

September 15, 2013

Lesson 2: Binding of Isaac



Genesis 21:1-3,22:1-14

The Lord dealt with Sarah as he had said, and the Lord did for Sarah as he had promised. Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a son in his old age, at the time of which God had spoken to him. Abraham gave the name Isaac to his son whom Sarah bore him.

After these things God tested Abraham. He said to him, 'Abraham!' And he said, 'Here I am.' He said, 'Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt-offering on one of the mountains that I shall show you.' So Abraham rose early in the morning, saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and his

son Isaac; he cut the wood for the burnt-offering, and set out and went to the place in the distance that God had shown him. On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place far away. Then Abraham said to his young men, 'Stay here with the donkey; the boy and I will go over there; we will worship, and then we will come back to you.' Abraham took the wood of the burnt-offering and laid it on his son Isaac, and he himself carried the fire and the knife. So the two of them walked on together. Isaac said to his father Abraham, 'Father!' And he said, 'Here I am, my son.' He said, 'The fire and the wood are here, but where is the lamb for a burnt-offering?' Abraham said, 'God himself will provide the lamb for a burnt-offering, my son.' So the two of them walked on together.

When they came to the place that God had shown him, Abraham built an altar there and laid the wood in order. He bound his son Isaac, and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to kill his son. But the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven, and said, 'Abraham, Abraham!' And he said, 'Here I am.' He said, 'Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me.' And Abraham looked up and saw a ram, caught in a thicket by its horns. Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt-offering instead of his son. So Abraham called that place 'The Lord will provide'; as it is said to this day, 'On the mount of the Lord it shall be provided.'

Binding of Isaac

Genesis 21:1-3; 22:1-14

“So Abraham
called that place
‘The Lord will
Provide’”



September 15, 2013

The Big Story Truth: God provides! God can be trusted, even when it is hard!

About this Scripture Passage: This is one of the harder scripture passages to understand in all of scripture. Before we deal with this particular scripture passage, though, we need a little bit of background. God's good creation was ruined by the entrance of sin into the world (see Genesis 3). So God sets about a rescue plan. The first part of that plan is establishing a relationship with a particular family, a family through whom the Savior (Jesus) will eventually come. God chose a man named Abraham and his wife, Sarah, to be the patriarch and matriarch of this family. There was only one problem, they were well beyond child bearing years and had no children. Yet, God promised that they would one day.... and they did! Sarah became pregnant and had a baby boy named Isaac. Which brings us to

today's story in which God tells Abraham to take his son Isaac and offer him as a sacrifice to God.

Abraham responds obediently and begins the journey with Isaac to the mountain God said to go to. As they are journeying, though, Isaac asks about the sacrifice. Usually a lamb would be taken to be the sacrifice. Abraham replies to his Son that God himself will provide the lamb. This does turn out to be true as God stops Abraham from sacrificing Isaac at the last minute and does indeed provide a lamb.

Making the Connection: This story is not only just hard to understand in why God would put Abraham through such a test, but also because it has been used to justify child abuse. Some parents with mental illness have also taken this passage to be the basis by which they have killed their own children. This passage must be handled with care! This passage is never to be read as a justification for violence or harm to children! That is never God's desire!

What is important about this passage is to hear how God kept the promise to Abraham and Sarah that they would have a son. And when Abraham trusted God to provide for that son, God did. God was faithful to the promises he had made and Abraham trusted that completely. Abraham trusted that so much that he was willing to stake everything on that being true.

The connection for our kids and for ourselves in this story is that we too can stake everything on God's faithfulness, that God will provide what we need. We can trust all God's promises and we can trust that God will provide for us! God will help us trust, even when it's hard!

Where in the World Are We?

The text names a place called Moriah, a three days journey away. At the time when this exchange between God and Abraham is taking place we are in the land of Canaan. We don't know where Moriah is for sure but some scholars have said

that it might be the place that will later become Jerusalem, a place that is reference in other places of scripture as "the mount of Yahweh." The map shows the area of Canaan enlarged with an arrow to the spot in Canaan that might possibly be Moriah (Jerusalem).

For Your Reflection:

When have you felt tested by something difficult in your life? How did God provide for you in that time?

What questions do you have about this passage? What questions do you anticipate your children might have?



Moriah (The place later known as Jerusalem???)

Large Group Gathering

Say: Welcome! It's good to see all of you back again this morning! Thank you parents too, who were able to make it for the start of our Sunday school time. In just a second we are going to get to our Faith 5. First of all though, I'm wondering who can help us remember what we learned about last week. Who remembers the story that we learned the last time we were together? (Affirm their answers about creation!) Great, you're right! Last time we read the story of creation and we even got to help tell the story in church last week! Do you remember which book of the Bible we read the story from? (Genesis!) Wow! You are great at remembering! Last week we also sang a song about God having the whole world in his hands! Do you remember that? Let's sing it together!

Sing "He's Got the Whole World in His Hands"

Say: Great! Thanks for singing that with me again today. For the story that we are going to be reading about today, its going to be important that we remember that God has everything in his hands and that we can always trust God to provide what we need! That's the verse that you are going to read together in your family groups for your Faith 5. Let's see here. Could I have one person from each family raise your hand or come up here to the front and pick up today's Faith 5 sheet? If you are here by yourself, the Sunday school teachers or adults from the adult class will make a little group with you and we'll do the Faith 5 together. Then when you go home tonight, you can take the sheet with you and do it with your family during lunch or before bed time tonight. Parents, just a reminder that this is just a quick five minutes. The steps are on the handout for sharing your highs and lows (the best and worst things that happened to each of you this week), reading the Bible verse together, talking about how it relates to your highs and lows, praying for one another, and blessing one another.

Hand out Faith 5 sheets. Give families 5 minutes to talk together. Then continue with any other music you would like to practice or dismiss to classes.

Family Faith 5

September 15, 2013

1. Each person shares their high and low (the best and worst things that happened this week.)
2. Read together this Bible Verse:
“So Abraham called that place ‘The Lord will provide.’”
3. Talk about how the Bible verse relates to your highs and lows.
4. Pray aloud for one another’s highs and lows.
5. Bless one another. Make the sign of the cross on each other’s heads and say these words: _____, child of God, God will provide for you!

Preschool¹

Materials Needed:

- Large sheet of black paper
- Glow in the dark chalk
- Three figures (one to represent each Abraham, Sarah, and Isaac as a boy)
These could be printed pictures or created on people cut-outs
- Spark Story Bible
- CD Player
- CD of “Abraham, Sarah, and Isaac” from Augsburg Fortress, Splash! Totally Toddler Tunes)
- CD of “All His Promises” Group Publishing)
- Star shaped cookie cutter
- Bread and Cheese
- Sheets of black construction paper (1 per student)
- Additional Activity Materials:** baby dolls, diapers, bottles, blankets, clothing, etc. Fabric for a blindfold.

Before the Children Arrive:

Cover a bulletin board or large space on one wall with black wrapping paper.

Experiencing the Story:

Welcome students into the room. Gather them around the wall that you have covered with black paper. Have the kids lay down on the ground.

Say: Let’s pretend that this black wall is the sky at night time. What’s missing from the night sky? (Stars, moon) We better add some stars to our sky! (Ask for their help in drawing stars up in the sky. Use glow in the dark chalk if you have it available.)

Say: Wow, that looks better with so many stars! You know these stars remind me of the story about Abraham and Sarah in the Bible. Let’s read the story about Abraham and Sarah together.

¹ Some of these ideas come from the Humungous Book of Preschool Ideas, Group Publishing

Read “God’s Promises to Abram” and “Abraham and Sarah’s Visitors” from the Spark Story Bible (pages 30-35).

Say: Abraham and Sarah had to trust God to keep his promise, didn’t they! It was a long time of waiting, but God did what he said that he would do. I wonder, do you think it was easy or hard for Sarah and Abraham to wait for a baby? I would think it was probably very hard to trust God to keep his promise! But God did! We can trust God even when it is hard! God always keeps his promises! This year in Sunday School, we are going to be learning a lot about the family that God gave Abraham and Sarah. Isaac was just the start of what turned out to be a really big family! God was right! Abraham has lots of kids and grandkids and great grandkids just like there are lots of stars in the sky! Let’s put these Abraham and Sarah dolls up on our starry night wall so that we can remember how God kept his promise! And here, we’ll add one for Isaac too! There we go! (Put all three figures up on the starry night bulletin board/wall).

Say: I have a song that I would like to play for you about Abraham and Sarah and their baby boy. Let’s listen to the song. You can sing and dance along to the song if you would like to! (Play the song “Abraham, Sarah, and Isaac”)

Say: In church today we are going to hear more about Abraham and his son Isaac. We are going to hear another story about Isaac when he was a little older. Even when Isaac was grown up, Abraham had to keep trusting God that God would keep Isaac safe and would help him to grow big and strong and get married and have children of his own one day. And do you know what? God did! Abraham trusted God and God provided everything that they needed! I know a rhyme about trusting God. But I need your help. When I point to you, you say “Trust God!” Let’s practice. (Point to the kids and help them say “Trust God!”) Great! Now let’s try saying the rhyme together. Remember, when I point to you, say “Trust God!” (Take turns pointing to the kids for their part and saying the rest of the sentence in the rhyme.)

Trust God every day

Trust God in every way.

Trust God! He will provide!

Trust God! He’s always by our side!

Just like Abraham trusted God, God wants us to trust him too! God keeps all his promises! God takes care of us and gives us everything that we need. Let's celebrate! (Play the song "The Lord is Faithful" and let the kids dance and sing to the song.)

Say: Do you remember what we started learning last week in Sunday School when we were with the bigger kids? We started learning something called "the creed." Do you remember how it starts? Let's try saying it together. I'll say part of it first, and then you repeat what I say. (Practice and repeat in small sections: "I believe in God, the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth.") Remember last week we said that this means that we believe that God made us and takes care of us... just like God took care of Abraham, and Sarah, and Isaac!

Let's practice that trust rhyme one more time! Maybe we can even say it for the big kids in closing today! (If your church does a Sunday School closing, be sure to let the leader know that your class has something to share. If not, ask the pastor if you class can share their trust rhyme with the congregation this morning!)

Trust God every day

Trust God in every way.

Trust God! He will provide!

Trust God! He's always by our side!

Snack: Starry Skies

Use a small star shaped cookie cutter to cut star shapes from bread and cheese. Serve the bread and cheese on black construction paper place mats!

Additional Activity Options:

1. **God Takes Care of Us-** Set out a number of dolls and doll care supplies like bottles, diapers, blankets, etc. Give kids the opportunity to practice taking care of the dolls. Remind them that babies need lots of love and help. Parents take care of babies and give them what they need. Tell the kids that God loves us and takes care of us too!
2. **Trust Walk-** Use a piece of fabric as a blindfold. Ask for a volunteer to be blindfolded. Take turns as a class leading the blindfolded child around the room. (Be sure to supervise the leading so that everyone is safe!) Afterward, ask the child who was blindfolded how it felt to trust the others. Was it easy or hard?

Early Elementary

Materials Needed:

- Blindfolds (enough for half the class at a time)
- Objects for an obstacle course
- If you'll be using the bulletin board suggestion: cover the bulletin board to look like a starry night. Prepare figures to represent Sarah, Abraham, and Isaac
- Copy of "Abraham and His Family Trust God" story booklets for each child
- Additional Activity Materials: white cardstock (at least 1 per student), watercolor paints and paintbrushes, cups of water for cleaning brushes

Before the Students Arrive:

Set up an obstacle course in your classroom (or another designated space). You might have things that students have to walk around, or hula hoops to crawl through, or any number of other obstacles.

Experiencing the Story:

Meet your class outside the door of your room.

Say: Welcome, class! I'm excited to read our story with you today, but in order to get there, we have to go through an obstacle course! (wait a brief moment for their reactions) This is a trust obstacle course, so each of you will need a partner. (Assign pairs). There's just one more thing, one of you will be blindfolded! (Give each pair a blindfold and make sure they are securely fastened.) Now. Those of you who can see are going to help your partners through the obstacle course. It's going to be tricky so you'll have to give very good directions so that you and your partner can make it through safely. Are you ready? Let's go!

Open the door and help your class through the course. When everyone has finished, congratulate them and have them sit down together at a table or on the floor.

Say: Great job! Those of you who could see did a good job of leading your partners! And those of you who were blindfolded did a good job of trusting!

Tell me, was it easy or hard for you to trust that your partner was going to keep you safe and lead you the right way? (listen for their answers).

Ask: Think about other times in life when you have had to trust some one. When is it easy? When is it hard?

Say: Today in church we are going to be hearing the story about a time when Abraham had to trust God. Do you remember who Abraham is? (listen for their answers). Abraham and Sarah were the couple who God promised would have a a huge family even though they were very old and didn't even have a single child. (If you have a bulletin board or flannel graph, place up figures to represent Sarah and Abraham). They trusted God and eventually God's promise came true. They had a son named Isaac. (Put up a figure beneath Sarah and Abraham to represent Isaac.) But that's not the story we are going to hear about today. There is another time that they had to trust God. It happened when Isaac was a boy probably a little bit older than you. I have a story book for each of you about our story today. Let's read it together.

Read the story "Abraham and His Family Trust God" from the handout. After you read the story, go back and read each page again, giving the kids time to complete the pictures on each page.

Additional Activity Option:

1. **Trust Paintings:** Give each student a piece of white cardstock and a white crayon. Have children write the word "trust" or draw a design of their own choosing on the paper with the white crayon. Then, have the children paint over their drawings with watercolor paints. (The wax of the crayon will resist the water and their design will be visible.) Talk with kids about how it is sometimes hard to see that God what God is doing, but that we can trust that God is always with us and will always make a way for us... even when it is hard to see that at first!

Abraham and his Family

Trust God

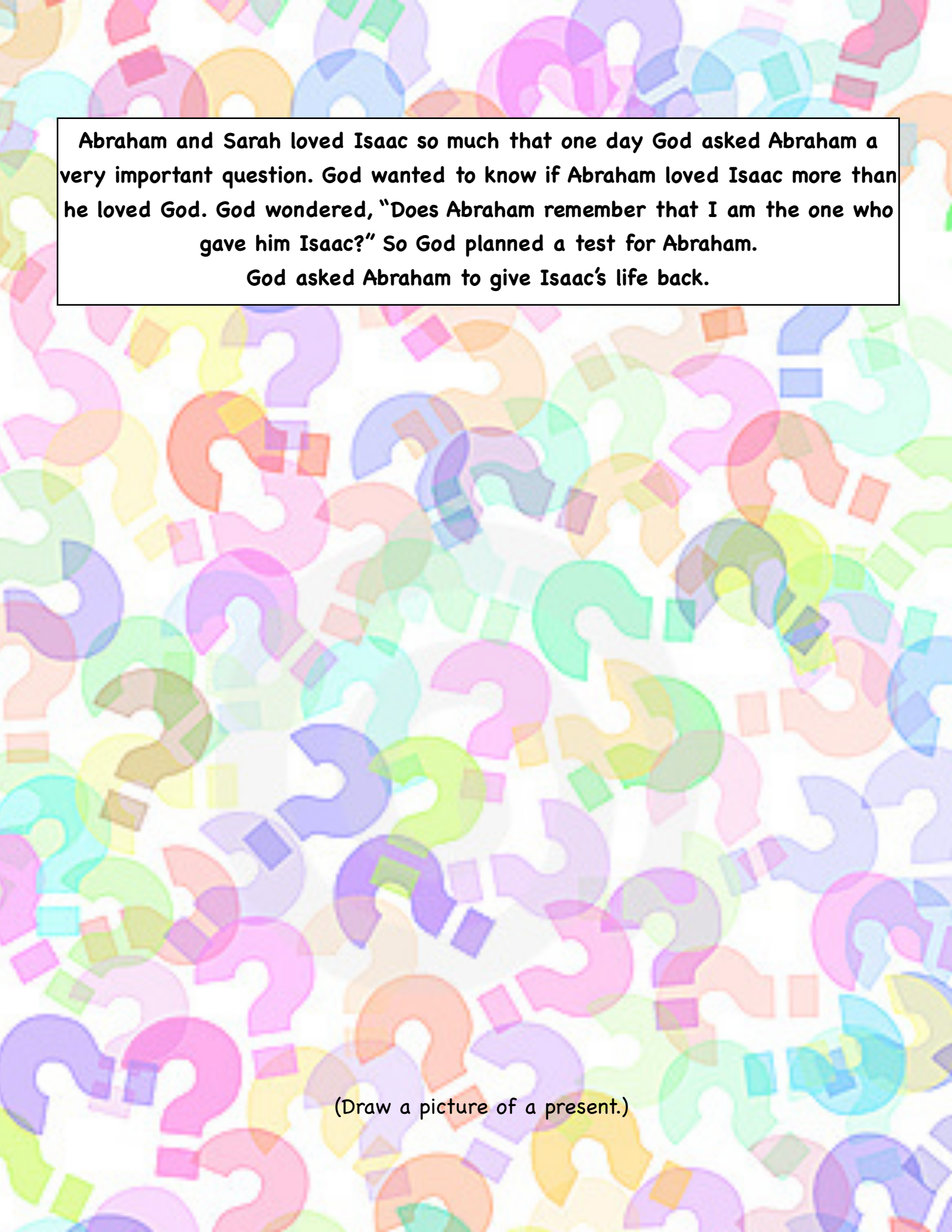
Once there was an old man named Abraham. God promised Abraham and his wife Sarah that they would have a family with more people in it than there are stars in the sky! Sarah and Abraham waited a long time. Finally, God gave them their first son... a boy named Isaac.

(Draw Abraham and Sarah waiting for Isaac.)

**Abraham and Sarah had trusted God to keep his promise to give them a child.
They loved Isaac so much! No one could ever have wanted or loved a child
more than Abraham and Sarah loved Isaac!**



(Draw Abraham and Sarah playing with their son Isaac)

The background of the entire page is a dense, repeating pattern of colorful question marks and small squares. The colors include various shades of pink, purple, blue, green, yellow, and orange. The question marks are of different sizes and are interspersed with the small squares, creating a vibrant and busy visual texture.

Abraham and Sarah loved Isaac so much that one day God asked Abraham a very important question. God wanted to know if Abraham loved Isaac more than he loved God. God wondered, "Does Abraham remember that I am the one who gave him Isaac?" So God planned a test for Abraham.
God asked Abraham to give Isaac's life back.

(Draw a picture of a present.)

“What a strange thing for God to ask!” thought Abraham. “But when God promised me a son, I trusted that Isaac would someday be born. I’ve trusted God my whole life to lead me and to give me what I needed. I will trust God again now too. I will do what God asks me to.... and I trust that God will keep my son Isaac safe with me.”

So Abraham took his son Isaac with him to the mountain where God told him to go. Abraham told everyone that he and Isaac would be back soon.



(Draw Abraham and Isaac going up the mountain.)

Abraham was right to trust God! On the mountain, an angel called out to Abraham, "Now God knows that you love him more than anything!" Abraham and Isaac worshipped God and gave that place a special name. They called that mountain "God provides!"

(Draw Abraham and Isaac thanking God!)

**Abraham and his family trusted God.
When was a time that you trusted God too?**

(Draw a picture of yourself thanking and praising God!)

Upper Elementary

Materials Needed:

- Spark NRSV Bible
- Wax Paper
- White paper (at least 2 sheet per student)
- Pencils/Pens (1 per student)
- Ziplock bags (no holes)
- Copy of today's story cut apart into sections
- Buckets of water, sand, etc. for hiding places (see below)
- Crayons
- Small Catechism

Before the Students Arrive:

Place one sheet of white paper at each place of the table. Over the top of each sheet of white paper, paperclip or staple a sheet of wax paper. Place a pen or pencil at each seat as well. Cut out the pieces of the story and put each piece in its own ziplock plastic bag. (Be sure there are no holes in the bags!) Find a few different places around the room or around the church to hide the story sheets. Some suggestions of good places to hide the story cards are: in a sink or bucket full of water, in a box of sand, on the underside of a pew or chair, etc. (Anywhere that is especially strange or surprising to someone who has their eyes closed will work especially well!)

Experiencing the Story:

Welcome students as they arrive. Then give them the assignment to draw a picture of someone that they trust on the wax paper. Give students three or so minutes to complete their drawings. (The surprise of this project will turn out best if students press hard enough to transfer the wax to the white page below, but soft enough not to tear the wax paper. You may need to provide some gentle encouragement if you see students who are going to far to one extreme or the other.) When the drawings are finished, ask the students to tell you about the person that they chose to draw. Say: **I'm wondering if you would be willing to tell me a little bit about your pictures. If you would like to show them, you may... but you don't have to. What I want you to think about is this, why do you trust that person? What is it about that person that makes them**

trustworthy? Make sure each student is given the opportunity to respond to those questions. They may say things like, the person's track record on promise keeping, how well they know the person, etc. After each student has had a chance to answer, pull out the picture of Abraham and say: **I have a picture to show too. I'm not really sure if it looks anything like him, but this picture is supposed to represent Abraham. Abraham is in our Bible story for today. The point of our Bible story is this question.... was Abraham someone that God could trust? And was Abraham someone that trusted God?**

First of all, before we get to the details of our story for today, do any of you remember hearing about Abraham before? (Wait for answers and affirm anyone whose on the right track!) **Abraham was the one who God promised would have as many descendants as there are stars in the sky (which is a lot!!) even though he was very old and didn't even have a single child yet. The story that we are going to hear about today comes after that. This story happens after Abraham and his wife Sarah have the child that God promised.**

Rather than reading the story out of our Bibles today, I have a little bit different way that we are going to tell the story. Since we are talking about trust today... we are going to do a little trust activity to find our story this morning. I need a brave volunteer to go first. Blindfold the first volunteer and walk with your class, leading the volunteer to where the first clue can be found. Talk your blindfolded volunteer through where to reach to get the clue, but don't give away anything hints specific to what's coming next... like the fact they might be sticking their hand into water! For each part of the story, ask for another volunteer until all the parts of the story have been found.

(If possible, while you are doing this activity, have a helper or another adult remove the wax paper drawings from the white paper underneath and set them aside so that only what look like blank white pages remain at each place at the table. If you don't have a helper, you can do this yourself later.)

Back in their seats, arrange the parts of the story in order and read it together. After you are finished reading, ask: **So what was it like to find the pieces of the story? Was it easy or hard to trust when you were the one blindfolded? What about Abraham? Do you think that it was easy or hard for Abraham to trust God? When have you had to trust God for something important?**

Activity:

Say: Sometimes it is hard to trust God. Sometimes even though we know that God is trustworthy, its hard to see how God will provide what we need. But God promises to always be faithful. Here's a little reminder for you to take home today about trusting God even when its hard to see how God will provide. Take a crayon and color that white piece of paper in front of you. Don't worry about drawing anything particular, just pick a color and color the whole paper. (As kids are coloring, the picture of the person that they drew at the beginning of the lesson will appear as the wax transferred from the earlier drawing resists the crayon.) **Remember, people might mess things up... Abraham didn't always trust God the way that he should have... but God is always trustworthy! God is always faithful and God will provide!**

With Any Additional Time:

Say: Last week we started talking about the Apostle's Creed. We read the part that talked about God as our creator. **Do you remember how that first part of the Apostles Creed goes?** (You can find it in the small catechism on page 11: I believe in God the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.) **Let's practice that together.** Go through it a few times until everyone has it down. Once that have that part, move on to the meaning. Say: **Martin Luther also wrote about what this means. Let's see if we can memorize that part too.** Take the meaning in small chunks. For today, especially work on the first paragraph, having fun repeating and challenging each other to be able to say it.

Small Catechism, Page 11:

What does this mean?

I believe that God has created me and all that exists. He has given me and still preserves my body and soul with all their powers.

He provides me with food and clothing, home and family, daily work, and all I need from day to day. God also protects me in time of danger and guards me from every evil.

All this he does out of fatherly and divine goodness and mercy, though I do not deserve it. Therefore I surely out to thank and praise, serve and obey him. This is most certainly true.

STORY PIECES

(Photocopy, cut apart, and hide)

1. A long time ago, God had given Abraham an amazing promise. God promised Abraham a land all his own and as many descendants as stars in the sky or grains of sand on the beach. Abraham trusted God's promise.... most of the time. A long time passed though before God kept his promise. And some days Abraham wasn't so sure that God would keep this promise to give him and his wife Sarah a son.
2. But God did. God gave them a boy named Isaac. Sarah and Abraham loved Isaac so much! In fact, they loved Isaac so much that God began wondering something. God began to wonder if Abraham loved Isaac more than he loved God. God wondered, "Does Abraham remember that I am the one who gave him Isaac?" You see, God had big plans for Abraham's family. God needed to know whether or not Abraham trusted him. So God planned a test for Abraham. God asked Abraham to give Isaac's life back.
3. "What a strange thing for God to ask!" thought Abraham. "But God has always kept his promises. God promised me a son, and here he is. Sometimes its been hard to trust, but God has always been faithful and always been trustworthy. I will trust God. I will do what God asks me to and I trust that God will keep my son Isaac safe with me." So Abraham took his son Isaac with him to the mountain where God told him to go. Abraham told everyone that he and Isaac would be back soon.
4. Abraham was right to trust God! On the mountain, an angel called out to Abraham, "Now God knows that you love and trust him!" Abraham and Isaac worshipped God and gave that place a special name. They called that mountain "God provides!"

Middle School/High School

Materials Needed:

- Photocopy of questions for conversation sheet
- Colored Pencils
- Spark NRSV Bibles for each student
- Lemon juice
- White paper
- Wax paper
- White crayons
- Water color paints (optional)
- Small Catechism

Before the Students Arrive:

Photocopy and cut out the “questions for conversation” and scatter these around the table.

Experiencing the Story:

Welcome kids into the classroom. As they take their seats they are likely to notice the questions that you have placed on the table. Encourage them to read over the questions. Invite students to take turns answering one (or more) of the questions as they choose.

After you’ve had a few minutes of conversation, say: **Our story today has to do with trust... a life and death kind of trust. It’s about the kind of trust that would put everything that you love, your whole future, and everything that’s ever been important to you in the hands of someone else. It’s about whether or not God can be trusted that way. And its about whether or not God can trust us.**

Before we start reading this story, we need a little bit of background. What do you know already about a guy named Abraham? (Give the students time to share. Affirm and redirect as necessary.) Abraham was the guy that God chose to use in the plan to rescue humanity from sin. God promised to give Abraham land and descendants more than the stars in the sky or grains of

sand on the beach even though he was old and didn't have even a single child. God promised that all the world would be blessed through Abraham.

Most of the time Abraham trusted God's promises... but not always. There was a nasty incident in which Abraham slept with his wife's servant to have a kid... because he wasn't sure God would really make a way for his elderly wife to get pregnant.

Even though Abraham sometimes messed up, God kept his promises to Abraham and he and his wife eventually did have a child together. They named him Isaac and they loved him so much! God promised that he would do great things through Isaac and through all the descendants that would come later! In fact as it turned out, even Jesus was a descendant of Abraham through Isaac.

But what would you say if I told you that there was a time when Isaac was still a young boy that God asked Abraham to kill Isaac? (Wait for responses. Reactions may vary from those who know the story to those who are upset by even the suggestion that God would ask such a thing.)

(Speak these next lines with softness and sadness...) Actually, its true. God did ask that of Abraham. Remember I told you that our story today had to do with a life and death kind of trust? Well, God needed to know that he could trust Abraham to follow him no matter what. And Abraham trusted God that even though he might be asking him to kill Isaac, that God would never make him actually do it. It's a story of relationship, trust that goes both ways.

Let's read about it together. Have students locate Genesis 22:1-14 and take turns reading aloud the story.

After you've read the story, get out the colored pencils. Say: **Even though God had asked Abraham to give Isaac's life back to God, Abraham trusted that God wouldn't actually make him kill Isaac. What clues can you find in the story that Abraham trusted that God would provide a different way?** Wait for the students to hunt down clues in the text. In one color have them underline verse 5 where Abraham says, "Stay here with the donkey; the boy and I will go over there; we will worship, and then we will come back to you." Also have students underline verse 7 where Isaac says, "The fire and the wood are here,

but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?" and Abraham says, "God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering my son." In the margin with the same colored pencil, have the students write: ABRAHAM TRUSTS. Then in a different color of pencil have them underline verse 13 and 14 where God provides the lamb instead of Isaac. Write in the margin: GOD PROVIDES.

Ask: What do you think Abraham was thinking and feeling as they walked those three days to the mountain? What do you think could have possibly made Abraham so certain that God would provide a different way than making him kill Isaac?

Say: Abraham knew God well enough to know that God is about life... not death. So Abraham could trust that God would provide. And God did. God had always been faithful to Abraham in the past, so Abraham could trust that God would be faithful this time too. I would bet, though, that there may have been some moments in that three day long walk that Abraham was wondering what God was up to. Sometimes it is hard to trust when we can't see exactly how it is that God is working or what it is that God will provide. That's true even for us, isn't it?

Activity:

Say: Think about a time when you have had to trust God even when you couldn't see how God was going to provide. Or think about a situation in your life right now that is difficult. What helps you to trust that God will provide? (Perhaps it is friends or the encouragement of someone who cares.)

Today we are going to make bookmarks you can look at or give to a friend when they need to be reminded that God will provide. These are secret reminders. You can tuck them into a book at school or stick them in a drawer or put them in your Bibles and no one else will even know what they mean because we are going to use writing that is invisible until the moment when you are ready to have it be revealed.

Let students choose which one of the options below they would like to try for making their own reminder bookmarks. They may choose to write the words "God will provide" or "trust" or anything else that would bring encouragement in times of difficulty.

Option 1: Lemon Juice

Use a paintbrush or fingers to write with lemon juice on a piece of white paper. Once the “ink” dries, it will be invisible until held up to a lightbulb. (It works because the heat from the lightbulb heats the paper weakened by the lemon juice and turns it brown, revealing the message.)

Option 2: Wax Paper

Place a piece of wax paper over the top of a piece of regular white paper. Write the desired message with a pen or pencil on the wax paper and then remove it. The pressure of the writing will have transferred the wax to the plain white paper. The message will be revealed when colored over with a crayon.

Option 3: White Crayon and Watercolor

Writing with a white crayon on white paper is a simple way to create a message that isn't easily visible. It will become very clear though when painted over with watercolor paints.

With Any Additional Time:

Students who have completed at least one year of confirmation memorized the Apostles Creed and meaning last year in confirmation. Use any remaining Sunday School time to review the first article and the meaning with the kids who memorized it last year and challenge those who haven't memorized it yet to start by quizzing each other in a fun way. See page 11 in the small catechism for the article and meaning (or if you don't have access to one, look at today's lesson for the Upper Elementary grade to see a copy.)

IMPORTANT NOTE: Now is the time to look ahead to next week's lesson. If you are going to be making homemade rock candy, it needs to be started today!!!!

Questions for Conversation

*What's the best
gift you've ever
been given?*

*What's the hardest
thing anyone has ever
asked you to do?*

*What was the worst
day of your life?*

*Who is the one
person that you
trust most in the
world? Why that
person?*

*Think about a time
when someone you
trusted let you down.
How did you react?*