

UNIT 1 | SESSION 5

# THE TOWER OF BABEL

GENESIS 11



**CHRIST CONNECTION:** People tried to make themselves look great, but God is the greatest. God mixed up their language and made them spread out all over the earth. One day, Jesus will come back. People from all over the earth will worship Him together. (Revelation 7:9-10)

**BIG PICTURE QUESTION:** Who is God? God is our Creator and King.

**KEY PASSAGE:** The earth is full of God's creatures. Psalm 104:24

**STORY POINT:** God is the greatest.



## PREPARE

PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

### LEADER Bible Study

Scripture's Tower of Babel account tells of man's disobedience and God's intervening mercy to keep people from their own destruction. Not long after God's covenant to never again destroy the earth by a flood, people chose to follow their own sinful plans rather than obey God's good commands. Despite God's mercy, people failed to trust Him and walk according to His ways.

In what ways is the Tower of Babel story marked by disobedience? How do we see God's kindness in scattering His people and scrambling their language?

After blessing Noah and his sons, God decreed that they were to "be fruitful and multiply; spread out over the earth and multiply on it" (Genesis 9:7). This command seems like it would be easy to obey, but sin's deception fueled an already present danger: mankind's pride-fueled ambition.

God commanded His people to spread out over the earth and fill it with His glory. However, they decided to stay put and build a name for themselves. They were supposed to make much of God, but they decided to make a name for themselves instead. In His love, God drew near to them and saved them from their plans for self-glorification.

God's decision to scatter His people and scramble their languages was part of a plan that emphasized His own glory above the people's self-glorification efforts. Jesus, the Son of God, became man so that He would one day gather His people unto Himself—those of every tribe, tongue, and nation—not to worship or build a name for themselves, but to worship the only worthy One, King Jesus. His grace unites us, saves us, and brings us back into relationship with Him.

Consider the ways God has redirected the plans you have made for yourself. Are you, in hindsight, able to see His redirection as a means of grace upon your life? Reflect on His goodness in intervening. Pray for the children who will learn from you today, that they would place their trust in the God whose plans are for our good and for His ultimate glory.



#### PREPARE

THE WEEK PRIOR

Prepare your heart to teach; plan the session



#### WELCOME

10–15 MINUTES

Greet preschoolers and open the session



#### LEARN

25–30 MINUTES

Teach preschoolers the story of the gospel



#### LOVE

Lead preschoolers to love the God of the gospel

30–40 MINUTES



#### LIVE

Lead preschoolers to live the mission of the gospel



#### BONUS

60–65 MINUTES

Teach preschoolers for an additional hour



## PREPARE

### PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

## GATHER Supplies

Keep a supply of the following items available during all teaching sessions: Allergy Alert, Bibles, washable markers, crayons, scissors (adult use), blunt-tipped scissors, construction paper, copy paper, glue sticks, glue, tape, baby dolls, blocks, play dough, and a beanbag.



### WELCOME

#### Find toy tools

- ☐ Big Picture Question Poster
- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster
- ☐ toy tools



### LEARN

#### Introduce the Bible story

- ☐ "Pictures of Towers" printable, 1 copy

#### Tell the Bible story

- ☐ "The Tower of Babel" video (optional)

#### Review the Bible story

- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster

#### Learn and practice the key passage phrase

- ☐ Key Passage Phrase Marker



### LOVE

#### Hammer golf tees

- ☐ golf tees
- ☐ foam blocks
- ☐ toy hammers

#### Look at maps

- ☐ assorted maps
- ☐ people figures



### LIVE

#### Missions activity

- ☐ "The Reeses Say Thank-You" missions video (optional)
- ☐ "Brazil Prayer Cube" printable
- ☐ tissue paper
- ☐ heavyweight paper or cardstock, 1 piece

#### Snack and transition

- ☐ hand sanitizer (optional)
- ☐ "Build the Key Passage Phrase" activity page, 1 per child
- ☐ Big Picture Cards for Families



### BONUS

#### Say the key passage phrase

- ☐ Key Passage Phrase Marker

#### Listen to languages

- ☐ audio clips in various languages



## WELCOME Preschoolers

Provide as many learning activities as possible from the Love and Live sections to give preschoolers choices to learn. Incorporate the Bible story, the Christ connection, and key passage phrase in your conversations as the preschoolers engage in learning activities throughout the session.

Use the following activity to greet children as they enter the classroom. Talk about the big picture question and answer. After each child completes the welcome activity, encourage him to participate in the activities provided from the Love and Live sections of the leader guide.

### FIND TOY TOOLS

Hide toy tools around the room for children to find. Identify each as it is found and talk about how it is used in building. Read the Big Picture Question and Answer Poster as each child brings you the tool they found.

**SAY** I am so glad you came to class today! What tool did you find hidden in our room? I wonder what the tools have to do with our big picture question and our Bible story? Do you have any ideas? What do you think? [Allow responses.] Our big picture question asks, Who is God? God is our Creator and King.

Worship

\* Every where I Go

\* Jesus Loves Me.

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





## LEARN

### THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

## LEARN the Bible Story

### 1 INTRODUCE THE BIBLE STORY

Print and display the “Pictures of Towers” printable for children to see. Point out and identify the various towers and talk about the different features you see such as different heights, different shapes, different colors, and so forth. Mention the different uses towers might have, talking about the good things people can do if they have a tower such as look at stars, watch for fires in the forest, and so on.

**SAY** “In our Bible story today, we will learn about a tower people tried to build. They were building the tower for the wrong reason, though, and God did not allow them to finish it.”



### 2 TELL THE BIBLE STORY Video

Open your Bible to Genesis 11. Tell the following Bible story using the provided storytelling points. You may choose to review the Bible story by showing the video.

#### THE TOWER OF BABEL

**SAY** “After the flood, Noah’s sons and their wives had children, and all their families grew.

The people said, “We want to always live together. Let’s build a city with a tall tower—so tall that it touches the sky! Then everyone will know how great we are.” But God is the greatest. God had told the people to spread out across the earth.

The people did not obey God. They made bricks out of clay. They baked the bricks to make stones. Then they used the stones to start building the tower.

God came down to look at the tower. God said, “If they are doing this together, they will think of more bad things to do. We need to stop them.”

So God mixed up the people’s words so everyone spoke different languages. The people were confused and could not understand each other. They had to stop building the city.

God made it so the people did just what He had told them to do after the flood: They were spread out all over the world. The city with the unfinished tower was called Babel.”

**Christ Connection:** People tried to make themselves look great, but God is the greatest. God mixed up their language and made them spread out all over the earth. One day, Jesus will come back. People from all over the earth will worship Him together. (Revelation 7:9-10)



## LEARN

### THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

#### 3 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY



Look together at the Bible Story Picture Poster. Ask children questions such as “Why did the people want to build the tower?” “What had God commanded Noah and his family to do?” “Did the people follow God or follow their own ideas?” “Did God like the tower they were building? Why not?” and so on. Add one block for each question to create a tower of blocks.

**SAY** 🗣️ God made the world and everything in it from nothing. Man cannot create anything without using something that God made. But the people thought they were greater than God. God proved He is the greatest when He confused their languages. Then the people had to move away from one another like God had told them to do in the first place. **GOD IS THE GREATEST.** There is no one like Him. 🗣️

#### 4 SING A SONG

Sing the song to the familiar tune of “The Bear Went Over the Mountain”:

The earth is full of God’s creatures,  
The earth is full of God’s creatures,  
The earth is full of God’s creatures,  
Psalm 104:24

\* “Countless” Video Song

#### 5 LEARN AND PRACTICE THE KEY PASSAGE PHRASE



Place the Key Passage Phrase Marker at Psalm 104:24. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Read the key passage phrase. Lead children to say the key passage phrase while tapping one fist on the other like they are using a hammer and nail to build.

**SAY** 🗣️ The earth is full of so many amazing things that God has made. This key passage phrase in Psalms is a praise to God. **GOD IS THE GREATEST.** No one else is like God. **Who is God? God is our Creator and King.** 🗣️

#### 6 PRAY

Pray, thanking God for His greatness. Ask God to help us obey Him.



LOVE

## THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

### LOVE God because of what we learned

#### 1 MAKE BRICKS



Give each child some play dough and ask them to pretend it is clay used to make bricks like in the Bible story. Allow children to use their bricks to build with as they play. Encourage their creativity.

**SAY** 🍌 God made the universe out of nothing. **God is our Creator and our King.** His works are countless, and they are good. We can use the things God made to create other things but we cannot create something out of nothing. **GOD IS THE GREATEST.**

#### 2 HAMMER GOLF TEES

Place foam blocks, golf tees, and toy hammers on a table for children to build with. Guide conversation around the key passage phrase, the Christ connection, and the story point. Encourage children to work together to hammer multiple foam blocks together using the golf tees for nails.

**SAY** 🍌 You are being creative in your building with the golf tees and foam blocks. God gave us the ability to make things and build things. God is the greatest Creator. In our story today, we learned that people tried to make themselves look great, but **GOD IS THE GREATEST.** God mixed up their language and made them spread out all over the earth. One day, Jesus will come back. People from all over the earth will worship Him together. (Revelation 7:9-10)

#### 3 LOOK AT MAPS

Place assorted types of maps on a table with some people figures. Guide children to look at the various items, talking about them together. Remind children that after the flood God told Noah and his family to spread out and fill the earth, but the people disobeyed God. Explain that this led to their languages being confused and the people's building never being finished.

**SAY** 🍌 The world is a big place, isn't it? God wanted people to live all over the world after the flood. But people disobeyed God and stayed together. They began to think of bad things to do. They built a tower to show how great they were. But **GOD IS THE GREATEST.** He confused the people's language so they couldn't build the tower anymore. The people moved to new places around the world just as God had told them to do after the flood.

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





## THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

### LIVE for God out of love

#### 1 TOSS THE BEANBAG



Lead children to stack blocks to create a tower as they say the key passage phrase with you. Lead them to stand a few feet away and toss the beanbag at the tower to knock it over as they say the key passage phrase. Restack the tower and take turns tossing the beanbag for each preschooler.

**SAY** “The people tried to build the tower in Babel to show how great they were. But **GOD IS THE GREATEST**. The people had forgotten the whole earth is full of God’s creatures—including themselves. God wanted the people to obey Him. He mixed up their words so the people had to spread out over the earth.”

#### 2 MISSIONS ACTIVITY



Print the “Brazil Prayer Cube” printable on heavyweight paper or cardstock. Cut out the cube and assemble as instructed. Guide preschoolers to take turns tossing the cube. Read the prayer request to the group and lead preschoolers in a prayer for that request. Pass the cube to another preschooler and continue until most prayer requests have been prayed for at least once. You may preview or show “The Reeses Say Thank-You” missions video.

**SAY** “Missions offerings and prayers help make it possible for missionaries like the Reeses to live in other countries to tell the people about Jesus. Missionaries are thankful when people give to missions offerings and pray for their ministries because it allows them the opportunity to tell many people about Jesus. [Lead in prayer.]”

#### 3 SNACK AND TRANSITION



Post an Allergy Alert. Serve the snack. As children eat, review and talk about the Bible story. When children finish their snack, lead them to complete the activity page. As they work, continue talking about the Bible story and emphasize the Christ connection.

**SAY** “People tried to make themselves look great, but **GOD IS THE GREATEST**. God mixed up their language and made them spread out all over the earth. One day, Jesus will come back. People from all over the earth will worship Him together. (Revelation 7:9-10)”

Remember to communicate helpful information to the bonus teaching hour leaders. If parents are picking up children at this time, tell them something their child did well during the session. Distribute Big Picture Cards for Families. Encourage parents to engage with the family discussion starters and family activities during the week.

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE**





## **BONUS** Teaching Hour Group Time

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### **1 WHO IS THE GREATEST?**

Tell children pairs of items while asking them to identify the greatest in each pair, such as kitten verses cheetah and cardinal verses eagle. Remind children that **God is our Creator and King**. Nothing is better than God because **GOD IS THE GREATEST**.

### **2 TALK ABOUT THE BIBLE STORY**

Open the Bible to Genesis 11. Use the summarized points below to talk about the Bible story.

#### **THE TOWER OF BABEL**

- God told Noah's family to spread out and fill the earth. As Noah's family grew, the people did not obey God.
- They said, "Let's build a city with a tall tower up to the sky! Then everyone will know how great we are." But God is the greatest.
- The people made bricks and started building the tower. God came down to look at the tower. He stopped the people by mixing up their words. Now everyone spoke different languages.
- God made the people spread out over the earth. The city with the tower was called Babel.

### **3 SING A SONG**

Sing the song below to the tune of "The Bear Went Over the Mountain":

The earth is full of God's creatures,  
The earth is full of God's creatures,  
The earth is full of God's creatures,  
Psalm 104:24

### **4 SAY THE KEY PASSAGE PHRASE**

Place the Key Passage Phrase Marker at Psalm 104:24. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Lead children to say the key passage phrase while standing closely together and while spreading across the room.

### **5 PRAY**

Pray, thanking God for His power as Creator and King.



## BONUS Teaching Hour Activities

### 6 MATCH THE WORD



Tell each child a different word, but don't let anyone else hear the given word. Use words such as cat, dog, cow, pig, and so forth. Tell children to remember their words. Invite them to walk around saying the word you gave them over and over until they find someone with the same word. No one has the same word, though, so they should be confused after just a few minutes.

**SAY** “It’s really confusing to not say the same word as anyone else, isn’t it? Can you imagine if you spoke a completely different language than everyone else around you? It would be difficult, wouldn’t it? No one could help you with any of your tasks because they wouldn’t know what you need help with. That is what happened with the people trying to build the tower in Babel. They had to stop building. God showed the people that He is the greatest, not them. **GOD IS THE GREATEST.**”

### 7 LISTEN TO LANGUAGES

Prior to the session, pull together audio clips of children saying the same phrase or word in different languages. Lead children to sit in a circle. Tell them to listen carefully for what they hear. Say the phrase or word to the children in English. Play the phrase in the various languages for children to hear.

**SAY** “God took the language that all the people working on the tower of Babel spoke and He confused it so the people could not understand each other. The languages you listened to today did not sound like what we speak in our classroom each week. It would be difficult to understand a language in a new place. We would have to learn the new language. Because the people could no longer understand one another, they never finished the tower. Instead, the people moved away from one another. Only God could make all the people speak new languages. **GOD IS THE GREATEST.**”

### 8 BUILD A BLOCK CITY



Lead children to build a city with the blocks. Remind them to include the tower that was not finished. Retell parts of the Bible story as children build.

**SAY** “I like the way you built your city. You planned it well. But just like with the tower of Babel, your tower is unfinished. God made the people move away, like He had told them to do after the flood, instead of allowing them to continue to disobey Him by staying in one place.”

Release preschoolers to parents according to your church’s security procedure. Tell them something that their child enjoyed doing or did well during the session.