

Lesson One: Our Father in Heaven

Scripture:

Luke 11:1-4, 15:11-24

Main Aim:

Love others with patience and kindness

**Memory Verse: "Love is patient, love is kind,...love never fails."
(1 Corinthians 13:4,8)**

(Keep visuals face down until indicated)

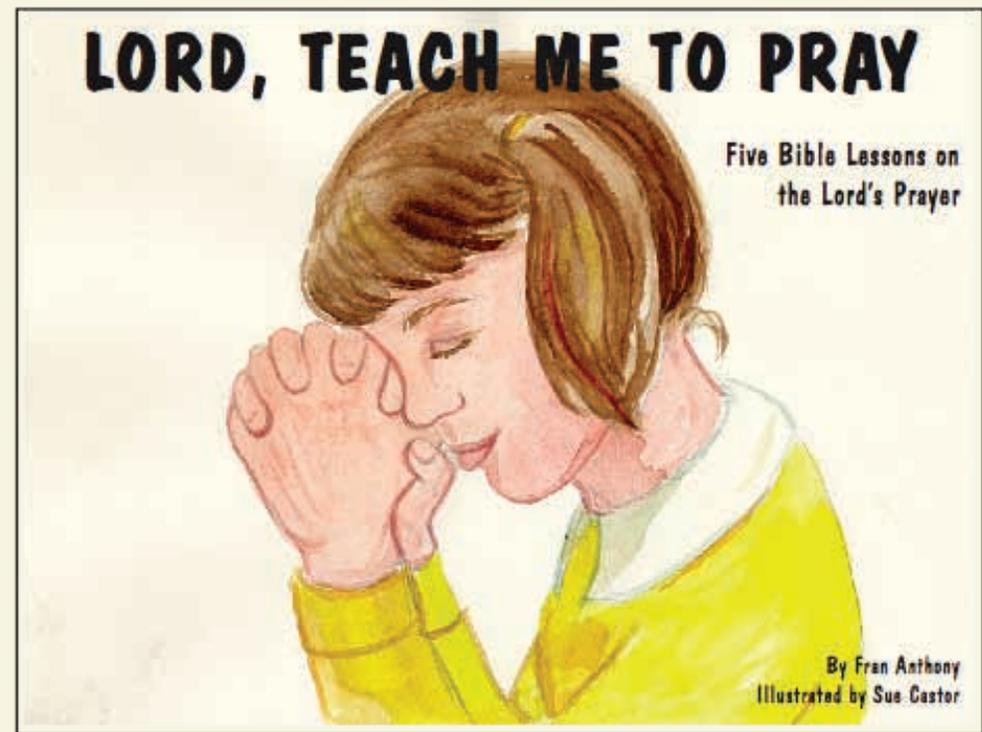
Today we will begin our first Bible lesson on the Lord's prayer. Praying is simply talking to God. Let's begin our time together by praying.

(Pray the following prayer or use your own words)

Dear Heavenly Father, thank You for the Bible, which teaches us about prayer. Thank You for the way You love us and want us to pray to You. In the next five Bible lessons, Lord, teach us to pray. It is in Jesus' name that we pray. Amen.

Long before this world was made, there was God. He never had a beginning; He has always been. Some things we cannot understand, and here is one of those things: God is one God, but three persons in one God. The names of the three persons are God the Father, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit.

One day Jesus left heaven and came to our earth. Many people celebrate the birth of baby Jesus at Christmas. Jesus grew into a man. Some people followed Him and believed He was God from heaven. They were called disciples. Jesus' disciples saw that Jesus spent much of His time praying. They wanted to learn to pray better. So, they asked him, "Lord, teach us to pray." The answer Jesus gave was for His disciples and also for all of us who follow Jesus. Jesus said to them, "When you pray, say:



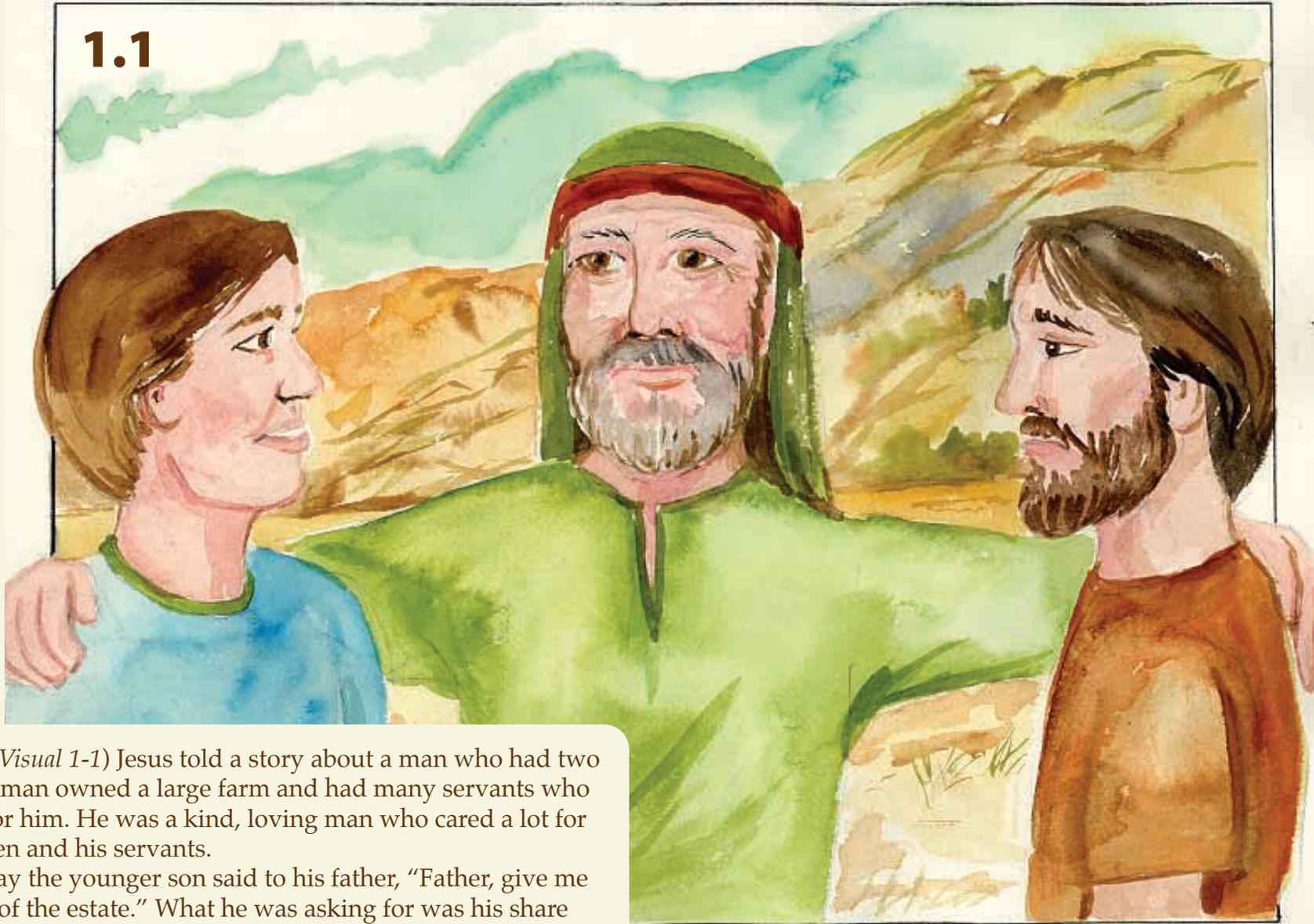
(Read the Lord's Prayer poster)"

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come, **Thy will be done** on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day **our daily bread**, and **forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors**, and **lead us not into temptation**, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

(Point to the poster and wait for a child to answer) To whom did Jesus say we should pray? Yes, to our Father in heaven. Today we are going to learn more about God the Father and what He is like.

What do you think our Father in heaven is like? Do you picture Him as a mean person who likes to punish people for doing wrong? Maybe you think God doesn't care how people live? Listen carefully to our Bible lesson today to see what our Father in heaven is really like.

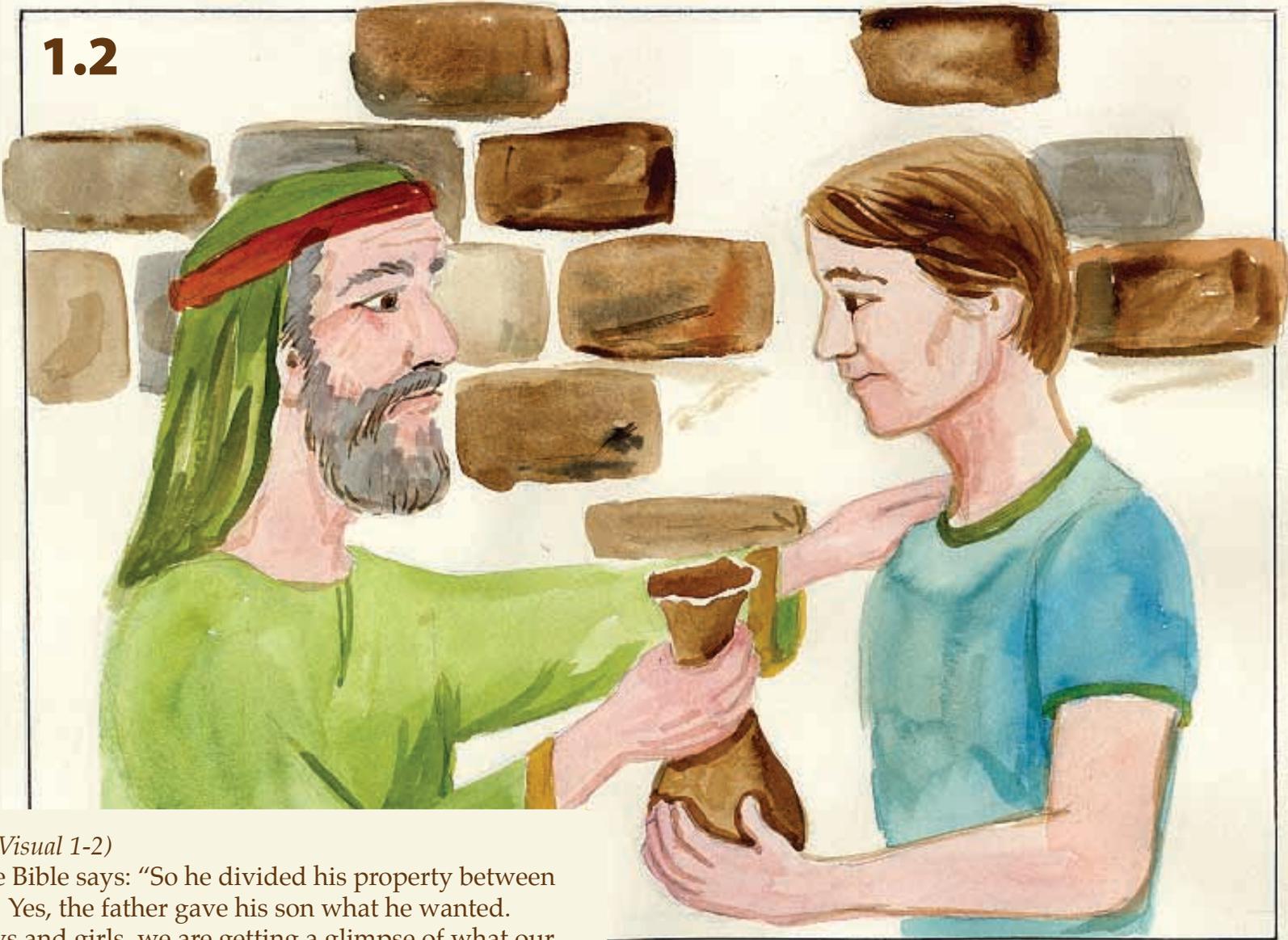
1.1



(*Show Visual 1-1*) Jesus told a story about a man who had two sons. The man owned a large farm and had many servants who worked for him. He was a kind, loving man who cared a lot for his children and his servants.

One day the younger son said to his father, “Father, give me my share of the estate.” What he was asking for was his share of all his father’s money. What a strange thing to ask his father! Usually, a father’s property and money are given after the father has died or is too sick to care for the farm. The son is thinking only of himself and not of others. The son was being selfish by asking for his share of his father’s estate, but did his father give it to him?

1.2

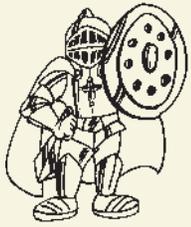


(Show Visual 1-2)

The Bible says: "So he divided his property between them." Yes, the father gave his son what he wanted.

Boys and girls, we are getting a glimpse of what our Heavenly Father is like. This father was showing great love for his son by treating him with patience and kindness. Our Heavenly Father shows love towards His children by treating them with patience and kindness. If you are a child of God, you need to be like your Heavenly Father and love others with patience and kindness.

Armor Ron is Neighborhood Bible Club's special character who



symbolizes what any child can become if he hears, believes, and obeys God's Word (based on Ephesians

6:10-18). He will demonstrate the movements to the theme and memory verse songs.

(Use same movements when phrases are repeated)

*Love is patient
right arm out
in front, palm up*



*love is kind
left arm out in
front, palm up*



*love never fails
shake pointer
fingers back and
forth while
shaking head
"no" at the
same time*



(Show Visual 1-3)

The Bible says in 1 Corinthians 13:4,8: "Love is patient, love is kind,...love never fails." (Allow children to answer the following questions) What does it mean to be patient? Can you give me an example of someone being patient with someone else? Our verse goes on to explain that the way to show real love is by being kind. Can you give me an example of how you can be kind to someone? As you show patience and kindness to others, (point to the word "fails") you won't fail them; you will be doing what is right. Let's sing our memory verse together. (Sing memory verse)

The father in our Bible lesson showed patience and kindness to his son by giving him the money. Listen to what the son does with it.

The Bible says: "Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had and set off for a distant country." He took the money, packed his bags, left his home, and went to a place far away.

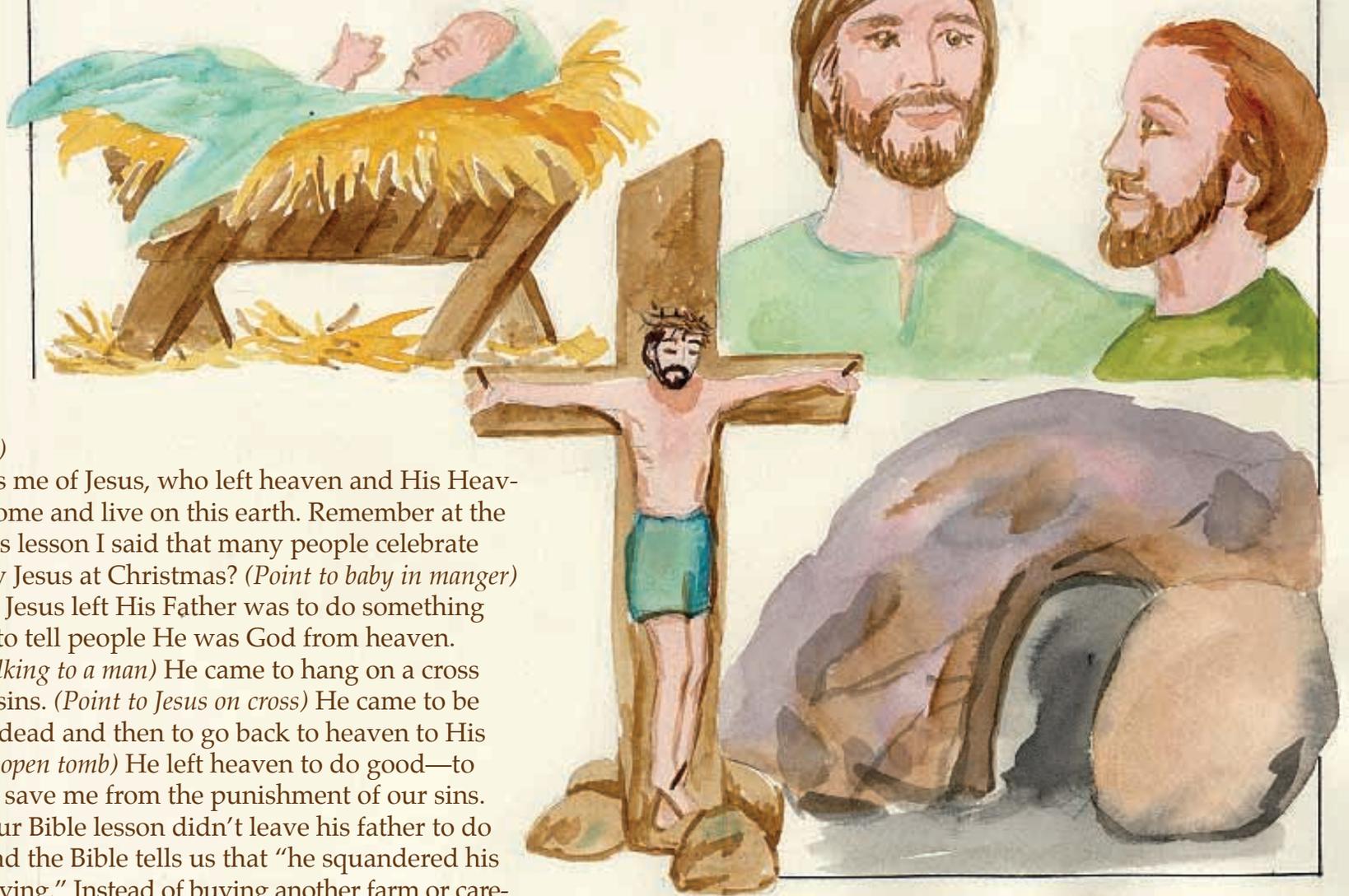
1 Corinthians 13:
*roll fists around
each other in a
forward motion*



*verses 4 and 8
roll fists around
each other in a
backward motion*



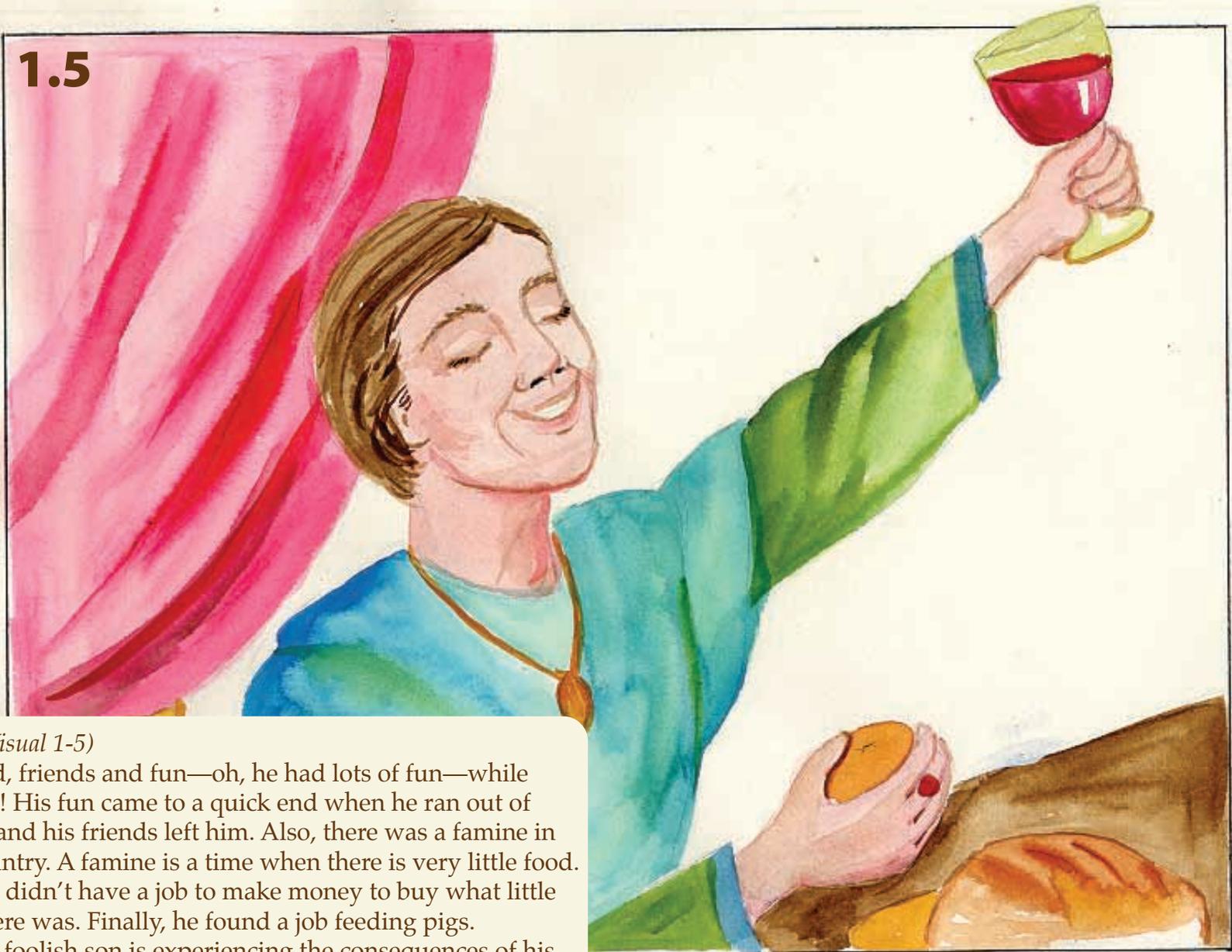
1.4



(Show Visual 1-4)

This reminds me of Jesus, who left heaven and His Heavenly Father to come and live on this earth. Remember at the beginning of this lesson I said that many people celebrate the birth of baby Jesus at Christmas? *(Point to baby in manger)* Well, the reason Jesus left His Father was to do something good. He came to tell people He was God from heaven. *(Point to Jesus talking to a man)* He came to hang on a cross and die for our sins. *(Point to Jesus on cross)* He came to be raised from the dead and then to go back to heaven to His Father. *(Point to open tomb)* He left heaven to do good—to save you and to save me from the punishment of our sins. But the son in our Bible lesson didn't leave his father to do good. No, instead the Bible tells us that "he squandered his wealth in wild living." Instead of buying another farm or carefully spending every cent, the son spent his money foolishly.

1.5



(Show Visual 1-5)

Food, friends and fun—oh, he had lots of fun—while it lasted! His fun came to a quick end when he ran out of money and his friends left him. Also, there was a famine in that country. A famine is a time when there is very little food. The son didn't have a job to make money to buy what little food there was. Finally, he found a job feeding pigs.

This foolish son is experiencing the consequences of his bad choices. He is a sinner. To sin is to be wrong in the way you think or act. The Bible says: "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). You and I are sinners for there are many things that we do wrong. Can you name some things we do that show we are sinners? *(Invite a variety of answers)* Jesus was the only person who ever lived on this earth without sinning.

1.6

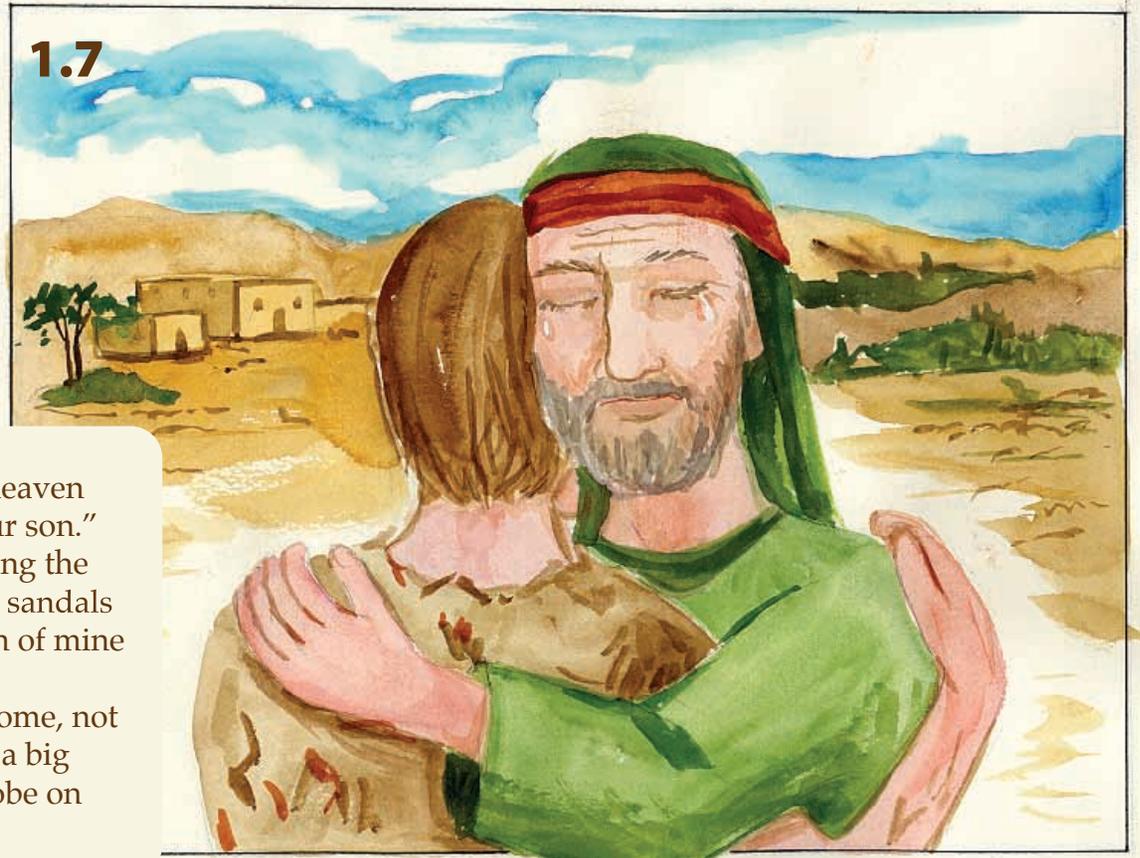


(Show Visual 1-6)

While he was out in the fields feeding the pigs, he was so hungry that the pigs' food looked good to him. The Bible says: "He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything." As he sat there starving, he thought about his father's home. He thought about the servants and how well they were fed. He knew he had wronged his dad. An idea hit him! He thought, "I will go back to my father and say to him: 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired men.'" The son remembered how his father loved with such patience and kindness. Remember what our memory verse says? "Love is patient, love is kind,...love never fails." After the son thought about his home, the Bible tells us that "he got up and went to his father."

While he was still a long way off, his father saw him walking toward home. The father was filled with love and forgiveness toward his son. The father couldn't even wait for the son to walk to him. Instead, the father ran toward the son, threw his arms around him, and kissed him.

1.7



(Show Visual 1-7)

The son said to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.” Right away, the father called to his servants, “Quick, bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet....Let’s have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.”

Yes, boys and girls, the father welcomed this child home, not just as a servant, but as a son. Not only that, but he had a big party to celebrate his son's homecoming and placed a robe on his son's back, the best robe he had.

The father in this story is a beautiful picture of what our Heavenly Father is like: loving, patient, and kind. Whenever we go to our Heavenly Father for anything, He will always treat us with patience and kindness. He will never fail us.

If you are God’s child, are you willing to love others as God loves you and them, with patience and kindness? In a moment we are going to pray together. When we do, you can ask God to help you love others with patience and kindness.

Maybe today you realized for the first time that you have sinned and you are like the son in our Bible lesson who is far away from his father. Sin separates us from our Heavenly Father. If you can’t remember a time when you asked God to forgive you of your sins and make you His child, listen carefully to the Good News puppet.

(Read poem or play CD while working the Good News puppet.

When finished, put puppet down)

Howdy, kids, I'm glad to see
You came today to NBC.
I've got some news I need to tell,
So listen close, and listen well.

Jesus loves you, this I know,
For the Bible tells me so.
The pain He felt when He died for you
Was for your sin, oh yes, it's true!

(Have puppet hold up a cherry jellybean)

Look at the color of cherry and see
The blood of Jesus on a tree.
Just for you, he suffered and died.
His blood poured out from His side.

Good News, Good News, believe it's true!
He's alive in heaven and looks for you
To become God's child by trusting in Him.
Believe that Jesus takes away your sin.

"Yet to all who received Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God" (John 1:12). Would you like to become God's child today? If so, after we pray and sing our theme song, come and tell me. Everyone, bow your head. *(Pray the following prayer or in your own words ask God to help the children love others with patience and kindness. Pray also for those children wanting to become God's children)*

Dear Heavenly Father, we are so glad to know that You love us and are patient and kind to all who come to You. As Your children we need to be patient and kind to others. Show us ways in which we can do that and forgive us for the many times that we have not been patient and kind.

I pray also for those children who have never put their trust in Jesus. Help them to take that important step today. Boys and girls, if you want to become God's child, raise your hand now so that I will know who you are. *(Acknowledge them and have them put their hands down)* If you raised your hand, come up to me after we sing, and you can make that important choice today.

Thank You, Father, for today's Bible lesson. Now be pleased to hear us sing this song to You. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Let's sing our theme song together. *(Sing "Lord, Teach Me to Pray." Movements to the theme song are on the last page. Remind those children who want to become God's children to come and tell you.)*

(Optional: Send all the children home after club with cherry jellybeans, reminding them of the blood Jesus shed for them by dying on the cross for their sins. Suggest that they share the meaning with others.)