

True Greatness

Focus Scripture
Mark 10:35–45

PURPOSE To discern our place in God’s big picture.

Lesson Preparation

- ❑ Read Psalm 104:1–9, 24, 35c, Mark 10:35–45, and biblical background for October 17.
- ❑ Set up worship table with green cloth, candle, Bible, offering basket and Unit 2 logo (#12).
- ❑ Bring a small jug of water and a bowl, pan or pie plate. Place a small mirror in the bottom with some stones or seashells around it. (If these things are not available, bring a variety of other items from nature along with a mirror.) Have the bowl with stones and the mirror hidden under a cloth on the worship table. Set the jug of water beside it.
- ❑ Bring a towel headdress, resource sheet “Psalm 104,” and a Bible.
- ❑ Print the words to “Thank God” and “O When We All Begin to Sing” on newsprint (see *Primary Teacher’s Resource Sheet*).
- ❑ Choose the option(s) you wish to use for Integrating and make necessary preparations.
- ❑ Check the birthday list.
- ❑ Pray that the children can see God’s greatness in everything and everyone.

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Opening

Welcome the children and invite them to share their joys and concerns.

Candle Lighting, Birthdays, Offering

Prayer: O God,
we see your work
in the beautiful trees and the bright sunshine.
It makes our hearts sing!
Amen.

Sing: “Thank God” (*See Primary Teacher’s Resource Sheet*)

2

Introducing the Theme

Sit in a circle. Set the bowl in the middle and remove the cloth covering. Mention that this bowl is full of the special things that God made for us. Pour the water into the bowl. Invite each child to look into the bowl to see God’s extraspecial gifts and then share what they see – you may have to encourage them to see themselves!

Read paraphrase of Psalm 104:1–9, 24, 35c (*from the resource sheet.*)

Encourage the children to say the refrain (**God we praise you!**) each time you pause.



3

Exploring the Theme

Each of us is a small yet very important part of God's creation. Like the mountains and the trees and the animals, and the wind and the ocean, we each have our part to play in God's world. Every part of God's creation is connected. Every part of the creation joins together to praise God. Every part of the creation serves a very important purpose.

Today our Bible story is about Jesus' disciples who didn't seem to understand this. They thought that because they played an important part in God's creation – this made them more important than anyone else. They thought that because God had made them great, this allowed them to lord it over the whole creation. But they were wrong. Let's hear the story...

(Before telling the story, turn away from the group and put on towel headdress. Choose which character you would like to portray: Joanna – a woman who traveled with Jesus and the disciples; or, Simon – a disciple of Jesus.)

Story: Arguing about Who Is the Greatest

Hi! My name is Joanna *(or alternative)*. I was one of the women who traveled with Jesus and the other disciples. One day when we were traveling down the road with Jesus, moving from one town to another, the brothers James and John had a private conversation with Jesus. Philip was not very far behind them and he overheard what they were saying. Would you believe it? They asked Jesus if they could sit on either side of him when he was anointed as ruler. They wanted to be the 2 top officials. When Philip told the rest of us we were angry! Did James and John think that they were better than the rest of us? Why should they be chosen to be extra special? People were so angry that a fight almost broke out.

Jesus heard us and came to talk with us. He explained that everyone was important in God's creation – the birds, the mountains, the trees, the people. We live in sacred nature and each one of us is beautiful and sacred too. Each of us must serve and care for God's creation and one another.

Our story is written in the Bible. Let me read to

you the last part about what Jesus said to us. *(Read Mark 10:42–45.)* Somehow we were thinking only about ourselves. We were missing the big picture of what it was that God wanted us all to do. Jesus had chosen us to be his disciples. But that did not mean we would receive special privileges. It meant we had special work to do. We were to help others and spread God's love everywhere.

Sharing God's Dream

(Look together at the unit logo.) If the Theme Conversation was used in worship, review it together now. If the Theme Conversations was not used, use it now to talk about dreams and visions and the theme "Sharing God's Dream." Talk about what is happening in the logo, and what the dove at the top symbolizes. What does the shape symbolize?

- I wonder what God dreams that we will do?...
- I wonder what makes God smile?...
- I wonder what makes God sad?...

Sing:

O When We All Begin to Sing tune: When the Saints...

Oh, when we all begin to sing.
Oh, when we all begin to sing.
Oh, it will be a joyful sound,
when we all begin to sing.

Chorus:

We need God's love, we need God's care,
oh, how we need God's love and care,
to help us build a better world,
and to live in harmony.

Other verses:

- Oh, when we all begin to love (repeat)
Oh, it will be a happy world...
- Oh, when we all begin to care (repeat)
Oh, it will be so warm and friendly...
- Oh, when we all begin to share (repeat)
Oh, it will bring such understanding...

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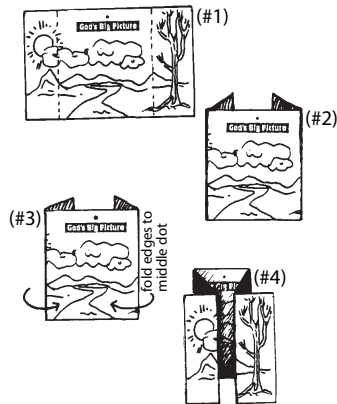
Integrating the Theme

Option A: God's Big Picture

Materials: crayons or pencil crayons

In advance: Make copies and pre-fold activity sheet "God's Big Picture" for each child. Trim off date strip and fold two sides under at dotted line. Bring each folded edge to the centre dot (see illustration).

Give each child a pre-folded picture to colour. Encourage them not to peek. When finished colouring, have them open it up to reveal the bigger picture. Invite them to draw themselves inside relating to other people in God's great world, spreading God's love.



Option B: Sharing God's Dream

Materials: crayons

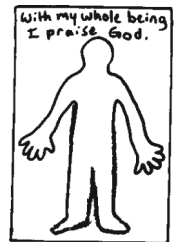
In advance: Cut large teardrop shape out of light blue paper for each child.

Hand out teardrop-shaped pieces of paper and invite the children to draw a dream that they have for our world – something that they believe is part of God's dream too.

Option C: With My Whole Being I Praise God

Materials: large piece of mural paper, crayons, sheets of drawing paper

Lay out a large piece of paper on the floor. Ask for a volunteer to lie down on it. Invite the children to help trace the volunteer's outline with crayons. Talk about God creating our world and everything in it (referring to Psalm imagery). Ask them how we join with God to make the world a beautiful, caring, and peaceful place. Invite children to draw a picture of something in nature that they enjoy and are thankful for or a picture showing themselves praising God by spreading God's love to others. Add their pictures around the person outline.



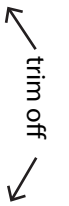
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Closing

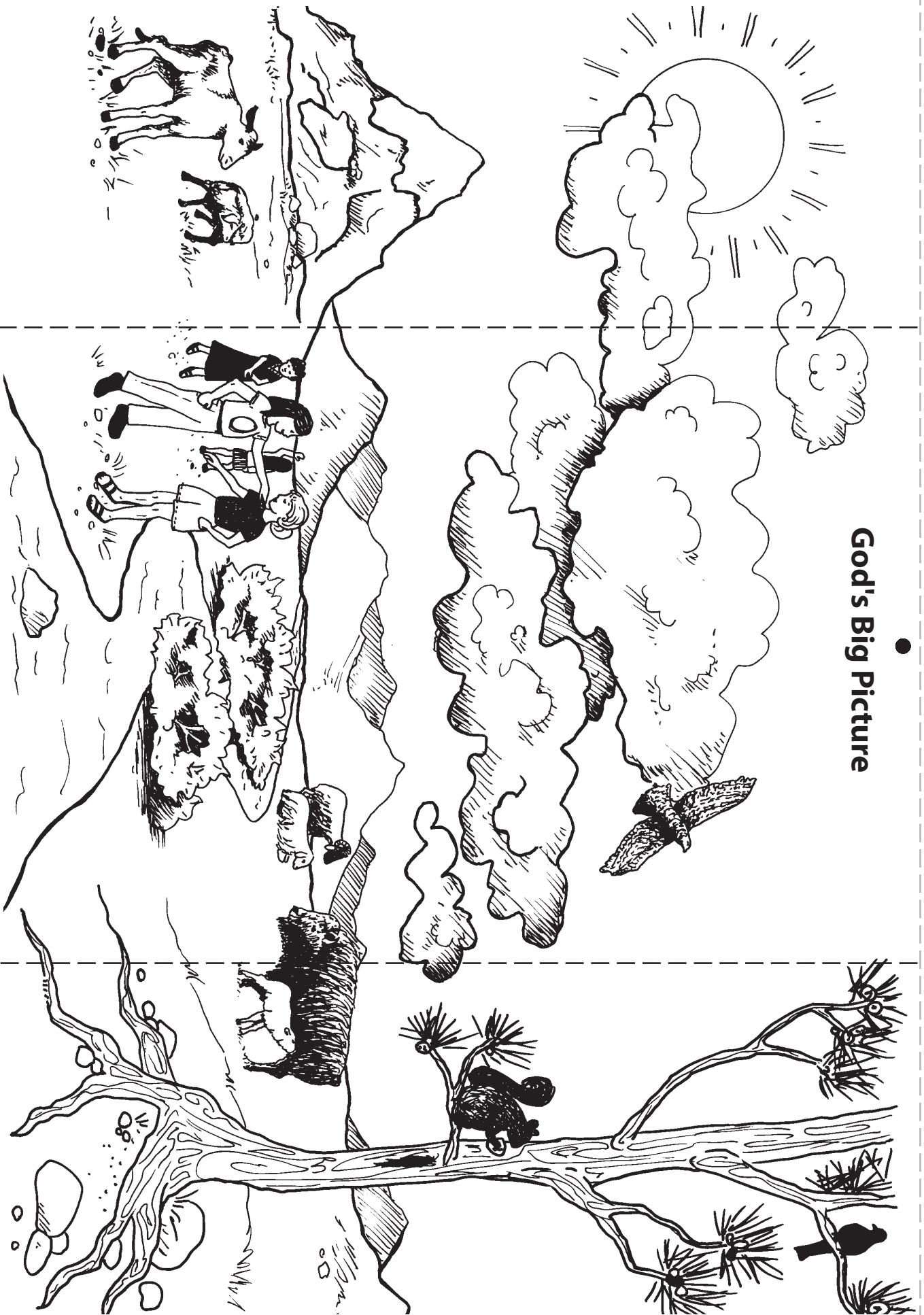
(Invite the children to pray by adding appropriate actions.)

Prayer: Thank you God for
 building hands (*mime building something*),
 drawing hands (*mime drawing*),
 helping hands (*reach out*),
 praising hands (*reach up*).
 May everything we do
 help you create a peaceful world. Amen

(Note: keep the song words and bowl of water with the mirror for next week.)



God's Big Picture





Psalm 104 1-9, 24, 35C

With my whole being, I praise God! *(pause)*
God, we praise you!
 You wear clothes full of the beauty of the earth.
 You wear the sun and the stars like a robe.
 You stretch out the skies like a tent.
 You build your room above the clouds.
 You make the clouds your chariot.
 You ride on the wings of the wind. *(pause)*

God, we praise you!
 You make the winds your messengers.
 Flames of fire are your servants.
 You built the earth on its foundations
 So it can never be moved. *(pause)*

God, we praise you!
 You covered the earth with oceans.
 The water was above the mountains.
 But at your command it rushed away. *(pause)*

God, we praise you!
 The mountains rose.
 The valleys sank.
 The water went to the places you made for it.
 The water will never cover the earth again. *(pause)*

God, we praise you!
 God you made many things.
 The earth is full of your riches.
 With my whole being, I praise God. *(pause)*
God, we praise you!

Song Oh, When We All Begin to Sing

(tune: When the Saints...)

Oh, when we all begin to sing.
Oh, when we all begin to sing.
Oh, it will be a joyful sound,
when we all begin to sing.

Chorus:

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oh, how we need God's love and care,
to help us build a better world,
and to live in harmony.

Other verses:

- Oh, when we all begin to love (*repeat*)
Oh, it will be a happy world...
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Oh, it will bring such understanding...

Song Thank God

With a 6/8 bounce

Traditional

Musical notation for the first line of the song. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 6/8. The melody is written on a treble clef staff. Above the staff, the chords G, C, Bm, Em, C, and D are indicated. The lyrics are: Thank God, Thank God, Thanks in the morn-ing, Thanks at the noontime,

Musical notation for the second line of the song. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 6/8. The melody is written on a treble clef staff. Above the staff, the chords G, B7, Em, C, D, and G are indicated. The lyrics are: Thank God, Thank God, Thanks when the sun goes down.

Other verses: Praise God, Serve God, Love God, etc. Add your own...