



Date: _____
Series: Father's Day
Summer Year 3, Lesson 4

Become a Child of Your Heavenly Father

Primary Scripture: John 3:5-8, 14-16

Key Verse: John 3:17, "God sent his Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but to save the world."

How does this address a need in our kids' lives?

Kids need to know how to get to heaven. They need to know that it is not just by doing good works and earning their way. We get to heaven by trusting in Jesus, who died to give us forgiveness. He is alive and present with us. Through the gift of faith in Christ, we become sons and daughters of God. In baptism, God says to us, "You are my son (or my daughter) and I am your Heavenly Father." On Father's Day, we remember the important role that fathers should have in passing down their faith to their kids. Even if the fathers are not believers, their kids can witness to them.

How does Jesus fill this need?

Jesus for us: John 3:14-15, refer to Jesus being lifted up (on the cross) so that everyone who believes in him would be saved.

Jesus in us: The Bible compares the Holy Spirit to the wind. The Holy Spirit is not physically visible, yet one can see evidence of his working. The Holy Spirit fills us with the gift of faith.

Jesus through us: Just as the love of the Father has been given to us, we can give the Father's love to others. We especially remember our own fathers on this Father's Day.

Stamp of Excellence:

Remind the kids what excellent worship looks like. We are in God's presence to honor him. Put on your best manners. This might include wearing your name tag, participating eagerly at all times, listening when the leader is talking, raising your hand to speak, not distracting others, playing the learning game with cooperation, singing enthusiastically, and praying reverently. Offer rewards or positive reinforcement to those who worship with excellence.



Worship

Invocation:

Let kids bring forward the worship symbol, such as the cross, candles, Bible, and offering plate. Invite God's presence and call by name Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Attention Grabber:

Capture the children's attention and help them focus on the worship theme for the day.

Supplies: picture of presenter as a child, picture of his/her son or daughter

Compare a picture of the large group leader as a child with a picture of his own child. Can the audience see any similarities? If a picture is not available, the child can stand next to the presenter. Say:

Sometimes similarities can be seen and sometimes they cannot. Today we will not only talk about similarities in the way we look, but we will talk about similarities in our souls.

God is our Heavenly Father. When we trust in Jesus as God's Son, we are his children. We become like him. We start to look more and more like our Heavenly Father, not on the outside, but on the inside.

The Bible says in 2 Corinthians 3:18b, "We are being changed into his image with ever-increasing glory. This comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit."

It is our hearts and souls that change. That is why we say we change on the inside. When we get filled up with knowing how much God loves us, it shows up in our lives in the way we love other people. It shows up in our lives when we worship him. Let's worship God because he is our Heavenly Father, and he is making us more and more like him!

Songs of Worship:

Choose two or three songs. Briefly introduce songs so kids can better understand what they are singing and be drawn into a more focused worship. Keep the attention on God!

Your choice of music.

The Power of the Cross:

Jesus has given his life for us that we might have forgiveness and power to live for him.

Supplies: baptismal font

Approach the baptismal font bending your ear down to it, pretending to listen. Ask the kids if they can hear it. Capture their imaginations by convincing them that you hear something.

The truth is that there is a message in the baptismal water. The message is not heard with your ears but with your heart. The message is that God says, "I am your heavenly Father and you are my child. I give you all the blessings that Jesus earned for you when he gave you his life."

Lead kids in a prayer of confession for not always remembering or acting like we are God's children. Then say:

God, the Father, loves you and forgives you. There is nothing you can do that would make him stop loving you. He loves you so much he wants you to call him, "Abba," which means Daddy.

Song of Response:

Choose a song to help the children turn to Jesus. Or, you may want help them celebrate what God has done by singing a song of praise.

Offering:

Teach the importance of giving and talk about the mission activities they are supporting.

Remind the kids as they give their offerings to the Lord, that the money is used to help people. Perhaps you might tell them briefly how their church helps single moms or kids without dads.

The Bible reminds us that we should use our money to help those who are fatherless.

Have a child read James 1:27:

“Pure, unstained religion, according to God our Father, is to take care of orphans and widows when they suffer...”

Explain how the current mission project is “pure, unstained religion.” Make sure to tie our giving to God’s first giving to us “while we were still sinners.” Give the kids specifics about the current project and how well their giving is “on track” to reach your goal.



The Word

Learning Game:

Some churches dismiss children from the adult service at this time to join Kids Church. The learning game provides a fun kinesthetic activity to help kids connect with each other. The learning point will help reinforce the theme of the day.

“Decorate a Dad”

Supplies: two cans of cheese spread in a can, or two cans of shaving cream for sensitive skin, two containers of cereal rings, two containers of cheese puffs, two containers of cheese crackers, two chairs, two dividers, father/daughter and father/son team, four sheets, towels, room divider

The object of this game is to decorate a kid and his father to look similar. Two dads need to be recruited ahead of time. Contestants will have their faces decorated using shaving cream for sensitive skin, cereal rings (e.g. Cheerios), cheese puffs, and cheese crackers. Another, more simple option, is to use cheese spread in a can instead of shaving cream and “accessories.”

The kids and dads being decorated need sheets covering them so their clothes do not get dirty. Extra towels also need to be available to wipe any shaving cream away from eyes.

***Caution: Have kids apply shaving cream first to their hands!
DO NOT apply shaving cream close to the eyes of the volunteers!***

Pick two girls and two boys to add to the father/son and father/daughter teams. Each team consists of a kid and dad plus two face decorating artists. One face artist decorates the father's face using shaving cream and the cereal or crackers. On the other side of a divider (in full view of the audience) is the other artist and kid. The second artist peeks around the divider to see how the first artist is decorating the father. She then attempts to decorate the kid's face as similarly as possible to the father's face. Have girls' team go first and then the boys' team. The audience can participate with their cheers.

The learning point:

Our Heavenly Father adopts us as his children by giving us Jesus. Since Jesus now lives in our hearts through the power of the Holy Spirit, our lives are changed to be more and more godly—or like God. When we are “God-like,” we can show love to others just like God shows love to us.

Bible Reading:

Help children pay attention by giving them a word or concept to listen for as you read. Consider letting a child read who could do so with excellence.

Read John 3:1-8,16. Briefly, talk about how Jesus explained to Nicodemus that we should be born again. Then say:

When we trust Jesus as our Savior, we are born again. Baptism is being born again of water and the Spirit. In baptism, God is saying to us, “I have given you Jesus and I have made you my child. Now you are part of my family so that you can be like me. You can now show the world how much I love them.”

Application:

Application 1:

Supplies: Waiting for the Wind (Family Films, 1991)

Show the 22-minute video. This is a story of a grandfather preparing to die and passing his faith along to his grandson. His unbelieving son-in-law, struggling with grief over the death of his young wife and his disbelief with God, encounters faith and the reality of the Holy Spirit of God.

After the video, ask the following questions.

When the boy asked his grandfather, “How can we know when we have done enough good things to get to heaven,” what did his grandfather answer? *(“No one can do enough good things. It is only because Jesus died on the cross that we are forgiven and can go to heaven.”)*

Why do you think it is sometimes hard for people to believe that God loves them and has given them Jesus? *(Any answer is acceptable. The film points out that when people are hurt it is often hard for them to believe in a loving God.)*

Do you think God at times lets us see miraculous things, like Elijah going up to heaven in a fiery chariot or the grandfather in his boat? *(Not often, but God can choose to do it. The important thing is that we have faith by trusting in Jesus.)*

What are ways in which a father can pass down his faith to his children? Why is that important? *(Taking them to church, reading the Bible and talking to them about it, praying with them, showing God's love, etc. It is important because this is an important role of the father.)*

Application 2: (An option if video is not shown.)

Supplies: clear milk bottle or another bottle with a neck circumference slightly smaller than an egg, hard-boiled egg without its shell, match, permanent marker, and small bowl of water

The following science demonstration will help teach the story of Nicodemus and how to become a child of your heavenly Father.

Practice this experiment before trying it in front of the kids. Use a clear milk bottle or another bottle with a neck circumference slightly smaller than a hard boiled egg without its shell. Place the egg on top of the bottle to show it will not fall in. Take the egg off and drop a lit match into the bottle. After the match burns, immediately place the hard-boiled egg on top of the bottle. The flame burns up the oxygen creating a vacuum that sucks the egg inside. (This is even quicker if the egg is slightly wet with water.)

As you do the demonstration with the kids use this story line:

Nicodemus was a very religious man who knew much about the Bible, but he didn't know how to be trust in Jesus as his Savior and be saved. He came to Jesus at night because many of his religious friends didn't like Jesus. Nicodemus didn't know what to think. When he spoke with Jesus, Jesus said, "You must be born again to see the Kingdom of God."

Nicodemus didn't get it. He thought Jesus was talking about being born like a baby is born from a mother. He thought, "How could anyone be born a second time?" But Jesus wasn't talking about being born physically, like being born as a baby from a mother. Jesus was talking about being born again on the inside. That means being born again spiritually.

It's like this bottle here. Imagine that this bottle is like any one us. It's empty right? Every one of us, before being born again spiritually, is empty, like this bottle. We are spiritually dead. We don't have God living inside of us.

But let's imagine this egg is Jesus. This egg reminds us of Jesus.

Draw a cross on the egg with permanent marker.

The cross is the symbol for Jesus because he gave his life for us on the cross. He wants to fill our lives with his presence and even live inside of us.

Place the egg on top of the bottle.

Since Jesus gave his life for us on the cross, he wants to live in us and work through us. That means we would be spiritually alive. We would be born-again spiritually.

Jesus told Nicodemus that unless we are born again, we can't be part of God's kingdom. Nicodemus asked, "How is someone born again."

Jesus said, "Unless you are born of water and the Spirit, you can't enter God's Kingdom." What did he mean? The Holy Spirit gives us faith to trust that Jesus gave his life for us. The Holy Spirit helps us not to trust in our own ability to earn our way to heaven, but to simply trust Jesus as our Savior.

The Holy Spirit is sometimes pictured as fire in the Bible, so I'm going to light this match and drop it inside of us... I mean inside the bottle.

Light match and drop it.

Then I am going to dip this egg in some water. The water reminds us of baptism. Baptism is God's way of saying; "You are my child because I have adopted you into my family. Now Jesus lives inside you!"

Place the egg on top of the bottle as soon as the match goes out. The suction will squeeze the egg into the bottle!

Have you been born again? Have you trusted in Jesus as your Savior? If not, why don't you ask him right now to come into your life. Pray like this:

Dear God, I need you to fill up my life. I admit that I have sinned and I can't earn my way to heaven by myself. I trust that Jesus has given his life for me on the cross. Jesus, please be my Savior and live in my life. Thank you. I want to be born again. In Jesus' name. Amen.



Witness and Tell:

Give children opportunities to share how God is working in their lives. It is best to use a microphone to ask children interview questions around the theme for the day.

Have kids come forward that want to share their testimonies to these questions.

Option 1:

What are things your dad does that helps you trust your heavenly Father? How can these things help you become a child of God?

Option 2:

Tell about when you first knew that you were born again and that you trusted in Jesus as your Savior.

Option 3:

What's the best thing about being a child of God?

Prayer:

Let the kids pray out loud. If you are using a microphone, invite children to form a prayer line and speak their thanksgivings or requests. If you have portable microphones, you can roam the audience. Kids can also go to prayer stations set up for specific types of prayer.

Options: (select one from the options below)

_____ **Prayer Line Option:** Kids line up and take turns stepping in front of the microphone to speak their prayers briefly.

_____ **Prayer Chair:** Adults or children with special prayer needs are invited to sit in the chairs. Kids gather around them, lay hands on their shoulders or knees and take turns praying.

_____ **Popcorn Prayer:** The leader moves through the crowd with a microphone and turns it toward kids who are raising their hands to pray. The kids speak their prayers into the microphone.

Lord's Prayer: Lead the children through the Lord's Prayer, phrase by phrase, or let them pray the entire prayer along with you.

Blessing:

Speak a blessing prayer over the children. Personalize this to your setting. Use a special scripture verse or blessing around the theme of the day.

Song of Sending:

Choose one song. Briefly introduce song so kids can better understand what they are singing and be drawn into a more focused worship. Keep the attention on God.

Supplies:

Attention Grabber:

- picture of presenter as a child
- picture of his/her son or daughter

The Power of the Cross:

- baptismal font

Learning Game:

- two cans of cheese spread in a can, or two cans of shaving cream for sensitive skin
- two containers of cereal rings
- two containers of cheese puffs
- two containers of cheese crackers
- two chairs
- two dividers
- father/daughter and father/son team
- four sheets
- towels
- room divider

Application 1:

- *Waiting for the Wind* (Family Films, 1991) www.christianbooks.com

Application 2: (An option, if video is not shown.)

- clear milk bottle or another bottle with a neck circumference slightly smaller than an egg
- hard-boiled egg without its shell
- match
- permanent marker
- small bowl of water

Safety and Security: Safety and security procedures are important for each church to carefully define and implement according to their unique needs. The security, safety, illness and accident procedures described in this curriculum are provided for example purposes only and may not be appropriate, applicable or adequate for every situation. Each church is responsible for determining whether any security, safety, illness and accident procedures contained in the curriculum are appropriate, applicable or adequate for its unique situation. The activities described in this curriculum require adult supervision and may not be suitable for each child and each situation. Each church is responsible for ensuring that adequate adult supervision is provided for all activities and for determining whether an activity is appropriate for each child and each situation. Kids Kount Publishing disclaims all liability for the implementation of any procedures or the performance of any activities described in this curriculum.