.” When each child has had a turn, bring out the Abraham and Isaac puppets and a stuffed animal (to use as the ram). Ask two volunteers to use the puppets to act out the story. Give the “ram” to another volunteer, and have him or her crouch down behind the crepe paper streamer thicket.

Remind children how Abraham and Isaac traveled to Mount Moriah and built the altar there. Then tell how God provided the ram, caught in the thicket. Let children take turns using the props to act out the Bible story.

Say: Thank you for that great storytelling! Abraham and his son Isaac traveled a long way up the mountain. Abraham knew why they had to go up there. That must have been very hard for him.

Ask: • How do you think Abraham felt when he took Isaac up the mountain? (Sad; tired; worried.)

• How do you think Abraham felt to know he wouldn’t have to sacrifice his son because God had provided a ram for the sacrifice? (Glad; happy.)

• Tell about a time when you obeyed God, even though it was hard. How did it make you feel? (I had to go to the dentist, but I was brave and didn’t cry; I was sad when my dad moved away from home, but I obeyed my mom and stayed with her.)

Say: Sometimes it can be hard to obey God, but you and I can be like Abraham. We can trust God and be obedient. Our Bible verse comes from Proverbs 3:5, and it says, ►“Trust in the Lord with all your heart.” Have kids repeat the verse with you. That means we should trust God more than anything, no matter what. When we do that, it will be easier to obey God. ►God wants us to trust and obey him. Let’s practice obeying in our next game!

Do the Bible Story

SUPPLIES: none

Stand at one end of the room with the Learning Mat: Abraham at your feet. Have the children stand at the other end of the room.

Say: God trusts us, too, and gives us the freedom to make the choice to obey him or not obey him. It’s important to remember that obeying God is a way of showing that we trust and love him. In this game, I’ll read a time when you would have to decide whether or not to obey someone. If you would decide to obey, take one step forward. If you think you wouldn’t obey, stay where you are.

Read aloud each situation listed below. After each sentence, say: If you choose to obey, move one little step forward. If you choose not to obey, stay where you are. These situations will get you started.

• Your mom asks you to come in for dinner.
• Your teacher asks you to wash your hands before snack.
• Your parents say it’s time to get ready for bed.
• You’re asked to share your toys with some guests.
• You’re told to be kind to your little brother or sister.
• Your teacher says it’s time to come in from the playground.
• Your dad asks you to help pull weeds in the yard.
• Your grandfather asks you to put your bicycle away.
• Your parents ask you to clean up your room.
• Your mom asks you to clear the dishes off the table after dinner.
• Your grandmother asks you to try everything on your plate.
• Your parents ask you to cheerfully take the garbage out.

When everyone has reached the Learning Mat, reward children by stamping their hands with the star stamp. Then gather kids together and ask:
• **What’s the hardest thing about deciding to obey?** (Sometimes I don’t want to; sometimes it’s hard work and I would rather play.)
• **What’s our reward when we obey?** (Happy parents; making God happy; getting to do more fun things.)

Say: **When we trust and obey, we make ourselves and others very happy.**

This week, remember that obedience will make you a winner because God *wants us to trust and obey him.* Let’s see if Pockets knows how important it is to trust and obey.

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### Closing

#### Pockets’ Precious Things

**SUPPLIES:** baby toy, tape

Before class, tape a baby toy to Pockets’ paws or place it in her pouch.

(Pockets enters, holding a baby toy.)

**Teacher:** Pockets, what’s that? Aren’t you a little old for that?

**Pockets:** Yeah, I guess. My mom’s been telling me to give some of my old toys to the church nursery. But I don’t want to!

**Teacher:** Sometimes it’s hard to give up things that are precious to us. What other kinds of toys do you have?

**Pockets:** Well, there are things like rattles, squeaky rubber animals, baby beads and teething toys, and my old blanket.

**Teacher:** Those sound like things that you haven’t used in a long time. How come you want to keep them?

**Pockets:** Because they’re special to me.

**Teacher:** Pockets, today we learned about Abraham’s most precious thing that God asked him to give up. Class, tell Pockets about what God asked of Abraham and what Abraham did.

(Allow the children to tell about Abraham giving up Isaac and then God sending a ram to take Isaac’s place.)

**Pockets:** (Surprised.) That must have been hard for Abraham. I don’t think I could do that!
Bring out Pockets the Kangaroo, and go through the following puppet script. When you finish the script, put Pockets away and out of sight.

**God’s Precious Treasure**

**Supplies:** Favorite Things Box from Option 1, Bible, CD player

Get out the Favorite Things Box from Option 1. Hold up a Bible and say: **Many, many years after God tested Abraham, God gave up his own Son, Jesus. God gave us his most precious treasure when he gave his Son, Jesus, to die on the cross for all the wrong things we do. As a reminder of that, I’ll add the Bible to our box of precious things.** Place the Bible in the box, and then ask:

- **How do you think God felt giving up his only precious Son, Jesus?** (Like Abraham; sad; unhappy.)
- **What’s it like to know that God gave up his most precious treasure just for you?** (I feel happy; I’m glad that he did that; I feel special.)

Say: **Let’s thank God for giving us his most precious treasure.** Pray a prayer similar to this one: **Dear God, thank you for giving us your most precious treasure, Jesus. Thank you for the many precious treasures that you have given us like our moms, dads, and families. You are so good to us. Help us to trust and obey you in all that you ask of us. In Jesus’ name, amen.**

Sing “Trust the Lord” (track 21) to the tune of “Frère Jacques” along with the CD.
God Tests Abraham’s Faith

**SING**

Trust the Lord, trust the Lord  
Every day, every way.  
Turn to him and pray,  
Trust him and obey  
Every day, every way.

Say: **God loves us just as Abraham loved Isaac.** Give yourselves a big hug to remember God’s love. Because he loves us, **God wants us to trust and obey him.**

**BIBLE POINT**

Growing closer to Jesus extends beyond the classroom.

Photocopy the “Today I Learned…” handout (at the end of this lesson) for this week, and send it home with your children. Encourage parents to use the handout to plan meaningful family activities to reinforce this week’s topic.
Lively Learning: Odd Obedience

Form pairs and have the pairs scatter around the room. Call out silly instructions, and ask kids to follow them. Ideas might include: sing “Happy Birthday” to a chair; stand back to back with your partner, link arms, and walk around the room; make funny animal sounds; lie on the floor and make faces at the ceiling; or link arms, skip around the room, and greet other pairs. Afterward, reward children for their obedience with a back-rub circle. Remind children that God wants us to trust and obey him.

Make to Take: Leap of Faith Frog

Before class, photocopy the “Leap of Faith Frog” handout on page 197. Cut out the frog shape, use it as a stencil, and make frog bodies and feet on green construction paper. Make sure you have one for each child. Cut two 1x9-inch strips of green construction paper per student. Instruct the children to fold the strips back and forth like an accordion for the frog’s legs. Help children glue the legs onto the frog body, and then show them how to glue frog feet to the ends of the legs. As children work, talk about the leap of faith that Abraham had to take, giving up Isaac to obey God. Tell children that their frogs are reminders of obeying God by taking a leap of faith.

Treat to Eat: Precious Treasures Dough

Before class, make edible dough by mixing equal parts of cream cheese and powdered sugar. Have children clean their hands with wet wipes or at a nearby sink. Give each child 1/4 cup of dough and a sheet of wax paper. Have each child form his or her most precious treasure from the dough. Ask them to tell about what they made before enjoying the yummy treat. Remind children that Abraham was willing to give up his most precious treasure to obey God.

Story Picture: Abraham Obeys and God Saves Isaac

Give each child a copy of the “Today I Learned…” handout. Set out toothpicks, glue, and crayons. Have the children color the picture and then glue toothpicks to the altar. As the children are working, talk about how God sometimes asks us to give up precious things, but he always has a reason.
Leap of Faith Frog
Verse to Learn

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart” (Proverbs 3:5a).

Ask Me...

- Why did God test Abraham?
- When have you obeyed God by doing something hard?
- How can our family learn to trust God more?

Family Fun

- At dinner one night, have each person think of something that would be hard to give up. Then take a hike or walk to a park and form a circle. Pray and “give” your precious things to God. Ask him to help you obey, even when it’s hard.
- Work together to prepare a delicious meal, such as pizza or submarine sandwiches. Then take the meal to another family or neighbor. Talk about how it was hard to give up the tasty treat, but how it made you feel good to do it.