

I Am a Child of God

Lesson

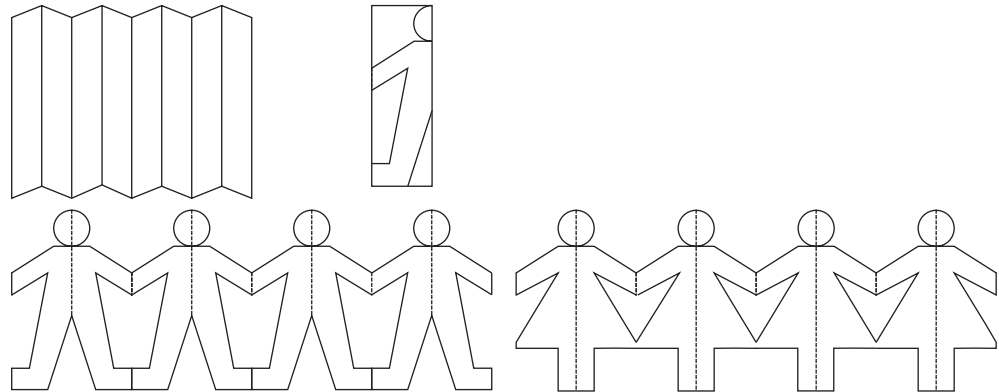
3

Purpose

To help each child realize that Heavenly Father loves each of us because we are his children.

Preparation

1. Prayerfully study Psalm 82:6. See also Hebrews 12:9; Moses 1:39; and *Gospel Principles* (31110), chapter 2.
2. Make a paper doll chain by folding a piece of paper accordion-style (see illustration below). Sketch half a figure of a person on the folded edge of the paper. Cut around the figure but do not cut into the folded edge where the body is or around the hand. The dolls will unfold with their hands joined together. You may want to cut out the dolls in class, while the children watch, or make a small paper doll chain for each child.



3. Prepare three wordstrips:

Spirit

Physical Body

Family

4. Prepare to sing or say the words to “My Heavenly Father Loves Me” (*Children’s Songbook*, p. 228) and “I Am a Child of God” (*Children’s Songbook*, p. 2). The words to “I Am a Child of God” are included at the back of the manual.
5. Materials needed:
 - a. A Bible.
 - b. A small mirror.
 - c. A five-fingered glove (if a glove is not available, you might want to bring a picture or drawing of a glove).
 - d. Picture 2-2, Family with a Baby (62307), or a photograph of a newborn baby.
6. Make the necessary preparations for any enrichment activities you want to use.

**Suggested
Lesson
Development**

Invite a child to give the opening prayer.

Follow up with the children if you encouraged them to do something during the week. You may want to have them report on their experiences as they have asked, "What would Jesus want me to do?"

Who Am I?

Attention activity

Ask the question:

- Who am I?

After the children have answered, repeat your full name.

Point to each child and ask, "Who are you?" Have each child answer by stating his or her name. Explain that each of us is a unique person.

Discussion

Show picture 2-2, Family with a Baby, and let the children point out the members of the family, or show the picture of a newborn baby.

- How old do you think this baby is?
- Where did this baby live before it was born on earth?

Explain that we all lived in heaven with Heavenly Father before we came to this earth. We are his children. That is why we call him Heavenly Father. We also lived with our heavenly mother and all the rest of Heavenly Father's children. Everyone who has been born on the earth is a child of Heavenly Father. We do not remember living with Heavenly Father, but we know we are his children because we read it in the scriptures.

Scripture

Read aloud the last part of Psalm 82:6, beginning with *all of you*. Explain that *the most High* means Heavenly Father.

Explain that all of Heavenly Father's faithful spirit children want to come to earth. Many of his spirit children have been born already, but there are still many waiting to come to earth.

We Have Spirits

Discussion

Display the wordstrip "Spirit."

Explain to the children that when we lived in heaven before we came to earth, we did not have physical bodies. We were spirits.

- What is a spirit?

Explain that our spirits are the part of us that make us alive.

- What do you think your spirit looks like?

Pass around a small mirror and have each child look into it. Ask the children if the mirror gives them any idea what their spirits look like.

Explain that our spirits look like our physical bodies. For example, spirits have eyes, ears, arms, and legs.

Object lesson Place a glove on the table. Explain that even though the glove is shaped like a hand, it cannot move like a hand because it is not alive. When a hand is placed in the glove, then the glove can move. Put your hand into the glove and wiggle your fingers. Explain that the glove is like a physical body, and the hand is like a spirit. Our bodies cannot move without our spirits inside them. Our spirits cannot be seen inside our bodies, just as the hand inside the glove cannot be seen. (See Boyd K. Packer, *Teach Ye Diligently* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1975], p. 231–33.)

We Have Physical Bodies

Discussion Display the wordstrip “Physical Body.”

Explain that when we came to earth, each of us was given a physical body. Have the children name some of the parts of their physical bodies, such as eyes, ears, arms, and legs.

- What can your physical body do?

Activity Let the children name and demonstrate some of the many things their physical bodies can do, such as jumping, hopping, wiggling, talking, crawling, or dancing.

Paper doll discussion Show the children the paper doll chain.

- How are we like these paper dolls? (We also have arms, legs, and heads.)
- How are we different from them? (They are made of paper; we have bodies made of flesh and bone. They aren’t alive; we are alive. They all look alike; we look different from each other.)
- What would it be like if we all looked alike?

Game Ask the children to stand up whenever you make a statement that describes them. Ask them to sit down if the statement does not describe them. Use statements that demonstrate the similarities and differences among the children in your class, such as—

- All the girls stand up.
- Everyone with brown eyes stand up.
- Everyone with a nose stand up.
- Stand up if you have blond hair.

Point out that we all have many things in common, but no two people are exactly alike. Explain that Heavenly Father planned for each of us to have a physical body that is similar to other bodies but not exactly like any other body. Each of us is different from every other person.

We Have Families That Love Us

Teacher presentation Display the wordstrip “Family.”

Tell the children that Heavenly Father loves us so much that he sent each of us to earth to receive a body. He sent us to families who would take care of us and teach us about Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ.

Story

Tell the following story in your own words:

Early one morning a boy and his father began a long hike. They wanted to spend the day together fishing, so they packed their equipment and started hiking toward a small, beautiful lake. They had been walking for a long time when the boy started to get tired and began walking slower and slower.

When the lake came into view, the father hurried ahead to see the beautiful blue waters of the lake. He thought his son would catch up.

When the father got to the lake, he realized that his son had not caught up with him. He could not see his son. The father dropped his pole and searched everywhere for his son. He shouted with all his might, but his son did not answer. The father became frightened. Was his son lost? Was he hurt?

The father knelt down and prayed. He asked Heavenly Father to help him find his son. Then he got up and walked back along the path. Soon he found his son. The father hugged the boy and told him how much he loved him. (Adapted from Owen C. Bennion, "Turning the Heart of a Father," *Ensign*, May 1971, pp. 28–30.)

Discussion

- How did the boy know that his father loved him? (His father took him fishing, searched for him when he was lost, prayed for him, and showed how happy he was to find him.)
- How do you know that your family loves you?

After the children have responded, explain that there are many ways our parents and families show us that they love us.

We Have a Heavenly Father Who Loves Us

Discussion

- How do you know that Heavenly Father loves you?

Song

Tell the children that Heavenly Father loves us and wants us to be happy. He has given us a beautiful world to live in. Sing or say the words to "My Heavenly Father Loves Me," helping the children do the actions indicated:

Whenever I hear (*cup hands around ears*) the song of a bird (*wave arms like wings*)

Or look at the blue, blue sky (*raise arm in arching motion*),

Whenever I feel the rain on my face (*wiggle fingers like raindrops*)

Or the wind as it rushes by (*wave both hands back and forth*),

Whenever I touch a velvet rose (*pretend to smell a flower*)

Or walk by our lilac tree (*walk in place*),

I'm glad that I live in this beautiful world (*outstretch hands and arms*)

Heav'nly Father created for me (*hug self*).

He gave me my eyes that I might see (*point to eyes*)

The color of butterfly wings (*link thumbs and flutter fingers like wings*).

He gave me my ears that I might hear (*point to ears*)

The magical sound of things (*cup hands around ears*).

He gave me my life, my mind (*point to side of head*), my heart (*point to heart*):

I thank him rev'rently (*fold arms*)

For all his creations, of which I'm a part (*outstretch hands and arms*).

Yes, I know Heav'nly Father loves me (*place hands over heart*).

- Discussion
- What things remind you that Heavenly Father loves you?
 - How does it make you feel to know that you are a child of Heavenly Father and he loves you?

Summary

Song Have the children sing the first verse of “I Am a Child of God.” Remind the children that *God* is another name for Heavenly Father.

Point out that the words of the song tell us that each of us is a beloved child of Heavenly Father and that he planned for us to come to earth and receive our physical bodies. He also planned for us to have families to love and teach us so we can return to live with him again.

Testimony Testify that you know Heavenly Father loves us because he has given us physical bodies, a beautiful earth to live on, and families who love us.

Encourage the children to thank Heavenly Father in their prayers tonight for being able to come to earth.

Invite a child to give the closing prayer.

Enrichment Activities

Choose from the following activities those that will work best for the children in your class. 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. Cut the paper dolls apart and give one to each child. Have the children color or decorate the dolls. When the children are finished, have them show their dolls to the rest of the class. Point out how different and beautiful each paper doll has become. Remind the children that we are similar but that no person is exactly like another person.
2. Have the children sit in a circle. Toss a beanbag or other soft object to a child and ask a question about the lesson. Ask the child to answer the question and toss the beanbag back to you. Repeat until every child has had a turn to answer at least one question. Use the following questions or create your own:
 - Where did we all live before we came to earth? (In heaven.)
 - Whom did we live with? (Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ and everyone.)
 - Where do we live now? (On earth.)
 - What do our spirits look like? (Like our physical bodies.)
3. Give the children paper and pencils or crayons and have them draw pictures of things that remind them that Heavenly Father loves them.
4. Have the children stand and play the game “Teacher Says.” Explain that they are to do what you tell them to do only if you say “Teacher says” before you give the instruction. Ask the children to do actions such as folding their arms, touching their shoulders, and turning around, sometimes saying “Teacher says” before asking and sometimes just asking for the action. If the children do the action when you do *not* say “Teacher says,” they must sit down until the end of the game. Repeat the game as many times as you want.

Remind the children that their physical bodies enable them to do all these actions.