



## GOD'S DIVERSE CREATION

### MODULE ONE

### SESSION 1

In this session, we will explore the biblical story of creation (Genesis 1) and examine the ways God created all people in his image.

Each child will hear that they are made by God and loved by God; they will have opportunities to explore the ways that they themselves, as well as other people around them, reflect God's image through diversity.

**KEY POINT:** God purposefully created a diverse world and called it good.

#### PREPARATION

30 MINUTES

#### LESSON

1 HOUR

Hyperlinks are set on URLs throughout the Justice Journey PDF.  
A single list of all links is also available at:  
[covchurch.org/justicejourney/links](https://covchurch.org/justicejourney/links)

Session #

# 1 Creation and Diversity

## KEY WORD

**DIVERSITY:** Variety, difference. God made a variety of people, plants, animals, and planets and called them good.

## SUPPLIES

### For this lesson you will need

- Sticky backed name tags
- Markers/coloring materials
- Drawing paper
- A Bible
- Magazine pages or printed images of several kinds of animals, plants, and land/water formations
- Pictures of cross-cultural creation stories, Christian based if possible, that show the first humans in a variety of ethnicities
- Index cards
- Playdough or clay, enough for each child to have a fist-sized lump
- Sticky notes
- Poster board
- Families of the world video playlist:  
<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL8HqCrX4JFq28TVVxrVwZu0lz2GpOa79p>
- Children & families around the world video:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y2r2C26RCYs>

## PREPARATION

- **Write “God made…” on each name tag so kids can write their names.** Put these, along with the markers, in the first place kids will see when they enter your environment.
- **Gather the magazine or printed images** of animals, plants, and land/water formations.
- **Familiarize yourself with the creation story** in the Bible you have chosen.
- **Set the creation storybooks and Bible in your storytelling area,** a place where all the children can see and hear you.
- **Set out more markers or crayons and drawing paper in this area.** If there is no table where you are telling the story, consider using hardbound books or clipboards to give kids a surface to draw on.
- **Write several words on index cards:** love, family, truth, beauty, joy, imagination, bravery, hero. Set these aside for an activity with the play dough. Choose one or two words for the whole group to make if you have mostly younger kids.
- **Write a T-chart on the poster board:** on one side, write “All People.” On the other side write “Some People.” Hang it on the wall on one side of your room.
- **Write characteristics on the sticky notes:** have brown hair, wear glasses, think, plan, have a house, dream, need rest, have brothers and sisters, like pizza, have brown skin, need food, need love, need respect. etc. Make sure to list things for all people that will help kids see that everyone reflects God’s image; and use specific things from your community that some people—those around you or those who are different from you—have, look like, or do.
- **Prepare to show one of the videos.**
- **Have extra sticky backed name tags** to use during closing.

## Welcome

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**SUPPLIES:** Sticky backed name tags, prepared as described; markers

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As kids arrive in your space, greet them warmly and offer them a name tag to personalize.

**Spend time with them, asking questions like,**

- How did you get your name?
- What is the best thing about being born in your birth month?
- What is your favorite food/game/YouTube channel/school subject?
- Who do you like to spend time with on the weekends?

The point is to show interest in the children as individuals who are made and loved by God, and to notice their communities of family and friends—the people around them who also have been made and loved by God.

## PRAYER

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Gather children in a circle for opening prayer. Explain we are entering a special time with God. Encourage children to hold their palms up as a sign we are ready to receive what God shares with us today. You may want to light a candle as a sign that God will show us how to light our way in love when we find ourselves in a dark or difficult place.

**PRAY:** God you love each of us and you purposely made all of us different. Because of your love for us, you offer each of us eternal life through your son Jesus and fill us with your Spirit so we may be guided by you. We look forward to what we will learn from you today and how it will help us to love others in the same way you love us.

## Opening Activity

**SUPPLIES:** Several pictures for each category, such as animals, plants, natural water/land formations

**Arrange kids into three groups and give each a set of pictures.** Let them talk about what their pictures have in common and how they are different. Encourage each kid to contribute a thought to the group.

**EXPLAIN:** Your pictures all are of the same type of thing—animals, plants, the earth. But they have diversity: varieties in that type of thing. Talk in your groups about why diversity is so good in your category. Why are you glad there are more than one type of animal/plant/nature?

Listen as kids talk, and repeat ideas that stand out: how boring it would be to have the same kind of flowers at your house as everyone else; how monotonous to eat the same kind of plant every meal for every day; how sad if everyone only had one kind of pet!

## Bible Time

**SUPPLIES:** Bible, drawing paper, crayons, flat surfaces for kids to write on, other creation accounts or pictures

Gather kids in your storytelling area. Invite them to listen carefully to the story from the Bible and to draw what they hear. It may be helpful to read through the text more than once so the children can reflect further as they draw.

### READ GENESIS 1:1-24.

**ASK:** What kinds of things has God made so far? Encourage them to share their pictures. Emphasize what each child noticed (not the quality of their drawing skills). "God has made a lot of things in our Bible story! God must be powerful and creative!"

**EXPLAIN:** Now we're coming to a really important part. Turn over your paper and put your markers down so you won't be distracted.

### READ GENESIS 1:26-27.

**ASK:** What does it mean to be made in God's image? Allow for answers, but recognize that most kids won't know what that means.

**EXPLAIN:** People were made special compared to all other

creation. We are made to show what God is like. The rest of creation shows that God can do anything and make anything. But people are different. We can do a little bit of what God does. We can think because God thinks; we can love because God loves. We can plan and dream and create and decide. We can have a relationship with God, we can help and love other people and take care of creation, because God helps and cares for all of creation. Every single person is equally made to do these things together, not just by ourselves. That's what it means to be made in the image of God. This is God's gift to us, that together we can reflect God's love to each other, and the rest of creation. That's amazing!

**Bring out the pictures of creation/stories.** No one knows what the first people looked like, sounded like, or smelled like. We don't know their skin color or hair color, but the variety of people in the world clearly shows God's plan for creation. Some people have brown eyes, some have blue eyes, some have green eyes. Some people have purple or yellowish eyes. There are short people and tall people; people with skin colors that are every shade from black to brown, golden, and cream. (*Show pictures.*)

No matter how they look, humans were intentionally created diverse by God. Remember that word? It means variety. We love having diversity in nature because our lives are better for having cats and dogs and chinchillas and bearded dragons as pets; we like climbing mountains and swimming in lakes; we like strawberries and tomatoes and french-fried potatoes. None of us looks the same or acts the same. This means we can learn from each other. Diversity of people makes our lives and our relationship with God better too. We're going to learn more about that today. Diversity is a gift from God.

## Review Activity

**SUPPLIES:** Prepared T-chart and sticky notes

**Divide your group into two teams and distribute the sticky notes evenly into two piles.** Line up the two teams at one side of your room across from where the poster is hung. Give each team, or the group, a pile of sticky notes.

The first player on each team will run to the poster, read their note, and stick it on the side they believe describes that characteristic of humanity. Then each player runs back and tags the next player in line. Play until all sticky notes

are gone.

Gather the whole group around the poster and read each note. Ask if they think all the notes are on the correct sides, and change any that need to be changed.

**EXPLAIN:** Some of these things—like riding a bike or having blue eyes—are traits or abilities that describe some people. That’s diversity. But other things—like being able to make plans or needing rest—are common to all people. That’s because all people, no matter what they look like or sound like, are made in the image of God. All of us are important, special, and unique. God loves diversity, and God wants us to appreciate diversity and love each other just as God loves us.

## Application Activity

**SUPPLIES:** Prepared index cards, playdough

**Give each child some playdough and an index card.**

Invite them to use the playdough to make something that shows or represents the idea on the card. If time allows, let kids swap cards to show even more the differences in how we see/reflect those ideas.

**EXPLAIN:** Turn to a friend, read their card, and check out what they made. Would you have made the same thing? Why or why not? We need other people to help us reflect what that idea is; all of your sculptures show something a little different and help us as a group to understand more about the diversity of God’s creation. God made each of us to reflect God’s love and show what God is like. Every single person on earth who has ever lived and ever will live is made unique by God. Each of us can share God’s love in a unique way.

## Video Activity

**SUPPLIES:** A selected video, a media player

**Gather your group around the media player and show the selected video.**

**ASK:**

- How did the people in this video look like you? How were they different?
- Did you see any different styles of clothing, houses, school, or food than yours?
- What do you think those different things tell us about God’s image?
- How were the people in this video like you/your family/your friends?
- What do you think those same things tell us about God’s image? Why did God make us both different and the same?

## Closing Activity

**SUPPLIES:** Sticky backed name tags, markers

**Set out blank name tags and markers.** On each tag, direct kids to write something like: God made you! God loves you! You are special! You are loved!

Encourage kids to think of a place to put these, or a person to give them to, who is both different and the same as they are—someone who shows God’s image in a different way than they do. This could mean leaving one at the grocery store cart corral in your neighborhood to be found by a stranger or giving one to a neighbor or younger sibling. Guide children to be creative in their planning.

**CLOSE IN PRAYER**

**Thank you God for the way you made diversity in creation and among humans. Help us to speak up and be a friend to everyone, not just those who look and act like us. Help us to be kind to one another and learn from each other. Amen**



## GOD'S DIVERSE CREATION

### MODULE ONE

### SESSION 2

In this session, we will read the account of Pentecost in Acts 2:1-12. This passage is commonly regarded as the birth of the church.

We will discover why diversity in culture, ethnicity, gifts, and roles in the church are vital to its expression as the body of Christ on earth. Each child will hear about different cultural and denominational practices in churches worldwide and affirm their own place in the local church.

**KEY POINT:** All are welcomed by Jesus into the church

#### PREPARATION

30 MINUTES

#### LESSON

1 HOUR

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Session #

# The Church and Diversity

## KEY WORD

**DIVERSITY:** Variety, difference. God made a variety of people, plants, animals, and planets and called them good.

## SUPPLIES

### For this lesson you will need

- Markers/coloring materials
- Drawing paper
- Human Bingo page, one for each child, like this one (or make your own)  
[scholastic.com/content/dam/parents/migrated-assets/blogs/body-text-images-5/meet-new-friend-bingo-game.png](http://scholastic.com/content/dam/parents/migrated-assets/blogs/body-text-images-5/meet-new-friend-bingo-game.png)
- A Bible
- Maps: Known world at the time of Christ  
[generationword.com/framework\\_images/81\\_map\\_lands\\_pentecost.gif](http://generationword.com/framework_images/81_map_lands_pentecost.gif)  
Modern-day map of the locations of the countries mentioned in Acts 2  
[google.com/maps/place/Mediterranean+Sea/@36.6223748,-2.9445746,4z/](http://google.com/maps/place/Mediterranean+Sea/@36.6223748,-2.9445746,4z/)
- Provide a set of the above maps for each pair of kids.
- Magazine pages or printed images of several different church buildings and services. If your church has access to missionary/outreach/evangelism magazines or bulletins, consider using these.

- Poster board, glue sticks, and scissors
- Uncooked spaghetti noodles
- Small marshmallows
- Paper plates
- Computer, tablet, or smart TV
- *Praises Heard Around the World* video: [youtube.com/watch?v=S-x7Yu-3cF8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S-x7Yu-3cF8)

## PREPARATION

- **Make copies** of the Human Bingo page.
- **Familiarize yourself with Acts 2:1-12.** Make sure you can point out where the mentioned countries would be located on the ancient world map as well as on the modern map. (*You may need to practice some of the countries' names out loud a few times.*)
- **Make copies** of the two maps.
- **On the poster board, draw a large outline** of a cross for kids to fill with pictures of the diverse churches.
- **Use the masking tape to mark out a large rectangle** on the floor of your room. Make it large enough for your whole group to stand inside.

**OPTIONAL:** Arrange a Skype or FaceTime call with a church that is different from your congregation in some way—ethnically, linguistically, generationally, or geographically (urban vs. rural, portable vs. stationary, etc.).

## Welcome

As kids arrive in your space, greet them warmly and offer them some markers and drawing paper.

**Ask them to draw the best part of being at church.**

**Spend time with them, asking:**

- Do you remember (last year's VBS, being in the preschool class, etc.)?
- I remember the first time you came to church/when we first met. I felt ...
- What is your favorite thing we do here at (Sunday school/children's church/ kids' club)?
- Have you ever visited a different church? What was the church or experience like?

Prompt kids to share positive memories and experiences of your church and other worship gatherings they may have attended.

## PRAYER

Gather children in a circle for opening prayer. Explain we are entering a special time with God. Encourage children to hold their palms up as a sign we are ready to receive what God shares with us today. You may want to light a candle as a sign that God will show us how to light our way in love when we find ourselves in a dark or difficult place.

**PRAY:** God you love each of us and you purposely made all of us different. Because of your love for us, you offer each of us eternal life through your son Jesus and fill us with your Spirit so we may be guided by you. We look forward to what we will learn from you today and how it will help us to love others in the same way you love us.

## Opening Activity

**SUPPLIES:** Human Bingo sheet for each person, markers, small prizes (optional)

**Hand each child a sheet and encourage them to ask friends to sign a square that could apply to them.** If you have a very small group, you could do this in the beginning

of church when parents are doing drop off and there's a larger cross-section of your community. For smaller classes or groups you could sit and work through the whole bingo card and see how many match and how many are unique to each child.

**EXPLAIN:** We have a lot of diversity right here in this church! Do you remember that diversity means variety and difference? I'm glad we have lots of different kinds of people in our church, because that reminds us that God purposely made each of us different and loves each of us but sometimes one group of people think they are better than another group of people and work to keep them separate. What might it look like if only one kind of person—who liked the color red, or ate pancakes every day for breakfasts—was allowed in the church? Take a minute and talk with your neighbor about how our church would be different if that was so.

**Now lets share our thoughts together.**

**ASK:** Who do you think God wants you to invite to the church? Why do you think this is important to God?

**SAY:** Now let's look at what God has to say about this in the Bible.

## Bible Time

**SUPPLIES:** Bible, maps, markers

Gather kids in your storytelling area. Invite them to listen carefully to the story from the Bible.

**READ ACTS 2:1-4.**

**Read a few times and encourage the children to draw what they imagine the coming of the Spirit looked like.**

**EXPLAIN:** Pentecost was a Jewish spring harvest festival, but now we use the word Pentecost to remember when Jesus's disciples received the Holy Spirit.

**EXPLAIN:** The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God which Jesus promised he would give to every one who received him as Lord and Savior. God loves us so much that just as God breathed the breath of life into us, God now also breathes his Spirit into us. The Holy Spirit helps us to understand the Bible and directs us to love others and live for God.

**ASK:** What did the Holy Spirit give the disciples to help

them share Jesus's love with others?

**EXPLAIN:** Now lets look and listen to Acts 2:5-12 to see how this gift from God was used to love others.

**READ ACTS 2:5-12.**

**Read slowly so that kids can hear all the different places people came from at Pentecost.** Use the ancient map and the modern map to show these places. Mark each location with a marker.

Pair the kids up and give each pair a set of maps and two markers. Encourage them to work together and mark the places on the maps as you read.

When you finish, explain: This is a really big story! Before this story, people had to go to one kind of place to worship God—the Temple. The priests leading the services spoke only one language, and only one kind of service happened there. If you didn't speak that language, or didn't understand that service, you couldn't worship God with God's people.

In fact, the reason all those people from all those countries and cities were gathered in Jerusalem is because of Pentecost, the big spring harvest festival. People traveled from all over to worship God at the Temple and celebrate what God had done for his people.

But when God sent the Holy Spirit to Jesus's followers, God was doing something new. God was saying that from now on, people can worship God anywhere they are. They don't have to become a citizen of a specific place or learn a new language or travel to a far country to worship God; God wants a loving relationship with all people—that's why Jesus came to earth. Peter and Jesus's other followers now had power and boldness to travel and tell everyone the good news about Jesus and that God had given us a new way to worship.

This new way to worship and know God swept everywhere in the world. On our maps, all the countries and cities that our Bible story mentioned seem clumped up in one tiny spot, but if you look at the ancient world map, it looks like God wanted to have a relationship with people literally all over the world. The Romans, who were in charge when this part of the Bible was written, hadn't explored the whole planet, just some areas in Asia, Africa, and Europe. But the roads and harbors they built made it possible for the disciples to tell others outside of Palestine about Jesus.

That's why people call this passage in Acts 2 "the birth of the church," because it's when God let everyone know

that the new plan for worship and relationship was for everyone. From there, people who worship God and followed Jesus began to gather wherever they were to celebrate what God had done through Jesus. Those groups were called churches—and they still are!

**DISCUSS**

- What do you think the good news of Jesus is? (Because of God’s love for us, God sent us a Savior, Jesus. Jesus’s life shows us what it means to love one another. Jesus loved us so much that he died on the cross for us so our sins are forgiven. Then Jesus filled us with the Spirit of God to guide us, so we could fulfill God’s plan to share God’s love with everyone.)
- What kinds of people do you think God wanted to be part of these new churches?
- Do you have a story with Jesus? (Let children know that each story is different, because we are all different.)
- Who does God welcome into the church?

**EXPLAIN:** Everyone is welcome to become a part of the church community. You don’t have to acknowledge Jesus as your Lord and Savior first. The church is the place where we learn about Jesus, experience Jesus’s love, become Jesus’s disciple and share Jesus’s love with others. If you’re not sure you are a disciple of Jesus but want to be Jesus’s disciples, we can talk it over and pray with your parents after class.

## Review Activity

**SUPPLIES:** Prepared poster board, glue sticks, scissors, and magazine pages or printed images of several different church buildings and services. (If your church has access to missionary/outreach/evangelism magazines or bulletins, please consider using these.)

**Invite kids to look through the magazine pictures or printed images and talk about what kinds of churches they see there.** What are the buildings like? What are people wearing? What languages are their signs/lyrics in?

When kids gravitate toward a certain picture, encourage them to cut it out carefully and glue it onto the poster board, around the cross outline. Try to fill up all the negative space around the cross outline.

**EXPLAIN:** We are all different kinds of people in different kinds of churches. God planned for diversity in the church, but we all have this in common Jesus loves us, we love Jesus, and Jesus commands us to love one another. Guide kids to talk about ways that churches worship God that are the same everywhere and different everywhere.

**DISCUSS**

- What are some different ways we can worship God? (Option: Do this as a charades game.)
- Why is it good that Jesus can be worshiped in many ways?
- What might we learn from the way others worship Jesus?
- Do you think God delights in the many ways people worship? Why?

## Application Activity

**SUPPLIES:** Uncooked spaghetti noodles, small marshmallows, Bible

**Divide into groups of three and give each small group several noodles and marshmallows.** Tell them their goal is to build the biggest strongest structure they can build with those materials.

When all the teams have made their structures, remark on what is the same and what is different about each one.

**EXPLAIN:** When God began to build a church with people who would tell the whole world about the good news, he used a lot of different kinds of people so there would be a lot of different kinds of churches. They all do some things the same—worship God, help each other, tell people about the good news—but they all do it a little differently. How is that like your marshmallow buildings? Remember: God made everything different on purpose. Diversity is a gift from God.

**READ 1 CORINTHIANS 12:12-27.**

**ASK: What role do they play in the body of Christ?** Do they help others? Do they love to share answers and talk about the Bible? Are they artistic or athletic and able to create movies or games to help us understand God and others better? Or ask: Why is it good we are not all the same? Why do you think God made it like this?









## GOD'S DIVERSE CREATION

MODULE ONE

SESSION 3

In this session we will focus on the marriage feast in Revelation 19:5-9 as God's ultimate goal of reconciling all people. Our diversity will not be erased but will be used as it was always intended: to show the goodness and creativity and splendor of God.

**KEY POINT:** Diversity demonstrates the goodness, creativity, and splendor of God.

**PREPARATION**

30 MINUTES

**LESSON**

1 HOUR

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Session #

# The Kingdom of Heaven and Diversity

## KEY WORD

**DIVERSITY:** Variety, difference. God made a variety of people, plants, animals, and planets and called them good.

**PREJUDICE:** Not knowing a person but mistreating them and believing things about them because of the color of their skin, gender, or where they are from.

**RACISM:** When one group of people believes they are better (superior) than others and uses their privilege to create laws and systems which work better for their racial groups than for other racial groups. Racism can happen intentionally or unintentionally.

## SUPPLIES

### For this lesson you will need

- Drawing paper and markers
- Paper bowls, one per child
- Plenty of cheese balls (for playing with and a few for eating!)
- A Bible, preferable NIV version
- A tablecloth
- Dishes for place settings, napkins, silverware, a vase of flowers, and small candles
- Paper plates
- Glue sticks and scissors
- Magazines or grocery store flyers

- Picture books from around the world and your local newspapers
- *There's a Space for You* video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u3-Px7JqAow>
- Blank cards
- Stickers

## PREPARATION

**Mark the Bible in the following places:**

**Revelation 19:5-9; 21:1-4; 22:1-5.**

Read the passages so you're comfortable with the language. Consider using different voices as you read so that kids get a sense of who is speaking during the Revelation songs. You might want to invite a friend with a different speaking voice or accent to help you.

Look through the picture books and your newspapers for people who have various jobs, wear different items of clothing, or are eating food.

Watch the video of Travis's feast so you're ready to discuss it.

If you have a community meal, a small group, or a church supper coming up, be prepared to make invitations with the kids so these can be used to welcome your community to your local version of the great feast!

## Welcome

As kids arrive in your space, greet them warmly and offer them some markers and drawing paper. Ask them to draw pictures of the biggest celebration they have ever been invited to—a wedding or anniversary party, a birthday or quinceañera or bar mitzvah.

**Spend time with them, asking:**

- What was this party celebrating?
- Who was there?
- Who was the guest of honor?
- What did you do? What kinds of foods did you eat?
- What did you wear?

## PRAYER

Gather children in a circle for opening prayer. Explain we are entering a special time with God. Encourage children to hold their palms up as a sign we are ready to receive what God shares with us today. You may want to light a candle as a sign that God will show us how to light our way in love when we find ourselves in a dark or difficult place.

**PRAY:** God you love each of us and you purposely made all of us different. Because of your love for us, you offer each of us eternal life through your son Jesus and fill us with your Spirit so we may be guided by you. We look forward to what we will learn from you today and how it will help us to love others in the same way you love us.

## Opening Activity

**SUPPLIES:** Paper bowls, cheese balls

**Divide your group into pairs and line the pairs up facing each other, around four feet apart.** Put some cheese balls into bowls and hand them to the partners on the left. Give empty bowls to the partners facing them. On "Go," the partners with the empty bowls must hold the bowls in their mouths by biting the rim. The partners with the cheese balls must try to toss them into the empty bowls from their

position four feet away. The pair with the most cheese balls in the far bowl wins. Start with new bowls and reverse positions.

**EXPLAIN:** This would be a terrible way to feed people at a feast! It would be messy and inefficient and just plain unfair! What if there were people who couldn't hold a bowl in their mouths, or who couldn't move their arms to toss their partners the snacks? Some people would end up with full bowls and many others would go away hungry. What would be a good way to serve all kinds of people at a big party? Talk with your partner about it.

Discuss a fair way to share resources and honor party guests.

## Bible Time

**SUPPLIES:** A Bible marked as described earlier, tablecloth, and table settings

Gather kids in your storytelling area. Invite them to listen carefully to the story from the Bible.

**EXPLAIN:** We've heard about the beginning of history, when God created our beautiful and diverse world; and we've talked about the middle of history, when Jesus sent out his friends to make disciples from every country and tribe on earth, and that includes us! Now, we'll talk about the end of history.

**Remember that God started everything by creating the earth and people, and then people messed up? Ever since then, people have been divided by the things that should unite us. Instead of appreciating how God made everyone different, some people decided that our diversity was a bad thing.** People have even gone to war, killed, and enslaved other humans because they thought that the color of their skin made them better than others. Even more than that, people all over the world hurt each other with words and actions because they are afraid of how we are different. Two ways this commonly happens is racism and prejudice. Many people are sad and hurting, or angry and hateful, because of these sins. Do you think God is happy with that situation?

Allow for responses.

**EXPLAIN:** No, I don't think God is happy about that either. God is not part of racism or prejudice at all. God is the one who intentionally made us all different in the first place.

Diversity was God's own idea!

God sent Jesus to save all people from all places, all over the world. We know that. But what you might not know is that God's plan doesn't stop there.

At the very end of the Bible, a man named John saw a wonderful dream from God and wrote it down. In this dream, John saw what would happen at the end of time, when Jesus comes back to earth to show all people that he loves them and rescues them. John saw the big throne room of heaven, where God rules as a king over all the earth. Here's what he saw.

### READ REVELATION 7:9-10.

**EXPLAIN:** So in heaven people of all countries and tribes and languages were all worshiping God together. They were wearing the same white clothes that reminded everyone of the way they followed Jesus. The only thing that was different about them was the way God had made them: individual and unique, diverse and special. But they were all following Jesus and praising God. And, the end of that, in Revelation 19:9, it says they were all invited to a feast!

Begin to spread out the tablecloth and set it with the place settings, flowers, and candles.

**EXPLAIN:** My table here isn't big enough for that many people. But do people who are at war, or who hate each other or are terrified of each other, sit down at a big feast together? No. A feast means a celebration with people who love each other! So, at the end of history, people of all countries and colors will sit down at a table together, at the same feast.

The most important guest will be God, who will be at the feast. The Bible says this about what it will be like.

God says this is what it will be like at the end of time. But God also wants us to live this way today.

- How might we do something like this? Who could we invite to a feast that doesn't look like us and whose traditions are different from us?
- How could we show God's love to those who are different from us?

### READ REVELATION 21:1-4.

**EXPLAIN:** God will end all fighting and war; there will be no more death or sadness or pain. Do you think there will be things like racism or prejudice there?

Allow for answers.

Racism is when one group of people believes they are better (superior) than others and uses their privilege to create laws and systems which work better for their racial groups than for other racial groups. Racism can happen intentionally or unintentionally.

Prejudice is believing things about a person without knowing them, and mistreating them because of what you think about the color of their skin, gender, ethnicity, or where they are from.

Let's take a few minutes to draw and share what you think this feast will look like. The end of John's dream, what God showed him, goes like this.

**READ REVELATION 22:1-5.**

**EXPLAIN:** A garden and rivers? That sounds like creation, like where God made all people in the first place! And, in verse 2, we read that the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations, which also means ethnicities. God will use us, our love, and the Gospel to heal the wounds racism and prejudice cause. We will all be one people—God's people. Just as God made us all different in the beginning at creation, God will love and rule over all the different kinds of people as our king at the end of time.

**DISCUSS**

- Why do you think God showed John this dream of all people from everywhere worshiping God together?
- Why do you think that God wants to throw a big feast for all God's people? Do you think there are people who would not want to come? Why or why not?

## Review Activity

**SUPPLIES:** Paper plates, glue sticks, scissors, grocery store flyers or magazines

**Give each child a paper plate, and lay out the other supplies.** Encourage them to cut out and glue the food pictures on their plate to create their idea of a feast. As they do this, talk about the Bible lesson:

These feasts all look different! Why do you think having lots of different foods at a feast would be a good idea?

- Who would you like to share a feast with? Why?
- When the activity is finished, set the plates aside to dry and guide the group to work together to clean up.

## Application Activity

**SUPPLIES:** Picture books showing people from all over the world as well as your local newspaper

**Look through the books and newspaper with the group. Point out all the people doing, wearing, and eating different things.** Play a game similar to "I'm going on a picnic."

To begin say, "I'm going to a feast and I'm inviting someone who (name an action, food, or clothing from the pictures)." For example, "I'm going to a feast and I'm inviting someone who eats tortillas." The child next to you must say, "I'm going to a feast and I'm inviting someone who eats tortillas and (their own choice)." Continue this way until either kids start forgetting the previous answers or until everyone has had a couple of turns.

**EXPLAIN:** Since we know that God has invited everyone from every place on earth to his great feast, it seems silly to exclude people now.

Would you be whiny and rude to someone who was a guest at your holiday meal? How can we be kind to people now, and treat everyone with respect, as if we were getting ready to sit down to a feast together?

What should we do when we see others being treated unfairly or unkindly because of their differences? As fellow future guests at the table, how can we stick up for them? How might we celebrate together? What might we learn from each other?

## Video Activity

**SUPPLIES:** A media player

Gather the kids around the video player and play the video: *There's a Space for You*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u3-Px7JqAow>

**DISCUSS:** What was most noticeable about the feast? Who was there? What were they saying? Was any one missing? Would you like to go to that kind of a feast?

## Closing Activity

**SUPPLIES:** Blank cards, coloring materials, stickers

Invite kids to use these supplies to make invitations to whatever local gathering you've decided on. As they decorate, ask them for ideas of who your church could invite to this feast—such as people they don't normally see at church. Collect these cards and distribute them as you can.

### CLOSE IN PRAYER

**God help us respond in a loving way to others rather than mean ways because someone is different from us. Thank you God for making us different and helping us to celebrate our differences.**

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# JUSTICE JOURNEY

*for kids*

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The Evangelical Covenant Church

LOVE MERCY DO JUSTICE  
MAKE & DEEPEN DISCIPLES