



# GROWING UP

God's  
Good  
Story



LESSON 1

I am who God says I am

Genesis 1:26-27 • Psalm 112:1

faith **in** kids

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Growing Up - God's Good Story

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We recommend the International Children's Bible for use with children during the lesson. Our leader's notes and parent handouts use the New International Version.

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"All for the glory of God alone" (1 Corinthians 10:31)



## LESSON 1

# I am who God says I am

Genesis 1:26-27 • Psalm 112:1



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### Truth that changes me:

We are made by God. He knows who we really are.



### Faith in Kids looks like:

Children who listen to God, trusting that he knows what is best for them.

## Preparation

As you prepare this lesson, we recommend watching the training video, and the introductory video if you haven't seen it.



## Notes



### Where are we going?

We want our children to hear the counter-cultural message of the Bible, that delight is not found in following their hearts, but in fearing the Lord. Their creator tells them who they are and how to live, so they should listen carefully to him. Other voices – friends, social media and their culture do not love them and know them as their creator does.

Pray and read the Bible passage. Read **Where are we going**, **The world our children live in** and **Look at the passage** to give you a better understanding of how to apply the truth.



### The world our children live in

Our children are told that they can and should define themselves; it's up to them to decide everything – their identity, gender, sexuality, and more.

What sounds like freedom is actually a crushing burden. Our children are left trying to work out what is good and who they should listen to in a confusing world of conflicting ideas and peer pressure.

How can they make wise decisions? How can they filter the noise?

Their loving heavenly Father who made them and adores them wants to tell them who they are. He can be trusted, his words will allow our children to navigate the challenges of growing up: 'Do the messages I'm hearing say the same things about me as God does?'

In this series we want our children to become more confident about what their heavenly father says, so that they are more able to filter other messages they will hear as they grow up.





## Look at the passage



### Created By God

*“So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.” GENESIS 1:27*

Because God created us, he gets to tell us who we are. His is the voice we measure all others against, his message holds the most weight. We can be certain about who we are and how to live by listening to our creator God. His word is the instruction manual for the people he made and loves.

### Listening to God

*“Praise the Lord. Blessed are those who fear the Lord, who find great delight in his commands.” PSALM 112:1*

When we live listening carefully to the one who made us, we’re in the safest place we can be. We are blessed. Our Culture tells us that we will find delight in following our hearts; the Bible tells us that delight is found in obeying the Lord. Who we choose to listen to reveals who we believe.

In this Psalm, every line begins with a successive letter of the Hebrew alphabet. It’s a poem of beauty, order and symmetry, an echo of the world as it was designed to be. We are being the people we were made to be when we live according to the beautiful design of our creator.

This is the better story we want to share with our children: our creator tells us who we are.



## Win my heart first

From the beginning, we have been fed the lie that obeying God means missing out. The serpent’s first hiss questioned God’s goodness: “Look at what God is keeping from you, don’t listen to him, make your own rules”. The lie remains the same today. Our culture’s loudest message is: “Don’t let anyone tell you how to live! You can choose”. This drum beat that sounds like freedom is the same hissing lie dressed in a different costume. The God who made us, knows us and loves us is the only one perfectly able to tell us who we are and how we should live.

If we truly believe God’s word, we will not be afraid of being in the minority, because we fear the Lord and we delight in him more than in other people’s opinions. Do you want this for our children?

- Who do you listen to? Whose opinion matters the most to you?
- In what situations do you easily care more about what others think than about fearing the Lord?

*For your heart, before you prepare the lesson.*



## 5 minutes to focus on your group

### Created By God

Who are the children in *your* group listening to? Are they influenced most by friends, media stars or their parents? What influences surround them at school or home? Use the lesson to help them build a framework so that they can work out which messages they should listen to and which ones to mute.



*What do the children in your group need?*

*Pray for them:*  
· to grasp the truth  
· to live it out  
· to rely on the Spirit



## In case you're feeling nervous...

- We want children to know that all voices are not equal - God's voice is always the best one to listen to.
- We don't want to suggest that all other voices are bad - lots of other messages agree with what God says and should be listened to.
- Many children have unbelieving parents, have unbelieving teachers etc. We want to affirm that they can be trusted, their messages are often good and the children should listen to them.

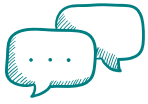
*We understand this might feel daunting. We are starting a conversation not completing it.*



## Series overview visual

The overview visual (see p.15) will help to explain this, and other big ideas in future lessons. Because God created us, he knows us better than anyone else. He gets to tell us who we are.

The visual shows a person hearing: messages from themselves - these are thoughts and feelings (represented by the thought clouds); messages from others - including other people and the media (represented by the speech bubbles); and messages from God - what he has written in the Bible. The crown shows that God's messages are the most important - we only let other messages stick if they say the same things as God says. God made us and loves us more than anyone, great delight comes from listening to him.



# All-together time



This has been written as an all-age slot to introduce the whole church family to what the children are learning today, but it could be adapted for the children's classes



## Helpers Needed

Volunteer to attach messages to



## Props

Post-it notes / labels to stick to your volunteer, a bin to put unwanted messages in, series visual (see p.15) to display on screen - or hold up.



## What to Say



## What to Do

Do you ever get to the end of the day and feel like you've been dragged through a hedge backwards?

You started the day all neat, tidy and feeling positive... but by the end you're frazzled, scruffy, a bit sad and you just want to eat biscuits watching TV.

What happened in the middle? ... LIFE!

You could show a before and after photo

Let's imagine - meet my friend Lara(/Dave), she's had one of those days!

Lara: "I've been through a lot; I lost a sock, fell over at lunchtime, got a star sticker for my work and then after school someone said something mean, but my friend stood up for me!"

Volunteer arrives, of either gender - looking frazzled - messy hair, spilled something down herself, lost a sock, lots of Post-it notes / messages pinned and taped to her clothing.

You also have a lot of messages stuck on you.

*Read out messages stuck to Lara.*

"Church is for idiots"

"Be who you want to be"

"You're ugly and fat"

"You're my best friend"

Lara: "Oh, those are just some of the different things I heard today"

Point to messages on her clothing. *Please use different messages if you prefer.*

Our days can be like Lara's can't they?

We're picking up messages all the time from the world around us, telling us who we are.

We get a sticker in school: we're smart.

Somebody is mean: we're ugly.

We watch YouTube videos of someone playing a game, or dancing - they're better than us: we're rubbish

Our teacher says, "be who you want to be": but I can't be a professional footballer if I can't run fast.

continued →

## What to Say

## What to Do

Lara heard other messages today, from God.

As her Dad read her the Children's Bible, Lara heard, "God loves you more than you can imagine".

She has a sticker in her bedroom - "I am always with you".

At Church she heard this verse, "Praise The Lord! Happy is the person who fears the Lord."

Add extra 'From God' labels to Lara

The messages we hear change how we feel about ourselves. We're picking up messages from three different places.

- From ME - from our own thoughts and feelings
- From OTHERS - friends, TV, social media, people around us
- From GOD - through the Bible, his people and his world

Can you do that with me? (*Repeat bullet-points above*).

This is the visual we're using in our session, showing someone hearing all of these messages.

The crown shows that they are letting God's messages be in charge - they only let other messages stick if they say the same things as God says.

Show series visual  
(see p.15)

Point to yourself

Point out

Point up

Repeat with children joining in.

Today Lara heard God tell her who she is.

God made her, God knows everything about her and God loves her.

He is the best person to listen to.

Lara heard other messages too. Which ones really tell her who she is? We can know which messages to let stick and which ones to drop by asking, "Are they saying the same things about me as God?"

Point to all the different messages

"Church is for idiots" - No! Christ died to create his church. His church is precious.

"Be who you want to be"- No! God is the creator, we are creatures. We can't choose everything.

"You're ugly and fat" - No! God says you're wonderfully made!

"You're my best friend" - Great! You are made for friendship. Well done for being a great friend, even when others let you down.

Sort through each message

Do they stay on - or go in the bin?

continued →

## What to Say

## What to Do

This is how we decide who to listen to...

"Are they saying the same things about me as God?"

This week, let's be asking that question about the messages we hear – things that we pick up from others and things we say to ourselves in our thoughts.

Are they saying the same things about me as God?

Point to the message at the top

Today we're starting a new series with the children, looking at some complicated, difficult but important issues - our bodies, how we use them now and the choices we will have in how to use them as adults. This week lays the foundations, helping us to understand how to make wise decisions. There will be a take-home sheet so that parents and carers can know what we have covered and how to continue these conversations at home.

Show series visual

Show take-home sheet (see p.21–22)

As we finish let me read you Psalm 112:1.

"Praise the Lord. Happy is the person who fears the Lord. He loves what the Lord commands."

Let's be people who are ready to listen to the God who made us and loves us.

Pray





## 7s and under lesson plan



### Get going

#### Listen Carefully

Take one item. Keeping it hidden in the bag, make the sound and ask the children to guess what it is. Repeat for the other items. For very young children – show them the objects and demonstrate the sound they make first, then play the game to see if they can guess which item you are holding just by the sound it makes.

➔ **Link:** You had to listen very carefully to work out what it was, today we are learning how we need to listen carefully to God to know who we are.



### Teaching time

#### Created By God

*"So God created human beings in his image. In the image of God he created them. He created them male and female."* **GENESIS 1:27 (ICB)**

Use a picture Bible to show the story of creation.

Help the children understand that God is the creator of all things. God is that big, that good, that powerful, that WOW! God created us, in his image – we are made to be a little like him. Because God created us, he gets to tell us who we are.

God tells us we are his children and that he loves us. Ask some questions to check their understanding. "Who invented you?", "Who gets to tell you what to do?".....

#### Listening to God

*"Praise the Lord! Happy is the person who fears the Lord. He loves what the Lord commands."* **PSALM 112:1 (ICB)**

Show and explain the series overview visual. The person is hearing messages from themselves - these are thoughts and feelings (point to the thought clouds); messages from others - what they say, what they shout (point to the speech bubbles); and messages from God - what he has written in the Bible (point to the Bible). The crown shows that they are letting God's messages be the ones in charge - they only let other messages stick if they say the same things as God says. The person is happy because they are listening to God.

Use a play figure and some post-it notes – ask the children to help you come up with the messages they might hear in an ordinary day... see *all-age talk* for ideas.



### Notes

**You will need:** A feely bag filled with items that can make noise, e.g. packet of crisps, purse full of money, squeaky toy, tube of smarties, tub of rice.

**You will need:** Children's picture Bible – e.g. The Beginner's Bible, play figure, Post-it notes, waste paper bin, pen and paper, series overview visual (see p.15) – ideally printed A3

continued →

- From Me – what kind of things might they say to themselves? When you're learning, playing, doing sport or lying in bed? *Be ready to give your own example, e.g. I am rubbish, I am the best, I am special, nobody likes me.*
- From Others – what kind of messages do they hear from family, friends, TV? What about teachers? Mean kids? Parents? *You might need to give a few examples to get them going, e.g. You are trying really hard. You are beautiful. You are kind. You are not my friend. Nobody likes you.*
- From God – where do you hear people tell you the truth? Who reads the Bible to you? Who prays with you? Who teaches you more about God? *You could draw out specific things God says as well.*



Write these messages on post-it notes and stick them onto the play figure.

Some of these messages say the same things about us as God says. We want those to stick on to us firmly. But some don't say what God would say about us. We want those to drop off, so we can leave them behind. *Sort through the post-it notes – stick or drop?*

It is good to listen to your parents because they love you and want what is best for you. Can you think of something your parents ask you to do that you sometimes find hard, but you know they're right? Can you imagine being happy to listen?

Because God made us, because God knows us better and loves us more even than our own parents do, we listen to him more than anyone else.



## Brain break

### Marco Polo!

Choose one child to be blindfolded and stand in the middle of the room. The other children scatter around the room and stand still. The blindfolded child calls out "Marco", and the others respond loudly with "Polo." When the children say "Polo", they can take one step in any direction to change their position. The blindfolded child listens carefully to work out where the other children are. That child can take as many steps as they like in a single direction to try and tag someone. If they manage, the tagged child becomes blindfolded. If they don't tag anyone they can shout Marco again and have another try.

➡ **Link:** This game was all about focusing on one voice amongst a room of noise in order to find someone. As we grow up we make choices all the time about who we are listening to. The God who made and loves us wants us to listen to him.

**You will need:** Scarf to use as a blindfold

continued →





## Heart & hands

### CRAFT TIME

#### Make an identity bracelet

Colour in a strip along 2 edges of the paper, fold the opposite corner up to the coloured corner so that the colour still shows. With the coloured side facing the table now fold the long edge over just a couple of centimetres and continue folding over until you reach the triangle point – making a strip with the colour strip on the outside.

This strip of folded paper becomes an ID bracelet – give the children some different options of labels to add to their bracelets – which ones are saying the same things about them as God does – those are the ones they should stick on.

Point to the different labels they have chosen. God tells us who we are – we need to let his words stick the most.



**You will need:** Colouring pens, sellotape, and either a printout of p.16 or a square of paper with small labels cut out to attach to your bracelet.

**Prepare in advance:** Use the labels on the printout or make labels to add with words like, "loved", "beautiful", "child of God", prepare some false options so they can select the ones that sound like those that God would say about them.

### Think time

**Big Question:** Who should we listen to most about who we are?  
(Show series visual as a reminder)

**A follow up question:** How can we decide which messages should stick and which should be dropped?

### Prayer

**Say together:** Heavenly Father, thank you that you made us, you know us and you love us. Thank you that you tell us who we are, your loved children. Help us to listen to you. Amen



## 8s and over lesson plan



### Notes

**You will need:** Blindfolds and a very simple course to navigate.

**You will need:** A swim ring or Hula Hoop, or just a big coat. Post-it notes / marker pen, Bibles, series overview visual (see p. 15)

continued →



### Get going

#### Listen to Your Leader

Split the children into pairs/threes. Each group will need a leader and a follower, the follower wears the blindfold, the leader gives the directions. The leader stands on the opposite side of the room to the follower and gives instructions to guide them safely around the obstacles to meet them. The children guiding often don't notice trip hazards or low overhead obstacles; keep a close eye on the safety of those who are blindfolded.

Add a twist – groups travel at the same time! Now the leader has to give good instructions and the follower has to listen to the right voice.

➔ **Link:** In today's lesson we are thinking about who we listen to about who we are. We want to be people who listen carefully to the voice of God our creator, because he made us and loves us.



### Teaching time

#### Created By God

Read Genesis 1:27 (NIV):

*"So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them."*

Because God made us, and made us like him, he knows us better than anyone else. Because he made us, knows us and loves us he gets to tell us who we are. Just like the person who designed and built a car can tell you how it runs, our creator is best placed to tell us who we are.

Check understanding: Where do we go to find out how something works? *Instruction manual*. Where might we go to find out God's instructions for us? *The Bible*.

#### Listening to God

Read Psalm 112:1 (NIV):

*"Praise the Lord. Blessed are those who fear the Lord, who find great delight in his commands."*

This verse describes a person who listens to who God says they are and lets him direct how they live.

- How are they described? *Blessed, happy, praising, delighting*
- Is that a surprise to you? Why/ why not?



Show and explain the series overview visual. In our lives, we hear messages from ourselves - these are thoughts and feelings (point to the thought clouds); messages from others - people we know, TV, social media (point to the speech bubbles); and messages from God - what he has written in the Bible (point to the Bible). The crown shows this person is letting God's messages be the ones in charge - they only let other messages stick if they say the same things as God says. The person is happy because they are listening to God.

Use a Hula Hoop/swim ring. Write "I am who God says I am" on the ring.

Stand in the ring - who God says you are is a secure and unchanging identity, a bubble of truth you can live safely inside.

Let's think about some different messages we hear:

- From Me - what might you say to yourselves, or feel about yourselves? When you're learning, playing, doing sport or lying in bed? e.g. *I'm not good enough, nobody will ever love me, I'm amazing.*
- From Others - what do you hear from family, friends, teachers, mean kids, social media, TV, YouTube? e.g. *If you do this you will be happy. All the cool people look like this. You are unique. You can be anything you want to be.*
- From God - where do you hear people tell you the truth? Who reads the Bible or prays with you? Who teaches you more about God? Who encourages you? What are some messages from the Bible that you know God says about you? *You could draw out specific things God says as well. Be ready to give your own examples. Help them think about pressures they feel and values they pick up, not just words they might hear.*

Write messages on post-it notes and stick them on the ring.

We can work out which of these messages should stick and which can be dropped by measuring them against who God says we are. If it sounds like what God says about me - it can stick. If it doesn't - drop it!

So why does God get to tell us who we are and how to live? Because he made us. *He doesn't change. His words are true.*

Other voices can change - sometimes saying true things, other times saying untrue or unkind things. God's message doesn't change, he only ever says true things, so we can trust him.

This is what it means to live saying, "I am who God says I am". We can navigate the confusion by knowing the voice of our maker and letting his voice be the one we measure others against.

If you want a momentary energy burst, the children could practise bouncing off each other.

If you have time, if you want to go further, ask what their biggest decisions are. Do any feel particularly difficult? What different messages are they hearing?



## Brain break

### Listen Up!

Stand your group in a circle. When you say "walk" they walk. When you say "stop" they stop. Then swap the actions over. When you say "walk" they stop and when you say "stop" they walk. The last person to successfully follow the command is out.



Mix it up by adding in “clap” and “spin”, initially to be followed correctly, then to do the opposite command to the one the leader says.



➔ **Link:** The only way to win is by listening to the instructor very carefully. The only way to win at life is by listening to our creator.



## Heart & hands

### Did you spot it?

- “So God created human beings in his image. In the image of God he created them. He created them male and female.” Genesis 1:27 What have we learnt from Genesis 1:27 that tells us who we are?
- “Praise the Lord. Blessed are those who fear the Lord, who find great delight in his commands.” Psalm 112:1 How is the person who listens to God described here? What does that mean?
- What reasons have we heard for why we should listen to God?

### Work it out

- Who do we find ourselves listening to or being influenced by? Are there messages you hear from them very loudly?
- What do you want to remember to help you make good decisions as you hear so many messages?
- Listening to the messages from your own head and heart is more complicated. Can you think of some of those messages that have been helpful and true? And can you think of some that you have wanted to ignore or change?

### Live it out

Look at case study picture A (see p.17) with the girl sitting on the sofa watching YouTube dance videos on a screen – thinking negative things about herself - “I’ll never be as good as her - I’m rubbish.”

- What messages is she picking up about herself?
- Where are they coming from?
- What could you say to her from today’s truth that could help?

Look at the case study picture B (see p.18) with the boy looking nervously at a group of mates - with one confident hair flicking cool lad saying “I don’t let anyone tell me what to do”. The boy looking on is thinking... “That sounds quite cool - is that right?”

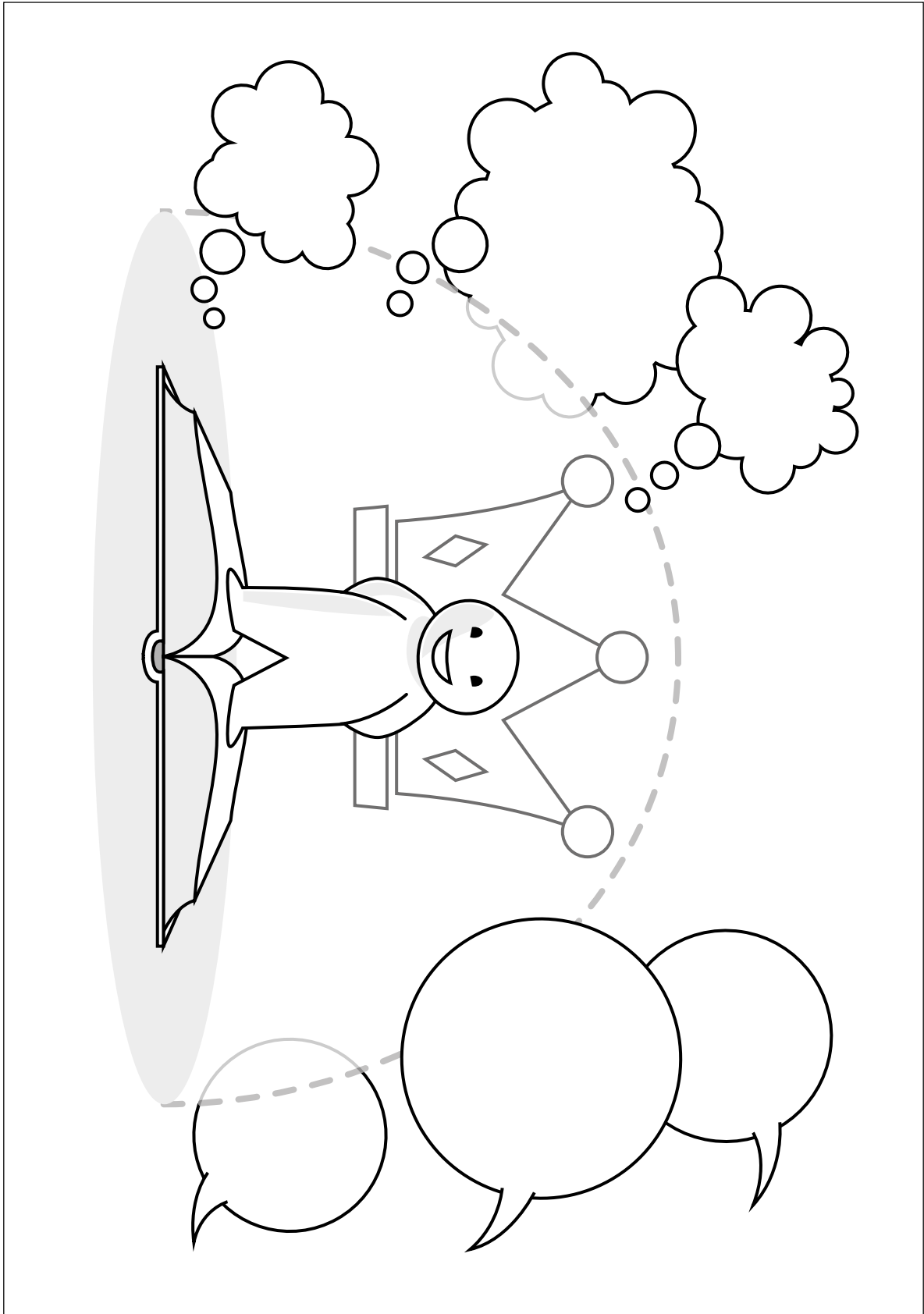
- Why does “I don’t let anyone tell me what to do” sound good?
- How could “I am who God says I am” be even better?
- Who do you trust to decide what is best for your life, you - or God?

### Prayer

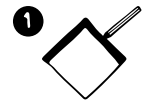
What help do you think you need to let **who God says you are** be the identity ring that you live inside? Ask God for that help now. Ask him to help you hear his voice and his truth louder than any other messages you might hear. Ask him to help you drop what is unhelpful and stick with what is true.

*We have found that this is where children make the most progress relating the Bible to their everyday lives. Please leave enough time for this section*

*These questions can mostly be found on the **Chat Time** (see p.19-20) sheet which has been designed to aid your discussion. If possible, enlarge the page to A3 so you can work on it together. Make sure each child can still answer the personal questions honestly for themselves (e.g. hand out Post-it notes for them to write/draw their answers to these questions).*



**What you do:**



1 Colour 2 edges of the square piece of paper (about 1cm).



2 Fold the bottom corner of the paper up allowing the coloured edge to still be seen



3 Turn over



4 Fold the bottom of the paper over (about 1cm).



5 Keep folding and then secure the end with tape.



6 Stick on your label.



A large empty rectangular box for drawing or coloring the craft project.

Beautiful	Loved	Unwanted
Child of God	Ugly	









Case study picture B



# Heart & Hands Chat Time



**Genesis 1:27 and Psalm 112:1**

Look at these verses together and find the answers

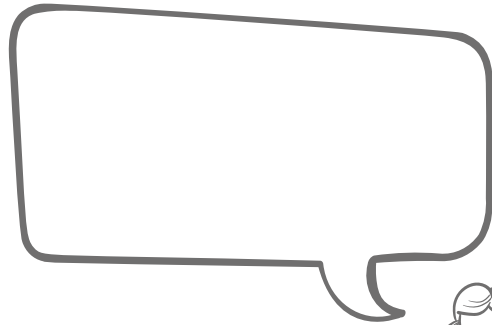


## Did you spot it?

How is the person who listens to God described?  
(circle the answers described in Psalm 112:1)

- Sad**      **Happy**
- Angry**    **Praising**
- Blessed**   **Grumbling**
- Delighting**

What does Genesis 1:27 tell you about who you are?



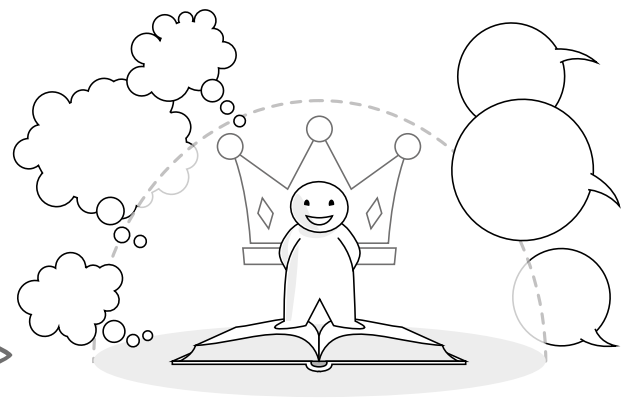
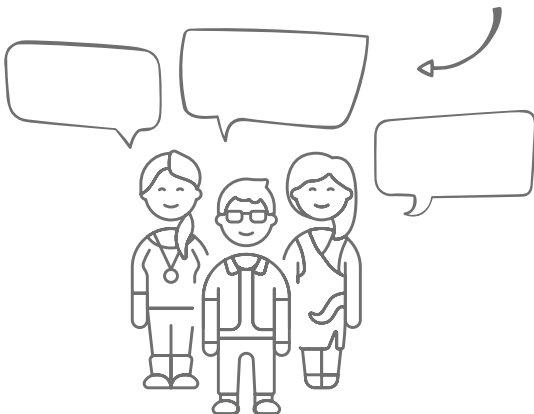
Why should we listen to what God has to say?



## Work it out

Give everyone a chance to answer

Who do we find ourselves listening to or being influenced by? What are the other messages that we hear?



Listening to the messages of your own head and heart is more complicated. Can you think of some of those messages that have been helpful and true? And some that you have wanted to ignore or change?





# Heart & Hands Chat Time



Live it out



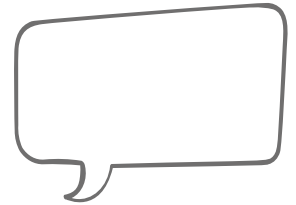
What messages is she picking up about herself?



Where are they coming from?

- God
- Family
- Friends
- TV
- People on social media

What could you say to her from today's bible truth that could help?



Why does "I don't let anyone tell me what to do" sound good?

How could "I am who God says I am" be even better?

Who do you trust to decide what is best for your life?

**You      God**

Ask God to help you hear his voice and his truth louder than any other messages you might hear, ask him to help you drop what is unhelpful and stick with what is true.





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# GROWING

God's  
Good  
Story

Take  
home  
truth

LESSON 1

I am who God says I am

Genesis 1:26-27 • Psalm 112:1

faith  kids



## Read and understand

### I am who God says I am

GEN 1:26-27, PSALM 112:1

**TRUTH** = We are made by God, he knows who we truly are.

**FAITH** = Children who listen to God, trusting that he knows what is best for them.

*"So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them: male and female he created them."* **GENESIS 1:27**

*"Praise the Lord. Blessed are those who fear the Lord, who find great delight in his commands."* **PSALM 112:1**

## Series overview

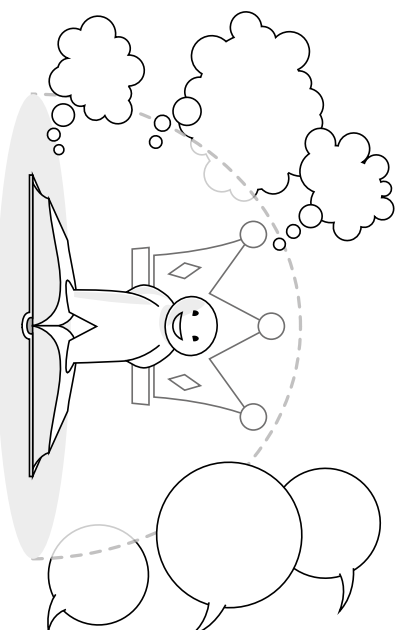
Because God created us, he knows us better than anyone else. He gets to tell us who we are.

We pick up many different messages, which shape who we think we are. Messages come from:

- Ourselves (the thought clouds)
- Others around us (the speech bubbles)
- God (the Bible)

This visual will be shown throughout the series to help our children understand that these messages are not equal. The crown shows that

God's messages are most important – we only let other messages stick if they say the same things as God says. God made us and loves us more than anyone, great delight comes from listening to him.



## Talk together



### 7 and Under

Who are the people in your life who tell you what to do? Which is the best voice to keep listening to? Why?



### 8 and Over

The confident looking boy is saying, "I don't let anyone tell me what to do!" Who is he trusting to know what is best for his life, him, or God?

How could saying, "I am who God says I am" be even better?



## Live it out

Help your child to look for the messages they hear, see and feel. When they watch TV, read, argue with a friend, are praised at school, ask:

- What messages are you picking up about who you are? *From TV, friends, feelings.*
- Are they saying the same things about you as God does? *Should they stick or drop? Use the series diagram to help.*

## Connect to the truth

- God made us and loves us
- God tells us who we are
- Listen to God!

## Pray

Use objects to help you connect with God.

1. BIBLE – ask God to help you listen to the truth that he tells you in his word the most.
2. MIRROR – What big truth about who you are could you write on your mirror? Thank God for that truth whenever you see it.

Let's be people who are ready to listen to the God who made us and loves us.



We've got more on this topic on our podcasts. Listen in and carry on the conversation.





Faith in Kids exists to encourage, inspire and equip influencers of faith in children with support, training and resources.

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