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Bickering Brothers

Community
We reflect God's love in our families.

POWER TEXT

"Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ" (Ephesians 5:21, NIV).

KEY REFERENCES

- Genesis 21:1-21
- *Patriarchs and Prophets*, chap. 13, pp. 145, 146
- *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 1, pp. 168-176
- Student lesson on page 62 of this guide

OUR BELIEFS

- No. 8, The Great Controversy
- No. 7, The Nature of Humanity
- No. 23, Marriage and the Family

OBJECTIVES

The students will:

- **Know** that God longs to help them prevent conflict.
- **Feel** a desire to stay close to God's will for happy families.
- **Respond** by learning God's will for all their relationships.

POWERPOINT

God helps us have a loving attitude even in difficult circumstances.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

The birth of Isaac brings great happiness to Abraham and Sarah. But as Isaac grows, the center of attention becomes more focused on Isaac as the promised son. This causes problems between Ishmael and Isaac. The contention between Ishmael, Hagar, and Sarah grows so strong that Sarah finally asks Abraham to send Ishmael and Hagar away. Doing so is very painful for Abraham, but God tells him it is necessary in order to make peace in the home. The conflict between Isaac and Ishmael continues today in the ongoing dissension between the Jews and Arabs.

This is a lesson about community.

Abraham and Sarah's lack of trust is the root cause of the dissension in the family. If they had waited patiently for God to fulfill His promise in His way, the problems that they faced would never have occurred. God wants us to trust Him in our family relationships. If we follow His guidelines, we will not create undue conflict, and we will learn how to better manage any that we do have. Although God can work through any conflict and help us to resolve it, His ultimate desire is that we, by following His divine principles for human relations, prevent conflict from ever occurring in the first place.

Teacher Enrichment

The descendants of Ishmael were called Ishmaelites. Ishmael's 12 sons became princes and lived a nomadic life in the camps of the desert of Northern Arabia.

"The Hebrews considered themselves superior to these primitive (and usually hostile) desert kinsmen, descended from the common forefather Abraham. The Arabs on their part venerate Ishmael as their forefather, and there is a . . . legend that he and his mother Hagar are buried in the sacred Ka'aba at Mecca. It is interesting that in some Arab tribes male children are circumcised at the age of thirteen, as Ishmael was in the Bible story" (*Who's Who in the Bible* [New York: Bonanza Books, 1980], p. 172).

What conflict am I experiencing with my family members that I need to work out? How can I demonstrate a loving attitude toward others I am in conflict with?

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. Family Timeline* *B. Anticipating Baby*	colored markers, crayons, paper baby items, bag, paper, pencils
* Prayer & Praise	15-20	See page 57. Prayer & Praise may be used at any time during the program.	songbooks, world map, pushpins, offering box/basket, pens/pencils, fill-in-the-blank paper
2 Bible Lesson	15-20	Introducing the Bible Story Experiencing the Story Exploring the Bible	dominoes Bibles Bibles, white/chalkboard, markers/chalk
3 Applying the Lesson	10-15	*The Four Ts*	white/chalkboard, markers/chalk, index cards, pencils
4 Sharing the Lesson	10-15	*Managing Conflicts*	
* Closing		A. Prayer and Closing Comments B. Reminder to Parents C. Coming Up Next Week	

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READINESS ACTIVITIES

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

A

YOU NEED:

- ☐ colored markers
- ☐ crayons
- ☐ paper

Family Timeline

Distribute paper and colored markers/crayons to students. Say: **Please draw on one piece of paper a series of pictures that represent important family events in chronological order.** You may need to give the students suggestions such as their parents' marriage, their birth, brothers' or sisters' births, the death of a grandparent or pet, moving to a new house, first day of school. Ask students to share their pictures.

Debriefing

Ask: **What are some significant, life-changing events? How do they affect us? Which of these events cause some tension? What experiences represent difficult circumstances?**

Say: **Let's say together our power text, Ephesians 5:21:**

"Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ" (Ephesians 5:21, NIV).

Which of the tension-producing situations you listed might have been improved by the advice in this text? Today we are learning that

God helps us have a loving attitude even in difficult circumstances.

B

YOU NEED:

- ☐ baby items
- ☐ bag
- ☐ paper
- ☐ pencils

Anticipating Baby

In advance collect at least five baby items such as a pacifier, bottle, diaper, feeding spoon, bib, safety pin, or rattle and place them in a bag. Say: **I have some objects in this bag. Everyone will have 10 seconds to reach in and feel the objects and then make a list of the objects they felt.** At the end, show the baby items.

Debriefing

Ask: **What are some good memories you have of the arrival of a new baby? What are some bad memories? Have you ever known the arrival of a new baby to cause conflict or unhappiness in a family?** (Allow time for sharing.)

Say: **Most families anxiously await the arrival of a newborn baby. But sometimes a baby can bring conflict, as we will see in our story today.** Say: **Let's say together our power text, Ephesians 5:21:**

"Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ" (Ephesians 5:21, NIV).

Our power text is advice God has given to help us work through conflict. Today we are learning that

God helps us have a loving attitude even in difficult circumstances.

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

"The Worship Song" (*He Is Our Song*, no. 26)
"Family" (*He Is Our Song*, no. 119)
"He Has Shown Thee" (*He Is Our Song*, no. 125)
"Sandy Land" (*Praise Time*, no. 3)

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 identify and mark with pushpins the location where the mission story is taking place.

Offering

YOU NEED:
- ☐ offering box/basket

Continue to use the box covered with faces of people. Say: **Isn't it wonderful that we can come and learn about God who loves us and is with us all the time? There are many who don't have this opportunity. Our offerings go to help others learn about God.**

Prayer

YOU NEED:
- ☐ pencils/pens
- ☐ fill-in-the-blank paper

Give each student a piece of paper with the following written on it: *I cannot control the difficult things that happen to me, but I can choose to ask God for a good attitude about it! My difficult thing is _____. I want God to give me an attitude of _____.*

Ask each student to fill in the blanks and when the papers are completed and folded, ask them to join you in prayer for these requests. 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

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BIBLE LESSON

YOU NEED:
- ☐ dominoes

Introducing the Bible Story

Beforehand, stand some dominoes in a line on a flat surface in front of the class. Say: **The consequences of our actions affect those around us as well as ourselves. Look at these dominoes. This little one here is tired of standing. He wants to rest while his other friends are still standing at attention. I'll help him lie down.** Push the first domino over and watch the others fall. Say: **This week's lesson is about Abraham's family experiencing the consequences of his and Sarah's impatient actions.**

YOU NEED:
- ☐ Bibles

Experiencing the Story

Have the students read aloud together Genesis 21:1-21.

Debriefing

Ask: **Why do you think God told Abraham to send away part of His own family? How do you think Abraham felt about the difficult situation he'd caused? What can we learn from his mistakes?** (God is very patient with us, but He doesn't change the natural results of our actions.)

Exploring the Bible

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

Write the Bible references on the board. Divide the students into five groups and assign a Bible story to each group. Say: **Today we are going to look at decisions and consequences. Read the case assigned to your group. Then in your group discuss what would have been the difference if someone had asked God for help first or followed God's instructions.**

1. Genesis 3:1-12 (Adam and Eve)
2. Acts 5:1-10 (Ananias and Sapphira)
3. Mark 10:17-22 (rich young man)
4. Exodus 32:1-6, 19-28 (Israelites and the golden calf)
5. Jonah 1:1-16 (Jonah)

Ask: **What kinds of choices did these people make? How did their choices affect their lives? What part did they let God play in their decisions? What kinds of attitudes did they display?**

Say: **Even when we get into difficult situations, we can be sure that God is there to help us if we ask. He can help us ask forgiveness, if necessary, and have a loving and forgiving spirit ourselves. Let's say together our power text, Ephesians 5:21:**

"Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ" (Ephesians 5:21, NIV).

Our power point reminds us that

God helps us have a loving attitude even in difficult circumstances.

Accommodations for students with special needs

You may wish to prepare in advance handouts with the Bible references and questions if you have learners with visual impairments or with any other special needs who may benefit from it.

The Four Ts

YOU NEED:
- ☐ white/chalkboard
- ☐ markers/chalk
- ☐ index cards
- ☐ pencils

Ask students to brainstorm typical conflict situations that occur at home (e.g., fighting with brothers and sisters, disagreements with moms and dads, etc.). Write them on the board. Also, prepare a list titled "The Four Ts of Dealing With Conflict." Say: **Let's look at a four-step formula for surviving this list of conflicts:**

1. Take TIME OUT. Cool off before you say hurtful things.

2. THINK about the situation before you act or talk. How do you feel and why? How does your parent or sibling feel?

3. TALK through your feelings with the person.

4. TRUST God to help you work together to resolve the situation.

Share with the class a personal real-life conflict, then apply "The Four T's of Dealing With Conflict" to show how to effectively work through disagreements when they arise.

Give each a card and a pencil. Have them copy the four steps to resolve a conflict to take home with them. Say: **You can use these four steps to resolve conflict at home, with your friends, at school, or anywhere. As our power point reminds us:**

God helps us have a loving attitude even in difficult circumstances.

(Adapted from *Easy to Use, Fun to Do Jr. High Meetings* [Loveland, Colo.: Group Publishing, 1994], p. 109. Used by permission.)

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SHARING THE LESSON

Managing Conflicts

Invite students to share if they had the chance to write cards or to do something nice for their family members, friends, or others. Ask: **Did you have a chance to do an act of kindness for someone during the past week? What was the reaction of the person you helped?**

Take another look at the four Ts. Ask students to divide into pairs. Students in each pair will share a personal event when they have experienced a conflict situation. They will then apply the four Ts to manage those conflicts. Give them three to five minutes for this activity and then bring the group back together.

Ask: **What are some of the conflict situations you have tried to solve? What will remind you to use the four Ts as you work through conflicts in your relationships?**

Say: **Let's ask God to keep us so focused on His power that we'll have a loving attitude no matter how difficult our circumstances. Let's repeat once again the power point:**

God helps us have a loving attitude even in difficult circumstances.

Closing

Prayer and closing comments:

Pray for God's guidance and help whenever your students will face conflicts.

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: **God tests Abraham. God extends His grace to us and offers a way out.**

Notes

Student lesson

Bickering Brothers

If you watch or listen to the news on just about any night, you'll probably hear a story about the Middle East. This is not a new conflict. The people in the Middle East have been fighting for a long time—about 4,000 years, to be exact. Much of the conflict goes back to two boys.

Abraham was 100 when Isaac was born. As you can imagine, Isaac's birth brought great joy to his parents. This was the child God had promised when He first called Abraham 25 years earlier. After 10 years, when no child appeared and Abraham wondered aloud if his servant would get his inheritance, God restated His promise of this son.

After Ishmael was born, God again promised Abraham a son with Sarah. Abraham asked for God's blessing on Ishmael, his first son. But Sarah's child was the son of promise, the one with whom God would establish His covenant. The nation promised so long ago would be Isaac's descendants, not Ishmael's.

After Isaac's birth the tension in Abraham's home only increased. Abraham threw a great feast for Isaac when he was a small boy, and the huge party certainly irritated Ishmael and his mother. When Ishmael began to bother Isaac, it was more than Sarah could bear.

"Get rid of that slave woman and her son," she said to Abraham (Genesis 21:10, NIV).

The first time Sarah had complained about Hagar, Abraham had said she could do what she pleased with her servant. But now Hagar was the mother of the 14-year-old son whom he loved. This time he turned to God with his problem.

"Do not be so distressed about the boy and your slave woman," God said. "Listen to whatever Sarah tells you, because it is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned. I will make the son of the slave into a nation also, because he is your offspring" (verses 12, 13, NIV).

It was a tough thing to hear, and even tougher to do, but the next day Abraham took some food and water to Hagar and sent her and his oldest son off into the desert. Can you imagine the heartbreak he felt as he watched them go?

God cared for Ishmael and his mother. The Bible says, "God was with the boy as he grew up" (verse 20, NIV). Ishmael must have maintained some contact with Abraham, because he and Isaac buried Abraham after he died. Ishmael had 12 sons, and the traits the angel predicted in Ishmael were passed on to his sons (see Genesis 25:18).

Ishmael's descendants did grow into a nation, as did Isaac's. Today we know Ishmael's descendants as the Arabs, and Isaac's as the Jews. Much fighting in the Middle East traces back to those two boys—to the son of promise who received all his father's inheritance, and to his older half-brother who was banished from his father's home and sent to live in the desert. Both claim Abraham as their father. Both claim the country of Israel as their rightful territory. And they still live in hostility with one another.

Abraham probably never imagined that his quarreling children would still be at it 4,000 years later. But some choices have long-lasting, far-reaching results that can haunt us for years or even generations.

Abraham's decision to take a second wife went against God's plan for family happiness. We still live with the consequences of that decision.

God knows the formula for a successful home, and He asks us to follow it for our own good. He has outlined a plan for relationships that will not lead to years of heartache and regret. He wants us to be able to look back on our lives without saying, "If only I had never . . ."

KEY REFERENCES

- Genesis 21:1-21
- *Patriarchs and Prophets*, chap. 13, pp. 145, 146
- *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 1, pp. 168-176
- Our Beliefs, nos. 8, 7, 23

POWER TEXT

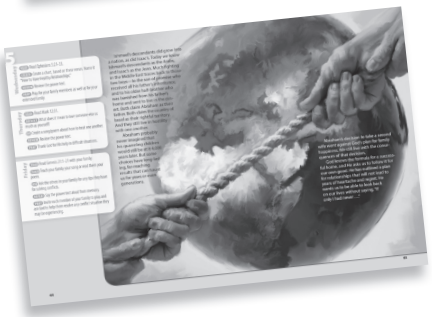
"Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ" (Ephesians 5:21, NIV).

POWER POINT

God helps us have a loving attitude even in difficult circumstances.







Sabbath

DO Do the activity on page 46.

Sunday

READ Read Genesis 21:1-7 and this week's story, "Bickering Brothers."

CREATE Cut out two paper people. Write the power text across both and place them where you will see them.

LEARN Begin to learn the power text.

PRAY Ask God to help you live peacefully with your siblings.

Monday

READ Read Genesis 21:8-13.

INTERVIEW Interview other Christians and ask them to tell you about a time God said, "Wait."

REFLECT How do you respond when God says, "Wait"?

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God to give you patience when you need it.

Tuesday

READ Read Genesis 21:14-21.

MAKE Make a card, send an e-mail, or do something nice for a brother, sister, or close friend.

TRACK Track via the news and newspapers the conflict between two nations.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Pray for the people affected by the conflict in the Middle East.

Wednesday

READ Read Ephesians 5:21-33.

CREATE Create a chart, based on these verses. Name it "How to Have Healthy Relationships."

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Pray for your family members as well as for your extended family.

Thursday

READ Read Mark 12:31.

REFLECT What does it mean to love someone else as much as yourself?

DO Create a song/poem about how to treat one another.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Thank God for His help in difficult situations.

Friday

READ Read Genesis 21:1-21 with your family.

TEACH Teach your family your song or read them your poem.

ASK Ask the others in your family for any tips they have for solving conflicts.

REPEAT Say the power text aloud from memory.

PRAY Invite each member of your family to pray and ask God to help them resolve any conflict situation they may be experiencing.