

Alma Teaches about Faith

Purpose To teach the children that the word of God, when nourished by faith, will grow in our hearts into a testimony of Jesus Christ.

Preparation

1. Prayerfully study Alma 32–33. Then study the lesson and decide how you want to teach the children the scripture account. (See “Preparing Your Lessons,” p. vi, and “Teaching from the Scriptures,” p. vii.)
2. Select the discussion questions and enrichment activities that will involve the children and best help them achieve the purpose of the lesson.
3. Examine the visual aids at the end of the lesson and decide how you want to display them during the lesson. You could make a paper copy of each illustration, trace the illustrations on construction paper, or be prepared to draw the illustrations on the chalkboard.
4. Materials needed:
 - a. A Book of Mormon for each child.
 - b. A seed for each child, if possible.
 - c. A paper copy of the visual aids at the end of the lesson (seed, sprouting seed, sapling, tree, rain, sun, soil, and fertilizer).

Suggested

Lesson

Development

Invite a child to give the opening prayer.

Attention Activity

Give each child a seed, show the illustration of a seed, or draw a seed on the chalkboard.

- What can a seed become? (A plant or tree, depending on the type of seed.)
- What must happen before a seed can begin to grow? (Show the illustration of the sprouting seed or draw one on the chalkboard.)
- What does a tree look like when it is young? (Show the illustration of the sapling or draw one on the chalkboard.) What does it look like when it is mature? (Show the illustration of a tree or draw one on the chalkboard.)
- What nourishment does a seed need to help it grow into a plant or tree? (Explain that *nourishment* means something that helps things grow or keeps them alive and well, such as water, fertilizer, sunshine, and soil. Place the illustrations of the sun, rain, soil, and fertilizer near the picture of the seed.)

Explain to the children that in this lesson they will learn how they can gain a strong testimony. You could use the wordstrips from enrichment activity 1 as you discuss each principle in the lesson.

Scripture Account

Teach the account from Alma 32–33 of Alma teaching the Zoramites. (For suggested ways to teach the scripture account, see “Teaching from the Scriptures,” p. vii.) Emphasize that just as a good seed with proper care and nourishment

Discussion and
Application
Questions

will eventually become a fruit-bearing tree, the word of God, planted in our hearts and properly nourished, will develop into a strong testimony.

Study the following questions and the scripture references as you prepare your lesson. Use the questions you feel will best help the children understand the scriptures and apply the principles in their lives. Reading the references with the children in class will help them gain insights into the scriptures.

Explain that in the last lesson the children learned about the rich and proud Zoramites.

- Why were the poor Zoramites humble? (Alma 32:2–3.) What are some afflictions that may make people humble enough to listen to the gospel?
- What does it mean to be “poor in heart”? (Humble, teachable, truly repentant, and free from pride.)
- How was being poor a blessing for these people? (Alma 32:12–13.) Explain that people can be humble even if they don’t suffer afflictions or poverty, but sometimes people with riches become proud. Why is it necessary for us to be humble when we are taught the gospel?
- What is faith? (Alma 32:21.) Why must we have faith to develop a testimony of the gospel? (Alma 32:26.) Explain that it takes time to gain a testimony. Keeping the commandments can help us gain a testimony that they are true.
- What did Alma tell us to do to develop faith? (Alma 32:27.) What can we do to increase our desire to believe?
- How is obeying the commandments an “experiment” on the word of God? (Explain that *experiment* means to try something you are not sure about. When we experiment, or keep commandments, such as the Word of Wisdom, we receive blessings for our obedience and our testimonies become stronger.) How has your faith increased through your obedience to the commandments?
- How can we plant the word of God in our hearts so our testimonies will grow? (By regularly studying the scriptures; listening in Primary, sacrament meeting, and family home evening; praying; and consistently applying the principles of the gospel in our lives.)
- How will we know when the good seed, or a testimony of the gospel, is beginning to grow inside us? (Alma 32:28, 34.) Invite class members to share their testimonies and describe how they gained them. Encourage the children to gain and strengthen their testimonies. Assure them that if they have faith they can gain strong testimonies of the gospel.
- What does it mean to nourish a seed? (Explain that *nourish* means feed or take care of.) What qualities did Alma tell us we must have to nourish our testimonies of the gospel? (Alma 32:41–42.) Why do you think patience and diligence are necessary in developing faith and a testimony?
- How can studying the scriptures strengthen our faith and testimony? (Alma 33:14.)
- What important teaching should be part of our testimony? (Alma 33:22.)
- How is a strong testimony like a tree? (Alma 33:23.) How will having a testimony help you gain eternal life? You may wish to tell how your testimony has made your problems easier to deal with and brought you joy.

Enrichment Activities

You may use one or more of the following activities any time during the lesson or as a review, summary, or challenge.

1. Make the following wordstrips:

Word of God	Study the scriptures
Testimony of Jesus Christ	Obey the commandments
Pray	Give service

As you teach the children the scripture account, explain that in Alma 32 the word of God is compared to a seed. Place the wordstrip “Word of God” on the illustration of the seed. (Explain that in this scripture the word of God means the gospel, or the teachings of Jesus Christ.) Just as a seed will grow into a tree, if we learn and obey the word of God, we will gain a strong testimony of the gospel.

Place the wordstrip “Testimony of Jesus Christ” on the illustration of the tree. Just as a seed requires care and nourishment to grow into a tree, our testimony of the gospel requires faith and care to grow strong. Ask the children what they can do to strengthen their testimonies. As they respond, place the wordstrips “Pray,” “Study the scriptures,” “Obey the commandments,” and “Give service” by the illustrations of the things that nourish a tree.

2. Make individual puzzles out of some of the words that apply to the lesson by writing the words on slips of paper and cutting the papers into pieces. The words could include *humility*, *desire*, *nourish*, *obedience*, and so on. Divide the class into as many groups as you have words. When a group has put the word together, let a child from that group review what the lesson taught about that word.
3. Prepare pieces of paper with a gospel principle, such as fasting, tithing, or Word of Wisdom, written on each one. Pin or tape a piece of paper on the back of each child, without the child seeing it. Have the children ask the other children questions to try to guess what the principle is, or have the rest of the class give clues. After the child guesses correctly, ask him or her how someone can gain a testimony of that principle. In each case the answer should include praying and living the principle.
4. Sing or read the words to “Faith” (*Children’s Songbook*, p. 96) or “The Fourth Article of Faith” (*Children’s Songbook*, p. 124).

Conclusion

Testimony	Testify that if the children will learn the word of God and obey the commandments while they are young, they will gain strong testimonies of the truthfulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Share your feelings about your faith in the Savior and in his gospel.
Suggested Family Sharing	Encourage the children to share with their families a specific part of the lesson, such as a story, question, or activity, or to read with their families the “Suggested Home Reading.”
Suggested Home Reading	Suggest that the children study Alma 32:21–22, 26–28, 40–43; and 33:14–23 at home as a review of this lesson. Invite a child to give the closing prayer.

