

God Sees Aaron Make an Idol

Exodus 32:1-29; 40:12-15

2

August
Week 2

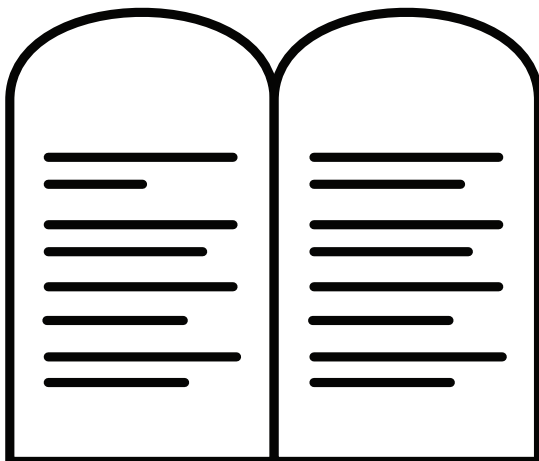
Teacher Background

What Happens: While Moses is up on a mountain listening to God, the Israelites get upset. They ask Aaron to make a god they can see. Aaron goes along with the crowd. He collects their gold and makes a golden calf, which they worship. Thankfully, God loves us even when we go along with the crowd, and he later allows Aaron to become a priest.

Why It Matters: Most kids are familiar with peer pressure. They've at least been tempted to do things they know are wrong, because it's the "cool" thing to do. Help kids see that even when we do the wrong thing to fit in, God continues to love us. He can help us follow him instead of going along with the crowd.

Think About: When have you gone along with the crowd? What did you learn from that?

Pray that God will help kids follow him instead of giving in to peer pressure.



Point

God loves us even when we go along with the crowd.



Key Verse

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take."

Proverbs 3:5-6

QUICK TIP

Two or More intentionally uses open-ended questions that allow kids to share their own opinions and stories, rather than questions that stunt discussion by seeking only one answer. When you ask a question with a specific right answer in mind, kids (like all of us) have a strong desire to respond with the correct answer. They want to impress everyone. When kids don't know an answer, they may feel frustrated or embarrassed because they want to be accepted by "the crowd."

This Lesson at a Glance



WHAT HAPPENS	KIDS DISCOVER
CHECK IN Connect about the week.	The importance of friendships at church.
SET THE STAGE Share about a topic related to the lesson.	The connection between their world and the Bible.
EXPERIENCE THE BIBLE Try to lean against the crowd as they learn about Aaron.	How God can help us when it's hard to go against the crowd.
HANDS-ON DISCOVERY Experiment with static electricity.	What can draw us to follow certain people instead of God.
PLAY A GAME Play a version of Simon Says that keeps getting harder.	What can make it hard to go against the crowd.
PRAY TOGETHER Each receive a blessing as they stand strong for God!	That God blesses them as they seek to follow him.

EASY SUPPLIES

- o Bible
- o inflated balloons
- o wool or fleece (yarn also works well)
- o paper plates
- o non-toxic powders such as baking soda, cornstarch, salt, and pepper
- o various paper types such as tissue paper, crepe paper, and construction paper
- o aluminum foil
- o candy or other individually wrapped snack (1 per child)
- o paper plate



CELEBRATE SMALL

One of the big advantages of your class size is your ability to hear from *all* the kids during check in and other discussion times. Everyone gets a chance to be seen and known!



CHECK IN (5 MINUTES)

- Thank kids for coming and have kids give a side hug to a friend.
- Make announcements and collect offering.
- Celebrate any birthdays by having kids say “happy birthday” in a squeaky voice.

ASK: Tell one fun thing that happened this week. Share your own quick story first, and then let everyone share! For groups of more than six, have kids share in pairs so everyone has a turn to talk.



SET THE STAGE (5 MINUTES)

SAY: Today we’re going to learn that ➡ **God loves us even when we go along with the crowd.** Since we’re talking about going along with the crowd, let’s talk about crowded places.

ASK: Tell about a crowded place you’ve been. Share your own quick story first, and then let everyone share!

SAY: Sometimes when we’re around a lot of people, they can try to get us to do wrong things. God doesn’t want us to do wrong, but ➡ **he loves us even when we go along with the crowd.** Let’s see what happened when Aaron went along with the crowd in the Bible.



EXPERIENCE THE BIBLE (10 MINUTES)



SUPPLIES

- Bible

LEAN



Open your Bible to Exodus 32, and show kids the words.

SAY: God gave his people 10 important rules, called the Ten Commandments. The first two rules on the list were to worship only God and not to make any idols.

But in today’s Bible story, the people wanted to make an idol to worship. Uh-oh! That wasn’t God’s plan.

Moses was their leader, but he was on a mountain talking with God. While he was away, Aaron was in charge.

Here’s what the people said to Aaron.



Read Exodus 32:1.

SAY: The right thing for Aaron to do would be to go against the crowd and say, “No. We can’t make idols, and we should worship only the one true God!”

Let’s try something to see if we can be strong enough to go against the crowd.

- Have kids sit in a shoulder-to-shoulder line. If you have only one or two kids, make sure adult and teen helpers join the line.
- Choose one child in the line to try to lean to the right while everyone else leans to the left.

- Repeat several times, letting one person at a time be the one to lean against the crowd and having them lean different directions each time.

ASK: What was it like trying to go against the crowd? Invite responses from everyone.

SAY: Well, it doesn't seem like Aaron tried very hard to go against the crowd. Listen to this!



Read Exodus 32:2-5.

SAY: Oh no! Aaron definitely leaned the same way as the crowd.

Have kids lean again, this time with no one trying to lean against the crowd.

SAY: God wasn't too happy about this. He told Moses to quickly go down the mountain. When Moses went down and saw all the celebration around the idol, he smashed the Ten Commandments to show that the Israelites had already broken their relationship with God.

You might think that was the end of the story for Aaron. He really messed up! But ➡ **God loves us even when we go along with the crowd.** God gave Aaron another chance later. Aaron and his sons became the priests in God's special tent, the Tabernacle. Listen to this.



Read Exodus 40:13-15.

Have everyone lean one way.

SAY: God doesn't want us to go along with the crowd. But when we do, God still loves us. And he can give us another chance. He can pull us out of the crowd (pull out one child) and set us apart to do special things for him.



TALK ABOUT IT

ASK: What's something that's really popular at your school or with your friends? Do you think it's a good thing to go along with or not?

SAY: Sometimes we go along with the crowd without even thinking about whether or not we're making a good choice. Thankfully, ➡ **God loves us even when we go along with the crowd.** But God is also there to set us apart and help us make better choices.



SUPPLIES

- inflated balloons
- wool or fleece (yarn also works well)
- paper plates
- non-toxic powders such as baking soda, cornstarch, salt, and pepper
- various paper types such as tissue paper, crepe paper, and construction paper
- aluminum foil

EASY PREP

- Place the powders on separate paper plates, labeling each one.
- Tear or cut the papers and foil into small pieces.

MAKE STATIC ELECTRICITY

SAY: In our Bible story, Aaron didn't make good choices. He went along with the crowd. Let's do an experiment to see what some static electricity can teach us about that.

- Set out balloons and wool or fleece.
- Have kids rub balloons on wool or fleece for about 10 seconds to create a static charge.
- Have kids choose an item from the powders or papers and guess whether or not the item will go along with the balloon due to static.
- Allow time for kids to test the item and see how it compares with their expectations.
- Kids will need to "recharge" each balloon between tests, and they should make a guess for each item before testing.
- Kids can also test different objects in the room—the wall, chairs, underneath tables, and so on.
- Encourage kids to be creative as they try different possibilities.

TALK ABOUT IT

ASK: What surprised you about this experiment?

SAY: It was challenging to guess if certain things would be attracted to the balloon. It was fun to see how some things had a strong attraction, while others were attracted but held their ground.

ASK: What attracts you to hang out with certain people?

SAY: We may be drawn or attracted to a crowd for different reasons. Maybe they wear cool clothes, play sports we like, or say funny things. But if they don't follow God, we may end up following them in the wrong direction.

The good news is that ➡ **God loves us even when we go along the with crowd.** He forgives us and gives us wisdom to steer us back toward him.





PLAY AN INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT GAME OF SIMON SAYS

SAY: God's love and forgiveness was good news for Aaron because he chose the wrong thing just to fit in!

ASK: When is it hardest for you *not* to go along with the crowd?

SAY: This game will really put you to the test! Can you avoid going along with the crowd?

- Play a game of Simon Says—you're Simon.
- You'll do a *different* action than the one you call out to try to trick kids.
- Any kids who follow your action rather than your spoken instruction will join you in the front and continue doing the wrong motion to try to trick other kids. As you invite kids who messed up, say things like:
You went along with the crowd, but I still love you. Come join me!
- Let the game keep going as time allows.



TALK ABOUT IT

ASK: What made it hard to follow my instructions in this game?

ASK: What can make it hard for you to follow God's way of living?

SAY: If you watched what I was doing, it might have been hard to follow what I *said* to do. Sometimes it's easier to follow what you see everyone else doing, even if it doesn't match what God says. God wants us to follow his way, but ➡ **God loves us even when we go along with the crowd.**

QUICK TIP

If you have fewer than four kids, have only one child up front at a time doing the wrong motion.



PRAY TOGETHER (5 MINUTES)



QUICK TIP

If you have a few preteens, empower them to pass on the blessing to the younger kids. You'll help raise them up as leaders!

SAY: It can be hard to stand strong and choose God's way. But there's good news—God will help you. God loves you and gives you the strength you need.

ASK: What do you picture when you think of someone who is strong? Strike a pose to show me now! Allow time for kids to make muscles or stand like a superhero. Then invite them to relax again.

SAY: A blessing is a prayer that asks God to prepare something or someone for special work. You might bless food before you eat it and ask God to prepare the food to help you stay healthy and strong. You could ask God to bless our church leaders and help them do God's special work.

Today I'd like to pray a blessing over each of you. I'll ask God to help you stand strong and get ready to choose God's way this week, rather than going with the crowd.

I'll call each of you by name. When I do, please stand up and strike a strong pose again. Hold that pose while I pray a blessing for you. Then you may have a seat and I'll call the next person.

Walk to each child, calling the child by name. As you bless each child, place your hand on his or her shoulder.

PRAY: Dear God, please bless [child's name]. Help [child's name] stand strong and follow you.

SAY: ➡ **God loves us even when we go along with the crowd.** May God bless you and keep you and help you choose his way each and every day!



LOSE A TREAT

SAY: ➡ **God loves us even when we go along with the crowd.** Let's look at a Bible verse that talks about God's love for us, even when we aren't making good choices. Even though we didn't deserve it, Jesus died for us.

Let's do something to help us think more about what Jesus did for us.

Place the candy or snack on the plate, and place it on the floor in the center of the room. Have kids form a circle around the treat.

SAY: We have a special treat today. But before you eat, I need to see if you *deserve* a treat. I have a few commands for you...

- If you've ever said something that wasn't true, take a giant step backward. Pause. If kids don't move, remind them of the importance of being honest.
- If you've ever said something unkind, take a giant step backward. Pause.
- If you've ever whined and complained, take a giant step backward. Pause.
- If you've ever argued with a brother, sister, or friend, take a giant step backward. Pause.
- If you've ever chosen not to do something your mom or dad asked you to do, take a giant step backward. Pause.
- If you've ever taken a cookie or another treat that you weren't supposed to eat, take a giant step backward. Pause.

Make sure kids are all far enough away from the treat that they won't be able to reach it. If not, repeat some of the statements, or come up with some of your own.

SAY: Now, if you can reach the treat without moving from where you're standing, you can have one. Pause.

It doesn't look like any of us deserve a treat today.

GET A TREAT

Ask kids to sit down.

SAY: Our verse today reminds us that even though we didn't deserve it, Jesus died for us. Jesus came to us to bring love and forgiveness.

Pick up the plate, and bring it within reach of each child so kids can take a treat. As kids enjoy their treat, lead this discussion.

ASK: How was what I just did like what Jesus did for us?

ASK: How did God show that kind of love and forgiveness to Aaron?

SAY: Maybe you've done something kind of like Aaron did. You probably didn't make a cow statue out of gold jewelry, but you might have done something you knew was wrong just to fit in or look cool.

SUPPLIES

- candy or other individually wrapped snack (1 per child)
- paper plate

QUICK TIP

There may be kids who deny ever having done anything wrong. If that happens in your group, simply say, "We've all done wrong things. Let's all take a couple of steps back."

