Session 10

God Makes a Covenant With Abram



Genesis 15:1-18

Worship Theme:



God knows everything.

Weaving Faith Into Life:



Children will worship God for knowing everything and trust his plans.

Session Sequence	What Children Will Do	Supplies	;
Let's Praise God! (up to 25 minutes)	•"Trust in the Lord" (Proverbs 3:5-6) (track 12) •"Holy, Holy, Holy" (track 5) •"God Is Our Help" (Psalm 33:20) (track 18) •"He Leadeth Me" (track 14) •"He Remains Faithful" (2 Timothy 2:13) (track 8)	KidsOwn Worship Kit: Songs From FaithWeaver Classroom Supplies: CD player, paper, pencils	WILL

Preschool

	Session Sequence	What Children Will Do	Supplies
2	Let's Learn the Point! (up to 25 minutes)	What's Inside? Make predictions about what's inside several boxes.	Classroom Supplies: Boxes, marker, items to be guessed, tape
		Like Stars Hear a story about Abram and God.	Classroom Supplies: 1 star sticker per child
		* Which Color? Guess the colors of M&M's candies.	Classroom Supplies: 2 M&M's per child

Elementary

Session Sequence	What Children Will Do	Supplies	
	Like the Stars Hear the story of God promising Abram that he would have descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky.	KidsOwn Worship Kit: Glow-in-the-Dark Stars Classroom Supplies: Black plastic, duct tape	
Let's Learn the Point! (up to 25 minutes)	* The Potter and the Clay Talk about making things with clay and how God is like a potter and people are the clay.	Classroom Supplies: Modeling clay	
	* "Wilma Rudolph" Watch a video about Wilma Rudolph.	KidsOwn Worship Kit: KidsOwn Worship DVD: "Wilma Rudolph" Classroom Supplies: TV, DVD player	

	Session Sequence	What Children Will Do	Supplies
(3	Let's Pray! (up to 10 minutes)	The Offering Offer their gifts to God.	KidsOwn Worship Kit: Songs From FaithWeaver: "He Remains Faithful" (2 Timothy 2:13) (track 8) Classroom Supplies: Offering bowls, CD player
		Great Questions Ask God questions in prayer.	
		Like the Stars Consider the plans God has made, and thank God for them.	KidsOwn Worship Kit: Glow-in-the-Dark Paint Pen Classroom Supplies: 1 index card per child

^{*} Starred activities can be used successfully with preschool and elementary children together.

Customize your session to fit your needs. You can separate preschoolers and elementary children for Let's Learn the Point!

Or, if you keep the children all together for the entire worship session, we suggest you choose from the starred activities.

God Makes a Covenant With Abram

Genesis 15:1-18

Abram had just returned from defeating a coalition of kings to rescue his nephew, Lot, and the Lord appeared to him in a vision. Notice that in Haran God simply spoke to Abram; later in Canaan God appeared before Abram; now God appeared in a lengthy vision. With each meeting, God's plan for Abram became a bit clearer.

Now God's first words to Abram were words of comfort. Abram had just won a big military victory; he wasn't likely afraid of any foes. What was bothering Abram, and what God addressed, was Abram's continuing lack of a son to be his heir. So in response to God's words of comfort, Abram poured out his heart. The name Abram used in his cry to God is literally "Lord of mercy." Abram was pleading with God to bless him in this one area in which he had not received God's promised blessing.

When God assured Abram by restating his promise that Abram would have his own son, Abram responded in faith. He believed God, and God declared him righteous because of his faith! Nothing that Abram could do in obedience to God could make him righteous, but his faith in God did!

To give Abram complete assurance, God made a covenant with him. In those days a covenant was a very serious thing. The cutting in half of animals described in Genesis 15:10 was to signify that the same would happen to any party breaking the covenant. Notice, however, that Abram wasn't asked to pass between the animals, which would have sealed his commitment to the covenant. Only God, symbolized by the smoking firepot and blazing torch, passed and sealed God's commitment to the covenant. Only God was required to fulfill the covenant.

Another interesting note is that each type of animal that was sacrificed was later used for a particular kind of sacrifice: the heifer for the Day of Atonement, the goat for certain festivals, the ram for a guilt offering, and the dove for purification.

God's listing of all the things that were to come for Abram's descendants accomplished at least two things: First, it confirmed that God's promise would come true because God could see the results more than 400 years in the future. Second, it assured Abram that even though his people would endure hardship, they would eventually possess the land as God had promised. God assured Abram that he had a plan for his people—a good plan that was sure to come true!

Devotion for Leaders

God, your plans are perfect. We thank you for Jesus, who revealed your plans and helped us see that when we follow your direction, you're with us at every step.

Weaving Faith Into Your Life: When have you recognized God's plans for you? It's a special feeling when God guides you. Sometimes it's scary if you aren't sure you can do what God asks you to do. But when God leads you, he helps you through. Share with your students how God has directed you and how it felt to follow him. Encourage them that God's plans are the best direction.

Why We Worship for Leaders

God's knowledge is unparalleled. There is nothing that's a mystery to him. He understands everything that is unfathomable to us. He understands calculus and physics; he knows where the edges of the universe are; he knows what there was before the universe existed. God understands not only the deep, big mysteries, but also the smallest detail. He knows the thoughts and motivations of people; he knows about each hurt and joy we experience; he knows when a swallow falls from the sky. Such a God is to be trusted and worshipped.

Easy Prep for Leaders

Like the Stars—If you took down the Glow-in-the-Dark Stars from Session 2, you'll need to mount them on the ceiling of your meeting area again.

"Wilma Rudolph"—Set up a TV and DVD player. Prepare the KidsOwn Worship DVD to play the clip titled "Wilma Rudolph" (8). You'll want to watch it at least once before the children arrive.

Preschool Activities—Refer to the preschool pages for preparations.

Web Help—Get bonus leader tips and ideas at kidsownworship.com.





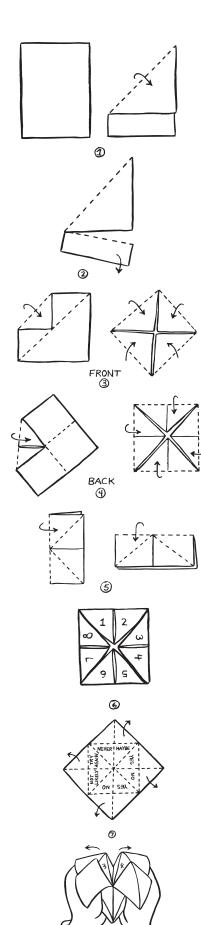
Let's Praise God!

Play *Songs From FaithWeaver, Fall 2011* as children arrive. Designate greeters to welcome children, particularly any newcomers, at the entrance to the room.

Set out pencils and paper. As children enter the room, invite them to make these folded paper toys. Many children will know these by the name "fortunetellers," but they're also called cootie-catchers in some parts of the country. Most children will know how to make these, but you can use the following instructions to help children who don't know how to make them.

- Step 1: Take one corner of the paper, and fold it over to the opposite edge of the paper.
- Step 2: Crease the small rectangular piece that sticks out beyond the folded part of the paper, and tear it off.
- Step 3: Unfold the paper so it lies flat—it should form a square. Fold in each corner to the center.
 - Step 4: Turn the paper over, and fold in each corner to the center again.
- Step 5: Fold the small square in half and crease. Then unfold it, fold it in half in the other direction, and crease. Then unfold it again.
 - Step 6: Number each of the small triangles (1 through 8).
- Step 7: Unfold the triangles. On each triangle of the square, write one of these words: "yes," "no," "not likely," "try again," "never," "maybe," "yes," and "no."





Step 8: Refold the triangles. Then fold the square in half. Insert your thumb and index finger into the outer triangles, and gently pull the cootie-catcher out. By moving your thumbs and fingers out and in, you can make the cootie-catcher move to reveal the numbers in the center triangles.

When everyone has arrived and made a paper toy, welcome the children.

- Say As you all came in to worship today, you made paper toys that some people call fortunetellers and other people call cootie-catchers.
- Have any of you ever made these before? What do you use them for? (Yes, they tell how something's going to turn out; yes, they're just for fun; no, but they look like fun.)
- Today, we're going to call them future-guessers. Let's see how they work in guessing what's in our future today. Get with a partner, and try to find out what will happen after worship today. One partner will work a future-guesser, and the other will ask questions that the future-guesser will answer. If you're the one asking questions, start by saying a number between 1 and 10. Your partner will move the future-guesser in and out that many times. Then say a color. Your partner will spell that color as he or she moves the future-guesser in and out for each letter. Then ask a "yes or no" question—"Will we eat dinner at Taco Bell today?" for example—and pick a number between 1 and 8. Your partner will look under that number, and that's what the answer will be. Then switch roles and ask the future-guesser another question.

Give the children a couple of minutes to try to tell the future with their future-guessers. Then have the children put the future-guessers aside.

- What did the future-guessers tell you would happen after worship today? (I would play my PlayStation; my brother would play football with me; my sister would help me with homework.)
 - Do you think the future-guessers gave you reliable information about the future? Why or why not? (No, my parents never let me play PlayStation after church; yes, my sister's really nice; yes, they're usually right.)
 - Do you think the future-guessers really know what's going to happen? (No, they're just lucky; no, they're not smart enough.)
 - Would you trust the future-guessers if you needed to make a big decision? Why or why not? (No, they'd lead me the wrong way; yes, they've been right before; no, you have to think and pray about big decisions.)
- It might be fun if we could predict what was going to happen in the future, and sometimes it'd be really great if we could use something like a future-guesser to help us make really tough decisions. But it's not a good idea for us to trust a future-guesser—it's really just a piece of paper without any special

powers. The Bible tells us that it's silly for us to trust in things like this that are man-made because God himself is ready to help us and guide us. And God knows everything! It's much better to trust the One who knows everything that ever happened in the past and knows everything that will ever happen in the future. Today we're worshipping God because he knows everything. **Let's sing about trusting in an all-knowing God.** All song lyrics are at the back of this book.

Sing "Trust in the Lord" (Proverbs 3:5-6).



Say God is the only one in the whole world—in the whole universe—who knows everything. That is one of the reasons we call him holy. Holy means clean and right, but it also means "one of a kind." God is the one-of-a-kind God who knows everything. We've learned a song called, "Holy, Holy, Holy." It talks about God's holiness, his mercy, and his strength or might. The fact that God knows everything makes him holy, or one-of-akind. Let's think about that while we sing "Holy, Holy, Holy."

Sing "Holy, Holy, Holy."



Before the next song, explain the difference between the past, the present, and the future. Use motions in each explanation. For "future," reach as far in front of you as you can with your hand. For "present" or "now," either point down or place your hands with your palms down in front of you to denote this current time. For "past," reach as far behind you as you can with your hand. Let the children mimic your motions. Then list events, and have children motion to indicate whether the event happened in the past, is happening now, or will happen in the future. After naming each event, ask if God knows or knew about that event. Here are some examples:

- The conversation we are having right now
- Someday when you go to high school
- Your supper last night
- School next year
- · When Jesus lived on earth
- Yesterday
- Tomorrow



Say God knows about everything in the past, everything that is happening now, and everything that will happen. That's good news, but here is the best news: This great and mighty and holy God, who knows everything and can do everything, has plans for us. Jeremiah 29:11 says, "'For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." Isn't it great to know that a God who knows everything and can do everything is on our side and wants the best for us? Wow! Let's sing about God's power, and let's worship him for caring about our past, our present, and our future.

Sing "God Is Our Help" (Psalm 33:20).



Say There is no one better to help us find our way in life than God, who can do anything and knows everything that is going to happen and cares about our lives. God even has a plan for our lives. We still get to make choices, but we can trust God to lead us and help us make decisions. Do you remember the song we learned called "He Leadeth Me"? This is a song about trusting God to help us know his plan for our lives. One line says, "Whate'er I do, where'er I be, still 'tis God's hand that leadeth me." That's an older way of saying, "Whatever happens or wherever I am, God will lead me." God will help us know what to do and will help us not to miss the good things he has planned for us.

Sing "He Leadeth Me."



Say It's hard for us to really understand what it means to say that God knows everything. Let's do an activity that'll help us understand what it means. There's a verse in the Bible that says God even knows how many hairs grow on our heads. Get with the same partner you had at the beginning of our worship time, carefully hold a small section of

Give kids a few minutes to do this. Then get everyone's attention.

your friend's hair, and count each strand.

Now let's see how well we remember how many strands of hair some people in our group have.

Invite several kids to tell how many strands of hair their partners counted. Make sure you invite enough children that it will be hard for kids to remember the exact numbers. After they've told how many strands of hair were counted, ask the rest of the group questions such as, "How many hairs did Jordan's partner count on his head?" "How many hairs did Madison's partner count?"

- AS Why did we have such a hard time remembering how many hairs these people have? (There were a lot of numbers; there's no way to know how many hairs everyone has.)
 - How do you think God can remember all the things he knows? (God knows everything; God is so amazing he can remember all that.)

Say God knows exactly how many hairs you have on your head. And when you brush your hair every morning and some of your hair comes out, God knows the new number of hairs you have on your head. Plus God knows all the baseball statistics, how much water is in all the oceans, and exactly what will happen to you every day of your life. Isn't that incredible? We serve an amazing God. And what's even better is that God is faithful to us. He faithfully cares for us, faithfully loves us, and faithfully plans what's best for us. Let's sing "He Remains Faithful" (2 Timothy 2:13).

Sing "He Remains Faithful" (2 Timothy 2:13).



- Say Our faithful God, who knows everything that's ever happened or ever will happen, is worthy of our praise. Let's praise God in prayer.
- **Pray** God, we praise you with our hands, with our feet, and with our voices because you are great and mighty. You know everything, and you're faithful to us. We know we can trust you to take care of us. Help us now to learn more about you. In Jesus' name, amen.

Let's Learn the Point!

Preschool Activities, pages 133-134

At this time, have the preschool leader invite the preschoolers to go to their own room for this section of activities. Tear out the Preschool Activities page, and give it to the preschool leader. Have the preschool leader bring the preschoolers back to participate in Let's Pray! with the older children. If you prefer to keep all the children together, do the starred (*) activities. They will work well with both elementary and preschool children.

Elementary Activities

Like the Stars

Sav There was a man in the Bible who found out that he could trust God's knowledge. This man's name was Abram. He was married to Sarai. When Abram was 75 years old, God promised that he would give land to Abram's descendants, but Abram didn't have any children. Still, Abram trusted God.

> Some time later, God appeared to Abram during the night. This time, God said to Abram, "I am your protection, and I will give you a great reward." But Abram was disappointed because he still didn't have the children God had promised him. He said, "But God, what good will it do for you to give me a reward? I have no children. When I die, there will be no one to inherit your good gift."

Then God said to Abram, "Abram, you really will have a child, a son who will inherit all you have. Come outside. I have something to show you."

Abram went outside, and God said to him, "Abram, look up into the nighttime sky." Turn off the lights so the Glow-in-the-Dark Stars on the ceiling glow.

God said, "Abram, there are so many stars in the nighttime sky that it's impossible for you to count them all. I promise that you'll have a child. And your descendants—grandchildren



and great-grandchildren—will be so many that they'll be as numerous as the stars in the nighttime sky."

When Abram heard this, he believed God. Abram knew that God knows everything. Abram knew that God could be trusted, so Abram put his faith in God. And what God said really was true. In time, Abram did have a son. And that son grew up and had children. After many years, Abram's descendants were as numerous as the stars in the sky. God could tell Abram the truth about what would happened in the future because God knows everything that has happened and everything that ever will happen.

* The Potter and the Clay

it. Ready? Here we go!

Have kids form discussion groups of three to four. If each group will have a teenage or adult helper, you can have kids form groups of five to six. Give each group a hunk of modeling clay or Play-Doh.

Say You have two minutes to think of all the different things you could make with this modeling clay. Pass the clay around your group. As each person holds the clay, he or she will mention something you could make out of the clay. Think up all kinds of ordinary things and wild and crazy things you could make with

Give the children two minutes to brainstorm. If time permits and you have enough clay, let kids mold some of their ideas and share them with the group.

- How many ideas did your group come up with? (Only a few, but they were good ones; we had a lot of ideas.)
 - What were some of the ordinary ideas you had? (A house; people; cubes; jewelry.)
 - What were some of the wild and crazy ideas you had? (Aliens; a video game system.)
- Say Each group had a hunk of clay that was pretty much the same as every other group's clay. And every group came up with a ton of really different ideas about what could be made from the clay. The Bible talks about clay and what it can become. The Bible says we are like clay and that God is like the potter—the one who makes things with the clay.
- ASK What do you think it means that God is the potter and we are the clay? (God makes us into something beautiful; God forms us into who we are.)
 - What do you think will happen when we ask God each day to mold us like clay? (We'll follow God; God's plans will come true in our lives.)

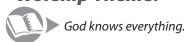
(continued on page 135)

God Makes a Covenant With Abram

Session 1

Genesis 15:1-18

Worship Theme:



Easy Prep for Leaders

What's Inside?—You'll need a marker and several boxes or bags with various items inside. For example, you might put a natural item such as pine cones inside one box and small, metal toy cars in another. Try to provide at least five different boxes, and make sure the items inside will make different sounds when the boxes are shaken. Tape the boxes shut so the children can't peek inside.

Using Theo

Consider using Theophilus the FaithRetriever puppet today in these ways:

- · Have Theo lead the preschoolers from the main worship area to the preschool room.
- Have Theo predict what's inside the boxes during the "What's Inside?" activity.



• See the KidsOwn Worship Kit for a puppet skit written for today's worship session.

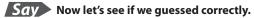
What's Inside?

Have the children sit in a circle. Put the boxes in the center of the circle.

- Say I wonder what's in these boxes. Let's see if we can figure out what's inside without looking inside
- Ask What do you think might be inside these boxes?
 - · What can we do to help us figure out what's inside these boxes?

If the children don't mention shaking the boxes, you can suggest it. Other ideas are to feel how heavy they are or smell them. Have the children take turns investigating the boxes. As the children make predictions about what's inside, write their ideas on the boxes or bags.

After a few minutes,



Remove the tape, and look inside each box.

• Did any of us guess correctly?

· Why do you think it was so tough to know what was inside the boxes?

Say We had lots of ideas about what might be in the boxes, but none of us knew for sure until we opened them up and saw what was inside. But there is someone who knew from the very beginning what was in these boxes. Even though

the boxes were closed up tight, God knew what was inside because God knows everything. Let's listen to a story about a time God told a man what would happen to him in the future.

Like Stars



Say A long, long time ago, there was a man named Abram. He was married to Sarai. They were very, very old. But they were also very sad because they didn't have any children. For many years, they'd wished for a baby, but they still didn't have one.

> One day God appeared to Abram. God said, "Abram, I will protect you, and I will give you a great reward."

But Abram was so sad about not having any children that he said, "God, it doesn't matter what you give me. If I had a child, I could pass on your gifts to him. Since I have no children, though, I don't want anything."

Then God said to Abram, "But Abram, you will have a child! In fact, I have something to show you. Come outside."

So God and Abram went outside, and God told Abram to look up into the nighttime sky.

• What do you see in the sky at night?

Say God said to Abram, "Look at the heavens and count the stars. You'll have so many children that they'll be like the stars in the sky—so many that it will be hard to count them."

Preschool Activities

Like Stars (continued)



Say Abram believed what God told him. Abram knew that God knew things that he didn't know. And Abram trusted God. Soon Abram had a son whom he named Isaac. Put a star sticker on the forehead of a preschool boy. Isaac was the first star. When Isaac grew up, he had children. Put star stickers on the foreheads of a couple other

children. When those children grew up, they had more children. Put star stickers on more children. And when those children grew up, they had even more children. Put star stickers on everyone else. What God had said was true; Abram had so many grandchildren that they were like the stars in the sky. God had known what was going to happen!

Tell the children to explain the star stickers to their families when they get home.

* Which Color?

Have the children sit in a circle.



Say Let's play a game and try to guess which color of M&M's candies we're going to get. You'll close your eyes and say a color. I'll put an M&M's candy in your hand, and we'll see if you guessed correctly.



Be aware that some children have food allergies that can be dangerous. Know your children, and consult with parents about allergies their children may have. Also be sure to read food labels carefully as hidden ingredients can cause allergy-related problems.

Go around the circle, and have children take turns closing their eyes and saying colors. Then put an M&M's candy in the child's hand. If a child guesses correctly, have everyone say, "You guessed right this time, but God knows everything all the time." If the child guesses incorrectly say, "You guessed wrong this time, but God knows everything all the time."

Play until each child has had at least two turns.

- Why should we trust God's plans for us? (He knows everything about us; he knows what's best for us.)
- What plans do you think the potter—God—has made for you? (I'll bring people closer to him; I'll have a family and a great job when I grow up.)

After the small groups have discussed these questions, encourage volunteers to share their insights with the rest of the group.

Say God fashioned or made each one of you with his marvelous hands. He made us to be part of his plan. God has a purpose for you. He made you for a reason. We can know that following God's plan for us is the best thing we can do because God knows everything. Because God knows everything, the plans he makes for us are wise and good.

* "Wilma Rudolph"

Have children stay in their discussion groups.

Say In our Bible story today, God told Abram what was going to happen to him in the future. Wouldn't it be great to know what's going to happen in the future? But only God knows everything. God told Abram that he would have a son and would have descendants—grandchildren and great-grandchildren—as numerous as the stars in the sky. Each one of those people was a part of God's plan. That means you are part of God's plan too. Nobody is a mistake! God has a plan for everyone who will trust him. God even had a plan for his own Son, Jesus. When Jesus was born, God knew he'd grow up to teach us how to love others and to save everyone who believes in him from their sins. Not only was that God's plan for Jesus, but that was God's plan for the whole world. Anyone who has a friendship with Jesus is following God's plan of eternal life.

> Each one of us is important to God's plan. Let's watch another video about a woman named Wilma Rudolph.

Show the KidsOwn Worship DVD clip titled "Wilma Rudolph" (10). Then have the groups discuss these questions:

- **Ask** Why was Wilma's life so amazing? (She had a lot against her, but ended up being a great runner; she worked hard toward her dreams.)
 - What does Wilma's experience teach you to think about the future? (We don't know what God has planned for us, but it's something great; we should follow God's plans no matter what.)
 - What does Wilma's experience teach you about God's plans and knowledge? (God knows everything about us; God has great plans for us.)



Say None of us knows for sure what will happen to us in the future. Wilma Rudolph had a rough beginning to her life; she was sick and couldn't even walk! But God knew she would overcome those problems and be an Olympic star. Abram and Sarai were old, way too old to have children. But God knew they would have a son. In fact, God was the one who planned for them to have a son. No one could have predicted that these things would happen. But God knew they would happen because God knows absolutely everything.

> The Bible tells us that God has made great plans for us just as he made great plans for Wilma Rudolph and for Abram. Not all of us will be Olympic athletes, and things won't always go well for us. Sometimes bad things happen, and sometimes life is really tough. But God wants us to trust him and follow his plans because he knows everything and knows how things will turn out. God is worthy of our worship because he knows everything. Let's thank God for knowing everything.





The Offering

Sav God really does know everything! Because God knows everything, we can trust the plans he makes for our lives just as Abram trusted that God would give him descendants as numerous as the stars. God is faithful to us, too. God faithfully uses his knowledge to work in our behalf. While we give our gifts to God today, we're going to listen to the song "He Remains Faithful" (2 Timothy 2:13). While you're listening, think about how good it is to have a God who knows everything and is faithful to us.

Have the volunteers take the offering. Play "He Remains Faithful" (2 Timothy 2:13).



Great Ouestions

Say Because God knows everything, he knows how everything works and knows the answers to every question. Do you wonder about things that you don't quite understand? God has the answers! He understands it all because he created it all. Let's think of some tough questions we'd like to know the answers to. If you could ask God anything, what would you want to know? I'll give you a couple of minutes to think. Then we're going to use your questions in a special prayer.

Give the children a couple of minutes to think of questions they'd like to ask God.

Say For our prayer, you'll all have a turn to ask God a question. After each question, we'll all say, "We don't know all the answers, but God, we praise you and trust you because you know everything."

If you have more than 20 children, have them form two groups for this prayer.

Give every child a turn to ask God a question. After each question, lead the entire group in saying, "We don't know all the answers, but God, we praise you and trust you because you know everything."

Like the Stars

Hand out index cards, one to each child. Put the Glow-in-the-Dark Paint Pen from the KidsOwn Worship Kit on a table at the front of the room.

Say Take a moment to think and pray about the plans that God might have for you. Think of at least three or four. Then, quietly and prayerfully come to the front of the room and put three or four dots of this glow-in-the-dark paint on your index card. Put one dot on your card for every plan you think of. The dots will be like the stars in the sky that God showed to Abram.

> While you're painting the dots on your card, thank God for knowing everything and for making good plans for you. Then return to your seat quietly, and pray silently until everyone is finished.

When all the children have returned to their seats, close in prayer, thanking God for his knowledge, wisdom, and plans. If you'd like, ask for one of the children to volunteer to lead the group in a closing prayer.

Encourage kids to look at the "stars" on their index cards at night before they go to sleep and to thank God for knowing everything about us and making good plans for us.

