



# WEEK 2

## ELEMENTARY LESSON GUIDE

**BREAKING**  
**NEWS**

### THE BIG IDEA

When I worship God, I can be sincere.

### THE BIBLE

**Amos:** Amos 5:18-24; (Matthew 25:1-13)

## LARGE GROUP TIME

**WHAT?** *What are we talking about today?*

#### MUSIC | Eyewitness Praise

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Play the video and invite the kids to sing along and follow the motions to this song, "[10,000 Reasons](#)."*
  - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** *Play the [lyric video](#) to help with retention and make it easier for kids to sing along.*
  - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** *Keep motions short and repetitive, for retention and comprehension purposes. You could also shorten the learned part of the song so that kids won't get overwhelmed and frustrated by the length.*

#### ACTIVITY | Photo Op

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Play an upbeat worship song. Tell the kids to dance, but when the music stops, they must freeze in place. While they are "frozen," take pictures as though for a newspaper article. After you have taken pictures, resume the music. Repeat a few times. If possible, you might want to take a few real pictures and print them later with captions and post them in your space.*
  - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** *After this activity, say/ask the following: "Wow, some of you really got into it, but I noticed that not everyone did! Even if you didn't sing, were you thinking about what the song is saying? Is worship just about singing and dancing, though? We all worship in different ways. Now, let's find out what God has to say about worship!"*

- Extra! Extra! Read all about it! Here we are, back again with breaking news – moments in the Bible where God had news to communicate through prophets. The prophet we will meet today is going to tell us something about how we worship God.
- So, let's do some freestyle worship together! When the music is playing, dance and enjoy yourselves. When the music stops, freeze in place so we can get pictures for our breaking news.

### ACTIVITY | Color Word Test

- Today, we're going to talk about how actions and words sometimes don't match.
- Let's take a look at this fun little test that shows words that don't do what they should.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Show [The Stroop Test](#), and tell the kids to call out the color of the word and not what the word says.
  - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** Pause the video at each word, instead of letting it play through. At each pause, ask them to tell you the color of the word. You could also provide a separate visual paper of the color (e.g., if the word is "yellow" but the color of the word is green, hold up a piece of green paper).
- That was hard, wasn't it? We wanted to read the word instead of calling out the color. Sometimes, what we say and what we do don't match, just like those words.

### POLL | Real or Fake?

- Has anyone ever heard of fake news? This is news that isn't real or didn't happen.
- I'm going to share with you some news stories. Some are real, and some are fake. You have to spot the difference. If you think it's real, give it a thumbs up. If you think it's fake, give it a thumbs down.
- **A chihuahua that can't walk befriends a bird that can't fly.** (Real)
- **A twelve-year-old dog graduates college.** (Fake)
- **Man arrested for using his phone while riding a horse.** (Real)
- **Cold weather in Florida could cause iguanas to fall from trees** (Real)
- **Ten-month-old baby becomes first ever county sheriff** (Fake)
  - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** Create motivation for kids to participate by subtly giving them the correct answer as you read each news story. You can do this by incorporating gestures such as thumbs up/thumbs down and modulating your voice accordingly. For example: "A twelve-year-old dog graduates college? **FAKE NEWS** (high energy voice, paired with "thumbs down" gesture).

## SO WHAT? Why does it matter to God and to us?

### SCRIPTURE | Amos 5:18-24

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Recruit the same or different adult volunteers to help with the skits, or play both parts yourself! Provide a handheld microphone – real or pretend – for the characters to use. You can even print the scripture and roll it up like a scroll for the Amos character to read aloud.
- Today, we're going to hear about a prophet named Amos. Before he was known as a prophet, Amos was a sheep herder and a farmer. He was from a place called Judah, but preached in

a place called Israel. Just like the prophet Micah we heard about last week, Amos had some breaking news for everyone.

- **Reporter:** Hello! I am [volunteer name], bringing breaking news to you from Amos. Amos has a message to us from God. What does God want us to hear, Amos?
- **Amos:** (Reads Amos 5:18-20.)
- **Reporter:** Oh, my. I'm not entirely sure what that means. "The Day of the Lord" . . . do you mean that to be the time we get to see God?
- **Amos:** That's exactly right! People are expecting a pat on the back from God when that day comes, but there are just some things God is not very happy about.
- **Reporter:** Oh, no! Like what?
- **Amos:** (Reads Amos 5:21-23.)
- **Reporter:** Wait, that sounds like God is not pleased about how people worship. What is wrong with their worship?
- **Amos:** Their worship is not sincere.
- **Reporter:** "Sincere?"
- **Amos:** It means real and true. God isn't happy with how people say they love God and even sing songs about God, but their actions don't show it at all.
- **Reporter:** That is terrible. How can people fix this?
- **Amos:** (Reads Amos 5:24.) The way we love God is all in how we also love others. God's people should always treat everyone fairly and kindly, and live in a way that honors God.
- **Reporter:** So . . . worship is not just about singing and dancing, but about how we live our lives. The things we do should match the things we say, is that correct?
- **Amos:** You got it, reporter friend.
- **Reporter:** Well, thank you, Amos, for bringing us that breaking news from God. Until next time, this is [volunteer name].
- You see, God, through Amos, was letting the people of Israel know that they were not being sincere in their worship. God had noticed they had forgotten how to worship God with their whole heart, soul, mind, and strength. They had forgotten to take care of each other and decided not to look out for those who needed help.
- Worship then and worship now has always been about more than saying all the right words to God. It's turning around and living out those right words each and every day, in real and loving ways. That's what it means to be sincere!
- **What can we learn from Amos' breaking news?**

### THE BIG IDEA | When I worship God, I can be sincere.

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Ask two volunteers to run across the front carrying a banner that says, "Breaking News" and play the sound effects from [this video](#). Ask another volunteer to play the role of the breaking news reporter every week.
- We interrupt these activities to bring you some breaking news. This is [name of volunteer] with today's Big Idea that everyone needs to remember: **When I worship God, I can be sincere!**
- We now return to your regularly scheduled programming.

**VIDEO | Breaking News, Episode 2**

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Play this week's [teaching video](#).*

**QUESTION | Have You Ever . . . ?**

- **Have you ever pretended to like something but you really didn't? Or have you ever said or done something but quickly changed your behavior when a parent or another grownup walked by?**
- You know, it's fairly easy to act nice, right? But it's a whole different thing to actually be kind and caring.
- This is what Amos was talking about earlier. When we pretend to be a certain way just so we won't get in trouble or so we can get compliments, that is not sincere.
- **When I worship God, I can be sincere.**

**OBJECT LESSON | One Hundred Percent**

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Show the kids a bottle of water. Open the water and pour in a few drops of food coloring of any color.*
- When you pour food coloring into a bottle of water, it completely takes over the way the water looks. No matter which way you turn the bottle, it's the same color all the way through.
- This is what our worship to God must be like. We need to allow it to take over all of us – and how we treat others is a part of who we are, too. Our worship can't just be halfway or even most of the way. We can't just do good things some of the time or only love certain people. We have to worship God with all that we have and in all that we do. And even though we're not perfect, this is what we're aiming for – the goal is one hundred percent.
- **When I worship God, I can be sincere.**

**SCRIPTURE | Matthew 25:1-13**

- Since we are talking about breaking news this month, there's one fact about breaking news we must remember: no one ever seems to know when that news is going to happen.
- Let's look at a short story in the Bible.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Read Matthew 25:1-13.*
- Did you know that Jesus' return is a lot like breaking news? We don't know when it's going to happen! So, what does this have to do with our worship?
- You see, we don't want to be like the five women in the story who were not prepared for the bridegroom's return. When Jesus returns someday, we want to have decided to follow Jesus already. While we wait for Jesus' return, we should practice worship by living a life that honors God. We practice that in the way we live, the way we talk, the way we think . . . and when we choose to be sincere in all of those things.
- **When I worship God, I can be sincere.**

**NOW WHAT?** *What does God want us to do about it?*

**REFLECTION | How Will You Worship God?**

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Give each kid a sticky note and something to write with. Tell each kid to write on their sticky note and place it in the front of the room on a wall or a board.
- We've been talking about being sincere in worship. God wants our actions in our lives to match our worship.
- **How will you be sincere when you worship this week?**
  - Will you choose to be kind?
  - Will you help someone in need?
  - Maybe someone needs help with a chore.
  - Or maybe someone you know needs a kind word.
- Think of a way you can be sincere in your worship this week and put it on your sticky note. You can either write it out or draw a picture.

**RESPONSE | "Every Move I Make"**

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Play "[Every Move I Make](#)" by CJ and Friends and encourage the kids to sing and dance along.
  - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Put your preteens in the spotlight! Give them some time to learn the choreography and have them perform it for the rest of the group. Afterward, they could even teach it to everyone!
- This is a great song that reminds us that in everything we do, no matter what it is or where we are, we can worship God. Just like our Big Idea says, **when I worship God, I can be sincere!**

**MEMORY VERSE | Memory Voices**

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** As you tell the kids the memory verse, change your voice. You can be loud and then soft. Deep and then high-pitched. However you change your voice, tell the kids to repeat after you, mimicking the same voice.

**PRAYER**

- God, thank you for the words you gave the prophet, Amos, and for showing us that our worship must be sincere. Teach us how to let the things we do match the things we say, and help us to remember that we can worship you in small and big ways from anywhere we are and with everything we do. Amen.

## SMALL GROUP TIME

### DISCUSSION

- What can you tell me about Amos?
- What was the breaking news Amos had for the people of Israel?
- How did God expect the people of Israel to be sincere?
- Let's look at Matthew 25:13. What do you think this verse has to do with what we heard about today?
- Why do you think it was important for Amos to share this message with the people?
- How do you think we can worship God sincerely?
- How will you choose to show genuine worship to God this week?

### ACTIVITY | Whole Heart

- Another word for "sincere" is "wholehearted." So when we worship God, we need to do it with our whole heart. That means no shortcuts, and with everything we have in us.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Give the kids a printable with a heart puzzle and a piece of construction paper. Instruct them to cut the pieces of the heart out, and then glue it back together on the construction paper. Tell them to write "actions," "words," "thoughts," and "feelings" on each puzzle piece.
  - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Give your preteens some Health and Science News! Show this [video](#) on how the heart works. Ask: "Does anyone know your heart's main job? Now imagine if only half of your heart did its job. What would happen? What are some ways you can worship God with your whole heart – your actions, words, thoughts, and feelings? Write them down on your heart puzzle."
  - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** Pre-cut this printable with each piece already labeled. Have kids decorate each piece and put them together with a buddy.
- The pieces of the heart represent the things that make a "whole heart" – our actions, words, thoughts, and feelings.
- Glue the pieces back together on the construction paper and write your name on the heart to remind yourself: **when I worship God, I can be sincere.**

### MEMORY VERSE | I Corinthians 16:13 (NIV)

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Practice this month's memory verse with the signs (a combination of SEE and ASL) we've provided.