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HEAVENLY FATHER AND JESUS CHRIST LOVE ME

INTRODUCTION FOR THE TEACHER

To prepare yourself spiritually to teach this lesson, please read and ponder the following: Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ have perfect love for each of us individually. They loved us before we came to this earth; They continue to love us now; and Their great love for us will never change. During His earthly ministry, the Savior demonstrated great love for little children in particular (see Matthew 18:5, 10; Mark 10:13–16; 3 Nephi 17:11–24).

PREPARATION

- Read 3 Nephi 17:11–12, 21–24 and be prepared to summarize this story briefly for the children.
- Bring a copy of the Book of Mormon.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Begin with a gathering activity. For ideas, see page 3.

Prayer Invite a child to give the opening prayer.

Doctrinal Instruction Tell the children that you love them, and talk briefly about some other people who love them, such as their parents, brothers and sisters, grandparents, and so on. Then explain that there are two others who love them more than anyone—Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ. Tell the children, “Heavenly Father and Jesus know who you are. They know your name, and They love you.” Point to one of the children, and say, “Heavenly Father and Jesus love [child’s name].” Repeat for each child.

Activity Verse Recite the following activity verse and invite the children to join you:
Heavenly Father knows me (*point to self*)
And what I like to do.
He knows my name and where I live. (*put fingertips together to form a housetop*)
I know He loves me, too. (*hug self*)

Scripture Story Display the picture on page 22. Tell the children that we learn in the scriptures that Jesus loves little children. Open the Book of Mormon and briefly summarize the story of Jesus Christ blessing the Nephite children (3 Nephi 17:11–12, 21–24). Below is an example:
Jesus was teaching the people (*point to Jesus in the picture*). He asked them to bring their little children to Him (*point to the children in the picture*). They sat on the ground around Him, and Jesus knelt and prayed (*have the children kneel and bow their heads*). Then He blessed each child, one by one. Jesus did this because He loves little children (*have the children hug themselves*).

Song Sing or say the following words to “I Feel My Savior’s Love” (*Children’s Songbook*, 74–75) and do the actions below. Invite the children to join you.
I feel my Savior’s love (*place hands over heart*)
In all the world around me. (*stretch arms out wide*) . . .



TEACHING TIPS

Introduction: Studying the scriptures listed in the “Introduction for the Teacher” section is a good way to invite the Spirit in your lesson preparation (see *Teaching, No Greater Call*, 14).

Actions: You may want to take some time to talk about the actions that go with the songs or activity verses. For example, you could explain that when they put their fingertips together (line 3 of this activity verse) they make a shape that looks like a housetop, and that this action goes with the words “where I live.”

Song: If a song or activity verse is too long for the children in your nursery, use only part of it.

I feel my Savior's love, (*place hands over heart*)
The love he freely gives me. (*point to self*)

Conclusion Share with the children your testimony that Heavenly Father and Jesus love each of them. Have the children repeat the phrase, "Heavenly Father and Jesus love me," a few words at a time.

Prayer Invite a child to give the closing prayer.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

PREPARATION *For the mirror activity:* Bring a small mirror that is large enough for the children to see their faces.

For the picture activity: Bring four or five pictures of things that Heavenly Father has blessed us with, such as a family, a home, trees, the scriptures, and so on. You can use pictures from Church magazines, copies of pictures from this book, or simple pictures you have drawn yourself.

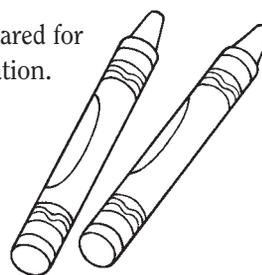
For the coloring activity: Copy and cut out the illustration on page 23 for each child to color (one circle for each child). Thread yarn or a string through the top of each circle to make a necklace.

Mirror Activity Have the children sit in a circle. Move around inside the circle with the mirror, and let each child look at his or her face. As each child looks in the mirror, ask the child to say his or her name (if the child is able). Then say, "Heavenly Father and Jesus love [child's name]."

Pictures Place the pictures you have brought in various places throughout the room. Tell the children that Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ have given us many blessings because They love us. Invite them to walk with you to one of the pictures, and help them name the blessing it represents. Invite them to do an action associated with that blessing (pretend to read the scriptures, pretend to be a tree, and so on). Repeat for the other pictures.

Activity Verse Recite the activity verse on page 9.

Coloring Let the children color the necklaces you prepared for them. Read to them the words on the illustration.



TEACHING TIPS

Testimony: Bearing testimony invites the Spirit. Express your testimony in a simple, concise way; for example: "I know that Heavenly Father and Jesus love all of us."

Young children: To help young children stay attentive and participate in the activities, one nursery leader can give them extra help and attention while the other nursery leader is teaching.

Previous lessons: If you ever need more for the children to do, select activities from previous lessons. All or part of lessons may be taught more than once. The children enjoy repetition, and it is a good review.



