

middle school



Lesson 3 / December 17, 2023

Forever Family

By RLD Editorial Team

for use as
STEP 1



Lesson 3

Focus:

God sent His Son so we could be His children.

Lesson 3

Bible Basis:

Acts 13:16-17, 21-23, 26, 38-39; Galatians 4:4-6

Lesson 3

Memory Verse:

But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship.
—Galatians 4:4-5

Students will watch a short video and hear about adoptive and “forever” families as they consider our eternal need for the same thing.

Materials:

- Internet access

It’s a funny thing: those of us with moms or dads who are able to love, care, and provide for us are usually the ones who take our families for granted. We tend to get annoyed with our parents for everything from their corny jokes to their rules that seem “so unfair.” But kids who know what it’s like when one or both parents could not fully care for them know that a good family is a blessing to be thankful for and hold on to.

Last month was National Adoption Month. For many families, this is a time to celebrate and tell others their story. Adoption is usually good news for parents who want children to care for, and good news for kids who need a loving home. Throughout the month of November, many adoption agencies and organizations focus on highlighting the importance of adoption.

Play the following video for your students [0:34]:
National Adoption Month

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VotOe47SAbg>

- **How do you think kids’ lives change as a result of being adopted into their new families?** (Parents who understand and care; good conversation, trust, and relationships with parents; a long-term loving family; a family who won’t give up on them; etc.)
- **Some people who have adopted or who have been adopted refer to their family as a “forever family.” What do you think that means for them?** (A forever family is one who has chosen you and is committed to caring for you. They’ve proven their love by formally adopting you into their family and their hearts.)

When we think about it, we all know that family matters. Whether it is our parents, our extended family, special friends, or church family, we can all understand the importance of a community who cares for us and treats us with love and respect.

The truth is, none of us can truly care for ourselves on our own—not in the ways that matter eternally. We all need a truly “forever” family: an everlasting Father, a lifelong Brother, and brothers and sisters in Christ. Let’s talk more about what God did to meet that need.

(Continue on to Steps 2 and 3 in your teacher’s guide; your Step 4 appears below.)

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Materials:

- Internet access
- Index cards
- Pen/pencils
- Optional: Whiteboard and markers (or screenshared document)

If your class is meeting online, invite your students to bring supplies with them to class.

You may have always thought of Christmas as Jesus' birthday, but now we know that in a way, it is our birth story, too. It is the story of how we came into our "forever family," the family of God. Many people need to hear (once again or for the first time) the true meaning of Jesus' birth—that Jesus has come to be our Brother—and the eternal impact that has on our lives.

- **Since God is the one who does the adopting, that makes us the brothers and sisters. How can we be good brothers and sisters to God's children?** (Showing love, kindness, forgiveness; sharing in joys and concerns; prayer; encouraging one another in the faith; etc.)
- **What about those who don't yet know or understand that God is reaching out to them through Jesus? How do we tell them and invite them into God's forever family?** (Students' answers may vary; whether they get stuck or not, share the answer in the paragraph below to summarize.)

The best way to share what God has done for you is to live your life in response to God's. When talking with others about God's family, it usually begins with kindness and friendship, or by serving others to meet their needs. Then at some point you can specifically tell them what the Bible says about God sending Jesus so we can be His children.

Hand out index cards and pens/pencils. If your class is meeting online, invite students to grab their index cards and pens/pencils. **There are people all around us that need to find their eternal "forever home." God is waiting to sign the adoption papers, but they haven't said**

yes to joining His family. Ask your students to think of one or more people they know who do not belong to God's family yet and write their names on the cards. On the other side of the cards, have students write Romans 10:1. (You can write it on a whiteboard or screen shared document. Or, you can have students look up and copy down the verse.)

As you pray for this loved one to become part of God's adopted family, look for opportunities to share the Good News about Jesus with them. They might be ready to say "yes" to God's invitation!

Close in prayer, thanking God for sending Jesus so that we can be part of His forever family.

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