

God's Blueprint for Families

Lesson 1



Scripture: Genesis 5:1-4; Exodus 2:1, 2, 10; 1 Samuel 2:18, 19, 21; Esther 2:7; Acts 16:1; Galatians 3:25-27; 1 John 3:1










Bible Memory: Colossians 3:12-14

Focus: ♥ God cares about families.

Heart to Heart Teacher Devotion

Families come in all shapes and sizes, and everyone's family experiences are different. For some, the word *family* brings images of warm fuzzy moments, safety, and love. For others, it brings to mind fear, anger, rejection, and sadness. But no matter the experiences the preteens you teach have already had, help them to understand that God cares about their families. And more importantly, God wants every person to join *His* family and live forever with Him as the perfect, faithful, and loving Father (see 2 Peter 3:9 and 1 John 3:1).

Lesson 1 at a Glance

<p>1 FOCUS IN Use one or more of these activities to help students <i>explore various family structures</i>.</p>	<p> Quick Step Family Posters</p> <p> Option Family Circles</p>	<p>HeartShaper Materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • none • <i>Resources</i> CD Families printable file 	<p>Other Materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 lengths of roll paper, markers, reusable adhesive • pencils
<p>2 EXPLORE HIS WORD Use these activities to help students <i>discover a variety of godly families in the Bible</i>.</p>	<p> Bible Exploration Genesis 5:1-4; Exodus 2:1, 2, 10; 1 Samuel 2:18, 19, 21; Esther 2:7; Acts 16:1; Galatians 3:25-27; 1 John 3:1</p> <p> Bible Memory Colossians 3:12-14</p> <p> Optional Bible Skill Builder</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Activities</i> for lesson 1 • <i>Resources</i> sheet 2 • <i>Resources</i> CD Optional Bible Skills 1 printable file 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bibles, whiteboard, dry-erase markers and erasers, pencils • reusable adhesive, Bibles • Bibles
<p>3 MAKE IT REAL Use one of these activities to help students <i>understand that God cares about all families</i>.</p>	<p> Quick Step Not Just <i>Some</i> Families</p> <p> Option God Never Gives Up</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Activities</i> for lesson 1 • none 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bibles • Bibles
<p>4 LIVE IT OUT Use one of these activities to help students <i>thank God that He cares about all families</i>.</p>	<p> Quick Step Express Your Thanks!</p> <p> Option God Cares Poster</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Activities</i> for lesson 1 • none 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pencils • long length of roll paper, markers, reusable adhesive

Focus In (10-15 minutes)

- 1 Use one or more of these activities to help students **explore various family structures.**


Welcome

- Welcome each student by name.
- Early arrivers will enjoy doing one or more of the additional activities described on the unit page.

Quick Step Family Posters

Divide the class into two groups. Give each group a length of roll paper and markers. SAY: **We all know that there are lots of different kinds of families. With your group, come up with as many different family structures as you can and draw them on your paper; stick figures are OK. Be prepared to talk about what your group came up with.** Give students time to work. Encourage everyone in the groups to participate. Some can come up with ideas while others draw. After several minutes, let the groups show their posters and tell about the different family structures they drew. Display the posters on a wall.


ASK: **How would you define the word *family*?** Accept responses.
How is each of these family structures different from the others?
How are these family structures the same?

SAY: **Let's dig into God's Word and read about some families. We'll discover that  God cares about families, no matter what families look like.**

Option Family Circles

Distribute copies of the Families printable file. SAY: **We all know that there are lots of different kinds of families. Think about your family. Who makes up your family? What words describe your family? Put the answer to those questions in the circle labeled "My Family."** When preteens are done, group them in pairs. Each pair should describe and discuss their own families. As they do so, have each person write words to describe his or her partner's family in the circle labeled "A Friend's Family." When pairs are finished, SAY: **On your paper, draw a large circle that slightly overlaps the other two circles. In that circle, write the information that's the same in the other two circles.** When everyone is done, have volunteers read what they wrote in the middle circle.

ASK: **How would you define the word *family*?** Accept responses.
What are some ways families are different from each other?
What are some ways families are the same?

SAY: **Let's dig into God's Word and read about some families. We'll discover that  God cares about families, no matter what families look like.**

Focus

 God cares about families.

Materials

2 lengths of roll paper,
markers, reusable
adhesive



Be aware that some students who are more concrete thinkers may have trouble processing different definitions of *family*.

Teaching Tips

Be sensitive to preteens who may feel that their family situation is not ideal. Encourage them throughout the lesson, explaining that we're all invited to become children of God.

Display the Poster for the Quarter (*Resources* sheet 1).

Materials

copies of *Resources* CD
Families printable file
(1 per student), pencils



Teaching Tip

If there's an uneven number of preteens, you can participate and be someone's partner.

Focus

♥ God cares about families.

Explore His Word (25 minutes)

2 Use these activities to help students **discover a variety of godly families in the Bible.**

Bible Background for the Teacher

God created people and the family structure. Genesis 1:27, 28 states, “So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, ‘Be fruitful and increase in number.’” With the birth of Cain and Abel (Genesis 4:1, 2), family life with parents and children began.

Throughout Scripture various family structures are described. Some examples include:

Nuclear, traditional family	Genesis 5	Adam, Eve, and children
Blended families (half brothers)	Genesis 21	Ishmael and Isaac
Adopted child/child with parent of different ethnic background	Exodus 2	Moses
Foster child (part-time parent)	1 Samuel 2	Samuel
Extended family	Esther 2	Esther
Parents of different faiths	Acts 16	Timothy

In each of these family structures, God provided love, protection, and blessings to those who sought, trusted, and lived in obedience to Him. God supplied the tools needed for children to grow “in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man” (Luke 2:52).

Materials

Bibles, whiteboard, dry-erase markers and erasers, pencils, *Activities* for lesson 1



Note

The Scripture text is provided on the *Resources* CD in both the *New International Version* and the *King James Version*, if you want preteens to read from the same Bible version.

How to Say It

Derbe	<i>Der-be</i>
ephod	<i>ee-fod</i>
Hadassah	<i>Huh-das-suh</i>
Levi	<i>Lee-vye</i>
Levite	<i>Lee-vite</i>
Lystra	<i>Liss-truh</i>
Mordecai	<i>Mor-dih-kye</i>
Pharaoh	<i>Fay-ro</i>

Bible Exploration Genesis 5:1-4; Exodus 2:1, 2, 10; 1 Samuel 2:18, 19, 21; Esther 2:7; Acts 16:1; Galatians 3:25-27; 1 John 3:1

Have students turn to the contents page in their Bibles (either print or digital Bibles). Ask students to find these books: Genesis, Exodus, 1 Samuel, Esther, Acts, Galatians, and 1 John.

ASK: **Which books are in the Old Testament?** (Genesis, Exodus, 1 Samuel, Esther)

Which books are in the New Testament? (Acts, Galatians, 1 John)

What do you think is one thing these books have in common?

Accept responses.

SAY: **These books all tell about families, godly families.** Divide the class into five groups or pairs, if you have enough students. Go to each group and quietly assign them one of these Scripture passages: Genesis 5:1-4; Exodus 2:1, 2, 10; 1 Samuel 2:18, 19, 21; Esther 2:7; Acts 16:1. **In your groups, find your Scripture passage and read it. Then decide how to draw that family. When you're ready, send a member or two from your group to the board to draw your assigned family. Stick figures are OK; and don't write any names.** When students are done, have them stay in their groups.

Point to one of the illustrations, and ask preteens who aren't part of that group to guess who the family is. When a correct response is given, have someone from that group write the names of the family members near the illustration. If students are having a hard time guessing, give some hints. Do the same for the other four illustrations. Distribute the leaflets, and ask students to look at the activity *Take a Deep Dive*. SAY: **In your groups,**

answer the two questions about your Scripture. For the question about family structure, think about whether the family is a traditional family, a single-parent family, a blended family, a family with foster or adopted children, a family with parents of different ethnic backgrounds, an extended family, a family with differing religious beliefs, and so forth. If you don't know how to answer the other question, keep reading in your Bible or ask me to help you. Be prepared to share your answers with the rest of the class. When groups are ready, ask them to share their answers. Encourage everyone to write the answers in their leaflets.

ASK: **What types of families does the Bible describe?** (traditional families, single-parent families, families with half brothers and half sisters, families of differing religious beliefs, families of different ethnic backgrounds, extended families)

SAY: **Even though these families were quite different, God used each of them in special ways. ♥ God cares about families, whether our families have two parents or one, lots of brothers and sisters or none, or have different ethnic backgrounds. ♥ God cares about families, whether they're extended families or step families or any other kind of families.** Ask students to turn in their Bibles to 1 John 3:1, and have a volunteer read it aloud. Then ask students to turn to Galatians 3:25-27, and have a volunteer read the verses aloud.

ASK: **Who can be part of God's family?** (those who have faith in God, those who are baptized and clothed with Christ)
How do you feel knowing that you can be a part of the best family of all and be a child of God?

Bible Memory Colossians 3:12-14

"Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity."

Display the Colossians 3:12-14 poster on a wall or bulletin board. Have preteens find Colossians 3:12-14 in their Bibles. Have a volunteer read the verses aloud. SAY: **Colossians 3:12-14 gives some good advice for family living.**

ASK: **What good advice for family living do you see in these verses?** (show compassion; be kind, humble, gentle, and patient; offer forgiveness and love)
What are some ways to show your family compassion? humility? patience?
When is a time that you needed forgiveness from a family member? How did it make you feel when you were or were not forgiven?

Ask preteens to look at the poster and say the Bible Memory together. Encourage students to work on memorizing these important Bible verses.

Possible Answers for Take a Deep Dive

Genesis 5:1-4=traditional family; first people God made.

Exodus 2:1, 2, 10=starts out as a traditional family, then is an adopted child with parents of different ethnic backgrounds; Moses led the people out of Egypt.

1 Samuel 2:18, 19, 21=starts out as a traditional family, then is a family with a foster child; Samuel became a prophet and the last judge of Israel.

Esther 2:7=extended family; Esther saved the Jewish people.

Acts 16:1=traditional family, family with differing religious beliefs; Timothy was a companion of Paul's and a leader in the early church.

Materials

Resources sheet 2, reusable adhesive, Bibles



Note

The Bible Memory in the *King James Version* is included on the *Resources* CD.

Optional Bible Skill Builder

Print and use the *Resources* CD Optional Bible Skills 1 printable file.



Focus

♥ God cares about families.

Make It Real (10–15 minutes)

3 Use one of these activities to help students **understand that God cares about all families.**

Materials

Activities for lesson 1,
Bibles



Teaching Tips

Since not all preteens like to act, be sure to encourage everyone in the groups to be involved in some way. Some preteens can help plan what will be acted out, some can find props to use, and some can have nonspeaking roles.

If you have a small class, work together to act out a few of the situations. You can discuss the others.

Materials

Bibles



Tech Tip

Record preteens playing the game. Let them watch the fun before leaving. You could let one of them record the action.

Quick Step Not Just Some Families



Have preteens turn in their leaflets to the activity Not Just Some Families. Read the instructions. Divide the class into small groups. Assign each group one of the situations to read and decide how to act it out, using the instructions provided. Give groups time to work on this. When students are ready, ask each group to read aloud its situation and then act it out. After each group is done, ask a few questions such as these:

ASK: If you and your family were in this situation, what are some other ways that you could show you believe that God cares and is with your family? Accept responses.

After all the groups have acted out their situations, SAY: **Even when sad or confusing things happen in your family, God cares. He doesn't stop caring about your family when things go wrong or your family seems different from others. God never stops caring about your family. He never gives up on you and your family. ♥ God cares about families, including yours.**

Option God Never Gives Up

Ask preteens to stand up. SAY: **Let's play a game of Simon Says.** Tell preteens to do what Simon tells them to do. If they do an action and you didn't say "Simon says," they will sit down. If they don't do an action that Simon tells them to do, they will also sit down. Be sure to keep the game moving quickly. Touch your nose as you give this instruction: **Simon says touch your nose.** Pause as preteens do this. Shut one eye as you give this instruction: **Simon says shut one eye.** Pause as preteens do this. Put your hand on your head as you give this instruction: **Simon says touch your mouth.** Those who put their hands on their heads can sit down. Clap your hands as you give this instruction: **Simon says raise a hand.** Those who clapped their hands can sit down. Stick out your tongue as you give this instruction: **Simon says put your hands on your shoulders.** When you're finished playing the game, have everyone sit down.

SAY: **The game got a little confusing and more difficult as it went on. Family life can be difficult at times and confusing too. Where can you and your family turn for help? You probably guessed that you can go to God's Word, because just as was true for the families described in the Bible, God's Word tells us that ♥ God cares about all families, including yours.** Ask preteens to turn in their Bibles to Nahum 1:7, and have a volunteer read it aloud. Then have other volunteers read aloud Psalm 68:6; Psalm 55:22; Matthew 6:25, 26, 33; Hebrews 13:5; and 1 Peter 5:7.

ASK: What are some hard things families go through? Accept responses. **How can your family trust in God during those times?**

SAY: **God never stops caring about your family. He never gives up on you and your family, because He cares.**

Live It Out (10 minutes)

- 4 Use one of these activities to help students **thank God that He cares about all families.**

Focus

♥ God cares about families.

Quick Step Express Your Thanks!

SAY: ♥ **God cares about families, no matter what families are like. Families are all different, and God cares about each one. Whether your family has half brothers and sisters or you live with extended family, God cares. Whether your family is led by a single parent or two parents, God cares. Whether you have no brothers and sisters or have lots of them, God cares. Whatever your family is like, God cares.**

Have students turn in their leaflets to the activity Express Your Thanks! Read the instructions. Encourage preteens to write their thanks to God. Tell them that no one else will see what they're writing.

When you sense that preteens are done, invite them to spread out in your area. Encourage them to silently pray the prayers they've written to thank God for caring about all families. Ask students to remain quiet until after you pray. After a brief time of silence, close in prayer. Thank God that He cares about *all* families.

Option God Cares Poster

SAY: ♥ **God cares about families, no matter what families are like. Families are all different, and God cares about each one. Whether your family has half brothers and sisters or you live with extended family, God cares. Whether your family is led by a single parent or two parents, God cares. Whether you have no brothers and sisters or have lots of them, God cares. Whatever your family is like, God cares.**

Lay out a long length of roll paper where preteens can write on it. Have a volunteer label the top of the paper "God Cares About Families." SAY: **In just a moment, find a place you can write on the paper. You're going to write these names on the paper: the names of your immediate family, the names of a friend's family, the names of a family you don't know very well, and the names of another family of your choosing.** Give students time to do this. When they're finished, SAY: ♥ **God cares about families. Let's thank Him for caring about these families and every family.** Encourage preteens to bow their heads and silently thank God for caring for their families and those they named on the paper. After a brief time of silence, close in prayer, thanking God that He cares about *all* families. Be sure to display the poster in your room.

Materials

Activities for lesson 1,
pencils



Offer to write for students who have difficulty with paper and pencil tasks.

Materials

long length of roll paper,
markers, reusable
adhesive



Be sure to offer the option of drawing, as some students may prefer drawing. Or offer to write for students who have difficulty with paper and pencil tasks.

Live Wire

Distribute *Live Wire* to students before they leave. They will enjoy the articles, puzzles, and other features included in this fun student magazine.

Be sure parents know about the *Faith & Family* pages available online to print and use with their children at home. Go to www.heartshaper.com.

