Preschool–Grade 6

Jacob and Esau

Sunday School Lesson for Preschool (Ages 3–5), 20–30 minutes

Main point: God wants me to tell the truth and be kind.
Bible passage: Genesis 25:19–34, Genesis 27 and Genesis 32–33. Read them yourself before class.
Memory verse: "Be ye kind one to another" *Ephesians 4:32 (KJV, part).*
You need: a Bible, a fuzzy sock or a piece of fake fur, a smooth plastic lid, crayons, and one take-home sheet for each child.
Before class: put a bookmark in your Bible at Genesis 27. Put the fuzzy sock and the smooth lid in a bag.

1. Opening game: Hairy or Smooth? (5 minutes)

Kids close their eyes. Let each child reach into the bag and feel one thing. Ask, "Is it hairy or smooth?" Then show them both. Say: "Today we will hear a true story about two brothers. One brother was hairy, and one brother was smooth."

2. Bible story (5 minutes)

Hold up your Bible open to Genesis 25. Say: "This story is true. It is in God's Word." Read each line slowly and do the motion. When you see **Say it with me**, the kids say the line back to you.

God gave Isaac and Rebekah twin baby boys (Genesis 25:24). *(Rock a baby in your arms.)*

Esau was born first. He was hairy (25:25). *(Rub your arms.)*

Jacob held on to Esau's heel (25:26). *(Grab your heel.)*

Esau grew up to be a hunter (25:27). *(Shade your eyes and look far away.)*

Jacob stayed home by the tents (25:27). *(Make a tent with your hands over your head.)*

Jacob cooked red stew. Esau traded for it (25:30–34). *(Stir a pot.)*

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The story continues:
Father Isaac was old. He could not see (27:1). *(Cover your eyes.)*
Jacob wore goat skins on his hands to feel hairy like Esau (27:16). *(Rub the backs of your hands.)*
Jacob said, "I am Esau." That was not true. It was a lie (27:19). *(Shake your head no.)*
Say it with me: "Tell the truth!"
Esau cried and cried (27:34). *(Rub your eyes.)*
Jacob went far away (27:43). *(Walk in place.)*
Many years later, Jacob came home (32:9). *(Walk in place.)*
Esau ran to Jacob and hugged him. They cried (33:4). *(Hug yourself.)*
Say it with me: "Be kind!"

3. Questions to ask (3 minutes)

1. Who was hairy, Jacob or Esau? *(Esau, Genesis 25:25)*
2. Did Jacob tell the truth? *(No. He said, "I am Esau," 27:19)*
3. What did Esau do when Jacob came home? *(He ran and hugged him, 33:4)*

4. Memory verse (3 minutes)

Say: "God says, 'Be ye kind one to another.' Ye means you. Be kind to each other." Teach the motions: put your hand on your heart for "be ye kind," then point to the other kids for "one another." Say the verse with the motions three times: in a normal voice, in a whisper, and in a happy loud voice. Then say "Ephesians 4:32" and clap two times.

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5. What this means for us (3 minutes)

Say: "God wants us to tell the truth, and God loves you! Everyone has done wrong things. That is called sin (Romans 3:23). Jesus is God. He came to earth as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). Jesus died for our sins. He was buried. Then He rose again (1 Corinthians 15:3–4)! The Bible tells us what to do (Acts 2:38). We repent: we tell God we are sorry, and we stop doing wrong. We are baptized in Jesus' name, down under the water, and our sins are washed away. And God gives us the Holy Ghost. That is God's own Spirit in us. When people are filled with the Holy Ghost, they speak in other tongues, words God gives them (Acts 2:4)."
Pray with the kids, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.

6. Activity: The Hug at the End (5–10 minutes)

Give each child a take-home sheet. In the drawing box, help them draw the red stew and the bread, or two brothers hugging. While they color, ask: "Who told a lie? Who ran and gave a hug?" Then play a quick game: say "true" or "not true" about simple things ("The sky is blue!" "Dogs say moo!"), and the kids give a thumbs-up for true and a thumbs-down for not true.

7. Prayer

Say each line, and the kids say it after you:
"Thank You, God, for loving me.
Help me tell the truth.
Help me be kind.
In Jesus' name, amen."

Tips for little ones: keep the story moving and let every child do the motions. Let them feel the fuzzy sock again when you reach the goat skins. Send the take-home sheet home so parents can tell the story again this week.

About the hard parts: this lesson leaves out Esau's plan to kill Jacob (Genesis 27:41) and the wrestling at night (32:24–30). Read them yourself before class. If a child asks why Jacob went away, say gently, "Esau was very angry, so Jacob went far away. Years later they hugged."

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