

July 26 Lesson

Bible Passage: Genesis—Revelation
(The Big God Story)



The Big God Story

Remember Verse

But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name. John 20:31

Items to gather:

- Ball of yarn
- Card stock (1 sheet per child)
- Scissors
- Tape
- Single-hole punch
- Colored pencils
- Ribbon, yarn, or twine (1' piece per child)
- Optional: construction paper squares (about 3" x 3") or sticky notes (about 1 dozen per child), glue sticks
- Storytelling cards (index cards with things written on them like school, church, playground, boy, girl, dog, family, cat, dog, lunch, jacket, shoes, tree, horse, duck, lake, mountain etc)
- Scissors

LEADER PREP

Each week you'll find a list of resources along with encouraging articles that help you prepare your heart to present the lesson.

Inspire *Shares personal stories from fellow ministry leaders about how God has worked in their lives*

My sons grabbed handfuls of peat moss and mushed it into a muddy mixture. Together we labeled plant sticks and filled the shiny plastic tubes with peat and seeds that would one day become beans. We placed the crate of tubes on top of our dryer to germinate. Then we waited.

After several days of looking and looking for signs of life, it was getting hard to convince my sons that these tubes would one day produce something they could eat, share with others, and replant. Finally we noticed a hair-like follicle pressing its way out of the soil. This tiny fiber would one day become a bean! But as we watched it grow, we found it hard to wait.

I have come to understand the people in The Big God Story as something akin to this tiny fiber. God created humankind with a distinct purpose. Daily He forms, grows, and prunes we who believe into the holy, redeemed people He desires for us to be. Similar to how hard it was to watch those earthly plants grow, it's hard for me to wait for the day when God will return to restore creation and make it new.

Yet God shows me every day the small signs of His life springing forth everywhere. I see people serving and praying for one another. I see parents modeling for their children the life of faith—showing them what it means to follow God with their whole heart. As much as we may want things to move or grow more quickly, God remains in control of His story. He is sovereign—from beginning to end.

Amy Palmerton

ROCKHARBOR Church

Equip *Offers perspective and context to the lesson's Bible passage*

From beginning to end, The Big God story is full of signs of life. It is the story of the salvation, the “life” God offers to humanity.

The core message of this gospel (good news) can be found in 1 Corinthians 15:1–4. Here Paul tells us Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures (15:3), was buried, and rose from the grave (15:4). This is absolutely the core of what we believe. Jesus Christ, God in the flesh, lived a perfect life and willingly died on the cross in our place to pay the penalty for our sins. He then rose from the dead, showing us that death no longer holds any power over those who believe.

To understand what it means for us to be sinners, we need to go back to the beginning to learn what sin is and how mankind has rebelled against God. This is why The Big God Story always starts with the creation and fall of man in the garden of Eden. Without this foundation, the cross makes no sense. In the garden we see the origin of sin and the beginnings of God's overarching plan to reconcile the world to Himself.

As we continue throughout the Old Testament, we start to see the implementation of that plan and how God's choosing of Abraham and Israel was the centerpiece of that plan. Through this nation God brought forth the Messiah, the remedy for sin. By the time we get to the cross in The Big God Story, we can understand how God's plan for redemption culminates in the birth, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

The Big God Story began in the garden, climaxed in the death and resurrection of Jesus, and continues today. We're

all a part of The Big God Story. And those who choose to believe in Jesus have special roles to play.

Support *Provides reflection and assessment through encouragement, prayer, and time in God's Word*

Throughout The Big God Story, God inspired countless men and women to live out stories of faith. Even though these men and women weren't perfect, God used them in unique ways. David was a man after God's own heart; Gideon was a mighty warrior who trusted God; and, Esther was a woman whom God used to save His people. These people weren't perfect, and neither are we. However, with God's help, we can live out stories of faith that encourage others. This week, take time to write about the ways God has led you through your own story. Notice the places where God called you to leave your comfort zone—to choose to have faith despite the circumstances. Notice the ways God brought you into a faith community. Notice the ways you have served and prayed for others in your life. Afterward, ask God to give you the opportunity and the open heart to share one or all of these aspects of your story with others. Pray that God would use your stories to encourage others in their faith and on their journeys through God's narrative of their lives.

CONNECT//10 minutes



Talk and Toss

Kids will toss a ball of yarn around as they share the best parts of their week.

SUPPLIES

- Ball of yarn

RELATE

CONNECT QUESTION: Open your time by asking this question: **What is your favorite story?**

The Big God Story is the story of God's love for all people throughout history and His desire to bring them into relationship with Him. God is the main character of the story, and as we learn more about Him, we'll see more of His world and how we can serve Him in it.

Everyone has a personal story. Invite your family to get to know one another's stories better as they toss around a ball of yarn. First, have everyone sit in a circle with you. Start the activity by sharing the best part of your week. Then take the end of the yarn and, while holding it, toss the ball to someone in the circle. Then that child will share the best part of her week, grab the yarn, and toss the ball to another person. As your family continues to toss the ball back and forth around the circle, they'll create a web. If someone has a hard time remembering what happened during the past week, suggest they share something else, such as something they're looking forward to in the coming week.

GATHER//30 minutes



Remember Verse

Each week children will spend time memorizing a portion of Scripture together. The Remember Verse focuses on a character trait of God that's highlighted in today's portion of The Big God Story.

But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name. John 20:31

Game: Sing the Verse

SUPPLIES

- None

RELATE

Have your family break up and give everyone a few minutes to work together and find a tune to sing the Remember Verse to (such as “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star”). Once they’ve finished practicing, invite everyone to perform their song.

Storytelling

Bible Passage: Genesis—Revelation

The Big God Story

RELATE

Thank you for sharing your stories. Today is a very exciting day! Throughout the year we’ve been exploring different parts of The Big God Story, and today we get to hear the entire story all the way through! First, let’s pray and ask the Holy Spirit to speak to us. Lead children in a Prayer of Release to pause, be still, and ask the Holy Spirit to quiet their hearts and minds.

Watch the Big God Story Musical/Brian and Tommy video

While we wait for Jesus to return, there’s something very important that needs to be done, and God wants you and me to do it. Many people don’t know God’s story; they don’t know what He’s done for them or how much He loves them. They need to know! How might God want us to respond with hearts of service to His story? Share a personal story about telling someone about The Big God Story and how God sent Jesus to be our Savior.

Discussion Questions

- **Where did The Big God Story begin?** Genesis 1:1
- **What did sin do to the relationship between God and people?** Romans 3:23
- **Who is the Redeemer? Why did God promise to send Him?** John 3:16
- **How does it make you feel to know Jesus will come back someday?**

RESPOND//15 minutes



God at Work

Kids will ponder the different ways God worked through the lives of people in The Big God Story.

SUPPLIES

- Card stock (1 sheet per child)
- Scissors
- Tape
- Single-hole punch
- Colored pencils
- Ribbon, yarn, or twine (1' piece per child)
- Optional: construction paper squares (about 3" x 3") or sticky notes (about 1 dozen per child), glue sticks

PREPARE AHEAD

Cut a sheet of card stock in half, lengthwise. Then tape two of the ends together to make one long piece. Finally, fold the card stock every four inches like an accordion to create a small “booklet.” Punch a hole in the last page. Make one of these booklets for each child.

RELATE

The Big God Story is the story of God’s plan, from the beginning of time, to bring His people into a loving relationship with Him. Every person in the story and everything that happened throughout history serves a purpose in God’s redemptive plan. As followers of Jesus, God’s story continues through our lives. We too can be a part of The Big God Story!

Invite your children to think through some of the people mentioned in the Bible and the different ways God worked through their lives. Then encourage the kids to create booklets describing The Big God Story. Give each child an accordion booklet and ask her to write words or draw pictures on the panels to represent various parts of The Big God Story. For example, she might write “Promise” or draw several stars to represent God’s promise to multiply Abraham’s descendants. The kids can write or draw directly onto the panels or use construction paper squares or sticky notes and glue those to the panels. Have each child leave a few pages at the end of the booklet blank so he can write about or draw how God works in his life during the coming weeks. When the kids finish their booklets, have them thread a piece of ribbon, yarn, or twine through the hole at the end of the booklet and tie it around the booklet to keep it closed. Finally, pray together as a class. Ask God to open the children’s hearts to His Spirit’s work in their lives this coming week.

Storytelling Cards

Invite your children to work together to tell a story using storytelling cards as prompts.

SUPPLIES

- Storytelling cards (index cards with things written on them like school, church, playground, boy, girl, dog, family, cat, dog, lunch, jacket, shoes, tree, horse, duck, lake, mountain etc)
- Scissors

SET UP

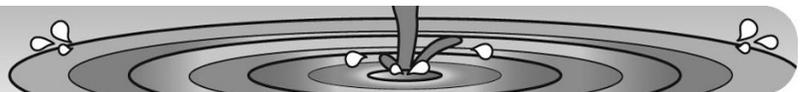
Make the Storytelling cards and spread them out on the floor facedown.

RELATE

God continues to work throughout time and history to bring people into relationship with Him. Each event, each person, and each place in The Big God Story helps us to see God’s great plan and to consider ways we can share Him with others.

Have the kids gather around the cards on the floor. Have one child begin the story by turning over a card and using the person, place, or thing to get the story started. For example, if a child draws a “School” card, she might say, “Once upon a time there was a school that had no doors or windows.” Then the next child can draw a card and continue the story. Encourage the kids to use hand gestures and facial expressions to act out the story dramatically. Give each child a turn at adding to the story.

BLESS// 5 minutes



RELATE

Invite your children to join you in a circle. Read the following blessing from 2 Corinthians 5:14–15:

For Christ’s love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.

Next, bless each child individually by using one of the following statements:

(Child's name), **may you know how great God's love is for you. May His love compel you to serve Him by sharing His love with others.**

(Child's name), **may the Holy Spirit guide and lead you as you take your place in The Big God Story this week and always.**

Once you've blessed each child individually, speak a blessing over the whole class. Children may choose to stand and place their hands in front of them, palms up, in a posture of receiving God's blessing so they may be a blessing to others.

May you know God has given you a special role to play in The Big God Story. May you be blessed by His gracious love for you so your life will be a blessing to others.