

The Family Of God

LOWER ELEMENTARY LESSON PLAN

Theme: Family of God

Scripture: 1 Samuel 16:7

Memory Verse: The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart. - 1 Samuel 16:7

The Children's Sermon

You'll need:

- Three varieties of apples that look different; a drawing of a tree; leaf cutouts of different shapes and colors with words written on them as listed below.

(Hold up three varieties of apples that are noticeably different.) Raise your hand if you think these three apples all came from the same tree. You're right. They did not.

This Golden Delicious came from a tree where all the apples looked like this one. This Red Delicious came from a tree where they all look like it, and the same with this little Fuji apple. In nature, you would not find one tree that had all three different kinds of apples. The Bible teaches us in Genesis 1:11 that every seed will bring forth a fruit of its own kind.

Now let's think about people. Have you ever had someone say to you, "Boy, you look just like your sister, or your brother, or your mom or dad."? Who thinks they look like someone else in their family? (Call on a couple children) Or maybe you have seen a picture of your mom or dad when they were your age, and they looked back then just

like you do right now. I saw a picture of Mrs. Smith's husband when he was younger, and he looked just like their son John. I have seen Katie Trott's younger sister here at school, and I knew she was Katie's sister. Even though they are not twins, they look alike. I could tell that they were sisters.

Just like with the apples, people from the same family tree will have the same looks – the same skin color, eyes, hair, height, shape of the nose, body shape, and many other things. This happens because all these physical characteristics are passed on from one generation to another. You may have red hair and your parents don't, but maybe your grandmother or grandfather had red hair. Isn't that cool?

Now as you know, there are exceptions to the families that I have been talking about. There is a wonderful thing called adoption, where parents have a special desire to bring a child into their family who probably doesn't look physically like the other members of the family. We know that Allison has a sister Abby who was born in China. But we also know that a miracle happened for the Martin family, when they discovered that Abby's biological sister from China was also adopted and now lives in New Hampshire. How did that happen? They found Abby's sister when they saw Marie's picture on the Internet. The two girls looked so much alike, they felt Marie had to be Abby's sister. And they were right! God has a plan when He makes family members look like each other. It is just one of the ways that helps to bring you together as a family. It makes for a special connection. For Abby and Marie, their similar looks brought them together on the other side of the world from where they were born. Isn't God wonderful?

But, without being adopted, there is another kind of family tree that we can all belong to no matter what our last name is. In this family we will not all look like each other.

Which family am I talking about? -Pause- Yes, God's family. No matter what your last name is, what you look like, or what country you live in ~ you can be apart of God's Family Tree.

(Turn around easel w/ a drawing of a tree - "God's Family Tree.")

Now, let's think about something really special. Even though we all look different (different skin color, eyes, nose shape, height, and many other things), there's a way we can recognize our brothers and sisters who belong to God's family. How will we know that someone is my sister or brother through Jesus Christ? - Pause - We can recognize each other by the special things in our hearts, the things that make us act like God wants us to. These things are not about how we look. The Bible tells us in I Samuel 16:7, "The Lord does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart." I am going to put some leaves on God's Family Tree that will show us how we can recognize each other.

Have a variety of leaf shapes, sizes, and colors with one of the following words written on each leaf: loving, caring, sharing, forgiving, love Jesus, help others, humble, praise God, pray, read the Bible, giving, and grateful spirit. (Attach each leaf to the tree as you mention them.)

When we see someone being kind, helping others, or talking about how much they love Jesus, it's like they are shining a big, bright light from their heart that says, "I'm part of God's family!"

Let's imagine you're at the playground, and you see someone who is all alone, looking sad. If you go over to them, ask if they want to play, and share your toys, you're showing

the heart characteristics of God's family. You're being loving and caring. That's how others recognize you as part of God's family, too.

Sometimes, recognizing God's family through Heart Characteristics means looking for the good in others, even when they make mistakes. If a friend accidentally breaks your toy and says sorry, and you forgive them, you're showing a heart like God's. Forgiving is a big word, but it just means not staying mad and still being friends even when something goes wrong.

So, next time you're with your friends, at school, or even at home, remember to look for those special heart characteristics. And don't forget to show them yourself! By doing so, you're not just recognizing God's family; you're being an important part of it.

Bible Memory Verse

The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart. - 1

Samuel 16:7

You Will Need:

- Colored construction paper
- Scissors
- Glue sticks
- Markers or crayons
- Stickers (optional)

Get Ready:

- Cut the construction paper into heart shapes, one for each child.

-Set up a table with all the materials spread out for easy access.

Do This:

1. Give each child a heart-shaped piece of construction paper and ask them to think about what makes them special on the inside, like kindness or bravery.
2. Have them write or draw these qualities on their heart with markers or crayons. They can also decorate their hearts with stickers if available.
3. Once everyone is done, gather the children in a circle and let them share their hearts, explaining what they wrote or drew. Emphasize that just like they have unique qualities inside their hearts, God looks at our hearts too, not just what we look like on the outside.

Bible Interactive Experience

You'll Need:

- A large heart-shaped cutout from poster board
- Many small, colorful sticky notes
- Markers
- A Bible

Get Ready:

- Write "The Family of God Sees the Heart" at the top of the heart-shaped poster board.
- Prepare a short, kid-friendly paraphrase of 1 Samuel 16:7 to read.

Do this:

1. ****Introduction****: Start by reading the paraphrased version of 1 Samuel 16:7, explaining that God doesn't look at the things people look at. People look at the

outward appearance, but God looks at the heart. Discuss briefly what it means to be part of God's family - that it's about what's in our hearts.

2. **Activity**: Give each child a few sticky notes and a marker. Ask them to think about what qualities make a good family member in God's family, focusing on heart qualities like kindness, love, forgiveness, etc. Have them write or draw these qualities on their sticky notes.

3. **Create the Family Heart**: One by one, let the children come up and stick their notes on the large heart-shaped poster board. As they do, encourage them to share why they chose those qualities. This creates a visual representation of what our hearts look like when we're part of God's family.

4. **Discussion**: Once everyone has added their qualities to the heart, have a short discussion about how we can show these qualities in our daily lives. Emphasize that being part of God's family means we try to have hearts like God, caring and loving others not for how they look but for who they are inside.

5. **Closing**: End with a prayer, asking God to help each child develop the qualities they wrote down and to always remember that being part of God's family is about what's in our hearts.

Snack Activity: Heartful Snack Mix

You'll Need:

- Mini pretzels
- Candy hearts
- Raisins

- Small paper cups
- A big bowl for mixing

Get Ready: Before starting, read Samuel 16:7 together: 'The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.' Discuss how we are all part of God's family, and He loves us for our hearts, not how we look.

Do this:

1. Mix equal parts of mini pretzels, candy hearts, and raisins in a big bowl. These ingredients represent different members of God's family - all different but loved equally by God.
2. Give each child a small paper cup. Let them fill their cup with the snack mix. As they do this, encourage them to think about the different people in their lives and how each person is special to God.
3. Enjoy the snack together! While eating, talk about how we can show love and kindness to all members of our family and God's larger family, just as God looks at and loves our hearts.

Game Activity: Heart of the Family Hopscotch

You'll Need:

- Sidewalk chalk
- A large, open concrete area
- Small stones or bean bags for each player

Get Ready: Draw a large hopscotch grid on the concrete, but instead of numbers, write attributes that God values in our hearts such as 'Kindness', 'Love', 'Patience', 'Joy',

'Peace', 'Goodness', 'Faithfulness', 'Gentleness', and 'Self-Control'. At the start, write 'The Family of God' to remind the kids that these qualities help us be part of God's family, reflecting on Samuel 16:7 which teaches us that God looks at the heart, not the outward appearance.

Do this:

1. Have the children line up at the start of the hopscotch. Explain that as they hop through the grid, they are journeying through the qualities that make us part of the Family of God. Each time they land on a quality, they should say it out loud and think of one way they can show that quality in their lives.
2. When a player reaches the end of the hopscotch, they toss their stone or bean bag onto one of the qualities. They then hop back, sharing a story or idea of how they or someone in the Bible has shown that quality. If they miss the square or lose balance, they share a way they can improve on that quality instead.
3. Once all players have had a turn, gather them together and remind them that just like in Samuel 16:7, God values what's in our hearts and being part of God's family means showing His love and qualities in everything we do. End with a short prayer, asking God to help each child develop these qualities in their hearts.

Craft Activity: Heart Inside – The Family of God

You'll Need:

- Construction paper (various colors)
- Scissors
- Glue
- Markers or crayons
- A printed or written copy of Samuel 16:7

Get Ready: Cut out heart shapes from various colors of construction paper. Each child will need one large heart and several smaller hearts.

Do this:

1. On the large heart, have the children write 'Family of God' at the top and Samuel 16:7 at the bottom. They can decorate around the edges with markers or crayons.
2. Discuss what Samuel 16:7 means: 'The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.' Explain that being part of God's family means we love and accept each other, not based on what we look like on the outside, but for the love in our hearts.
3. Have the children think of qualities that make someone a good family member in God's family, like kindness, love, patience, and forgiveness. On the smaller hearts, they write these qualities and then glue them onto the large heart, creating a collage of what our hearts look like when we're part of the Family of God.

Prayer Activity: God's Family Tree

You'll Need:

- Construction paper (various colors)
- Markers or crayons
- Glue sticks

Get Ready: Cut the construction paper into large tree shapes and small leaf shapes ahead of time.

Do this:

1. Read Samuel 16:7 together: 'But the Lord said to Samuel, 'Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things

people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.' Explain that God chooses us to be part of His family because He loves our hearts, not because of how we look or what we can do.

2. Ask the children to think of qualities or characteristics that make someone a good family member in God's family, like kindness, love, and honesty. Have them write or draw these qualities on the leaf shapes with markers or crayons.

3. Let each child glue their leaves onto the tree shape to create a 'Family of God' tree. Discuss how each of us, with our unique qualities, makes up the beautiful family of God.