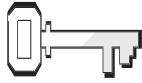


Don't Be Afraid!



References

Luke 1:13, 19, 30; 2:10;
The Desire of Ages,
pp. 47, 97, 98



Memory Verse

"Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people" (Luke 2:10).

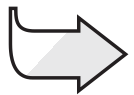


Objectives

The children will:
Know they need not be afraid of God.

Feel loved and accepted by God.

Respond by celebrating God's love and acceptance of them.



The Message

Because God is our Friend, we are not afraid of Him.

Monthly Theme

God is our best friend.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

The Luke 2 angel's message of "do not be afraid" is often heard when Heaven directly communicates with humanity. This lesson touches on examples of when these comforting words are spoken. Gabriel says "Do not be afraid" to Zechariah at their encounter by the altar of incense in the temple. Mary hears these words when Gabriel tells her that she will become the mother of the Son of God. On the night Jesus is born, an angel appears to the shepherds and calms them with "Do not be afraid."

This is a lesson about grace.

God takes the initiative in building bridges with His beloved humanity. He is an awesome, powerful God, and this reality often scares human beings when He connects with them through His angel messengers. However, He is just as loving and caring as He is powerful, and His angel messengers endeavor to put people at ease and to make it clear that God is their best friend.

Teacher Enrichment

"[Fear not] are] often the first words of celestial beings when addressing men. The agencies of heaven are constantly at work to remove fear from the hearts of consecrated men and women and to substitute for it 'the peace of God, which passeth all understanding.' Perfect understanding of God and love for Him remove all fear from the human heart" (*The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 673).

Room Decorations

Decorate the classroom with Christmas decorations emphasizing Jesus' birth, with a Nativity scene, angels, shepherds, etc.

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. "Afraid" Posters B. Touch Bags	construction paper and markers for each child (option: magazines and scissors, or paper and pencils), Bible paper bags, plastic bags, things for the children to touch (suggestions: cooked noodles, pinecones or other prickly objects, cotton balls, sand, rough rocks, dry rice, sticky dough), wipes, Bible
Any Time Prayer and Praise*	up to 10	Fellowship Songbook Mission Offering Prayer	<i>Sing for Joy</i> <i>Children's Mission</i> gift-wrapped box chalkboard/dry-erase board, chalk/marker, prayer calendar, Bible
2 Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story Memory Verse Bible Study	thunder sound effect (or kettle or drum to beat) none Bibles, chalkboard or dry erase board and chalk or marker
3 Applying the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Best Friends</i>	paper, pencils, chalkboard or dry erase board, chalk/marker, Bible
4 Sharing the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Christmas Tree Ornament</i> <i>Closing</i>	class Christmas tree (if culturally acceptable), Christmas ornament outlines for each child (see p. 143), markers, glitter and glue, tape, yarn, etc., ornament hooks or paper clips Bible

*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. Have them begin the Readiness Activity of your choice.



Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

You Need:

- construction paper
- markers
- option: magazines and scissors, or paper and pencils
- Bible

A. “Afraid” Posters

Give the children construction paper and have them draw pictures of things of which children their age are afraid. Option: cut pictures and words from magazines and newspapers to be glued to their paper to make a collage, or draw a picture of something frightening.

Debriefing

Ask: **What did you put on your poster?** (Allow time for sharing.) **What things are children most afraid of?** (Take answers.) **God does not want us to be afraid, and we never have to be afraid of Him.** Read aloud Luke 1:13. **God sent an angel to say, “Do not be afraid.” That brings us to our message for today:**



BECAUSE GOD IS OUR FRIEND, WE ARE NOT AFRAID OF HIM.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- six to eight paper bags
- six to eight plastic bags
- things to touch (see activity)
- wipes
- Bible

B. Touch Bags

In advance, prepare six to eight paper bags, lining each with a plastic bag. Inside each plastic bag, place a different-textured item for the children to touch. Suggestions: cooked noodles (inside a plastic bag or a bowl), prickly pinecones, cotton balls, fur (or a fluffy stuffed animal), sand, rough rocks, uncooked rice, sticky dough. (Mix flour with a small amount of water until it turns sticky.)

Give each child a chance to feel inside the bags. No one is to start guessing until everyone has had a turn. Some children may not want to participate.

Debriefing

Ask: **Were there things you wanted to touch? What things did you *not* want to touch? Why did some of you not want to put your hand into the bags? Was there anything about this touching game that made you a little bit afraid?** (After someone else said “yuck” or made a face, I didn’t want to touch that; I didn’t want to do it because I was afraid of what I might touch, etc.) **Sometimes we’re afraid of what’s around us in the world, but we never have to be afraid of God.** Read aloud Luke 1:30. **The first thing the angel told Mary was “Don’t be afraid.” Our message for today tells us that . . .**



BECAUSE GOD IS OUR FRIEND, WE ARE NOT AFRAID OF HIM.

Say that with me.

Prayer and Praise

Any
Time



Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Review the memory verse and allow time for sharing experiences from last week's lesson study. 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)
- "Away in a Manger" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 73)
- "Joy to the World" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 81)
- "Anywhere With Jesus" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 45)



Mission

Share a story from *Children's Mission*.



Offering

Say: **Our mission offering goes to help the people in _____ (name where offering goes this quarter) learn that Jesus is their best friend.**

You Need:

- gift-wrapped box



Prayer

Allow time for prayer requests and concerns. List them on a prayer calendar where all can see. If using a chalk or dry erase board, note that you will use the prayer calendar in the coming weeks. Tell the children to add the requests to "prayer calendars" at home. Read aloud 1 Peter 5:7. Invite volunteers to pray out loud for the various requests. Thank God for being such a good friend who cares and will help us with our worries.

You Need:

- chalkboard/dry-erase board (optional)
- chalk/marker (optional)
- prayer calendar
- Bible

Bible Lesson

You Need:

- thunder sound effect (or large kettle or drum to beat)



Experiencing the Story

Involve the children in an interactive Bible story. If possible, have a hidden tape recorder or a drum to provide sound effects when you say the word “thunder.”

When you say:	The children will:
frightened	<i>Look scared/hold their faces.</i>
But the angel said . . .	<i>Say: “Don’t be afraid!”</i>
God is our friend.	<i>Point upward.</i>

Read or tell the story.

What do you think God’s voice sounds like? Do you think it sounds like **thunder**? (*Sound effect.*) Sometimes it does. When God spoke to the Israelites from Mount Sinai, it *did* sound like **thunder**. (*Sound effect.*) But **God is our friend**. [*Point upward.*]

A few weeks ago our lesson was about Zechariah. Zechariah was in the Temple, burning incense in the holy place, and getting ready to say a prayer for the people.

Do you remember what happened? He saw an angel standing on the right side of the altar. Zechariah was **frightened**. [*Look scared/hold their faces.*] **But the angel said . . .** [*Don’t be afraid!*] Why did the angel say that? Because **God is our friend**. [*Point upward.*]

Then the angel told Zechariah that he had a special message from God, and that Zechariah and Elizabeth would have a special baby boy, even though they were very old.

Later an angel appeared to Mary to tell her she was going to have a baby.

When Mary first saw the angel, she was **frightened**. [*Look scared/hold their faces.*] **But the angel said . . .** [*Don’t be afraid!*] The angel had good news for Mary! Baby Jesus was going to be born. Jesus was going to come to earth to show us what God is like. **God is our friend**. [*Point upward.*]

The night that Baby Jesus was born, the angels came to earth once more. That night, shepherds were watching their sheep on the hills near Bethlehem when an angel appeared to them. The light from the angel was so bright, the Bible tells us, that the shepherds were very **frightened**. [*Look scared/hold their faces.*] **But the angel said . . .** [*Don’t be afraid!*] “I have good news for you! News of great joy! The Savior has been born.” Then more angels came and sang a beautiful song of joy and happiness and praise so the shepherds would know **God is our friend**. [*Point upward.*]

The shepherds ran to Bethlehem with happy, excited hearts—not fearful hearts—to worship the newborn King. The Bible says that after they saw Jesus they glorified and praised God. Sometimes God might speak in a voice that sounds like **thunder**. (*Sound effect.*) But He also sends His angels to tell us not to be afraid. Jesus was born as a baby and lived on earth to show us what God is really like. **God is our friend**. [*Point upward.*]

Debriefing

What would you think if you heard God speak like thunder? (Accept answers.) **How would you feel if you saw and heard angels singing in the night? What if an angel stood beside you; how would you feel? What would you do?**

Why does God send angels to talk to people? (To give us messages from Him.) **Would you like to see God and talk to Him someday? Would you be afraid of Him? Why? What are you going to remember about God? That's where our message comes in. Let's say it together:**



**BECAUSE GOD IS OUR FRIEND,
WE ARE NOT AFRAID OF HIM.**

Memory Verse

Sing the memory verse to the tune of "London Bridge," as follows:

"Do not be afraid. I bring
You good news that will cause
Great joy for all the people"
(Luke 2:10).

Repeat several times until children know the verse and can say it without help.

(This works if you give every syllable a note.)

Bible Study

You Need:

- Bibles
- chalkboard/dry erase board
- chalk or marker

Have another "Bible sword drill."
Say: **I will say a Bible text (for example: "Luke 1:13"). You must all start at the same time to find it in**

your Bible. The first one who finds it is to stand up and read it. We are going to look for some Bible verses about

angels. Are you ready? Get set. (Say the first Bible reference.) **Go!**

(Adult helpers assist as needed.)

When the child finds and reads the text, ask the class what Bible story it refers to.

Luke 1:13 (Zechariah was serving in the Temple.)

Luke 1:31 (Gabriel told Mary that she would be the mother of Jesus.)

Luke 2:10 (The angel told the shepherds about Jesus' birth.)

Matthew 14:25-27 (Jesus walked on the water.)

Matthew 17:5-7 (Jesus was transfigured.) (Explain the verse.)

Matthew 28:5-10 (Jesus was resurrected.)

Debriefing

Say: **We just read parts of today's Bible lesson, and some other stories.**

Who visited these people? (an angel)

How did the angel begin each message? (Do not be afraid.)

Let's give each story a title and write them on the board. Can you help me? Have the children compose titles based on the information in parentheses after each Bible text above. Write it where all can see.

How would you feel if you were the people that we read about in our texts? (nervous, afraid, strange, etc.)

What do all these stories tell us?

Let's answer by saying the message together:



**BECAUSE GOD IS OUR FRIEND,
WE ARE NOT AFRAID OF HIM.**

3

Applying the Lesson

You Need:

- paper and pencils
- chalkboard/dry-erase board
- chalk or marker
- Bible

Best Friends

Give each child paper and pencil. Ask them to draw or describe their best friend and list five things they like about that person.

Have each child tell one thing they wrote. List each thing where all may see. (For example: He likes me; she is kind to me; he shares with me; she makes me laugh; we do things together; etc.)

Debriefing

How do we know that people are our friends? Once again, read the list. **Nobody said that we chose a friend because we are afraid of him or her.**

Why not? (Because we are not afraid of our friends.) **How do you feel around your friends?** (unafraid, happy, relaxed, etc.) **How do you feel about Jesus?**

What gift is Luke 1:30, 31 referring to? Read the text aloud. (Baby Jesus, the good news) **What secret is God sharing?** (the birth of Jesus; the good news that God has a plan to save us) **What kind words of friendship does God offer?** (Don't be afraid.)

Read aloud Matthew 1:23. **One of Jesus' names means "God with us." Being with us is a sign of friendship. So what does this tell us about God? Let's say our message to answer this question:**



**BECAUSE GOD IS OUR FRIEND,
WE ARE NOT AFRAID OF HIM.**

4

Sharing the Lesson

Christmas Tree Ornament

Photocopy the Christmas ornament outlines on heavy paper, one set for each child. (See page 143.) Provide art supplies to decorate the ornaments and ornament hooks or paper clips to hang the ornaments on the tree or tape them to the wall.

The children will write "God is our friend" on the ornaments, cut them out, and decorate them. If possible, have them make one to hang on the tree or hang on the wall and the other to take and share with someone who does not attend your church. Open out the paper clip so that it has a hook on each end; hook one end on the ornament and the other on the tree or wall.

Debriefing

Gather in a circle. Say the memory verse together. Then have each child tell how they feel about God. Tell them to give one of their ornaments to someone who does not attend their church, and to tell that person how they feel about God. Encourage them to share with that person the message for today. Say it together right now:



**BECAUSE GOD IS OUR FRIEND,
WE ARE NOT AFRAID OF HIM.**

Closing

Ask volunteers to tell of a time that they were afraid and how God helped them. Read aloud 1 John 4:18, first part. Then close with a prayer of thanks to God for His love that drives out fear.

You Need:

- class Christmas tree (if culturally acceptable)
- Christmas ornament outlines for each child on heavy paper (see p. 143)
- markers, glitter and glue, tape, yarn, etc.
- ornament hooks or paper clips

You Need:

- Bible

Don't Be Afraid!

References

Luke 1:13, 19, 30;
2:10;
The Desire of Ages,
pp. 47, 97, 98

Memory Verse

"Do not be afraid.
I bring you good
news that will cause
great joy for
all the people"
(Luke 2:10).

The Message

Because God is our
Friend, we are not
afraid of Him.

Were you ever afraid of thunder? of lightning? of the dark? of people who shout?

Jamie didn't like thunderstorms, especially when they came in the night. But his mother knew that. She always came to be with him. "Don't be afraid," she would say. "I'll stay with you. It will be all right." And then Jamie could go back to sleep.

In Bible days when God sent an angel to talk to someone, He first made sure that they were not afraid.

Recently we learned about an angel's visit to Zechariah, a Temple priest. God sent an angel to stand by the altar where he served. Zechariah, the elderly priest, was frightened—but not for long. The angel immediately soothed Zechariah's fear.

"Do not be afraid," the angel said. "God has heard your prayer." Then the angel told Zechariah some wonderful news. His wife, Elizabeth, would have a baby, and they were to name the baby John.

Later God wanted to tell Mary that she would have a special baby boy. Again He sent an angel to carry the message. To keep from frightening Mary, the angel spoke softly. "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you" (Luke 1:28).

Now, greetings are friendly words. Enemies don't send each other greetings; they send threats. But even so Mary was troubled—and fright-

ened. So the angel spoke more plainly. "Do not be afraid, Mary." There it was again—that special message from God: *Do not be afraid.*

God sent the same message to the shepherds the night Jesus was born. When the angel messenger appeared, glory and brightness shone, lighting up the night sky. The shepherds were afraid.

In his book Luke, says that these brave men were terrified. But then the angel spoke. "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people." And the angel told them about the special Baby born in Bethlehem. They would find Him lying in a manger. When at last the angel voices were hushed and the bright light had faded, the shepherds were no longer afraid.

"Let us go to Bethlehem and see this thing that the Lord has told us about," they said. No longer afraid, they hurried to look for Jesus.

So when God speaks, He doesn't mean to frighten us. He wants everyone to hear the friendly message "God is with us." There is no need to be afraid. God is our friend; we need not be afraid of Him.



Daily Activities

Sabbath

- With your family, take a walk outdoors, if possible. Are there some things in nature you might be afraid of? Find a place you feel very safe and read your Bible lesson together.
- Find and read Luke 2:10. What is the good news?
- Sing "Anywhere With Jesus" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 45). Then thank Jesus for the good news.

Sunday

- During family worship, ask each person what scares them the most. Together, read Luke 1:13, 30 and Luke 2:10. What scared Zechariah, Mary, and the shepherds? How did the angel calm them?
- Make an angel mobile. Make five (or more) angel cutouts from construction paper. With lengths of thread or yarn, hang them from a wire coat hanger. Add a sign that reads: "Do not be afraid!" Put it where you will see it every day.
- Teach the memory verse to your family. Then thank God for His angels.

Monday

- Read and discuss Luke 1:11-13 for family worship. Have everyone fold a piece of paper in half and then in half again. Open the paper. In the first corner write "God is our Friend; do not be afraid." Draw a picture of the angel talking to Zechariah in the second section. Under the picture write "You will have a son named John." Save the paper for tomorrow.
- Say your memory verse to your family.
- Sing "God Is So Good" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 13). Then thank Him for being your best Friend.

Tuesday

- During worship, read and discuss Luke 1:26-31. In the third section of the papers made yesterday, draw the angel talking to Mary. Underneath, write "You will give birth to Jesus." Save these papers.
- Ask an adult to tell how they felt when they first

heard the good news about Jesus.

- Make a "good news" poster. Draw something you are afraid of. Put an X through it. Write "God is my friend; I am not afraid."

Wednesday

- With your family, read and discuss Luke 2:8-10. Finish the papers started earlier. In the fourth section, draw a picture of the angel talking to the shepherds. Underneath write your memory verse.
- Cut a sheep shape from an empty cereal box. Cover it with cotton balls to remind you that the angel told the shepherds, "Do not be afraid."
- Say your memory verse with your family.
- Sing "Go, Tell It on the Mountain" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 83).

Thursday

- To begin family worship, have everyone cut a large circle out of construction paper. On one side draw a face with a scared expression. Then write: "Do not be afraid." Turn the paper over. Draw a face with a smile. Write: "I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people" (Luke 2:10).
- With your family, discuss how this lesson helps us not to be afraid of the second coming of Jesus. Read Matthew 24:30, 31 together. How will Jesus' second coming be like the first? How will it be different?

Friday

- During family worship, show and tell about the things you made this week. Hang your angel mobile in a special place. (Save it for Lesson 12.) Show your papers with the four squares. Tell your Bible lesson to your family. Show your scared/smiling face and say your memory verse.
- Ask each person to tell something they like about Jesus. Read John 15:15 together.
- Sing songs about being friends with Jesus.