



## Family Sunday School Lesson 2 - God With Us

**Introduction:** Last week we focused on the way God’s magnificence is displayed in the creation of the universe and that Jesus is God. This week we will try to comprehend that this magnificent God is with us and in us. This week on Wednesday, Jan. 6, we celebrate Epiphany, or Three Kings Day. This day recognizes the moment when Jesus was revealed to be the Savior of the world.

This amazing Savior, whose Spirit is in us, made our true identities possible.

### Start the Fun!

#### Who God Sees

Materials: A sheet of paper, a pencil

Step 1: How would you describe yourself? Think of three or more adjectives (describing words) that tell about your personality or appearance. Draw a quick sketch of yourself and label the picture with the words you chose.

Step 2: Now read who you are the way God sees you



#### Ephesians 1:3-14 My True Identity In Jesus

1. I Am Blessed With All Spiritual Blessings (v3)
2. I Am Chosen By God (v4)
3. I Am A Child Of God (v5)
4. I Am Highly Favored (v6)
5. I Am Forgiven Completely (v7-8)
6. I Am Included In God’s Plans (v9-10)
7. I Am An Heir Of God (v11-12)
8. I Am Sealed With The Holy Spirit (v13-14)

Step 3: What could you add to your picture to show some of this information? You do not need to take away any of the details you included earlier, because you are still you in God’s eyes, and God loves you just the way you are. But what could you add to show that you are God’s child, that the Holy Spirit is with you, or any of these other details from Ephesians? (Ideas: more labels, big smile, tag saying “Property of God,” halo to show forgiven status, T-shirt that says, “Blessed,” etc.)

## **Read together**

### **Ephesians 1:3-14 (Revised for Children)**

Praise be to the God and Parent of our Lord Jesus Christ. In Christ, God has given us every spiritual blessing in heaven. In Christ, God chose us before the world was made. In God's love we were chosen to be God's holy people—people without blame before God. And before the world was made, God decided to make us God's own children through Jesus Christ. That was what God wanted and what pleased God. This brings praise to God because of God's wonderful grace. God gave that grace to us freely, in Christ, the One God loves. In Christ we are set free by the blood of his death. And so we have forgiveness of sins because of God's rich grace. God gave us that grace fully and freely. God, with full wisdom and understanding, let us know God's secret purpose. This was what God wanted, and God planned to do it through Christ. God's goal was to carry out God's plan when the right time came. God planned that all things in heaven and on earth would be joined together in Christ as the head. In Christ we were chosen to be God's people. God had already chosen us to be God's people, because that is what God wanted. And God is the One who makes everything agree with what God decides and wants. We are the first people who hoped in Christ. And we were chosen so that we would bring praise to God's glory. So it is with you. You heard the true teaching—the Good News about your salvation. When you heard it, you believed in Christ. And in Christ, God put a special mark on you by giving you the Holy Spirit that God had promised. That Holy Spirit is the guarantee that we will get what God promised for God's people. This will bring full freedom to the people who belong to God, to bring praise to God's glory.

### **Discuss**

*Ask:* Which one of the eight statements about your identity did you need to hear today? Which one surprised you? Which one do you feel like you already know really well? Which one do you think is the most important?

*Ask:* What does it mean when it says God put a special mark on us?

*Discussion points:* We are given a special mark through the Holy Spirit. Can you guess what that mark might be? Yes, a cross! Paul reminds us that God marks us with the cross of Jesus. In our baptisms the pastor, your parents, sponsors and other people may make the sign of the cross on your forehead to show the whole world that you belong to God. Even when you can't see it, it is still there because God promises that you belong to God forever and always. Make the sign of the cross on each other before we pray.

You may also want to add a cross on your forehead in the drawing you made earlier.

## Pray

Dear Jesus, Thank you for making us yours and marking us with the sign of the cross. Help us to remember that all people are loved by you no matter what and that your cross connects us to one another. Amen.

## Participate

How do we respond to all these wonderful things God has given us? With gratitude, of course! Grateful people are happy people, and happy people make others happy. Our response is to spread God's light and love.

### *Creative New Year's Resolutions*

It's the time of year when we make plans to do something good in the upcoming year. Here are some ideas for families to spread God's love throughout 2021.

- Donate gently used clothing
- Donate non-perishable food items
- Write a letter or send a card to someone going through a tough time or who lives alone
- Save some energy--lower the heat, walk instead of driving
- Shovel someone's sidewalk
- Save up your coins and donate them at the end of the month
- Shop at AmazonSmile
- Give a care package to a homeless person
- Write your state senator or representative
- Sign up for a CSA (Community Supported Agriculture); support a local farmer and enjoy fresh fruits and vegetables
- Get on your road bike and train for the MS150, which supports research for multiple sclerosis
- Train for and participate in a walk such as Walk for the Cure or the MS Walk. (This is in April. Get info from Suzie, Carl or Lucille Miles.)
- Volunteer at a regional park to remove invasive species
- Volunteer to help Epiphany serve meals to homeless people at Shepherd's Table with the Laurel Winter Shelter in March.



*Suggestion:* Don't overwhelm yourself by planning too much. Choose one or two of the more time-consuming ideas to do this year. Or create a plan to do one less-involved thing each month by writing them on the calendar. Support each other as a family and have fun!

## **Wrap Up**

You've heard Pastor say it is important to know who you are and whose you are. You are valuable and you belong to an awesome God.

## **Take a Moment to Breathe**

### **Focused Breaths**

Find a comfortable seated position, or you can even lay down. Begin to slow your breath and focus on each inhale and exhale through your nose. Taking long deep inhales and soft slow exhales. As you breathe in, imagine the air entering your nose and slowly traveling down your trachea (windpipe) and into your lungs. Pause. As you breathe out, imagine the air moving slowly from your lungs, up your trachea, and out your nose. Pause.

Repeat 4 or 5 times or as many times as you would like. Notice if you feel different after the exercise than you did before you started.

