

Bible Passage: Genesis 18**CHRIST CONNECTION:** God is good to judge sin. He is the Judge of all the earth, and He always does what is right. The good news of the gospel is that Jesus took the punishment our sin deserves, and Jesus gives His righteousness to everyone who trusts in Him.**Key Passage phrase:** My eyes have seen the Lord. Isaiah 6:5

LEADER DEVOTIONAL

There is something inside of each of us that longs for justice. When your family or community is impacted by an atrocity, there is an innate wiring to every person that desires to those responsible be punished. Where does this come from and what should we do with this?

Our desire for justice comes as a result of our being made in the image of God. We learn from Scripture that God formed each of us (Ps. 139:13) and created us in His image (Gen. 1:27). Being created in the image of God and by the hand of God leaves us with certain characteristics informed by our Creator.

So, what should we do? Should we respond to every act of sin with an act of justice? Should we point and scream when another image bearer demonstrates her sinful nature? Should we ignore evil acts and simply “let God take care of it”?

Genesis 18 speaks to some of this. As God began to unfold His plan to punish the people of Sodom and Gomorrah, Abraham stepped in. Abraham knew firsthand just how sinful these people were, how distorted their views of the world were, and how extreme their culture had turned as a result. Yet, he pleaded for God to show mercy.

It’s likely that there were people that Abraham knew and worried about. It’s clear that Abraham didn’t want those who followed God to be punished along with those who did not. But it seems there was something in Abraham that desired God to show mercy to other sinners because he knew his own great need for God’s mercy as well.

When we see that the ground is level at the foot of the cross, our desire for justice is often—at least in part—overcome by a desire for mercy. When we see ourselves in need of the same mercy as the offender we have in our sights, it may likely change how we think and pray.

Ultimately, God is the judge who discerns where there is mercy. Scripture reminds us, “What should we say then? Is there injustice with God? Absolutely not! For he tells Moses, I will show mercy to whom I will show mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion” (Rom. 9:14-15).

TERMS TO KNOW

Justice: order that God seeks to reestablish in His creation where all people receive the benefits of life with Him. Justice is the central ethical idea of the Old Testament.

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WELCOME

Play music in the background as you greet preschoolers and welcome them to class. As children enter, have them decorate a paper bag. They will place their crafts, coloring pages, and activity pages, in the bag for easy transportation home. After children are finished decorating their bags, line them up outside the classroom along the wall for easy distribution and pick-up. *** Please remember to reference the class schedules posted in your room for the timing of your class's various activities.

ACTIVITY PAGE

Lead preschoolers to complete the activity page: "How Many Can You Find?"

Say: How many tents did you count? How many shoes and how many birds? [Invite children to respond.] That's right! You found three of each. In today's Bible story, three men visited Abraham. Let's listen to find out what messages they brought him.

BIBLE STORY

Tell the following Bible story using the provided storytelling tips or show the video. Use the bold version of the Bible story for younger preschoolers.

God Is Good to Judge Sin

When Abraham was old, the Lord appeared to him. Abraham looked up and saw three men standing by his tent. He welcomed them, and he gave them food and water. The men told Abraham that his wife Sarah was going to have a baby. When Sarah heard this news, she laughed.

The men got up to continue their journey, so Abraham walked with them for a while. They looked out over the city of Sodom, and God decided to tell Abraham about His plan.

God said, "I've heard about this city. The people living there are wicked. Their sin is very serious. I'm going to go see how bad they really are."

The men turned and went toward the city. Abraham asked, "God, will you destroy the good people and the evil people? What if there are 50 good people in that city? Surely you will save the city for the 50 good people. You are the judge of all the earth. Won't you do what is right?"

God said, "If I find 50 righteous people there, I will spare the whole city."

Then Abraham asked, "What if there's only 45? Will you destroy the whole city?"

God said, "I will not destroy the city if I find 45 righteous people there."

Then Abraham asked, "What if there are 40?"

God said, "I will not destroy the city if there are 40 righteous people."

Then Abraham asked, "What if there are 20?"

God said, "I will not destroy the city if there are 20 righteous people."

Abraham asked, "What if there are 10?"

God answered, "I will not destroy the city if I find 10 righteous people."

Then God went on and Abraham went back to his tent. The next morning, Abraham looked out over the city. All he saw was smoke because God had destroyed the city.

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CRAFT

COLOR WITH A MARKER BUNDLE

Make bundles of washable markers by taping three different colored washable markers together. Make enough for each child to have one. Distribute construction paper to the children and show them how to draw with the marker bundles. Guide children to trade bundles so they can draw with other colors.

SAY: *Let's count how many markers are in a bundle. We have three markers in each bundle. In the Bible story, Abraham looked up and saw three men. Abraham welcomed them. God told Abraham that He was going to the city of Sodom to see how bad the people really were. God is good to judge sin, and He always does what is right. God judged Sodom. Jesus took the punishment for our sin, and Jesus gives life to everyone who trusts in Him.*

ACTIVITY

FIND 10 PEOPLE

While preschoolers cover their eyes, hide 10 people figures around the room. Encourage children to find the people and bring them back to you. Open your Bible to Genesis 18 and briefly retell the Bible story.

SAY: *You did a great job finding 10 people figures. In our Bible story today, God promised Abraham that He would not destroy the city if He found 10 good people. The Bible says that all people are sinners, and God would not find even one person who always obeyed Him. [Hold up one person figure.] The good news is that God sent His Son, Jesus, to earth. Jesus became a man, and He always obeyed God in everything He did, said, and thought. When we trust in Jesus, God forgives our sin and gives us life with Him forever.*

SNACK AND PRAYER

WASH HANDS OR USE HAND SANITIZER. SERVE THE SNACK. AS CHILDREN EAT, REVIEW AND TALK ABOUT THE BIBLE STORY.

As the children finish snack, continue talking about the Bible story and emphasize the Christ connection.

SAY: *What was your favorite part of today's Bible story?*

SAY: *What did you learn about God in today's Bible story?*

SAY: *God said He would not destroy the city if He found how many good people?*

SAY: *Why does sin separate us from God? Because God is holy.*

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CLOSING ACTIVITES

Before doing closing activities, please have the children help you clean up the toys and materials that have been used today. After the room is cleaned up, set out markers or crayons and let kids work on today's **Bible Story Coloring Page** until their parents arrive. You can also choose a book to read to the children as they color or for those who don't want to color. Please make the effort to have the children quietly engaged when parents arrive. When parents arrive to pick up their children, tell them something that their child enjoyed doing or did well today.

BEFORE YOU GO...

Please clean up by doing the following:

- 1) Clean any used toys with provided alcohol wipes.
- 2) Use sanitizing spray to wipe down tables.
- 3) Sweep up any cracker crumbs or dirt.