

The Israelites Build the Tabernacle

Exodus 35:4–36:38



Worship Theme:



God deserves our excellent service.

Weaving Faith Into Life:



Children will worship God by offering their excellent service.

Session Sequence	What Children Will Do	Supplies
1 Let's Praise God! <i>(up to 25 minutes)</i>	Sing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "He Is the Light" • "Doxology" • "Praise Him" • "His Great Love" (Romans 5:8) • "Trust and Obey" • "Love the Lord" (Deuteronomy 6:4-9) 	KidsOwn Worship Kit: <i>KidsOwn Worship DVD</i> Classroom Supplies: Video equipment

Preschool

Session Sequence	What Children Will Do	Supplies
2 Let's Learn the Point! <i>(up to 25 minutes)</i>	* Good Work! Work together to build with blocks as they explore the Bible story.	Classroom Supplies: Blocks, newspaper
	Are You Willing? Play a game about being willing to use our talents.	
	What's It Used For? Practice using talents to serve God.	Classroom Supplies: Several brooms, 1 paper cup per child, pitcher of water

Session Sequence	What Children Will Do	Supplies
2 Let's Learn the Point! <i>(up to 25 minutes)</i>	* My Talents List abilities, and discuss how they can be used to serve God.	Classroom Supplies: 1 index card and pencil per child
	* Running the Race Pretend to prepare for a race, and compare that to serving God.	
	Design a Church Design a church, and talk about the Bible story.	Classroom Supplies: Paper, pencils

Session Sequence	What Children Will Do	Supplies
3 Let's Pray! <i>(up to 10 minutes)</i>	The Offering Give their gifts to God for his service.	KidsOwn Worship Kit: <i>KidsOwn Worship DVD</i> Classroom Supplies: Video equipment, offering bowls, cards from "My Talents," tape
	You Deserve It! Tell God that he deserves their excellent service.	
	Prayer Partners Pray with a partner asking God to help them use their gifts for him.	

* 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 Section 2. Or, if you keep the children all together for the entire worship session, we suggest you choose from the starred activities.

The Israelites Build the Tabernacle

Exodus 35:4–36:38

It was time for the Israelites to build a portable dwelling place for the worship of God. When Moses asked for contributions, the people gave generously. Apparently the events of the previous months inspired them to give to God. They may have realized how they had wronged God in worshipping the golden calf and wanted to do what they could to make amends for the damage done. They gave so generously that eventually they had to be told to stop bringing more materials (Exodus 36:6-7)!

One might wonder where these former slaves got gold and fine cloth to donate to the tabernacle. The answer lies in the generosity of the Egyptians as the Israelites were escaping. God told the Hebrews to ask for things from the Egyptians; the Egyptians responded with silver, gold, and clothing (Exodus 12:35-36).

Not only did the Hebrews give *things*, but they gave time and talents as well. This story singles out Bezalel and Oholiab as the leaders of the workers, and also mentions women skilled in spinning goat hair (Exodus 35:26) and other skilled and willing people (Exodus 36:2).

Notice the detailed instructions provided by God and the way the people followed God's plan meticulously. Crafting the sanctuary required willingness to give, willingness to work, and willingness to obey. And all the people did what they were asked.

What can we learn from this story? Serving God involves all kinds of different tasks and abilities. If you can't build a structure, maybe you can spin cloth. If you can't sing, maybe

you can tell a co-worker about Jesus. Every one of us has God-given abilities and spiritual gifts. God wants us to use what he's given us to serve and honor him in whatever ways we can. God can use anyone to serve him and to further his kingdom here on earth. The only thing stopping our service to him is our unwillingness to serve.

Devotion for Leaders

Our relationship with Jesus gives us daily opportunities to serve him. He is our friend, our Creator, and our Savior.

Weaving Faith Into Your Life: Service is a choice we make on a daily basis. But how often do you analyze your motives for serving? Wrong motives can rob us of blessings and limit our effectiveness in service. Look at the following list, and objectively respond to these statements:

- I serve to please...
- I find my identity in...
- I must prove myself by...
- I need to be depended on for...

For the Christian, service comes out of thankfulness for salvation and devotion to honor our Creator. If we are not serving for those reasons, perhaps we are really self-serving.

Why We Worship for Leaders

In Exodus 25, God commanded the people to make a sanctuary for him so that he might dwell among the people. The instructions God gives in Exodus 25 and in Exodus 35 are very specific and very detailed. God told the people exactly what materials to give for the building of the Tabernacle. God even chose who would be in charge of the design and who would train the workers. It was important to God that the Tabernacle be well made and beautiful.

We do well when we tell children that they don't need to be the best at something for God to be pleased with them. But we also do well when we explain to them that when we serve God, we should do our *best*. We serve the Creator who took care to create atoms as well as galaxies. God is worthy of our best work. Take the opportunity today to help children learn to worship God by offering him their excellent service.

Easy Prep for Leaders

Let's Praise God!—Make sure your video equipment is ready. Watch "Excellent Service" at least once before the worship session.

Preschool Activities—Refer to the preschool pages for preparations.

1 Let's Praise God!

Play the music videos on the *KidsOwn Worship DVD* as children arrive. Ask some children to stand at the door and welcome everyone who comes into the room. Ask these greeters to smile, shake hands, and say, "Welcome!"

Say **Hello, everyone! Welcome to children's church. Every time we gather as a church, our goal is to give God glory, honor, and praise. Let's begin our time of worship by singing "He Is the Light."**

 Sing "He Is the Light."

Say **Today we'll be learning that one way to worship God is by serving him. God deserves our excellent service. Let's watch a video to help us know what that means.**

 Show the "Excellent Service" video. The video shows a person at a restaurant who gets less than excellent service. Then ask the following questions. If your children are in small groups, have them answer the questions with their small-group leader.

- Ask** • **What did you think about the way the server did her job?** (She was rude; she did a bad job; it was gross.)
- **How do you think this server would have worked if God were the one she was serving?** (Probably the same; she would have done much better.)
- **Why does God deserve excellent service from us?** (He created us to serve him; he deserves the best at everything we do; God has done so much for us, we should show our appreciation by serving him well.)
- **We don't serve God the same way a restaurant server serves diners. What do we do to serve God excellently?** (We worship him; we help others grow closer to him; we love others the way he does; we use the gifts he gives us to serve him.)

Say We each have gifts and abilities. God wants us to be willing to use our gifts and abilities for his glory. God calls all of us to praise him. We can do that by using our gifts and abilities to serve him with excellence. Let's praise God right now with this song that calls all creatures to praise.

 Sing the "Doxology."

Say Now let's sing "Praise Him." As you sing this song, think about all the reasons it's important to praise God.

 Sing "Praise Him."

Ask • **Why is it important to praise God?** (God deserves it; it's how we show our appreciation for all God has done for us.)

Say God does so many good things for us that it's natural to want to give him love and praise. One of the things we praise God for is the way he loves us. Let's sing about God's great love for us.

 Sing "His Great Love" (Romans 5:8).

Say That was great singing. The Bible tells us that God has prepared good works for us to do.

Ask • **What kinds of good works do you think God has prepared for you to do?** (Helping others know Jesus; sharing God's love with others; following God.)

Say God gives each person special abilities so that we'll each be perfectly prepared to do the things God wants us to do. Our job is to obey God and to do those good works as excellently as possible. Let's worship God now by telling him we want to obey him and do the good works he has prepared for us to do.

 Sing "Trust and Obey."

Say There are many ways to worship God. One way is to come to church and sing fun worship songs. Another way is to use your gifts and abilities for God.

The song we just sang told us all about that. It said, "While we do his good will, he abides with us still, and with all who will trust and obey." That means when we trust and obey God by doing his will, we can know that he is with us.

We worship and obey him with everything we have, with everything we are. We can use our *voices* to praise God, and we can use our *skills* to serve God.

The Bible says, "Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men" (Ephesians 6:7). When we serve God with our whole heart, we're showing God how much we love him. Stand up if you want to serve God with your whole heart. Let's sing a song to tell God that we want to love him with our whole heart, soul, and strength, the way the Bible says to.

 Sing "Love the Lord" (Deuteronomy 6:4-9).

Say Raise your hand if you can think of a way to serve God with your whole heart. Pause and allow children to give answers.

Those are great answers. Whenever we serve God wholeheartedly, we are serving him with excellence. And anytime we serve God with excellence, we're showing him how important we think he is. Let's pray.

Pray God, we worship you with our whole life. Please help us to remember that we should use our gifts for you because you deserve our excellent service. In Jesus' name, amen.

2 Let's Learn the Point!

Preschool Activities, pages 89-90

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

* My Talents

Say In a moment, I'm going to give each of you one index card and a pencil. I want you to think very carefully about the things you like to do and the things you're good at. The Bible tells us that God gives each of us special gifts and abilities, so I know you'll

be able to think of several things you do well. On your index card, write your name, and then list things that you do well or things that you really like to do.

Hand out pencils and an index card per child. Have adult or teenage helpers circulate among the children and help them come up with 10 things to write on cards. For example, children may list playing an instrument, drawing, playing soccer, or acting. Give the children two or three minutes to work.

Say Now that you have 10 things written down, put a star next to the one you're the best at. Then put a smiley face next to the one that is your favorite thing to do. Give the children a moment to do this.

Now find a partner to talk about your list with. Talk about how you could use each activity or skill to serve God. Give the children two or three minutes to share with each other. Then have volunteers share their ideas with the entire group.

God was very careful when he created each one of us. God made sure that he gave each of us a unique set of gifts and talents to use to serve him. Now let's learn about how we can use our gifts to serve God with excellence.

** Running the Race*

Lead kids in stretches they'd do to prepare for a race. This could include touching their toes, lunges, running in place, or holding one leg up.

After several minutes of stretching, have the children get in groups of four or five to discuss these questions.

- Ask**
- **What do athletes do to prepare for a race?** (Stretch; run every day; practice a lot.)
 - **Why do you think they work so hard?** (They want to win; so they can do well; to be good at what they do.)
 - **How is training for a race like serving God with excellence?** (We need to practice; we need to work hard at it; we should always do our best.)
 - **How is it different?** (Training for a race is just practice for one event, but serving God with excellence is like always being in a race; serving God with excellence takes different kinds of skills, but training for a race takes just physical skill.)

Say Every day people work hard at many different things. Kids work hard at school, and they work hard at sports. Athletes work hard to be good athletes. Musicians work hard to be excellent musicians. It's good to work hard to be excellent at the things we do. But as Christians we have an extra reason to strive for excellence. We know that we can serve God with the things that we do. And we know that God deserves excellent service.

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The Israelites Build the Tabernacle

Session 7

Exodus 35:4–36:38

Worship Theme:



God deserves our excellent service.

Easy Prep for Leaders

Good Work!—Get some blocks out and put them in a messy pile in the middle of the room. Make sure there is at least one block per child in your class. Lay out some newspaper in a different location.

What's It Used For?—Gather several brooms (the more the better, but one is fine), paper cups, and a pitcher of water.

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 try to play the “Are You Willing?” game and say that he is willing to share his bones with others.
- See the KidsOwn Worship Kit for a puppet skit written for today’s worship session.



* Good Work!

Gather the children around the newspaper.

Say Let’s talk about jobs.

Ask • What jobs do you do at your house?

• If I say, “[name of a child], you did an excellent job making your bed,” what do I mean?

Say That’s right. I mean that [child’s name] did a super fantastic job at making [his or her] bed. If you did an excellent job making your bed, you probably worked hard to make sure all the wrinkles were smoothed out so everything was neat and tidy.

It makes us feel good to do excellent work. Sometimes the work we do is for God—we call that service. God deserves our excellent service.

Let’s pretend it’s our job to build a building for God. But we’ve got some hard work to do! The blocks are a big mess! Everybody needs to help clean up the mess before we can build.

Encourage the children to pick up one or two blocks and carry them to the newspaper. Have the children work together to build a building with their blocks.

While the children are working, ask the following questions:

Ask • What do you work hard at?

• Do you like working hard?

• What does it feel like to know that you’re doing excellent work?

• Why is it a good thing to work hard?

After the children have built the building,

Say You’ve all done an excellent job making this building! You’re all good builders.

The Bible tells of a time when God asked the Israelites to build a tabernacle. A tabernacle is like a church, but it’s also a tent that can be moved from place to place easily.

God asked the people to bring the materials to build the Tabernacle.

Ask • What do you think they used to build the Tabernacle?

Say The people brought gifts of cloth, leather, wood, gold, and precious stones to build the Tabernacle.

God also had a special person in mind to be in charge of building the Tabernacle. God chose Bezalel to be in charge. God gave Bezalel special talents so that he would make the Tabernacle a special and beautiful place for the people to worship God.

Bezalel taught the people how to do excellent work. And together, Bezalel and the other workers worked hard and created a beautiful Tabernacle for God.

We’ve got to work hard one more time to clean up our building!

Have the children take blocks from the building and stack them neatly on a shelf.

Are You Willing?

Say God deserves our excellent service. Bezalel and the Israelites served God with excellence. We can, too. I think that Bezalel and the Israelites were happy and willing to serve God with their building skills.

We need to be *willing* to use our gifts and talents for God. Let's play a game to help us remember to be willing to serve God. It's called Are You Willing?

Here's how we play the game. I am the leader. I

will call on each of you by name and ask, "Are you willing?" You say, "Yes, I am. Yes, I am." Then I say, "Good!" I give you a job to do, and you do it. Ready? Here we go!

Play the game, assigning various types of service. For example, you might have a child sing a song or pretend to dust a table. Make sure that each child is called on at least once.

Ask • What kinds of things do you think God wants you to do?

• Are you willing to serve God?

Say Let's serve God with excellence right now.

What's It Used For?

Hold up a broom.

Ask • What is this used for?

Say That's right! It's used for sweeping.

Ask • How can we use a broom to serve God?

Say Let's sweep up our room and give this service to God. God is pleased when we serve him. Let's work hard and do an excellent job for God.

If you don't have many brooms, have the other children wipe off tables or straighten clutter.

Then hold up a cup.

Ask • What is this used for?

Say That's right. We use cups to drink from.

Ask • Can you think of a way to serve God with a cup?

Say God is pleased when we serve others. When we serve others, we're really serving God. Let's serve God by getting cold drinks for each other.

Pour water into each cup, and allow the children to give their cups of water to another child.

Say We all have gifts and talents. Gifts and talents are things that we can do well.

Ask • What are some things you're good at?

• How can you serve God with the things you're good at?

Say God has given us all gifts and talents. We can serve God with our gifts. Just as the people of God used their gifts to build the tabernacle, we use our gifts for God. We use our gifts for God because he *deserves* them! God gave us our gifts because he wants us to use them for him.

(continued from page 88)

Design a Church

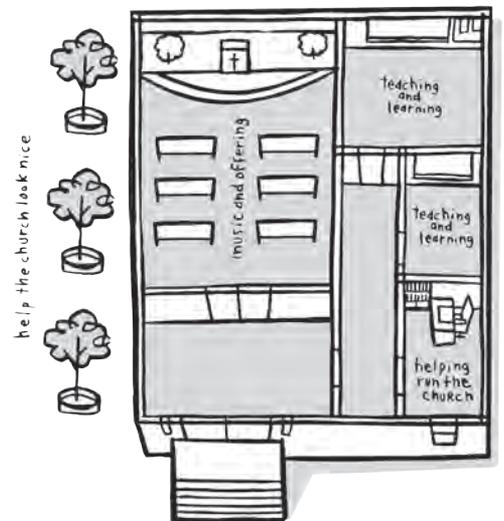
Say Today we've been talking about serving God with excellence. Serving God with excellence is really an act of worship—it's a way to tell God that we think he's important. Now I want each of you to become an architect. I'm going to hand out paper and pencils. I want you to design a church building. Church buildings give us a place to serve God and to worship God. So, as you're designing your church, think about all the ways we can serve God—we've talked about so many today. Design your church with space to serve God in all the ways we've mentioned.

Pass out paper and pencils. You may also want to provide rulers and compasses for children's use. Give children 5 to 10 minutes to design their church buildings. Then have them share their drawings with each other.

Say The Bible tells us that God wanted the Israelites to build a Tabernacle, which is kind of like a tent church. The story is in the book of Exodus. God told the people to bring gifts of precious metals, precious stones, special fabrics, and expensive wood. He appointed a talented craftsman named Bezalel to be in charge of the building project. Bezalel used his abilities as a craftsman to serve God with excellence. The Tabernacle was built according to God's instructions. It was a beautiful place in which the people worshipped God. Bezalel's special gifts helped the entire nation of Israel worship and serve God.

Ask • How might your special gifts and talents help others serve God or learn about God? (We can help others worship God with music; I can invite my soccer team to come to church with me before our game next week.)

Say God has special work for each of us to do. There isn't time for any of us to sit on the sidelines. God wants all of us to use our talents and gifts to serve him. When we do, others will learn about God. We have important work to do.



3

Let's Pray!

The Offering

Say As we give our gifts today, we will listen to the song, "Love the Lord." When we offer our gifts to God, we do it out of love and adoration for God.

Just as the people brought their gifts for the Tabernacle, we bring our gifts for God's service today. When I tell you to, bring your talents cards to the front of the room. We'll all tape our cards to the wall as a way of showing God that we're willing to use our abilities to serve him with excellence. The offering bowl is at the front of the room, so, if you brought an offering, you can put it in the bowl.

 Play "Love the Lord" (Deuteronomy 6:4-9).

Take the offering, and have the children tape their cards to the wall. Have the preschoolers serve the others by handing out small pieces of tape.

Say Look at all the gifts we have to give God. Let's thank him now.

Pray God, we worship you with our gifts today. Please use our gifts for your service. In Jesus' name, amen.

You Deserve It!

Say The reason we give God our excellent service is because God deserves it. Sometimes people give someone a gift and say, "You deserve it." Well, the one who really deserves our gifts is God. Let's say this prayer together. Repeat after me. Pause after each line so that children can repeat it.

Pray You are my God;
I give my gift and say,
"You deserve it."
You are my King;
I give my love and say,
"You deserve it."
Amen.

Prayer Partners

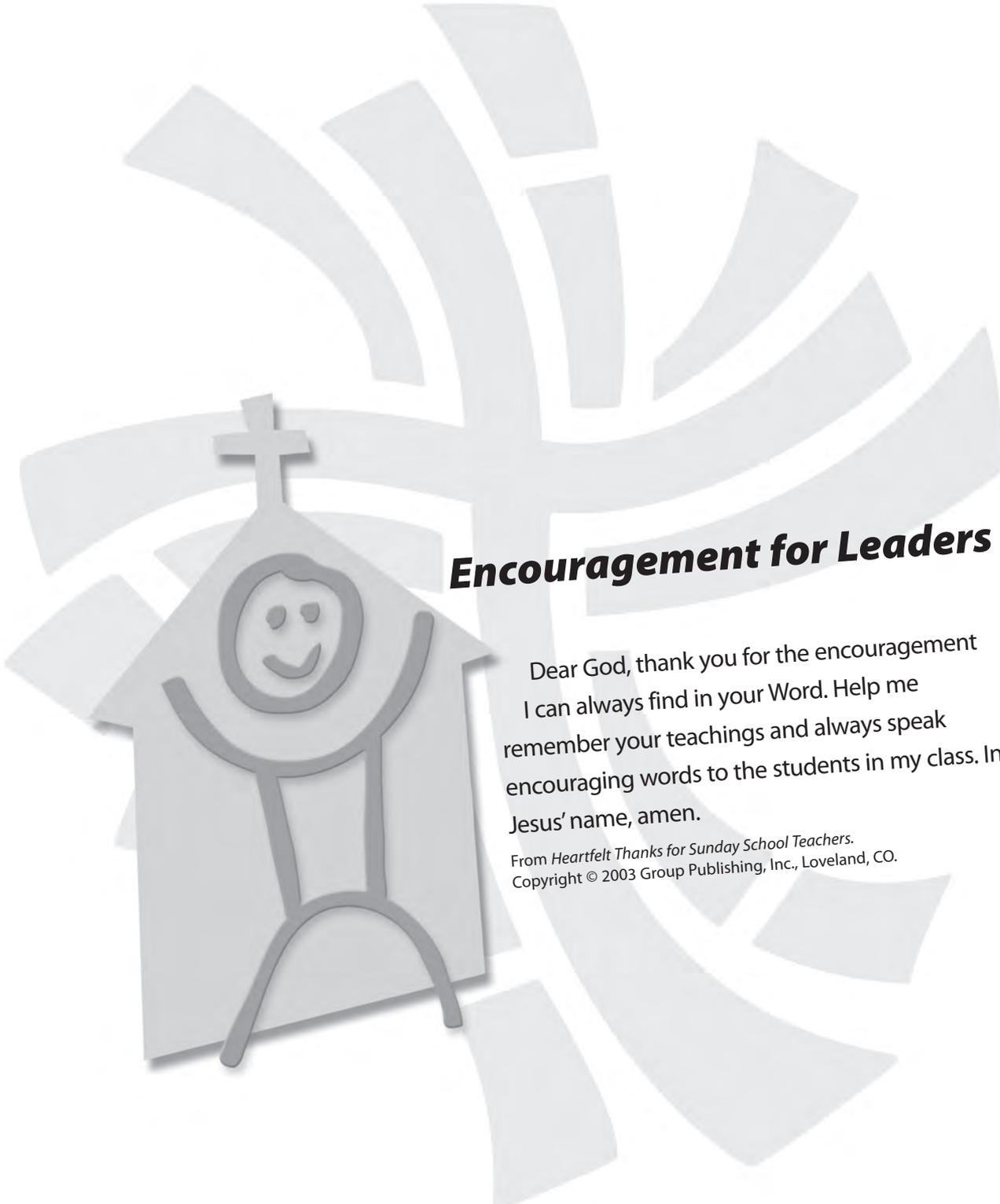
Say Take a prayer partner, and ask your partner what his or her gifts are. Pray with your partner that God will help both of you use your gifts for him.

Help the children find prayer partners, and give them a couple of minutes to talk and pray. Then close the worship session in prayer.

Extra Impact

Get to know your kids better with this great idea! After the offering, make a Talent Box, like a recipe box, with the kids' talent cards organized in it. As you prepare to lead worship sessions in the future, refer to these cards so you can meet the interests and needs of each child in your children's church.





Encouragement for Leaders

Dear God, thank you for the encouragement
I can always find in your Word. Help me
remember your teachings and always speak
encouraging words to the students in my class. In
Jesus' name, amen.

From Heartfelt Thanks for Sunday School Teachers.
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