



LESSON SAMPLE

no Greater name

PREPARE / START THE ADVENTURE AT HOME

Read Genesis 11:1-9.

This week The GREAT LIFE will consider how people have been trying to make a name for themselves since the very beginning. But even though Jesus is truly greater than we could ever dream of being, He humbled himself and became a servant. Someday everybody will recognize this truth, but we get the opportunity to recognize it today.

For this Family Circle Time you will need a Bible, pencil, crayons or markers, and a sheet of paper. Set aside 15 minutes for this family experience.

SHARE / SHARE OUR STORIES AND GOD'S TRUTH

What are some times when you want people to think you're great? (Some examples might be at a sports game, before a test, before a presentation at work, etc. **Parents, give your answer first if your kids are having trouble coming up with examples.**)

Why do you think people try to make themselves seem greater than they are? What negative things can come from doing that?

Read Genesis 11:1-9.

Discuss: Why do you think the people at Babel built the tower?

How did the people at Babel act towards God and others?

How did God respond to them?

Why do you think God responded the way He did?

Read Philippians 2:3-11.

Discuss: How did Jesus act towards God and others?

What differences do you notice between how the people at Babel acted and how Jesus acted?

How did God respond to Jesus?

What good or bad things might happen if we imitate Jesus instead of the people at Babel?

RESPOND / RESPOND TO THE TRUTH OF GOD'S WORD

Take a sheet of paper and fold it in half (top to bottom). Write your names and draw a picture to represent each person in your family on the bottom half of the paper. Write "Jesus" on the top half, and then write and/or draw some reasons why He is greater than you are. *Optional: on the bottom half, write some specific ways your family members could be more like Jesus in the times when they want people to think they are great.*

Send your paper with your child to the Great Life or take a picture of it and text it to your kids' guides.

Pray together as a family: "Dear Jesus, we are sorry for the times when we try to set ourselves up as being better than others. Help us to recognize that You are the name above all names and are greater than all, and then help us to humble ourselves like you did and serve others."





CIRCLE TIME / OLD TESTAMENT / LESSON 5

no greater name

Central Story: Tower of Babel

Key Passage: Genesis 11:1-9

Jesus Link: Jesus is the name above all names (Philippians 2:3-11)

Key Verse(s): *Therefore, God has highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*
Philippians 2:9-11 (ESV)

Key Idea: People often try to be better than others and make a name for themselves instead of glorifying God's name. Jesus is greater than all, had an attitude of humility to serve, and someday everyone will bow to Him.

Discipleship Link: Disciples will be guided to take a humble attitude towards themselves as they recognize that Jesus' name is above all names and consider ways to praise Him, serve others, and share with others the greatness of His name.

Prepare

PREPARE YOURSELF AND KIDS
TO GROW SPIRITUALLY

STEP 1: PREPARE YOURSELF

Read Genesis 11:1-9.

This story shows human pride at its worst. Instead of obeying God's clear blessing and command to fill the earth and multiply (Genesis 9:1-7), the people in Babel decided it was better to stay together in one place and create their own identity and destiny apart from God. The type of tower and full motives for building it are unclear in Scripture. (Many scholars say the tower was likely a pagan temple-tower, called a ziggurat, common to ancient Mesopotamia.) However, one thing is clear. Rather than glorifying God's name, they sought to make a name for themselves. Perhaps they hoped that future generations would see their great tower and talk about how great they were.

Have you ever wanted to make a name for yourself? Have you tried to be better than others so everyone would think you were great? There's nothing wrong with healthy competition, but when we seek fame and glory for ourselves instead of giving credit to God for all He's done for us, we act like the people in Babel.

To relate to the kids in your Circle, describe a time when you were in elementary school and you thought you were better than others. Describe any negative effects your prideful attitude had on yourself or your relationships. (If you can't think of a situation, describe a time in your childhood when you experienced the prideful attitude of someone else.) Write your story below and start thinking about how you will share it with your Circle.

Read Philippians 2:3-11.

Then read Philippians 2:5-8 again, but this time, do it thoughtfully and slowly, focusing on what this passage tells us about Jesus' actions and attitudes. Describe His attitude here:

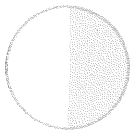
Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to show you where you need to adjust your attitude to mirror Jesus' attitude. Write what the Holy Spirit shows you below. Be prepared to share with your Circle one concrete way you will show a changed attitude this week. (For example, maybe you will stop getting so impatient at other drivers and let them go first.) Start thinking of how you will share your attitude adjustment challenge with your Circle.

Ask some friends or family members what they think about your attitude. Ask them what it feels like to be around you and/or live with you. Write their comments here and start thinking of which ones you will share with your Circle.

STEP 2: PREPARE THE CIRCLE TIME EXPERIENCE

Finally, after you have spent the above portion preparing yourself spiritually, begin preparing for the Circle Time experience:

- Pray for the Holy Spirit's insight into the spiritual needs of your group. Focus on how this lesson's Scriptures, Key Idea and Discipleship Link relate to the kids' lives. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you plan an experience that addresses those needs and helps accomplish His purposes in their lives and yours.
- Review the Family Circle Time sheet so you are aware of what kids might have done at home.
- Read over the Share, Respond and Reflect portions and prayerfully customize the questions and activities for your group.
- Include finalized notes in the Guide Sharing sections for how you will share with kids about the spiritual preparation you did above.
- Gather any supplies needed for the activities you have chosen.



30-40 MINUTES

SUPPLIES FOR TODAY'S EXPERIENCE

- ☐ Prop for Guide sharing
- ☐ Noah visual
- ☐ Scripture map visual
- ☐ Tower of Babel visual
- ☐ Kid Servants visual
- ☐ Bibles (one for each kid and Guide)
- ☐ *Optional:* Bricks
- ☐ Items needed for your choice of response activities (These are listed by the activities.)

share

SHARING OUR STORIES AND GOD'S TRUTH

WELCOME 5-10 MINUTES PRIOR TO OFFICIAL START TIME

Focus on making personal connections with parents and kids at this time. Here are some ideas: Ask parents and kids about their experience with this week's Family Circle Time. Some families may have brought in their Family Circle Time craft or sent a picture of their craft to you. Ask kids to share high points or low points from their day or week. Ask kids to talk about any ways they might have followed through on personal responses from the Circle Time last week.

GUIDE SHARING

Bring in an object or another sort of visual to accompany the sharing of your story from elementary school about a time when you thought you were better than others. For example, bring in a trophy and hold it up while you talk about the time you acted prideful because you won the spelling bee.

Think about how to best communicate your story to your kids and write it below, as concisely as possible, to refer to as you share:

KID SHARING

Can you remember a time, maybe even this week, when you thought or acted like you were better than others? (Encourage kids to share their stories as you take notes below.)

◀ GUIDE SHARING PROP

- ☐ Item or visual that illustrates or facilitates the telling of your story from elementary school

SUPPLIES

- ☐ Noah visual
- ☐ Scripture map visual

SUPPLIES

- ☐ Noah visual
- ☐ Tower of Babel visual
- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ *Optional:* Bricks

SUPPLIES

- ☐ Kid Servants visual
- ☐ Bibles

LOOK BACK

Explain that today your group will learn about some people who acted like they were better than everyone, even God! But first, you want them to remember what they learned last time. Hold up the **Noah visual** and ask one of the kids to retell the Noah story and anything else they remember from the last Circle Time in less than a minute. Briefly correct any errors or add any key points. Then ask a kid to point to where the Noah story fits on the **Scripture Map visual** (Sin and Separation). Explain that today's story also fits in the Sin and Separation category.

CENTRAL STORY

Set the stage:

Display the **Noah visual** as you share the following: After the flood was over, God told Noah and his sons to have lots of children and fill the earth. God didn't want them all to stay in one place to live; instead, He wanted them to spread out from each other and move to many different places all over the earth. So, Noah's sons had many sons and daughters, but one day, they all decided that they had a better idea than God.

Read: Genesis 11:1-4. (Display the optional bricks and the **Tower of Babel visual** at appropriate points during the reading.)

Ask: Why did the people want to build a city and a tower?

What was wrong with what these people were doing? What sin do you see in this story (something that disobeys God)?

Did they seem more focused on God, themselves or other people? How can you tell they were focused on only themselves? (To emphasize the point, you could have kids count how many times the people say *us*, *we*, and *ourselves* in verse 4.)

Read: Genesis 11:5-9 (After reading, you or a third grader may want to paraphrase for the group what you just read to ensure comprehension.)

Ask: God didn't want the people to keep doing things on their own without Him. What did God do to stop the people from building?

One of the reasons the people started building in the first place was to make a name for themselves. What do you think that means?

Explain: When people want to make a name for themselves, it doesn't mean they are deciding on a new name for everyone to call them. It means they want everyone to know who they are and see what they did and think they are great. They make themselves look great instead of telling others how great God is!

Transition: We've learned what we're NOT supposed to do—focus on being better than others. Let's learn what we ARE supposed to do.

JESUS LINK

Read: Philippians 2:3-4. After reading, paraphrase the verses in your own words and define any difficult words for kids.

《 KEY POINTS 》 FROM NOAH LESSON:

- Sin is anything we think, say or do that disobeys God. Sin separates us from God.
- God offered Noah and his family an undeserved gift called grace when He saved them from the flood.
- God offers us the undeserved gift of grace by sending Jesus to save us from our sin.

SUPPLIES

- Kid Servants visual

Ask: What do these verses tell people who follow Jesus to do?
Why do you think it's good to do these things?

Read: Philippians 2:5-8. After reading, paraphrase the verses in your own words.

Ask: Jesus is God, and He never stopped being God, but verse 7 says He made Himself nothing and became a servant. How did He serve others?

How was Jesus' attitude different than the attitude of the people building the tower of Babel?

(Display Kid Servants visual.) How are the kids showing a servant attitude like Jesus did?

Read: Philippians 2:9-11. After reading, paraphrase the verses in your own words, if needed.

Ask: Jesus didn't set out to make a name for Himself, but this verse tells us that God gave Him "the name above every name." What do you think that means?

★ **IDEA:** Tell kids to all stand up and act like a servant in some way. For example, a kid could pretend to sweep the floor or open the door for someone. Ask a few kids to explain how they are acting like a servant.

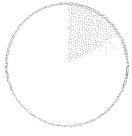
GUIDE SHARING

Think of an age-appropriate way to share with your Circle your attitude adjustment challenge from the Prepare portion and observations from family members. Write what you want to say here:

KID SHARING

Ask one or more of these questions to encourage kids to share as you take notes below.

- Think about the time you shared at the beginning when you thought or acted like you were better than others. What might have happened if you acted like Christ instead?
- Have you acted like Christ any time this week? Describe what you did.
- How do you think other people would describe your attitude if you asked them?



10-15 MINUTES

SUPPLIES

- Lined notebooks (one for each Guide and child)
- Pencils, colored pencils, crayons
- *Optional:* worship song focused on Christ and music player

SUPPLIES

- Poster board or whiteboard and appropriate markers

Respond

RESPOND TO THE TRUTH
OF GOD'S WORD

Recap: Jesus' name is above all names! Even though we sometimes think we are better than others, Jesus is greater than everyone. He is the one who deserves our praise. Like the verses say from Philippians, every knee should bow to him and every tongue confess that He is Lord.

Write or Draw: Give a notebook to each kid. Direct kids to each find a comfortable spot alone in the room to think about the Bible verses they read today and the sharing time in the group. Then they should pray and ask God what He might like them to think or do to respond. They should write or draw in their notebook about what God shows them. If desired, play a Christ-focused worship song to set the tone while kids work. Guides should set an example by also working in notebooks.

Give kids these two ideas to help them get started:

- Praising Jesus is just telling Him how great you think He is. Write or draw about one way you could praise Jesus this week.
- Instead of trying to get people to see how great you are, you should tell them how great Jesus is. Write or draw about one person you could talk to about Jesus and the great things you would say about Jesus to that person.

RESPONSE ACTIVITY OPTIONS

NOTE: If you have more time, you may choose to do one of the response activity options below instead.

KEY VERSE(S) RESPONSE ACTIVITY

Guide Instructions:

On a whiteboard or a piece of posterboard, write the Key Verses (Philippians 2:9-11) in three parts. Divide your Circle into three groups. Assign each group a part of the passage to practice reading. Guides should help with pronouncing and defining any difficult words, such as *exalted* and *confess*.

Circle Instructions:

Practice reading your part of the passage with your group. When a Guide directs, your group will stand up to read your part together. We will recite the passage, with each group reading their part, several times. Then, at the end, we will all read the whole passage together, but this time everyone should kneel when we say "every knee should bow." Remember to say the verses with respect and reverence, giving Jesus the glory this passage tells us He deserves.

Explain: Jesus' name is above all names! Even though we sometimes think we are better than others, Jesus is greater than everyone. He is the one who deserves our praise. Like the verses say from Philippians, every knee should bow to him and every tongue confess that He is Lord.

SUPPLIES

- 2 pieces of poster board or large paper
- Tape or putty that will not mark walls
- Crayons or markers
- Art supplies (for decorating the Jesus poster)

ONE PROP RESPONSE ACTIVITY

SUPPLIES

- Campaign-style button that says “I’m #1” or first place ribbon
- Permanent Marker

(CONTINUED IN THE RIGHT HAND SIDEBAR)

Ask: Praising Jesus is just telling Him how great you think He is. What is one way you could praise Jesus this week?

Instead of trying to get people to see how great you are, tell them how great Jesus is. Who is one person you could talk to about Jesus? What great thing would you say about Jesus to that person? (Let a few kids share. For fun, invite two third graders to role-play this conversation for the group. Give them direction, if needed.)

POSTER ART RESPONSE ACTIVITY

Guide Instructions:

Attach one of the poster boards to the wall with tape or putty, somewhere just high enough that kids will have to reach a bit to write on it.

Circle instructions:

Think of ways you’ve tried to be better than others — ways you’ve tried to make a “name” for yourselves. Maybe you’ve tried to be a soccer star or the smartest kid in your class. Maybe you always push to be first in line or to have the best swing on the playground.

Write or draw these on the poster board.

Guide Instructions:

As kids work, remind them that doing their best is a good thing, and competition can be fun and healthy. But it’s not good when they do things with an attitude that believes they are better and more important than everyone else.

When they’re finished, lay out the second piece of poster board with the name “Jesus” written in the middle. Encourage everyone to decorate the Jesus poster with the art supplies. They can write reasons that Jesus is great on the poster.

Hang the Jesus poster above the poster that everyone wrote on previously.

Ask: Praising Jesus is just telling Him how great you think He is. What is one way you could praise Jesus this week?

Instead of trying to get people to see how great you are, you should tell them how great Jesus is. Who is one person you could talk to about Jesus? What great thing would you say about Jesus to that person? (Let a few kids share. For fun, invite two third graders to role-play this conversation for the group. Give them direction, if needed.)

For a quicker and lower preparation activity, check out the One Prop Response Activity in the sidebars.

In this activity, kids pass around a “Jesus is #1” button or first-place ribbon and each share one reason why Jesus is number one.

(CONTINUED FROM THE LEFT HAND SIDEBAR)

Guide Instructions:

Cross out the phrase “I’m #1” on the button and write “Jesus is #1,” or write the name Jesus on the first-place ribbon, if possible.

Circle instructions:

Pass the button (or ribbon) around the Circle until the Guide says ‘stop.’

The person holding the button gives one reason why Jesus is #1. Then the button is passed around the Circle again until the Guide says ‘stop.’ Continue until several Circle members have had a chance to share.

Explain: Jesus’ name is above all names! Even though we sometimes think we are better than others, Jesus is greater than everyone. He is the one who deserves our praise. Like our Key Verse says, every knee should bow to him and every tongue confess that He is Lord.

Ask: Praising Jesus is just telling Him how great you think He is. What is one way you could praise Jesus this week?

Who is one person you could talk to about Jesus? What great thing would you say about Jesus to that person? (Let a few kids share. For fun, invite two third graders to role-play this conversation for the group. Give them direction, if needed.)



5-10 MINUTES

SUPPLIES



- Notebooks or other finished projects from the Response Activity Options

Reflect

REFLECT ON
THE HOLY SPIRIT'S WORK

SHARE

Draw the group back together and allow time for both Guides and kids to share about what they wrote or drew in their notebooks. How did they feel God was asking them to respond? (The responses do not have to correlate with the specific ideas you gave to the group. Allow freedom in responses, yet guide them towards wisdom and truth.) Encourage kids to follow through on their responses in practical ways. For example, if they thought of a person to talk to about Jesus, they should actually try to talk to that person.

If you did one of the Response Activity Options, use the questions at the end of each activity to encourage sharing and reflection.

SUMMARIZE

Say that people often try to be better than others and make a name for themselves instead of making God's name great. But we all need to realize that Jesus is greater than all. We should praise His name and have a servant attitude like He did.

LOOK AHEAD

Tell the group that next week they will hear about a man named Abram (later called Abraham) who believed God's promise to him and left his homeland to follow God. Jesus gives us special promises too, when we choose to obey and follow Him.

PRAY

Lead your group in prayer, asking for God's forgiveness for the ways we all struggle with making a name for ourselves and seeing ourselves as better than others. Close by confessing that Jesus Christ is Lord and praising the name of Jesus, who is above all and deserving of our praise.

SEND OFF

As you dismiss each child, affirm the way he or she responded to Jesus today. You can do this by complimenting children specifically (e.g., say, "I loved the picture you drew of yourself praising Jesus in your notebook today"), or by thanking them generally for their response (e.g., say, "Thanks for joining me in worshipping Jesus today.").

Evaluate

Guides, use this tool to reflect how your Circle Time went this week:

How well did I develop an engaging and authentic relationship with the kids?

How can I adjust about my approach and interactions to be more effective?

Which part(s) of the lesson were clear or unclear to the kids?

How fully did the kids participate with the lesson and each other? What distractions or barriers to inclusivity need to be addressed?

In what way(s) did the kids identify personalized steps to incorporate what they learned into their lives?

What will I pray for this week on behalf of the kids and families represented in our Circle?
