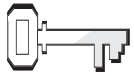


Running Away Again



References

Genesis 30:25-43; 31;
Patriarchs and Prophets,
pp. 190-194



Memory Verse

"Whatever you do,
work at it with
all your heart"
(Colossians 3:23, NIV).

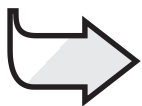


Objectives

The children will:
Know that loving
service is done well,
without expecting a reward.

Feel that God will give the
reward for our work,
even if people don't.

Respond by taking respon-
sibility for doing a job well.



The Message

Loving service is done
well, even without
a reward.

Monthly Theme

Our families help us learn how to serve others.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

God tells Jacob to leave Laban and return to his homeland. Jacob leaves without telling Laban. When he catches up to Jacob, Laban is angry. They quarrel about the terms of their separation. Laban insists that all that Jacob owns really belongs to him. Jacob counters by reminding Laban what a good employee he has been for the past 20 years. Jacob reminds Laban of his faithful service in harsh conditions, unfair wages, etc. Finally they agree to part on good terms and together build an altar to testify to their agreement.

This is a lesson about service.

In Jacob's long service to Laban we see the principle of taking responsibility for our work. Jacob gave Laban faithful, dependable service for a long time. Jacob trusted that his reward would come from God for a job well done, not from the person he worked for here on earth. So we are to serve others, leaving the reward to God, not humans.

Teacher Enrichment

"Jacob would have left his crafty kinsman long before but for the fear of encountering Esau. Now he felt that he was in danger from the sons of Laban. . . . He was in great perplexity and distress, not knowing which way to turn. But . . . he carried his case to God. . . . In a dream his prayer was answered: 'Return unto the land of thy fathers, and . . . I will be with thee' " (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 193).

"Laban had withheld the marriage dowry of his daughters and had ever treated Jacob with craft and harshness. . . .

"Jacob plainly set forth Laban's selfish and grasping policy. . . . Laban could not deny the facts . . . , and he now proposed to enter into a covenant of peace. . . .

"The night was spent in friendly communing; and at the dawn of day, Laban and his company departed" (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 193, 194).

Room Decorations

See Lesson 1.

Program Overview

Lesson Section	Minutes	Activities	Materials Needed
Welcome	ongoing	Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled	none
1 Readiness Options	up to 10	A. <i>Trash Pickup</i> B. <i>Rewarded</i> C. <i>Puppets</i>	small trash cans, crumpled paper stickers (or other small gifts) plastic spoons, colored napkins, yarn or rubber bands, markers
Any Time Prayer and Praise*	up to 10	Fellowship Songbook Mission Offering Prayer	none <i>Sing for Joy</i> <i>Children's Mission</i> offering container none
2 Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story Memory Verse Bible Study	puppets made during Readiness C (optional), Bible-times costumes (optional), stones or rocks (optional) chalkboard or whiteboard; chalk or marker; broom (optional) Bibles
3 Applying the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Charades</i>	none
4 Sharing the Lesson	up to 15	<i>With All My Heart Coupon</i>	heart coupon pattern (see p. 33), paper, colored markers or crayons, scissors

***Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.**

TEACHING THE LESSON

Welcome

Welcome students at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they are pleased/troubled about. Review last week’s memory verse and encourage the children to share any experiences from last week’s lesson study. Have them begin the readiness activity of your choice.



Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

You Need:

- small trash cans
- crumpled paper

A. Trash Pickup

Form two teams and have each line up single file. Assign each team a small trash can that is placed on the other side of the room. Place a larger trash can between the two smaller ones. Place a pile of crumpled paper at the front of each line.

When you give the signal to start, the first person from each team is to pick up a piece of crumpled paper from a pile on the floor next to them, run to their small trash can, dump their paper in, and run back. The next person in line will repeat the action. When all have had a turn, the last person picks up the small trash can and empties it into the larger trash can. The faster team wins hugs and high-fives from the other team.

Debriefing

Allow responses as you ask: **Did you enjoy our game? What is your least favorite chore to do at home? Today we’re going to be talking about doing our very best job in whatever we are asked to do, even if we don’t like it very much. Our Bible story tells us more about Jacob and his work for Laban. The Bible says: “Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart” (Colossians 3:23). We won’t always be rewarded by people, but God sees our work. Our message today says:**



LOVING SERVICE IS DONE WELL, EVEN WITHOUT A REWARD.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- stickers (or other small gifts)

B. Rewarded

Have ready three separate stickers for each child. Ask children to clap their hands four times, stand up and sit down two times, and repeat the alphabet. Reward each child with a sticker after each activity. Next, ask them to sing “Jesus Loves Me.” Do not give a sticker when completed.

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask: **Why didn’t I give you a sticker the last time I asked you to do something? How is that like Jacob working hard and well for Laban and still not being treated fairly? Is it easier to do a good job when you know you are going to be rewarded? Why? Our Bible story tells more about Jacob and his work for Laban. The Bible says: “Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart” (Colossians 3:23). We can’t always expect to be rewarded by people, but God sees our work. Our message today is:**



LOVING SERVICE IS DONE WELL, EVEN WITHOUT A REWARD.

Say that with me.

C. Puppets

Give each child a plastic spoon and either a blue or white napkin to place over the top of it (you can use any two colors you choose, divided up evenly among the children). Twist the napkin and tie the yarn, or put a rubber band at the top of the handle to make a puppet head. Have them draw a face on it.

(Adapted from Anita Reith Stohs, *Look What I Made!* [St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1998], pp. 10, 11.)

You Need:

- plastic spoons
- colored napkins
- yarn or rubber bands
- markers

Debriefing

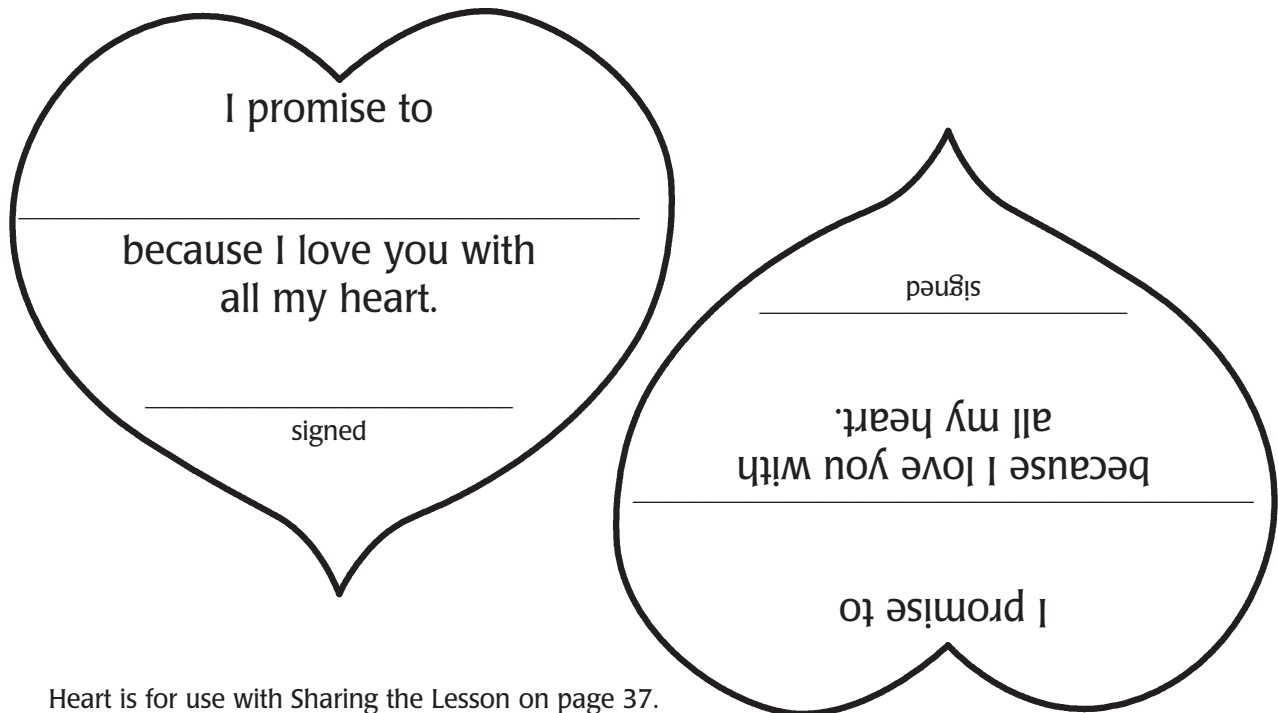
Say: **If you have a white puppet, you have made Jacob. If your puppet is blue, you made Laban. We will use our puppets when we tell today's Bible story. Our Bible story tells more about Jacob working for Laban. The Bible says: "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart" (Colossians 3:23). We can't always expect to be rewarded by people, but God sees our hard work. Our message today is:**



LOVING SERVICE IS DONE WELL, EVEN WITHOUT A REWARD.

Say that with me.

NOTE: Prayer and Praise appears on page 36.



Heart is for use with Sharing the Lesson on page 37.

Bible Lesson

You Need:

- puppets made during Readiness C (optional)
- Bible-times costumes (optional)
- stones or rocks (optional)

Experiencing the Story

If you are using the puppets, have children pair up so one partner has a Jacob puppet and the other partner has a Laban puppet. Otherwise, have students volunteer to be Jacob and Laban. Dress them in Bible-times costumes and have them act out the story as you read or tell it.

Read or tell the story.

Twenty years had gone by since Jacob had left home. Twenty years he had worked for his uncle Laban. By this time Jacob had 10 sons and at least one daughter.

After Joseph's birth, Jacob had asked Laban to let him take his family and return to Canaan. But Laban had begged him not to go. "Please stay," Laban had said. "I know that the Lord has blessed me because of you."

So Jacob had agreed to stay. And Laban had agreed to pay Jacob. He would give Jacob all the spotted, speckled, and dark-colored lambs or goats in the flocks. That way, Jacob could have his own flocks. Since that time, many spotted, speckled, and dark-colored animals had been born and added to Jacob's flocks! Jacob was now a wealthy man.

Laban's sons were not happy about this. Jacob soon learned what they were saying. He knew that they believed he had flocks that should belong to them. And Jacob also noticed that "Laban's attitude toward him was not what it had been" (Genesis 31:2).

So when the Lord said to Jacob, "Go back to the land of your fathers," Jacob knew it was time to leave. Without a word to Laban, Jacob gathered his wives,

his children, and his flocks, and started for Canaan.

After three days Laban learned that Jacob was gone. Quickly Laban gathered his family and started after Jacob. Seven days later Laban caught up to the large group traveling with Jacob. That night God spoke to Laban in a dream and told him to be careful of what he would say to Jacob.

Jacob could see Laban's men. He wrinkled his forehead with concern as they drew nearer. Jacob knew that Laban would not be happy with him. Soon they would meet.

"Why did you run away without telling me?" Laban shouted as he came near the next day. "You didn't even let me kiss my grandchildren and my daughters goodbye." Then he added, "It is in my power to harm you, but last night God told me not to say anything to you that was good or bad."

Jacob answered, "I left without telling you because I thought you would try to take my wives away to keep me from leaving."

"Uncle Laban," Jacob said, "I have been a faithful worker for you for 20 years. During that time I was careful to take good care of your animals. I didn't complain about my work even if it was blistering hot or freezing cold. I worked 14 years to pay my debt to you for your daughters. And these last six years I have worked to earn my animals. During that time, you changed my pay 10 times! But God was with me. You would have even sent me away empty-handed, but God saw how hard I've worked for you, and that is why He talked to you last night."

"Jacob, in a way, everything you have is from me," Laban spoke sharply. "These are my daughters and my grandchildren. The animals you have came from my

flocks. But it wouldn't be right to keep my daughters and their children." Laban's voice was kinder now. "Let's make a peaceful agreement," he offered. And Jacob agreed.

So they piled some stones into a big heap. "These stones are a witness between us," said Laban. "I will not go past this pile of stones to harm you, and you will not pass it to harm me."

Jacob repeated the promise. "I will not harm you, and you will not harm me." Then the two men and their families fixed food and shared a meal together.

Early the next morning Laban kissed his daughters, Leah and Rachel, and his grandchildren and returned home. Jacob and his family traveled on toward Canaan, glad that they could part in a peaceful way.

For years people called that place Mizpah, a place of blessing, because it was there Laban said to Jacob, "May the Lord keep watch between you and me when we are away from each other" (Genesis 31:49).

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask:

What kind of worker was Jacob?

Why hadn't Laban treated Jacob fairly? Why did Jacob have so many animals? (The Lord blessed Jacob.)

Why did Laban follow Jacob?

How do you think Jacob felt after Laban offered to part peacefully? Remember...

LOVING SERVICE IS DONE WELL, EVEN WITHOUT A REWARD.



Memory Verse

Write the memory verse on the board. **"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart" (Colossians 3:23).**

Ask for volunteers to do something for one minute that is helpful or encouraging. They should do it as fast as they can (to tire them out quickly), and repeat the memory verse while doing it. Time them and encourage them to keep going even when they get tired. For example, have several children sweep the floor, stack chairs, bend over to pretend to pick up trash, etc.

Allow response time as you ask:

What were you thinking at the end of the time? What does our memory verse tell us to do? ("Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart" [Colossians 3:23]).

Bible Study

Help the children find Genesis 31:49 and read it aloud. ("May the Lord keep watch between you and me when we are away from each other.")

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask:

Have you ever heard this said as a prayer? It's known as the Mizpah because that's what the place was called where Jacob and Laban built an altar before they went their own way. This is what Laban said to Jacob as they parted ways. Did they part peacefully, or were they still upset with each other?

Even though Jacob felt that Laban had been unfair and unthankful for his work, they parted as friends. Jacob had to remember that...

LOVING SERVICE IS DONE WELL, EVEN WITHOUT A REWARD.



You Need:

- chalkboard or whiteboard
- chalk or marker
- broom (optional)

You Need:

- Bibles

Prayer and Praise



Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Allow time for sharing experiences from last week's lesson study and review last week's memory verse. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special warm greeting to all visitors.



Suggested Songs

- "Amigos de Cristo" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 69)
- "Redeemed!" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 68)
- "Seek Ye First" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 67)
- "I've Got Peace Like a River" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 108)
- "God Made Our Hands" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 57)



Mission

Talk about the influence our actions have on others. When people notice how helpful, obedient, and kind we are, they will want to know what makes us that way. Share a story from *Children's Mission*.



Offering

Remind the children that giving to others without expecting something in return is living how Jesus lived.

You Need:

- offering container



Prayer

Ask Jesus to help the children do whatever He asks them to do with a cheerful heart and without expecting anyone to notice or reward them.

3

Applying the Lesson

Charades

Have children think of things their parents had to do for them when they were babies (changing diapers, rocking, soothing when crying, feeding, playing with, caring for at night when sick, etc.). Ask for volunteers to act them out without words while the others guess what they are doing.

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask:

Did your parents do these things for you just because they had to? Were you able to thank them at the time? Do you think they got upset or discouraged because you weren't being

thankful or rewarding them for caring for you? Of course not! They did those things because you were helpless and needed them, and they loved you. They knew you couldn't thank them. They didn't get a reward.

When have you done something without a reward?

What do you think about doing things and getting nothing in return?

Who knows everything you do? Will God reward you here on earth? (maybe, maybe not) in heaven? (yes)

Let's say our message together again to help us remember it:



LOVING SERVICE IS DONE WELL, EVEN WITHOUT A REWARD.

4

Sharing the Lesson

With All My Heart Coupon

In advance, make copies of the heart coupon for each child (see page 33). Ask the children to think of something nice or helpful they can do for one of their parents for which they wouldn't usually be paid or rewarded. Then distribute the heart coupons and have the children cut them out, color them, and fill in the blanks.

Debriefing

Say: **Share with us some of your ideas for doing something to say thank you to your parents without getting a reward.**

These hearts can help you remember to put your whole effort and heart into what you do, even when you didn't get something in return. Take your heart home and share it with your family.

Let's say our message together one last time:



LOVING SERVICE IS DONE WELL, EVEN WITHOUT A REWARD.

Closing

Together, say the Mizpah prayer (Genesis 31:49): "May the Lord keep watch between you and me when we are away from each other."

You Need:

- heart coupon pattern (see p. 33)
- paper
- colored markers or crayons
- scissors

Running Away Again

References

Genesis 30:25-43;
31; Patriarchs and
Prophets,
pp. 190-194

Memory Verse

“Whatever you
do, work at it with
all your heart”
(Colossians 3:23,
NIV).

The Message

Loving service is
done well, even
without a reward.

Have you ever eaten in a restaurant with your family? If the service was good, did your family leave a reward for the person who waited on you? Did that person expect a reward? When you help someone, do you think about getting a reward?

Twenty years had gone by since Jacob had left his home and family. Twenty years he had worked for his uncle Laban. By this time Jacob had 10 sons and at least one daughter.

After Joseph had been born, Jacob had asked Laban to let him return to Canaan. But Laban had begged him to stay. “Please stay,” Laban had pleaded. “I know that the Lord has blessed me because of you.”

So Jacob had agreed to stay. And Laban had agreed to pay Jacob for his work. All the spotted, speckled, and dark-colored sheep or goats would belong to Jacob. Since that time, many animals had been added to Jacob’s flocks. Jacob was now a wealthy man!

Laban’s sons were not happy about this. Jacob knew that they believed his flocks should belong to them. And Jacob also knew that “Laban’s attitude toward him was not what it had been” (Genesis 31:2).

So when the Lord told Jacob, “Go back to the land of your fathers,” Jacob knew it was time to leave. Without a word to Laban, he gathered his wives, his

children, and his flocks and started for Canaan.

After three days Laban learned that Jacob was gone. Laban started after him. Seven days later Laban caught up with Jacob. That night God spoke to Laban: “Be careful! Do not say anything to Jacob, good or bad.”



The next day Jacob watched Laban and his men. He wrinkled his forehead with concern as they drew nearer. He knew that Laban would not be happy with him.

“Why did you run away without telling me?” shouted Laban. “You didn’t even let me kiss my grandchildren and my daughters goodbye. You know, it is in my power to harm you! But last night God told me not to say anything to you that was good or bad.”

Jacob answered, “I left without telling you because I thought you might try to take my wives and children away.”

“Uncle Laban,” Jacob said, “I have been a faithful worker for you for 20 years. During that time I was careful to take good care of your animals. I didn’t complain about my work whether it was blistering hot or freezing cold. I worked 14 years to pay my debt to you for your daughters. And these past six years, I have worked to earn my animals. During that time, you changed my pay 10 times! But God was with me. You would have sent me away empty-handed. But God knows how hard I’ve worked for you. That is why He talked to you last night.”

“Jacob, in a way, everything you have is from me,” Laban spoke sharply. “These are my daughters and my grandchildren. The animals you have come from my flocks. But it wouldn’t be right for me to keep my daughters and their children.” Laban’s voice was kinder now. “Let’s make a peaceful agreement,” he offered. Jacob agreed.

So both families gathered some stones into a big heap. “These stones are a witness between us,” said Laban. “I will not go past this pile of stones to harm you. And you will not pass it to harm me.”

Jacob repeated the promise. “I will not harm you, and you will not harm me.” Then the two men and their families shared a meal together.

Early the next morning Laban kissed his daughters and his grandchildren. Then Laban returned home. And Jacob and his family traveled on toward Canaan.

For years people called that place Mizpah, a place of blessing. For it was there that Laban said to Jacob, “May the Lord keep watch between you and me when we are away from each other” (Genesis 31:49).

Daily Activities

Sabbath

- If possible, go with your family to see some sheep or goats. Count the spotted, speckled, or dark-brown animals. Did Jacob have more or fewer animals? How do you know?
- Share the heart coupon you made in Sabbath School with an adult in your house. (Or make a paper heart and write on it one thing you will do without expecting a reward.)

Sunday

- For worship today, read and discuss Genesis 30:25-36. What agreement did Jacob and Laban make? Now read verses 40-43. What did Jacob do? Why?
- Say your memory verse over and over while doing a chore (sweeping, cleaning up, washing dishes, etc.).
- If possible, look at your baby pictures. Then thank the people who took care of you when you were a baby. Thank Jesus, too.

Monday

- For family worship today, read and discuss Genesis 31:1-13. What did God tell Jacob to do? Who really caused the animals to be streaked? Why?
- Make a picture of a spotted animal and write the memory verse on it. Use this to teach the verse to your family. Thank God for animals.

Tuesday

- During worship today, read and discuss Genesis 31:14-21. How did Laban’s daughters feel about him? Why? What did Rachel do? How did Jacob deceive Laban? Was this right? Why? How would you feel about moving away from your family?
- Think of something good to do for someone without them knowing. Do it this week and see if they notice. But don’t expect to be rewarded!

Wednesday

- For family worship, read and discuss Genesis 31:22-43. What did Laban say to Jacob? How did Jacob answer? What do you think about Rachel’s actions? Who served without expecting a reward? To whom did Jacob give credit for caring for him? What did Laban suggest they should do?
- Have you quarreled with someone recently? Or treated someone unfairly? Has someone treated you wrongly? Ask Jesus to help you make things right with that person. Don’t wait. Do it today. Pray for that person today.

Thursday

- Read and discuss Genesis 31:44-55 for worship today. What covenant did Jacob and Laban make? What did they make to witness to their covenant? Why was that place called Mizpah? What do you think about the way Laban and Jacob parted?
- Read Genesis 31:49 again. Ask your family to say the Mizpah together.
- Sing some praise songs. Then thank Jesus for caring for all of you.

Friday

- For family worship, act out the Bible story. Who will be Jacob? Rachel? Laban? Review the memory verse. Ask each person: What have you done to help someone this week?
- Find the word *covenant* in a dictionary. Tell your family what it means. Make a covenant with your family. Write a sentence that tells about the covenant.
- Read Matthew 6:3, 4 together. What can your family do to help someone in need? Make a plan and do it together this weekend. Ask Jesus to help you do it cheerfully, without expecting a reward.