

## Blessed Are . . .

It makes us happy  
to do the things God  
wants us to do.

### Scripture Words

Blessed are those who  
work for peace;  
they will be called  
children of God.  
—Matthew 5:9 Inclusive  
New Testament

## Here We Come!

As each child arrives, greet and hug them with phrases such as “Bless you, my child. Thank you for coming” or “Blessings to you, Kyle. I’m so glad you’re here.” Serve a simple snack, pausing to “bless” the food. As the children eat, find out what they understand about the word “bless” or “blessing.”

## Scripture Words and Worship

Blessings were important to people who lived during the time the Bible was written. The familiar word “blessed” is used over and over in the Beatitudes. The definition usually given for the word is “happy.” Children can understand this connection. Introduce them to the Beatitude from verse nine. It has many abstract concepts, but children can begin to understand its meaning with concrete examples. Name each child and repeat the phrases “You are blessed” or “You are a child of God” followed by “You are all children of God.” “Work for peace” can be repeated while pretending to build a house for Habitat, pick up trash, or share a ball or toy passed from person to person.

## Moving Music

Two songs in *Sing for Peace* have parts that children can learn and recognize when heard in the larger congregation.

- “Go, My Children” SP 44 Skip the third line of each verse, as the words are more complicated. The first and fourth verses have words that fit the theme of blessings and being God’s children.
- “Peace for Everyone” SP 46 The melody is simple and the words lend themselves to actions. The children can learn this song, and then lead the congregation in the singing.

## Up and at 'Em

Take a walk, pretending to follow a herd of sheep. Take along a blanket and a card table to make a tent. Someone will also have to carry the food and other supplies. Stop to rest under the tent and serve snacks.

## Sense-ations

People need to eat all kinds of food to help their bodies grow. Sheep need to eat grass or hay. Have a sample of each for the children to examine. (A shredded wheat biscuit can be used for hay.) Which do they think the sheep would choose first?

Sample the biscuit. Talk about its dryness. What would the sheep need next? How do sheep drink water? Where do they get water? How do people drink water? Where does that water come from?

## Live and Learn

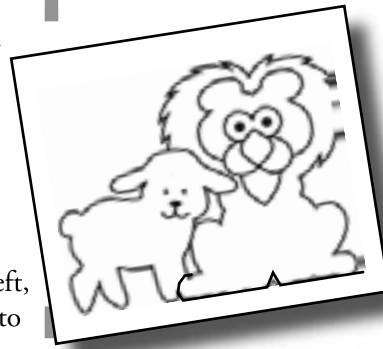
Genesis, chapter 13, has a story about sharing in a peaceful manner that children can identify with. Tell the story of Lot and Abraham dividing the land. Include the children and their experiences whenever possible.

- Abraham and Lot were part of a very big family. Abraham was Lot's uncle.
- Abraham and his wife had lots of animals and servants to take care of them.
- Lot and his wife had lots of animals and servants to take care of them.
- The animals needed grass to eat, so Abraham and his family and Lot and his family had to keep moving from place to place to find good grass.
- The families and the servants would sleep in tents they brought along with them. Have you ever slept in a tent?
- One day Abraham heard a noise that sounded like people arguing. He went to see what was wrong. Abraham's servants and Lot's servants were all trying to feed their animals in the same place. It was too crowded. Everyone was bumping into everyone else.
- Abraham said to Lot, "There should be no arguing between you and me, or between your herdsmen and mine" (Genesis 13:8 YB).
- Lot agreed, but he didn't know how to solve the problem. What do you think they should have done?
- Abraham looked at the beautiful land. He saw rivers and trees and grass and space to graze wherever he looked. He said to Lot, "We should separate. The whole land is there in front of you. If you go to the left, I will go to the right. If you go to the right, I will go to the left" (Genesis 13:9 YB).
- Abraham let Lot choose first, even though Abraham was the oldest. If you let someone else choose first, do you always get what you wanted? Why did Abraham let Lot choose first? What would Jesus think of the way Abraham and Lot solved their problem?

## Story Talking

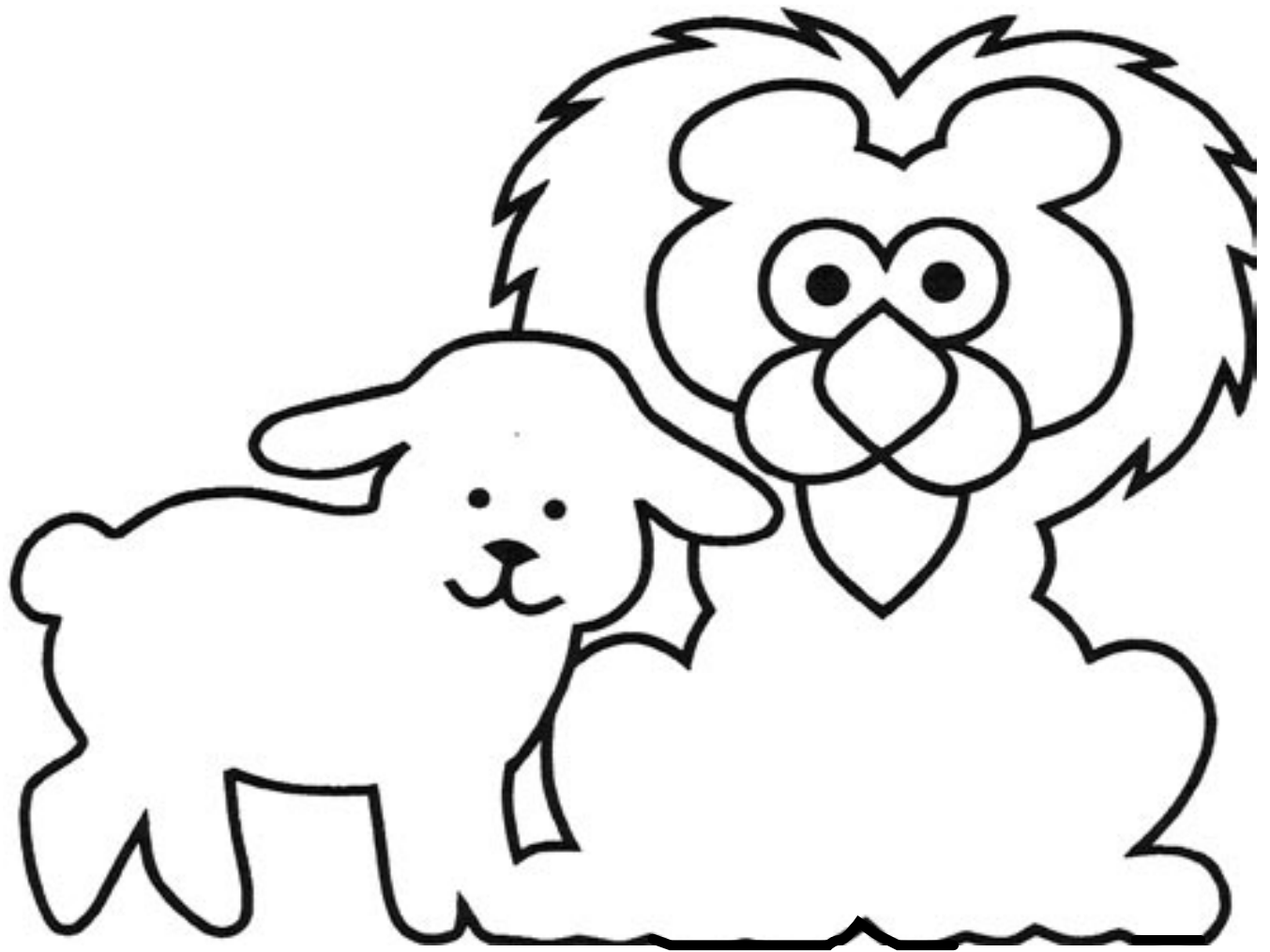
When Jesus was talking to the people on the hillside and telling them how to be happy, he knew it would not always be easy. Sometimes sharing is our first choice and sometimes we choose to put ourselves first. Children who are two, three, four, and five are still in an "I'm most important" mode. It takes practice and encouragement to learn to share what you have with others and think of others first.

Plan an activity where the children play together and have opportunities to share. Work on a picture that requires sharing crayons. Make individual sheep with cotton balls and arrange them on the community-made picture for their classroom. Build something together.



## There We Go

Color the picture of the lion and lamb with the scripture verse, found in the pattern section, page 45. Children may want to draw themselves into the picture.



Blessed are the  
peacemakers for  
they shall be called  
the children of God.  
—Matthew 5:9