

# Challenging Changes

## Lesson 3



**Scripture:** Genesis 12:1-9










**Bible Memory:** Colossians 3:12-14

**Focus:** ♥ Trust God in changing family situations.

### Heart to Heart Teacher Devotion

Abram “went,” “set out,” “arrived,” “traveled,” “pitched his tent,” and “built an altar” to the Lord. What journey has God called you to make for Him today? Has He called you to take His truth to the office, mission field, home, or to preteens? Allow the Lord to guide you as you equip your students to ♥ trust God in changing family situations and to trust Him with the challenges they will face in their rapidly changing world.

## Lesson 3 at a Glance

<p><b>1 FOCUS IN</b> Use one or more of these activities to help students <i>explore changes that happen in families.</i></p>	<p> <b>Quick Step</b> Keep the Story Going</p> <p> <b>Option</b> Changing Sounds</p>	<p><b>HeartShaper Materials</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• none</li> <li>• none</li> </ul>	<p><b>Other Materials</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• none</li> <li>• 5 identical plastic bottles, pitcher of water, towel</li> </ul>
<p><b>2 EXPLORE HIS WORD</b> Use these activities to help students <i>explain how Abram trusted God with his family.</i></p>	<p> <b>Bible Exploration</b> Genesis 12:1-9</p> <p> <b>Bible Memory</b> Colossians 3:12-14</p> <p> <b>Optional Bible Skill Builder</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Activities</i> for lesson 3</li> <li>• <i>Resources</i> sheet 2</li> <li>• <i>Resources</i> CD Optional Bible Skills 3 and Unlock Your Bible printable files</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bibles, pencils, paper, markers, reusable adhesive</li> <li>• Bibles, 2 boxes</li> <li>• Bibles of various versions, Bible dictionary, Bible concordance, dictionary, whiteboard, dry-erase marker, paper, pencils</li> </ul>
<p><b>3 MAKE IT REAL</b> Use one of these activities to help students <i>discover how to trust God in changing family situations.</i></p>	<p> <b>Quick Step</b> What Would You Do?</p> <p> <b>Option</b> The Change Game</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Activities</i> for lesson 3</li> <li>• none</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• none</li> <li>• 2 nonbreakable items to pass</li> </ul>
<p><b>4 LIVE IT OUT</b> Use one of these activities to help students <i>plan to trust God in changing family situations.</i></p>	<p> <b>Quick Step</b> My Plan of Action</p> <p> <b>Option</b> Trusting God, No Matter What</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Activities</i> for lesson 3</li> <li>• none</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• scrap paper</li> <li>• chairs, trash cans, foam balls, index cards, pencils, markers, Bibles</li> </ul>

## Focus In (10-15 minutes)

- 1** Use one or more of these activities to help students **explore changes that happen in families.**

### 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 Keep the Story Going

SAY: **I'm going to begin a story about a pretend family; we'll call them the Smith family. The Smith family is going through changes, both good changes and not-so-good changes. When it's your turn, keep the story going and talk about one more change they're going through. Let's see how long we can keep their story going.** Begin the story: **The Smith family sure has been going through lots of changes this year. The first change that happened to them was . . .** A student next to you picks up the story, telling one change that happened in the Smith family. Then the next student adds another change. If any preteens get stuck for ideas, let a friend whisper an idea to them. Some changes students might mention include: moving, new sibling born or adopted, older sibling leaving home, death, divorce, parent going back to work, job loss, more money, less money, grandparents/other family moving in, grandparents needing more help, parent remarries, step family.

SAY: **While the Smith family probably had more changes than your family will ever have, it's a fact that all families experience changes. While some changes may be good, other changes will not be so good. Let's dig into God's Word and find out who learned to ♥ trust God in changing family situations.**

### Option Changing Sounds



Show preteens the water bottles. Ask students to predict what will happen when someone blows across the tops of the bottles. Then have a few students try it. (The sounds should all be the same.) Then vary the amount of water in each bottle. Arrange the bottles in order from most to least full. Ask students to predict what will happen now. Then have a few students try it. (The sounds should all be different.) SAY: **Changing the amounts of air and water in the bottles changes the pitch. That's a fun change. But what about changes in families? Sometimes those are good changes, but not always.**

ASK: **What are some changes that happen in families?** (moving, new sibling born, older sibling leaving home, death, divorce, parent going back to work, job loss, more money, less money, grandparents/other family moving in, grandparents needing more help, parent remarries, step family)

SAY: **Let's dig into God's Word and find out who learned to ♥ trust God in changing family situations.**

## Focus

♥ Trust God in changing family situations.

### Materials

none



### Teaching Tip

Continue to display the Poster for the Quarter (*Resources* sheet 1).

### Materials

5 identical plastic bottles (filled with the same amount of water), pitcher of water, towel for cleanup



### Note

When you blow across the tops of the bottles, you are making the air inside vibrate. In bottles with more air, vibrations are slower, so the pitch is lower.

## Focus

♥ Trust God in changing family situations.

# Explore His Word (25 minutes)

**2** Use these activities to help students **explain how Abram trusted God with his family.**

## Bible Background for the Teacher

Nomadic wanderings were not unusual in Abram's time. Since Noah's day the descendants of Ham, Shem, and Japheth had wandered, explored, and relocated to all the far places of the earth. Rudimentary nations, as city-states, had arisen, with political, cultural, and religious diversity.

Abram chose to trust God by leaving his extended family—a set of vital relationships in that day—and moving his nuclear family 600 miles northwest from what is now Iraq to what is now Turkey. From there he traveled another 700 miles southeast to the Nile Delta. This was not a mild undertaking, even for the seasoned traveler. Yet Abram set out in determined obedience to God, reflecting his trust in Him. God's promises to Abram—if Abram obeyed God's direction of Genesis 12:1—are clear: Abram's family would survive and prosper; Abram's name would be known; Abram's line would have a long-term effect on all nations.

Abram's response was that of the true worshipper. He built an altar at Shechem (Genesis 12:6, 7) and later, one between Bethel and Ai (v. 8). Abram trusted God in every way, at every place, and in every changing situation. One of the best ways to live for God through family changes is to trust and obey Him.

### Materials

Bibles, *Activities* for lesson 3, pencils, paper, markers, reusable adhesive



### 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

Ai	<i>Ay-eye</i>
Bethel	<i>Beth-ul</i>
Canaan	<i>Kay-nun</i>
Harran	<i>Hair-un</i>
Moreh	<i>Mo-reh</i>
Negev	<i>Neg-ev</i>
Sarai	<i>Seh-rye</i>
Shechem	<i>Shek-em</i>

### Tech Tip

Go online and show students some examples of emojis.

## Bible Exploration Genesis 12:1-9

**SAY: Abram, a man we read about in the Old Testament, knew about family situations that changed. When he was young, Abram lived in Ur in the land of the Chaldeans. Abram's father took Abram, Abram's wife Sarai, and Abram's nephew Lot and moved to Harran. That's where we pick up Abram's story.** Ask students to turn in their Bibles to Genesis 12:1-9. Have volunteers read the verses aloud.

**ASK: What changing family situation happened to Abram and his family?**  
(They moved.)  
**Why did they move?** (God told them to.)

Distribute the leaflets, and have students look at the activity *Abram's Journey*. Help students get into pairs. Tell pairs to work together to answer the first two questions. When students are ready, let volunteers share their answers. (Answers: 1=75 years old, wife was Sarai, nephew was Lot, had possessions, he trusted God; 2=left his country as God told him to, took his family with him, built altars to worship God)

Divide the class into four groups. (For a smaller class, call on four individuals.) Give each group a sheet of paper and markers. **SAY: Now that we know some facts about Abram, let's think about how he and others might have felt about what happened. You'll draw emojis on your paper to do that.** Emojis are simply-drawn faces that show different emotions. The groups will probably want to draw more than one emoji. Assign one group verse 1. They are to draw emojis showing how they think Abram might have felt as God asked him to move. Assign another group verses 2 and 3. They are to draw emojis showing how they think Abram might have felt as God told him how He would make Abram into a great nation and bless all peoples through him.

Assign another group verses 4 and 5. They are to draw emojis showing how they think Sarai and Lot might have felt about the family change of having to move. Assign the last group verses 4, 7, and 8. They are to draw emojis showing how they think God felt when Abram obeyed God and when Abram built altars to worship God. When groups are done, let them display their drawings and explain why they drew the emojis that they did.

**SAY: No matter how Abram felt, he obeyed God. Whether or not Abram was scared or fearful about moving, he did it. Whether or not it was hard to believe that God would make him into a great nation, Abram obeyed and trusted God. And Abram trusted God with his family.** In the leaflet, have a volunteer read the third question, and let another volunteer answer it. (Answer: Abram took his family with him to the land God would show him, even though Abram didn't know where God would lead them.)

**SAY: Since we know that God is pleased when we obey Him, God must have been pleased with Abram's obedience, even as Abram and his family went through a changing family situation. The same can be true for us. When we ♥ trust God in changing family situations, God is pleased.**

## **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."

Continue to 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. Then ask everyone to read the Bible Memory together.

**ASK: How can these verses help when your family is going through changing situations?** Accept responses.

Form two teams. Have team members line up opposite the wall where you've displayed the Bible Memory Poster. Give the first person on each team a box. **SAY: Let's pretend that these are boxes people use when moving. With the person behind you, carry the box to the side of the room where the poster is displayed, and read the Bible Memory together. Then carry your box back to the next players on your team.** Continue until all players have had a turn carrying a box and saying the Bible Memory. **Whether your family is going through good times or hard times, you can ♥ trust God in changing family situations. And during those times of change, remember to treat your family with kindness and patience, always showing them love and offering forgiveness.**

### **Materials**

Resources sheet 2,  
Bibles, 2 boxes



### **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 3 printable file.



## Focus

♥ Trust God in changing family situations.

# Make It Real (10–15 minutes)

**3** Use one of these activities to help students **discover how to trust God in changing family situations.**

### Materials

Activities for lesson 3



### Teaching Tips

If you have a small class, form two groups and let each group choose which situation to act out.

For preteens who don't like to act, help them find ways to be involved, such as planning how to act out the situation, finding or making props to use, or making sound effects.

### Materials

2 nonbreakable items to pass



### Teaching Tip

If you have a large class, form more than one circle, and provide more items for preteens to pass.



Remind preteens that changing directions is hard and that everyone will do it at different speeds.

## Quick Step What Would You Do?



Ask students to turn in their leaflets to the activity What Would You Do? Have volunteers read the situations aloud. Then divide the class into four groups, and assign each group a situation. Challenge groups to act out ways the preteen in each situation could ♥ trust God in changing family situations. When the groups are ready, let them act out their situations.

**ASK: When changing family situations come to your family, how can you trust God during those times?** (remember how much God loves me and wants what is best for me, talk to God about it, read the Bible and believe what it says, look for the good in changing situations, talk to a parent or other trusted Christian adult about it, honor and respect my parents, react in ways that show I trust in God)

**SAY: Change happens. And there are always lots of changes that happen in families. So let's be prepared to ♥ trust God in changing family situations.**

## Option The Change Game

Ask students to stand in a circle. Give a preteen one item you have for them to pass. Tell students to keep passing the item to the right until you say "Change!" Students must quickly stop and pass the item the other way until you say "Change!" again. Keep the game moving very quickly for a few minutes, frequently saying "Change!" Then have preteens play the game again, but this time add another item for them to pass. Start the items at different places in the circle.

**ASK: How was the game similar to changes that happen in families?** (Changes happen all the time. Changes can happen quickly.)

**SAY: As in our game, changes can come quickly in families, and sometimes these changes can get us all mixed up and confused and feeling very frustrated.**

**ASK: When changing family situations come to your family, how can you trust God during those times?** (remember how much God loves me and wants what is best for me, talk to God about it, read the Bible and believe what it says, look for the good in changing situations, talk to a parent or other trusted Christian adult about it, honor and respect my parents, react in ways that show I trust in God)

**SAY: Change happens. And there are always lots of changes that happen in families. So let's be prepared to ♥ trust God in changing family situations.**

# Live It Out (10 minutes)

- 4 Use one of these activities to help kids **plan to trust God in changing family situations.**

## Focus

♥ Trust God in changing family situations.

### Quick Step My Plan of Action

Wad up some scrap paper, and quickly toss the paper wads at the preteens. Then collect the paper wads, unless you want students to toss them at each other. SAY: **You didn't see that coming, did you? Well, Abram probably didn't see the change coming to his life either. But Abram trusted God. When God told Abram to move to some unknown place, Abram obeyed. Abram moved his family and everything he had, trusting that God would lead him. Will you trust God when a changing family situation comes your way? Having a plan always helps, so let's make a plan to ♥ trust God in changing family situations.**

Ask students to turn in their leaflets to the activity My Plan of Action. SAY: **The next time a changing family situation comes your way, use this plan to help you.** Have a volunteer read the plan. Discuss with the students how changing family situations can be easier to go through when they follow this plan that will help them trust God. Close with a time of prayer. Ask students to hold their leaflets as they spread out in your room. **Think about a changing family situation your family is currently going through or one that has recently happened or something that's about to happen. Read through the plan of action. Take time right now to talk to God about it. Look for the good in the situation. Think about how you can react in ways that show you trust God. Remain quiet until I close in prayer.** Give preteens a few minutes to do this, and then close in prayer.

### Option Trusting God, No Matter What

Set up a simple maze using chairs, trash cans, and whatever you have available. Ask everyone to go through the maze. As students do this, lob some foam balls (or paper wads or other soft items) at them. Then collect the foam balls, unless you want students to toss them at each other. SAY: **Life can seem like a maze at times, can't it? And like the foam balls coming at you unexpectedly, changing family situations can happen without warning.**

SAY: **Well, Abram probably didn't see the change coming to his life either. But Abram trusted God. When God told Abram to move to some unknown place, Abram obeyed. Abram moved his family and everything he had, trusting that God would lead him. Will you trust God when a changing family situation comes your way? Having a plan always helps, so let's make a plan to ♥ trust God in changing family situations.** Give each student an index card and a pencil. Tell them to draw a maze on their cards, representing the maze that life can be at times. Then encourage them to use markers and write on top of the maze their commitment to trust God, no matter what comes their way. Preteens could write their commitment in their own words or write Scripture (see the narrow column for suggestions).

When preteens are done, close in prayer. Encourage preteens to keep their cards so they'll be reminded to ♥ trust God in changing family situations.

### Materials

scrap paper, *Activities* for lesson 3



### Materials

chairs, trash cans, foam balls (or paper wads or other soft items), index cards, pencils, markers, Bibles



### Scriptures

Psalm 28:7; Psalm 37:5; Psalm 91:2; Proverbs 3:5; Nahum 1:7



If some students seem fearful of having objects thrown at them, let them watch.

### 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](http://www.heartshaper.com).

