

# WEEK 1

## GOD SENT HIS SON

### JESUS IS THE PERFECT SUBSTITUTE

#### ELEMENTARY LESSON GUIDE

## THE FOUR KEYS . . .

### KEY VERSE

For our sake He made Him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.  
2 Corinthians 5:21

### KEY IDEAS

1. We cannot save ourselves.
2. Jesus offered Himself as our sinless substitute.
3. Jesus is both God and man.

### KEY PASSAGE

Mark 15:21-40

### KEY PRINCIPLES



#### EVERY CHILD SHOULD KNOW . . .

we cannot save ourselves and Jesus was the only perfect substitute because He is both God and man and lived a sinless life.



#### EVERY CHILD SHOULD FEEL . . .

Amazed that God would love us so much that He would send His son Jesus, who is God and man, to die in our place.



#### EVERY CHILD SHOULD BE ABLE TO . . .

understand the concept of a substitute.



#### EVERY CHILD SHOULD WANT . . .

to live for the One who gave everything for them.

# INTRODUCTION

The only acceptable sacrifice for sin is a perfect offering. That is why there were so many rules God gave the Israelites about the animals they sacrificed, because those animals had to be as perfect as possible. However, no animal sacrifice was perfect enough to permanently pay for sin, so there had to be a final, perfect substitute that could die in our place and satisfy our sin debt forever. The only One who was able to do that was God himself, and that is why He sent Jesus, to take the form of man, live a perfect life, and die in our place. Jesus was the only perfect substitute, and He died for us willingly because He loves us that much!

## OPENING ILLUSTRATION

Ask for two volunteers. Have one child put on a dirty, stained white t-shirt that represents us born in sin (just put it on over their clothes; it should be adult size so fit is not an issue). Have the second child put on a clean, white t-shirt that represents Jesus. Explain, "When God looks at us, He sees our sin, just like we see the stains on (insert child's name). When God sees sin, He is angry at it because He is just, and He must punish that sin just like we want the evil in the world to be punished, too. But God loves us so much that He doesn't want our sin to come between us and Him, and that is why He sent Jesus to take our punishment for us." Instruct the second child to take off their clean, white t-shirt and give it to the first child to put on over their stained one. Explain, "Jesus's sacrifice covers our sin and pays for it permanently, but each one of us has to personally accept His sacrifice in order for it to apply. Just like at Christmastime, your parents give you a gift, but it's not yours while it's wrapped under the tree. It only becomes yours when you open it and accept it. Once we accept Jesus's gift, then His blood covers our sin and washes us white as snow. Now when God looks at us, all He sees is His perfect son!"

## KEY IDEAS

Read Mark 15:21-40. Then use the following points for guided discussion.

- We cannot save ourselves.
  - Why can't we save ourselves? God's law shows us that we cannot meet His perfect standard. Once sin entered the world through Adam, it corrupted the perfect nature God gave us, transforming us into sinners. The only way for us to be saved was through a perfect substitute who would take our punishment for us.
- Jesus offered Himself as our sinless substitute.
  - What is a substitute? How is Jesus our substitute? A person or thing acting in place of another. Jesus was the person who acted on our behalf by taking our sin upon Himself on the cross and bearing our punishment.
  - Why did our substitute have to be sinless? The only acceptable payment for sin is a perfect sacrifice. Since sin cost death, the only acceptable payment is death. Since we cannot be perfect, we needed a perfect substitute to take our punishment. If we did not have a perfect substitute, we would have to pay for our own sin and it would separate us from God forever because it would not be enough. Jesus was enough because He lived perfectly, so His payment for us was complete and offers us renewed fellowship with God.
  - If Jesus's death satisfied the sins of the whole world, why do we have to accept it? Jesus's death was perfect enough to satisfy the sins of the whole world, but it must be personally applied to each person's life. Just like a gift that is given to you, the person who offers you the gift has already paid for it, but it doesn't become yours until you accept it.
- Jesus is both God and man.
  - How is Jesus both God and man? He is also God's son? God is Triune, or 3 in 1. This means that He is one God but has 3 separate forms or persons. He is God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Each one has a different role but they are all connected. Jesus has always been God and existed before time with God the Father and the Holy Spirit. Jesus became man when He was born on earth for the purpose of saving us. He is equally God and equally man.

## Activity

Give each child a blank piece of paper and markers/color pencils. Tell them to write the words "perfect substitute" somewhere on the paper. Then write or draw something to help them remember this attribute of God. They could write a definition for perfect substitute like "took our place" or draw a cross. They could write the key verse or draw some other picture. After a few minutes, give each child a minute to explain what they drew or wrote.

## Prayer

Thank God for offering us the perfect substitute in Jesus. Thank Jesus for loving us so much that He would leave His place in Heaven to die for our sins so that we could be with Him forever. Ask God to help you accept His perfect gift.

# FAMILY DEVOTIONAL

## ACTIVITY

Memorize the key verse 2 Corinthians 5:21.

Spend time with your child helping them write out each of the following parts of the Gospel. Write each part on a separate piece of paper. You can make it fun and decorate each piece or draw a picture describing what it says. You can make it a progressive thing, doing one piece each day, or do it all at once. Tape each piece to the wall or a posterboard to form a cross (4 pieces down and 1 on each side forming the arms). Write each part as follows:

1. God made people to be in perfect relationship with Him.
2. Sin entered the world through Adam and Eve and destroyed the relationship between God and man.
3. This broke God's creation and transformed mankind in such a way that every person after them was born as sinners in a fallen world.
4. God gave His law and a sacrificial system as a temporary way to satisfy His anger at sin so that He could dwell with His people but it was not a permanent fix. It showed the people they needed a true Savior.
5. The price that had to be paid for sin was a perfect sacrifice...because we are not perfect, if we paid for it ourselves, it would not be enough to satisfy God's wrath and we would be separated from Him forever.
6. Jesus came to earth as the perfect substitute to take our place and pay the price for sin. He lived a holy and sinless life as only He could. His payment was final and His resurrection made a way for us to be resurrected, too. If we accept His payment as a gift, we can live forever with Him.

## DISCUSSION

Take time this week to read Isaiah 53 as a family. Explain to your child that this prophecy came to Isaiah to share with God's people about 700 years before Jesus was born! This prophecy was so specific about what Jesus endured on our behalf that it could only have come from God!

## PRAYER

Thank God that He replaced the temporary payment for sin with a final, permanent payment in Jesus. Thank God that He sent Jesus to be our substitute and take our place when we deserved death and eternal separation from Him. Ask God to help you understand the depth of His love for you and your need for Him.