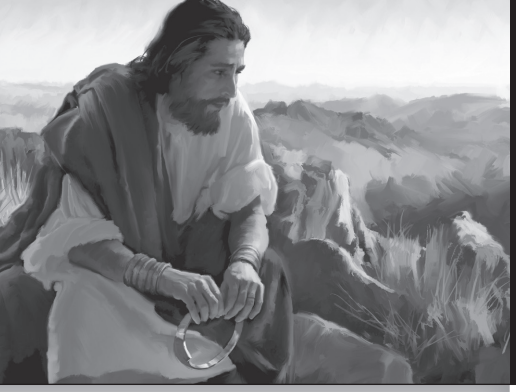


5

Grieving Father, Victorious King

Community
We build positive relationships.

POWER TEXT

"But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous" (Matthew 5:44, 45).

KEY REFERENCES

- 2 Samuel 16:15-18:33
- *Patriarchs and Prophets*, chap. 72, pp. 744, 745
- *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 4, pp. 109-111
- Student lesson on page 62 of this guide

OUR BELIEFS

- No. 23, Marriage and the Family
- No. 14, Unity in the Body of Christ
- No. 11, Growing in Christ

OBJECTIVES

The students will:

- **Know** that relationships with others can reflect God's long-suffering love.
- **Feel** determined to let God rule in their relationships with others.
- **Respond** by being loving, even to those who fight against them.

POWERPOINT

We reflect God's love when we are patient with and accepting of others.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

Absalom and his forces go up to fight against David and his men. David asks his general, Joab, to be gentle with Absalom, but Absalom is killed by Joab himself. Two runners take the news to David. The first tells him that his forces have won the battle. The second brings the news that Absalom is dead. David is shaken and as he leaves the room cries out in mourning, "O my son Absalom! . . . If only I had died instead of you" (2 Samuel 18:33).

This is a lesson about community.

The sad end to the story of David and Absalom reminds us of the deep and abiding love parents have for their children, even when those children turn away from the values in which they were raised. We begin to learn about God from our relationship with our parents. We learn about how to love others, even those in our own family, our close friends, and others in our community of faith who might make choices that hurt us.

Teacher Enrichment

In his reaction to the death of Absalom, David acted as a father, not a king. "He failed to see Absalom as a traitor and a rebel, whose actions had caused a great deal of harm to the stability and welfare of the kingdom, to say nothing of the great loss of life in the civil war (verse 7). Yet every parent will feel a good deal of sympathy with David's viewpoint" (David F. Payne, *The Daily Study Bible [Old Testament], I & II Samuel* [Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1982], p. 245).

"On the other side there is Joab, apparently cold, unforgiving and relentless, and yet presumably motivated by utter loyalty to David. The problem can be neatly posed in a single question—was the death of Absalom good news or bad news? It was good news for David's army and for the nation, and indeed it was good news for David the king; but it was desperately bad news for David the father, and that is the poignant note on which the chapter ends" (*The Daily Study Bible*, p. 245).

How would I have reacted if Absalom had been my son? How do I demonstrate patience and acceptance of others? How does my acceptance of others bless those around me?

Welcome

Welcome students at the door and direct them to their seats. Ask them how their week has been. Encourage learners to study their Sabbath School lesson regularly, and use several minutes to debrief students on the previous week's lesson.

Ask: **What was the most interesting part of the Bible story? What activity did you find the most helpful? Which activity was the most fun?** Invite students to share their experiences and/or the handiworks they created for Sabbath School during the week. (The leader should be familiar with the previous lesson to be able to direct the discussion.) This is also a good time to have students recite the power text.

Have students begin the Readiness Activity of your choice. »

Program notes

LESSON SECTION	MINUTES	ACTIVITIES	MATERIALS NEEDED
Welcome	Ongoing	Greet students at the door. Ask about their week.	
1 Readiness	10-15	*A. Long-Suffering Parents*	Bibles, paper, pencils
		B. God's Parental Advice	Bibles, paper, pencils, white/chalkboard, markers/chalk
* Prayer & Praise	15-20	See page 57. Prayer & Praise may be used at any time during the program.	songbooks, world map, pushpins, offering plate/basket
2 Bible Lesson	15-20	Introducing the Bible Story	Bibles, family photographs
		Experiencing the Story	Bibles, paper, pencils
		Exploring the Bible	Bibles, white/chalkboard, markers/chalk
3 Applying the Lesson	10-15	*Scenario*	
4 Sharing the Lesson	10-15	*Letter to God*	paper, pencils
* Closing		A. Prayer and Closing Comments	
		B. Reminder to Parents	
		C. Coming Up Next Week	

1

READINESS ACTIVITIES

Select the activity or activities that are most appropriate for your situation.

A

YOU NEED:
- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ paper
- ☐ pencils

Long-Suffering Parents

Have students write about a time their parents were forgiving and compassionate even after they (the students) disobeyed and got themselves in trouble. Ask for volunteers to share what they wrote.

Debriefing

Ask: **How did your parents' reaction make you feel? How would you have reacted if you were in their place? What does this show about how long-suffering you are?**

Let's say our power text together, Matthew 5:44, 45:

"But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous" (Matthew 5:44, 45).

Our power point for this week reminds us that

We reflect God's love when we are patient with and accepting of others.

Accommodation for students with special needs

Allow students with special needs who experience difficulty with writing to use alternative modes of expression, such as drawing or verbally sharing their answers with one of their peers.

B

YOU NEED:
- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ paper
- ☐ pencils
- ☐ white/chalkboard
- ☐ markers/chalk

God's Parental Advice

Organize the class into groups of three or four. Say: **Please read Proverbs 3 and search for references that give direction to families, including children. From the verses, make a list of three important principles of family life.**

Debriefing

Ask: **Let's hear what your groups came up with.** List the principles on the board as they share. Discuss with the entire class which of these principles they consider to be most important.

Say: **One important principle is to always be patient and forgiving.**

Let's say our power text together, Matthew 5:44, 45:

"But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous" (Matthew 5:44, 45).

Let's repeat our power point:

We reflect God's love when we are patient with and accepting of others.

Prayer & Praise

Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). If they have given you permission, share one or two special items from students' Bible study during the week. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special, warm greeting to all visitors.

Suggested Songs

"This Is My Commandment" (*He Is Our Song*, no. 116)
"God Is So Good" (*He Is Our Song*, no. 33)

Mission

YOU NEED:
- ☐ world map
- ☐ pushpins

Use *Adventist Mission for Youth and Adults* (go to www.juniorpowerpoints.org and click on MISSION) or another mission report available to you. Using a world map, have the students mark with pushpins the location of the story.

Offering

YOU NEED:
- ☐ offering plate/basket

Say: **Giving our offerings to God is like giving a gift to a beloved parent who has been generous and loving to us.** Collect the offering at this time.

Prayer

In prayer, express gratitude for all the "parental" qualities of God's goodness to us: comfort when we're hurting, encouragement when we're challenged, leadership when we're unsure, inspiration when we're weak, etc. Close with a prayer for the students' joys and sorrows, for the birthday and other special event celebrants, as well as for the visitors.

Notes

2

BIBLE LESSON

YOU NEED:
- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ family photographs

Introducing the Bible Story

Bring to class photographs of your own parents at about the time that you were a child. Show them to the class and share two or three of your fondest reminiscences of your own childhood. If no photos are available, proceed to tell about some of your happy childhood memories. Say: **Today we're going to learn about a father's long-suffering love for his son.**

Let's say our power text together, Matthew 5:44, 45:

"But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous" (Matthew 5:44, 45).

Our power point this week reminds us that

We reflect God's love when we are patient with and accepting of others.

YOU NEED:
- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ paper
- ☐ pencils

Experiencing the Story

Arrange for a captivating storyteller to tell the story of Absalom and David from 2 Samuel 16:15-18:33.

Say: **Pretend you are David and today you have heard that your son Absalom is dead. Create a journal entry describing how you feel and why.**

Then ask: **Who would like to share what you wrote?** Discuss with the class why David was so preoccupied with Absalom's safety and his grief over Absalom's death. You may wish to share the materials in the Teacher Enrichment section.

Ask: **Why do you think David wept over Absalom's death? How is this like or unlike your parents' love for you? How is this like or unlike your love for your parents? How is this like or unlike God's love for you?**

Our power point reminds us that

We reflect God's love when we are patient with and accepting of others.

Accommodation for students with special needs

Allow students who experience difficulty with this activity to receive assistance from a partner.

3

APPLYING THE LESSON

YOU NEED:
- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ white/chalkboard
- ☐ markers/chalk

Exploring the Bible

Write the following texts on the board. Divide the students into five groups, each group taking a verse to discuss it.

Say: **Let's explore some other examples from the Bible of people who were long-suffering and patient.**

1. Exodus 16:2; 17:2; 32:9-14, 31, 32; Numbers 12:3 (Moses)
2. Psalm 86:5, 15 (God)
3. Hosea 1:2, 3; 3:1-3 (Hosea)
4. Luke 15:11-32 (the lost son's father)
5. Luke 23:33, 34 (Jesus)

Ask: **Whom did you discover and how did they demonstrate long-suffering?** Allow the groups to report.

Say: **Let's say together our power text, Matthew 5:44, 45:**

"But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous" (Matthew 5:44, 45).

Ask: **How easy is it to continue to love someone when they are rebellious toward you? How can you cultivate the long-suffering trait in your character? Why would we bother? Because as we learned from the power point:**

We reflect God's love when we are patient with and accepting of others.

Scenario

Read the following scenario to the students.

Patrick has recently given his life to Jesus. He has been blessed with parents and friends that have reflected God's long-suffering love in their relationships with him. He wants God to use him in the same way through relationship with others. He is determined to let God rule as he relates to people, but there is one problem. One person fights against everything he does and makes it very difficult for Patrick to stay connected to Jesus. He comes to you for advice on what to do.

Debriefing

Ask: **What personal experience will you share with him? How can he continue to reflect God's long-suffering love to this person? How can he keep from becoming unpleasant? Where can he get the strength? Remind him that:**

We reflect God's love when we are patient with and accepting of others.

4

SHARING THE LESSON

YOU NEED:
- ☐ paper
- ☐ pencils

Letter to God

Allow time for students to share with the class if they had the opportunity during the past week to care for someone with whom they had a conflict situation in the past. Was it easy to help someone who was unkind to them in the past? Was it difficult? How did these acts of service help improve their relationships with others?

Say: **Write a short letter to God asking Him to rule in your relationships so that His long-suffering love will be reflected by you. Think of at least three ways you can reflect God's love in your relationships, and tell God about how you want to use those methods.**

Debriefing

Ask: **Would anyone like to share what they wrote? Does anyone have an especially difficult relationship they need God's help with? How are you going to reflect God's love? Who wants to thank God for being long-suffering with us in spite of the many mistakes we make?**

Say: **When we are about to give up on someone else, let's remember how God keeps loving us, even when we are rebellious toward Him. He's always willing to forgive and be reconciled to us, just as David longed for Absalom to be.**

(Note to Teachers: This does not mean that we encourage students to accept the behavior of a bully against them. If you suspect any of your students are being bullied, please go to www.juniorpowerpoints.org and click on Teacher Resources to access materials on this topic.)

Let us remember the principle we learned this week from our lesson as we say the power point together:

We reflect God's love when we are patient with and accepting of others.

Closing

Prayer and closing comments:

Say: **Dear God, we want to let others see Your never-ending love through us. Give us the strength to not give up on people but to continue being patient and accepting. Thank You. Amen.**

Reminder to parents:

Say: **Check out the student Bible study guide to find Parents' Pages for your use in family worship, or however you wish to use them to spiritually guide your children. You may listen to the podcast of the lesson online at www.juniorpowerpoints.org/podcast.php?channel=1.**

Coming up next week:

Say: **King David brings reconciliation to Israel and Judah. God wants us to be reconciled with those around us.**

Notes

Student lesson

Grieving Father, Victorious King

Do you remember a time you got lost? Did you stop and ask for directions? Most people do. But some people just don't want to follow directions. They think they know a better way. A long time ago Joab, one of King David's generals, thought he knew a better way. Was he right? What do you think?

The king of Israel was in exile. His son Absalom had rebelled and was trying to kill him and rule in his place!

Abishai, Ittai, and Joab were ready to take their men into battle. David stood by the gate watching as hundreds of men filed out. These men loved David enough to fight for him. David said to Abishai, Ittai, and Joab, "Be gentle with the young man Absalom for my sake" (2 Samuel 18:5). As he spoke, all the soldiers heard. In spite of all that had happened, David wanted his son kept alive. He hoped that someday he and Absalom would be reunited.

The battle raged. The army of David fought with courage and strength. Many of the people fought in the forest, and it was there the soldiers found Absalom riding on his mule. In his haste to get away from them, Absalom rode under a large tree, and his head was caught in the low-hanging branches, but the mule kept going. Absalom hung there helplessly while the man who saw it ran to Joab.

"I just saw Absalom hanging in an oak tree," the man cried.

"What! You saw him? Why didn't you strike him to the ground right there?" asked Joab. "Then I would have had to give you ten shekels of silver and a warrior's belt."

But the man replied, "Even if a thousand shekels were weighed out into my hands, I would not lay a hand on the king's son. In our hearing the king commanded you and Abishai and Ittai, 'Protect the young man Absalom for my sake.' And if I had put my life in jeopardy—and nothing is hidden from the king—you would have kept your distance from me."

"I'm not going to wait like this for you," Joab shouted impatiently (verses 10-14).

He walked to the tree where Absalom hung and killed him. Joab blew the trumpet, and the troops stopped fighting. The battle was over.

Then Ahimaaz [uh-HIM-ay-az], a loyal follower of King David, spoke up. "Let me run and take the news to the king."

"You are not the one to take the news today," Joab replied. "You may take the news another time, but you must not do so today, because the king's son is dead."

Joab turned to a Cushite and ordered him to carry the message.

But Ahimaaz insisted, "Come what may, I want to run."

So Joab agreed. The eager man ran so fast that he passed the Cushite (see verses 19-23).

When he arrived in the king's presence, he bowed down and announced, "Praise be to the Lord your God! He has delivered up those who lifted their hands against my lord the king."

Then David inquired, "Is the young man Absalom safe?"

Ahimaaz replied, "I saw great confusion just as Joab was about to send the king's servant and me, your servant, but I don't know what it was."

"Stand aside and wait here," asked the king.

Soon the Cushite arrived as well and said, "My lord the king, hear the good news! The Lord has vindicated you today by delivering you from the hand of all who rose up against you."

But David was not so concerned with his own victory as he was with the welfare of his son. He asked the Cushite, "Is the young man Absalom safe?"

"May the enemies of my lord the king and all who rise up to harm you be like that young man," answered the Cushite.

David realized then that Absalom was dead. "O my son Absalom!" he cried. "My son, my son Absalom! If only I had died instead of you—O Absalom, my son, my son!" (see verses 19-33).

Soon after this, David was restored to the throne. Things seemed to be better, except the place in David's heart that mourned for Absalom. That is the kind of love God has for all His children. And that's the kind of love He wants to give us for one another.

God's plan at Creation was that human beings would reflect His love in their relationships with one another. It is in the family setting that we can most fully comprehend God's love for us as we share with the other members of the family love, respect, and appreciation and receive theirs in return. Just as children respond to the love of their parents by being obedient and respectful, so we show our love for God when we obey His instructions. This is why God's Word declares: "If you love me, keep my commands" (John 14:15). It is our privilege to show God how much we love Him as we follow His will for our lives.

KEY REFERENCES

- 2 Samuel 16:15-18:33
- *Patriarchs and Prophets*, chap. 72, pp. 744, 745
- *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 4, pp. 109-111
- Our Beliefs, nos. 23, 14, 11

POWER TEXT

"But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous" (Matthew 5:44, 45).

POWER POINT

We reflect God's love when we are patient with and accepting of others.







Sabbath

DO Do the activity on page 46.

Sunday

READ Read 2 Samuel 16:15-17:4 and this week's lesson, "Grieving Father, Victorious King."

WRITE Write a psalm or a song using the words of the power text. If you wish, ask someone to help you create it. Share it with someone once you have completed it.

LEARN Begin to memorize the power text.

PRAY Thank God for His long-suffering love.

Monday

READ Read 2 Samuel 17:5-17:29.

ASK Interview your parents about their childhood experiences. Ask: What do you remember most about your parents when you were a child? Compared to today, how was life for parents different then? What did you learn from your parents that affects your life the most today?

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Thank God for your parents and the great love they show you.

Tuesday

READ Read 2 Samuel 18.

THINK What evidence is there in chapter 18 that David hoped to be able to forgive Absalom some day?

WRITE Describe a time you cared for someone who did something unkind to you. Why were you able to do this?

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God to help you love those who are unkind.

Wednesday

READ Read Luke 15:11-24.

THINK Name another father and son in the Bible who had a disagreement. Reflect on how they solved or could have solved their disagreement. Compare the stories.

LIST Watch a nature video or look in a book for information about how animals care for their young.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God to give your parents wisdom and understanding for raising you and your siblings.

Thursday

READ Read Ephesians 6:1-4.

DISCUSS Find a story that deals with the subject of parenting. Discuss with someone what this story says about how parents and their children should treat each other.

ASK Ask members of your family how this story applies or does not apply to your own family relationship.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Thank God for Christian examples of long-suffering love.

Friday

READ Read Matthew 6:26-33.

SING Find the hymn "Children of the Heavenly Father" (*The Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal,* no. 101). Play the hymn on a musical instrument or sing the words quietly. If you are not familiar with the tune, read the words.

DISCUSS What are two words in which this song describes God as your heavenly Father?

REPEAT Say the power text aloud from memory.

PRAY Thank God for being your heavenly Father, who lavishes His love on you.