

PRESCHOOL
GUIDE
2

GOD IS THE GIFT GIVER

FOUNDATION: GOD IS - GOD GIVES

BIG TRUTH: GOD IS THE GIFT GIVER

Psalm 85:12; 145:9; John 3:27; 1 Corinthians 4:7

BIBLE VERSE: JAMES 1:17

“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father.”

BIG IDEAS

- God is good; it is who He is. Everything that is good comes from Him.
- God is not only good, but He also loves giving good things to His children.
- Even things that may not seem like good gifts God uses for good in our lives.
- God is so good that He gave His very best gift, Jesus, to the world when we did not deserve it.

BIBLE STORY: GENESIS 22

After a longtime of waiting God gave Abraham and Sarah a good gift that He had promised them long before, a son! Now God asked Abraham to do the unthinkable, give his son back to God! Thankfully God had a plan to give Abraham another gift that would point to the best gift of all that God gives to the world.

FOUNDATION: GOD IS - GOD GIVES

“God is” means that there is only one god in the universe. He alone is Lord over everything that exists, and He alone is worthy of our worship. This also means that every good thing that exists comes from God. All good things come from Him because goodness is a part of who He is as the one true God. It is a part of His nature and character to be good, and everything that comes from God is good. Thankfully, God has not chosen to withhold His goodness from His creation, but instead gives it freely to us.

BIG AIMS



Every child should know that:

- There is only one true God
- God is good
- Every good gift that we have comes from God



Every child should feel:

- Thankful for every good gift that God gives



Every child should be able to:

- Talk about God when they wake up, go to bed, and throughout the day



Every child should want:

- To talk about God and to know more about Him

FAMILY DEVOTION: GOD IS GOOD AND EVERYTHING THAT COMES FROM HIM IS GOOD

God is always good and every gift He gives is good. Every good thing we receive is from Him, the creator of all things.



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BIBLE VERSE: JAMES 1:17

“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father.”

God is the Gift Giver

James, the half-brother of Jesus, was writing to the persecuted Christians who had been driven from their homes and were now scattered.

- These believers had been driven from their homes and yet they were seeing God’s faithfulness in their lives.
- James was reminding them that their trials were not in vain. God had a purpose for them.¹

Every good thing we receive is from God because the gifts He gives are good.

- James encourages Christians to not be deceived into thinking that God’s gifts are not good or that good gifts come from somewhere else.
- God is the gift giver. He is the creator of all things and every gift He gives is good.

God does not change like the shadows shift and change.

- We can find comfort in knowing that God is unchanging. It is part of His character.
- He has always given good gifts and He will always give good gifts.
- This truth was important for the first-century Christians because they were facing persecution.
- Their lives were not as they would have liked them to be, but God was using their trial to increase their faith and that was a good gift.

1. James 1:2-4: This important statement on trials is pivotal to a believer’s spiritual walk. Here James reminds the first century Christians that the trials they were facing served a purpose---these trials increased their faith and made them spiritually stronger. They were not in vain, just as our trials are not in vain.

BOOK: GENESIS 22*Abraham Offers Isaac As A Sacrifice*

Genesis 12:1; 15:1-6; 17:15-16; Leviticus 1:9; Hebrews 11:17-19; James 1:17; John 3:16; Psalm 74:16; 136: 7-9

Teacher Introduction:

All that God does is for His people's good and His glory. Abraham and Sarah had seen the fulfillment of God's promise to give them a son. God blessed them with a son in their old age and in giving them a son He was fulfilling His promise to make them a great nation. They believed that God was going to do what He said and yet, He was asking the most difficult thing of them.

Abraham believed God and trusted that God was doing the very best thing for him, even when God asked him to sacrifice his son, Isaac. This narrative echoes a theme that is seen throughout Scripture--God is the giver of all good things. God gave Abraham life, He gave him a promise, He gave him a son, and now He was testing Abraham's love and faith in Him.

This narrative is instrumental in pointing to God's greatest gift---Jesus Christ. Through Abraham's willingness to give his son Isaac as a sacrifice to God, we see the coming sacrifice of the Messiah for the sins of mankind. God is the giver of good gifts. Everything He does is good. God does not withhold good things from His people, even willingly giving His only Son to save the world.

Teaching Guide:

The guide below is provided to help you teach the foundational truth "God is the Gift Giver." The four points are the Big Ideas that should guide your lesson as you share the narrative of Abraham offering Isaac as a sacrifice. Footnotes are provided for further study of the text and how it ties to the Big Truth. Questions are provided throughout the guide to help you focus the children on the foundational truth—God is the Gift Giver.

Opening Illustration:

(Gather small gifts for your children—something you know they will like. Wrap them or put them in gift bags. Place them in the front of the room where the children can see them.)

What is the best gift you've ever received?

- What made it so special?
- Did you know you were going to get it?

I have a gift for you today. I'm going to give it to you. (Give each child the gift you've brought for him or her.)

- What do you think is inside the box/bag?
- Do you think it is a good thing or something to be afraid of?

I want you to open the gift I gave you. I'm excited for you to know what it is. Are you ready to receive the good gift I've brought you? (Let children open the gift and then enjoy the treat.)

- God is the best gift giver. He gives all good gifts, never any bad gifts.
- Do you know what His greatest gift to the world was? (Jesus Christ)

BIG IDEA: GOD IS GOOD AND EVERYTHING THAT IS GOOD COMES FROM HIM.²

*What are some good things? (Food, clothes, toys, parents, treats)
How do we know these things are good? (They are helpful or they are fun.)*

Many years had passed since God had promised Abraham a son. Then God visited Abraham again and promised yet again to give him a son.

- This time God specified that the Son would come through Abraham's first wife, Sarah.
- This was not what Abraham or Sarah had expected. Sarah was past the age of being able to bear children, yet it was God's plan for her to conceive and give birth to Isaac.

God was going to give Abraham and Sarah a good gift.

- Abraham and Sarah were promised a son through whom God would make a great nation.³
- Abraham and Sarah waited many, many years for God to give them a son, yet Abraham continued to believe that God would do what He had said He was going to do. Abraham knew God was good and gave good gifts.
- When it seemed that old age had ended their chances of conceiving, God gave them His good gift.

Abraham and Sarah were surprised when God told them He was going to give them a child in their old age, yet they trusted Him.⁴

- They were surprised that God was going to give them a son through Sarah; they had supposed He would give them a son another way.
- God is good---always. Everything He does is good.
- *What are some good things that God has given us?*
- *What makes these things good?*

God had made a promise to Abraham and Sarah and because God is good, He always keeps His promises.

- They believed God, but weren't sure how He would keep His promise to them.



Help the preschooler memorize the Bible verse this week (James 1:17) by gathering different colors of construction paper. Write one word of the verse on a different color of construction paper. Hide the pieces of construction paper around a room and then call out a color for the children to find. Once all the pieces have been found lay the verse out in order and help them say the verse several times. Once loudly. Once in a regular voice. Once in a whisper. Play several times to help them memorize the verse.

2. Psalm 100:5; 136:1; 86:5; Mark 10:18: God is good. Everything He does is good and everything He gives His people is good. The earth declares His goodness.

3. Genesis 12:1; 15:1-6; 17:15-16: God had promised Abraham and Sarah a son, yet as they waited for God to give them a son, their faith faltered. Sarah gave her maidservant to Abraham to be his wife and he fathered a child through her, but this was not the child that God was going to use to make a great nation.

4. Genesis 18:1-19: Many years had passed since God had promised Abraham a son. Then God visited Abraham again and promised yet again to give him a son. This time God specified that it would come through Abraham's first wife, Sarah. This was not what Abraham or Sarah had expected. Sarah was past the age of being able to bear children, yet it was God's plan for her to conceive and give birth to Isaac.

BIG IDEA: GOD IS GOOD AND HE LOVES GIVING GOOD THINGS TO HIS CHILDREN.⁵**When it was time, according to God, for Sarah to conceive and give birth, she did.**

- It was exactly as He had said it would be. He was giving them a good gift, the son they had longed for.⁶
- *What was the good gift that Abraham and Sarah received from God?*
- *Did they receive the gift when they thought they would or when God was ready to give it to them?*

God's gifts are always good even when they come when we don't expect them or when we don't get them when we think we should.

- Because God is good, everything that He does is good. His timing is good and perfect.
- Abraham and Sarah did not receive their promised son when they thought they would, but God's ways are higher and greater than ours.
- Abraham and Sarah received Isaac when God wanted them to, when it was the right time, and in the perfect way.

God received more glory through His timing than if He had given them Isaac according to Abraham and Sarah's timing.⁷

- God is always good and everything He does is good and perfect.
- Even when it seemed that He was delaying in giving Abraham and Sarah a son, God was doing a good thing.



Place a large piece of paper or a large poster board on the wall where every child can see it. Prior to class cut or print out pictures of good gifts—toys, homes, parents, etc. Discuss with the preschoolers how every good thing we have is from God. Allow the children to “pin” the good gifts to the poster board or paper so they can see them all.

5. Matthew 7:11; Luke 12:7: *When teaching on prayer and asking God for our needs, Jesus emphasizes that God delights in giving gifts to His children. He knows what we need and exactly when we need it. He does not withhold any good thing from us.*

6. Genesis 21:1-7: *Sarah gave birth to Isaac when Abraham was a hundred years old. She remembered her laughter at the time the Lord had told Abraham that she would give birth and she saw God's faithfulness to His promise.*

7. Genesis 21:6-7: *Her question reveals a truth about the goodness of God. His goodness cannot be defined in human terms. Man is infinitely less wise and knowledgeable than God. It is impossible for man to accurately define 'good' as God would. Man can only look to God and His ways to understand what good really is. Sarah was past the age of bearing children, yet she gave birth to a son. With man things are impossible, but with God all things are possible.*

BIG IDEA: EVEN THINGS THAT MAY NOT SEEM LIKE GOOD GIFTS GOD USES FOR GOOD IN OUR LIVES.

God's fulfillment of His promise to Abraham may not have happened exactly when Abraham thought it would or should, but the fulfillment of the promise was good and brought joy to Abraham and Sarah.

- Abraham and Sarah rejoiced to receive their promised son.
- They raised him to fear God and to follow God, just as they followed God.

God gave Isaac to Abraham, yet He required something more from Abraham.

- Several years after Isaac was born, God presented Abraham with an opportunity to give back to Him.
- What He asked for from Abraham was not an easy thing to give, yet it was good.
- God asked for Abraham's son, Isaac, the son that Abraham and Sarah had waited so long for.

Abraham obeyed God. He may not have understood God's exact plan, but he trusted God and believed God would raise Isaac from the dead.⁸

- Abraham didn't hesitate to do what God had asked of him.
- He rose early the next morning, saddled his donkey, called two of his men and his son, Isaac. They cut the wood they would need for the altar and then they set out for the place God had told them to go.⁹
- Abraham hiked up the hill on which he was supposed to sacrifice Isaac.
- He made ready the altar and laid Isaac upon it, tying him down just like he would have tied down a ram.

Through it all, Abraham trusted that what God was asking of him was good.

- He raised his knife, prepared to sacrifice Isaac, but God stopped him.
- Even things that may seem hurtful or bad for us, if commanded by God are still good things---some can be some of the very best things we ever endure.
- Abraham didn't necessarily understand, but he trusted God.¹⁰

God had tested Abraham's faith and love for Him by asking a very difficult thing of him and Abraham had passed the test.

- *How was the thing God asked of Abraham a good thing? (Abraham proved that he really did trust and love God.)*
- *Even though sacrificing his son was a very difficult thing, what good thing did Abraham gain by being willing? (His faith increased and he was blessed by God.)*

8. Hebrews 11:17-19: Abraham believed God's promise to make a great nation through Isaac. Though he knew God was asking him to offer Isaac as a burnt offering, he believed God would raise Isaac from the dead. It was this faith that set Abraham apart from others--this unwavering faith and trust in God's plan.

9. Genesis 22:4: This two-day journey to prepare to meet God on the third day sets the pattern of the "third day". It is seen elsewhere in Scripture when God descends upon Mt. Sinai. In Exodus 19:11, we see that God descended upon the mountain on the third day after the people had been told to consecrate or prepare themselves two days prior. See also Matthew 16:21 and I Corinthians 15:4.

10. Genesis 22:11 says "the Angel of the Lord called to Abraham...". This language is seen throughout scripture as it references the Son of God. Some scholars believe the angel of the Lord referenced here is Jesus, the Son of God. We see this same reference earlier in Genesis 16:7-8 when the angel of the Lord appears to Hagar by a spring of water in the wilderness. The same reference is made in Exodus 3:2-6 when the angel of the Lord appears to Moses in the burning bush.

BIG IDEA: GOD IS SO GOOD THAT HE GAVE HIS VERY BEST GIFT, JESUS, TO THE WORLD WHEN WE DID NOT DESERVE IT. ¹¹**Everything that God gives His children is good.**

- When Abraham climbed the mountain upon which he was going to sacrifice Isaac, he had with him the necessary materials to offer Isaac as a burnt offering.¹²
- The burnt offering was an offering that was made to atone for sins.
- Abraham and Isaac would have been familiar with it. Abraham would know what was being asked of him, yet he did not hesitate to do it.
- God provided Abraham a ram to sacrifice in place of Isaac as a substitute---the ram died in place of Isaac.



Sing “God is so Good” or other praise and worship songs with the preschoolers. Discuss how God in His goodness sent His only Son to die on the cross for the sins of the world and if we believe in Jesus Christ we can be with God now and forever.

Abraham and Isaac offered the ram as a burnt offering to God on the mountain that day. God had given them another good gift—the ram.

- God blessed Abraham---promising to make a great nation of him.
- Abraham and Isaac returned to their home.
- In giving Isaac to Abraham, God had given him a son, a great blessing indeed.

When Abraham was willing to give his son back to God, God showed the world what was to come---the Messiah.

- Abraham’s willingness to offer up his only son as an atonement offering is a foreshadowing of God giving His only Son, Jesus Christ for the sins of the world.
- *What good gift did God provide for Abraham and Isaac? (A ram to take Isaac’s place.)*
- *What gift did God give to the world so we don’t have to pay for our sins? (His only Son, Jesus Christ.)*

11. John 3:16: God in His great mercy desires that no one perishes, but that all who believes in His Son will have eternal life.

12. Leviticus 1:1-17: The burnt offering was the most costly of offerings because everything was consumed. The first mention of burnt offerings is in Genesis when Noah offers burnt offerings after the flood waters subside. The burnt offering is seen throughout the Israelites’ history repeatedly. It was the sin atonement offering and took place at the first altar one would come to in the temple. The regulations of the offering were strict and violations of them were severe. The animals offered as burnt offerings were to be of highest quality. This offering foreshadows the offering of Christ as mankind’s sin atonement---He was God’s only son, a most precious sacrifice.

HOOKS



KNOW

God Loves Giving Good Gifts to His Children

(Gather some birthday party decorations. Some balloons, a Happy Birthday sign or banner, confetti. Show the decorations to the children.)



DO

- What usually happens at a birthday party?
- Do you usually get birthday gifts?
- What type of gifts do you get for your birthday?
- Do you give gifts on other people's birthdays?
- Why do you give gifts?



FEEL

Every good thing that we receive is from God. He delights in giving us gifts, in giving us things that will make us happy.

Read James 1:17: Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.

- Do you think Abraham and Sarah were happy with the gift God gave them?
- Can you think of a good gift that God has given you? (A mom or dad, a sibling, a certain toy, or friend, etc.)



WANT

Even Things That Don't Seem Like Good Gifts God Uses For Good.

(Gather the following items or things similar: an ugly scarf/hat/gloves, a toy, a bag of candy, toothbrush/toothpaste. Put the items in gift bags separately. Place the bags at the front of the room where the children can see them.)

- How many gifts do I have up here?
- Do you like receiving gifts?

(Open the gifts one at a time. Place the items where the children can see them.)

- Which gift would you rather receive? The toothbrush or the bag of candy?
- Why would you rather receive the toy or the candy?
- Is the toothbrush and hat and scarf helpful to us? (*They are even though we don't like to receive them as gifts.*)

Sometimes God gives us gifts that we may not like at first, but they are for our good. Just like we might not want to receive a hat and scarf for our birthday, but they are good for us because they keep us warm when it's cold.