
Purpose	To help each child know that Joseph Smith saw Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ.
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Preparation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prayerfully study James 1:5 and Joseph Smith—History 1:7–20. 2. If available, prepare to show <i>The First Vision</i> (15 minutes), on videocassette <i>Moments from Church History</i> (53145). 3. Prepare to sing or say the words to “Joseph Smith’s First Prayer” (<i>Hymns</i>, no. 26); the words are included at the back of this manual. 4. Materials needed: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. A Bible and a Pearl of Great Price. b. Crayons and paper. c. Picture 3-8, Joseph Smith Seeks Wisdom in the Bible (Gospel Art Picture Kit 402); and picture 3-10, The First Vision (62470; Gospel Art Picture Kit 403). 5. Make the necessary preparations for any enrichment activities that you will be using.
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**Suggested
Lesson
Development**

Joseph Smith Saw Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ

Invite a child to give the opening prayer.

Follow up with the children if you encouraged them to do something during the week.

Attention activity

Display picture 3-8, Joseph Smith Seeks Wisdom in the Bible.

- Who is this? (Joseph Smith.)
- What is he doing?
- Why do you think he is reading the Bible?

Explain to the children that when Joseph Smith was fourteen years old, he lived with his family on a farm. At that time the people living nearby were interested in religion. The ministers of the different churches held many meetings to explain their beliefs. Each minister said that his church was the right one and tried to get people to join. Because Joseph Smith wanted to know which church really was true, he went to several meetings of different religions. He found that each minister had different ideas about God and the scriptures.

- How do you think Joseph Smith felt about all these different beliefs? (Confused.)

Scripture discussion

If a child who can read is in the class, help him or her to read Joseph Smith—History 1:10 or read it aloud yourself. Begin with the words “I often said to myself. . .”

Emphasize that the many ideas and opinions confused Joseph. He wondered which of these churches was right or if they were all wrong. Joseph’s mother, two of his brothers, and a sister joined the Presbyterian Church, but Joseph did not join any of the churches.

Show the children a Bible and explain that Joseph often read the Bible. One day he read a scripture that impressed him very much.

Have an older child read James 1:5 aloud or read it aloud yourself.

- What do you think it means to lack wisdom? (Make sure the children know that to lack wisdom means to not know or understand something.)
- What does it mean to ask of God? (Pray to Heavenly Father.)

Reread the scripture. Explain that this scripture means that we can pray to Heavenly Father and ask him to help us understand and learn about something.

Joseph knew that he lacked wisdom. He was confused. He didn’t know which church was true, so he decided to do what the Bible says—pray to Heavenly Father.

Videocassette or scripture story

Show *The First Vision*, or relate the following:

Early one spring morning, Joseph walked to a grove of trees near his home. After looking around to make sure that he was alone, Joseph knelt down to pray.

As he was praying, he saw a very bright light in the air above his head. Joseph described what he saw in this way: “When the light rested upon me I saw two Personages, whose brightness and glory defy all description, standing above me in the air” (Joseph Smith—History 1:17).

Picture and discussion

Show picture 3-10, The First Vision.

One of the personages called Joseph by name and, pointing to the other, said, “*This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!*” (Joseph Smith—History 1:17).

- Who were these two personages? (Heavenly Father and Jesus.)

Joseph asked Heavenly Father and Jesus which church was right and which he should join. He was told that he should not join any of the churches because they were all wrong. Joseph learned that Jesus’ true Church was no longer on the earth.

The place where Joseph Smith saw Heavenly Father and Jesus is now called the Sacred Grove.

- How do you think Joseph Smith felt after having seen Heavenly Father and Jesus?

Joseph Smith Learned Many Things from His Vision

Ask the children what Joseph Smith learned from his vision. Bring out the following points:

1. Joseph saw Heavenly Father and Jesus. He learned that they have bodies of flesh and bone.
2. He learned that Jesus' true Church was no longer on earth.
3. He learned that he was not to join any of the churches. Emphasize that none of the churches was true. (You might tell the children that the next lesson will explain how Joseph Smith helped bring Jesus' true Church back to the earth.)
4. He learned that Heavenly Father and Jesus care about us and answer prayers.

Song Sing or say the words to "Joseph Smith's First Prayer." Or you might invite a guest to sing this song for the children.

Article of faith Joseph Smith once wrote a letter to a man and explained what the Church taught. Part of that letter became known as the Articles of Faith.

Help the children repeat the first article of faith, which states that we believe in Heavenly Father, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost.

Summary

Testimony Bear your testimony that Joseph Smith saw the Father and the Son, and express your gratitude for Joseph Smith.

Testify that Joseph learned that the promise in James 1:5 is true. If we lack wisdom, we can ask Heavenly Father and receive an answer.

Testify that Heavenly Father and Jesus love all of us. They will help us find answers to our questions just as they helped Joseph Smith. Angels might not appear to us; but if we ask sincerely, Heavenly Father will answer our prayers in the way that is best for us.

Invite a child to give the closing prayer. Ask him or her to thank Heavenly Father for Joseph Smith and for his vision of Heavenly Father and Jesus.

Enrichment Activities

Choose from the following activities those that will work best for your children. You can use them in the lesson itself or as a review or summary. For additional guidance, see "Class Time" in "Helps for the Teacher."

1. Have the children close their eyes while you read the words to the song "The Sacred Grove" (*Children's Songbook*, p. 87). Ask them to think carefully about Joseph's experience so they can draw a picture of it.

The Sacred Grove was green and fresh,
The morning sun shone bright around,
As Joseph knelt in fervent prayer,
As Joseph knelt in fervent prayer
Upon that sacred ground.

The Father and the Son appeared.
They spoke to him as with one voice.
Their message answered all his fears,
Their message answered all his fears
And made his heart rejoice.

Have each child draw a picture of Joseph Smith in the Sacred Grove and label it “Joseph Smith in the Sacred Grove.”

2. Reread James 1:5 aloud to the children and explain how this teaches us to find answers to our problems. Give the children situations in which they might “lack wisdom” and need to “ask of God.” Help them think of ways that Heavenly Father could help them with problems if they will ask him. You might use situations such as the following:

- You are sad because you and your best friend have been fighting lately. You don’t know how to make things better.
- You feel lonely and scared in your bed at night.
- Your mother is sick and she seems sad. You would like to help her feel happy again.

Be sure to emphasize that Heavenly Father and Jesus usually answer prayers by giving us a peaceful feeling, which the children will learn more about in another lesson. The children should not expect Heavenly Father and Jesus to appear to them to answer their prayers.