

# **Series: The Born Identity**

## **Lesson 1: Baby Love**

### **Lesson Objectives:**

As a result of this lesson, students will be able to...

- Reflect on (and have a tangible experience of, if option A is chosen) a parent's love for a child and God's love for God's children.
- Interact with scriptural passages that teach adoption into God's family.

### **Materials Needed:**

- ☐ scrap paper
- ☐ pens
- ☐ prize (optional)
- ☐ stop watch or clock
- ☐ parents (see Task One)
- ☐ a deck of playing cards sorted by value (Aces first, twos second, and so on)
- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ a concordance per group
- ☐ board and markers

### **Series Lead In:**

Give each student a pen and various pieces of scrap paper (they will need it for other tasks) and tell them that they have exactly sixty seconds to write a list of words or phrases that finish the sentence, “I am a...”. The student with the most real answers wins a prize or gets cheered for. For example, I might write father, husband, servant, speaker, quiet guy, loud guy, etc. When the clock stops have the students count up their answers. Have the student with the most answers read the answers out. Have the other students monitor for fake or incomplete or repeated answers. Those answers don’t get points. Cheer or award prize to the winning student.

Ask the students to guess what the series is about. A great answer is identity. Explain to them that over the next four lessons you are going to be exploring issues of identity and that you are going to use the metaphor of life stages to explore spiritual identity. The first lesson will use the metaphor of infancy; the second of childhood; the third of adolescence and adulthood; and the last of senior years.

### **Task One (Option A):**

If you choose this option you will be inviting a parent or parents to your lesson and conducting an interview. Obviously, this requires some advanced preparation. We suggest this as the best option; however if you are not able to do this see Option B. Another option is to record the interview ahead of time. Choose a parent who is either in the process of adoption or has already adopted a child. (If not applicable or available, invite a parent who has a newborn or infant). Prepare that parent for the role they will play during the lesson, talking about their experience of adoption or birth.

Introduce the parent to the students and ask the students to turn to the person next to them and write down one to three questions that they would like to ask the parent (provide more scrap paper if necessary). Have them hand in the questions and sort through them

to find question such as the following. If they are not there, pretend that they are or have some of your own planted ahead of time. They won't know that you planted them; they will assume that another group wrote them. Keep the actual interview to less than ten minutes.

Look for questions like:

- 1. Why do you want to adopt a child?**
- 2. How did you select his/her name?**
- 3. How did you feel when you first saw your child?**
- 4. What dreams do you have for your child?**

Invite the parent to stay for the lesson and observe or participate.

### **Task One (Option B):**

Ask each student to write down a list of three to five descriptives that parents use about their children, for example angel, tiger, kiddo, darling, cutie, or whatever else. Have them include one that their parents really used about them. If you suspect that there are students in your group for whom this would be a painful exercise because their parents were negative or verbally abusive, say "your parents or a favourite adult like an uncle, aunt, grandparent, or teacher."

Now have each student read out their list and have the other students guess which one is real. If you have a large group, do this in smaller groups. Emphasize the positive descriptives.

## **Task Two:**

Give every student a playing card and have them group with the others of the same value (all Aces together, all twos together). Instruct each group to read Genesis 2:4-7 and generate (recording their answers on paper) a list of five descriptions of how God felt when God made Adam. Answers may include excited, hesitant knowing what Adam would do, joyful, full of dreams. Each person will be reporting the answers to another group. This should take no more than five minutes.

Now have the students regroup according to suit (all hearts together, all spades together). Each person should report their five answers to the new group and the new group should compile a list of the most common, best, or agreed upon answers. Solicit the best answers from each of the four groups and clarify or correct if there are any concerns.

## **Task Three:**

Have students return to their value groups (all Aces, all twos). Give each group a concordance and tell them that they are going to find verses with certain phrases in them. They must find at least five verses with at least two of these words or phrases in them. Here are the words and phrases:

- Adopt
- Adoption
- Adopted
- Child of God

Instruct each group to find the verses, read the verses, and then identify at least one way that God feels about God's children, based on those verses. For example, in Ephesians 1:5 we read that God adopted children for God's pleasure and will. Each person will be reporting their group's answers to another group. Be prepared to do an example together (the one above will do) as these instructions have various parts. Also, be prepared with some of your own answers to guide students when you give feedback.

When the students are finished, solicit the best answers from the groups and have the other groups listen to see if they agree or disagree or have the same answers. Choose a student to be the class scribe and keep a master list on a board. Be prepared with some of your own answers so that you can clarify and correct as needed.

### **Closing:**

Transition by saying something like, *When you look at this list, how do you think that God sees you? Do you think that God falls in love with you just like a parent does when he or she sees his or her baby or child for the first time? God looks at you and feels love! God wants you to be part of God's family! Look at the list again and choose on description that stands out to you. We are going to end by closing our eyes and imagining that God is looking at us and saying those words to us. I will leave a few minutes of silence while you do that and then I will close with a prayer.*