

Psalm 149:1-4

- L: Praise the LORD!
- C: Sing to the LORD a new song,
- L: His praise in the assembly of the godly.
- C: Let Israel be glad in his Maker;
- L: Let the children of Zion rejoice in their King.
- C: Let them praise his name with dancing,
- L: Making melody to him with tambourine and lyre!
- C: For the LORD takes pleasure in his people;
- L: He adorns the humble with salvation.

Prayer

- L: Let us pray together:
- C: Lord God, you have made yourself known to us through your Word, and shown us that you are worthy of honor. Thank you for the privilege of worship, and for the opportunity to give you praise. May our hearts reflect the joyful promise that you have given us, that we may sing of your glory and power, forever and ever, in Jesus' name. Amen

Gathering: "Hallelujah Chorus"

Have the students listen to an audio recording of Handel's *Hallelujah Chorus*. It is a tradition to stand when this song is sung. Why do you think that is?

As an option, you may try going online to find a video presentation to play. Many creative renditions of the song can be found on the internet on sites like www.YouTube.com™ — that incorporate visual motion, dance, etc. (The teacher should make sure to preview the entire clip before class.)

Needed: CD Player or Computer

Doxology



Hallelujah!

You have probably heard the word "Hallelujah" many times, especially in hymns and prayers to God. But do you know what it means?



The word *Hallelujah* is the Hebrew phrase: "Praise the Lord!" Found many times in the Bible — for example, in the opening verse of the psalm to the left — the word *Hallelujah* (sometimes written in the Latin form, *Alleluia*) is a happy expression of joy and worship, which gives glory and praise to God as the One in whom we trust and believe. It is an example of a "doxology" — a response to our experience of who God is, and what God has done for us.

Theme Word: "Doxology"

= words of praise and worship to God
(describing the greatness and majesty of the Lord)

Standing Before the Throne of God

In the rare places where the Bible gives us a glimpse of the heavenly throne room of God, the scene is always one of worship and praise.

Look up in the Bible: Revelation 4:1-11

- a) What descriptive images in the scene most strongly demonstrate to you the power and greatness of God?
- b) In what part of this lesson do you find a doxology? What is said about God in these words of praise?

Did You Know? The English word *worship* comes from the word *worth*. To **worship** God is to recognize and express God's "worth-ship." We acknowledge that the Lord is greater than ourselves and is worthy of our respect, attention, and praise.

Catechism Practice

Fill in the blanks from Martin Luther's *Small Catechism*, in his explanation of the Lord's Prayer: (Catechism Booklet, p. 17)

The First Petition

Hallowed be thy _____ .

What does this mean?

God's _____ is indeed _____ in itself, but _____ pray in this _____ that it may be _____ holy also _____ us.

How is this done?

God's name is _____ when his _____ is taught in its _____ and _____, and we, as God's _____, lead holy _____ in _____ with it. _____ this to us, dear _____ in heaven. But whoever _____ and _____ in ways _____ than what God's _____ teaches _____ the _____ of _____ among us. _____ us from _____ this, heavenly _____.

Being True to God's Word

In the Catechism lesson above, Martin Luther emphasizes that hallowing God's name is not just something we *say*, but something we *do* — by our actions and the kind of life we live. Jesus gave an example of this in the story of two sons who were told to work in their father's vineyard.

Look up in the Bible: Matthew 21:28-32

Jesus used this story to show the religious leaders that faith in God is more than just something we *say*, but something we *live*. In the end, it was the first son who obeyed his father's word. In the same way, we honor our Father in heaven by living in accordance with his Word.

- a) Returning to the example of the Olympics, are athletes chosen simply to walk in parades and carry flags? What is their real purpose for being there?
- b) Why would Olympic athletes want to do their best — *for the sake of the country that sent them*?

Some Important Words:

Hallow = to keep holy, to sanctify

This term comes from the same root as the name *Halloween* ("hallows evening") — the night before All Saints Day.

In Itself = by its own nature

We do not *make* God's name holy; it already is. We pray that our words and deeds would give honor to God's name.

His Word = God's Teachings

God's Word includes all his commands and promises. Holy Scripture (the Bible) is God's written Word.

Holy Lives = set apart from others

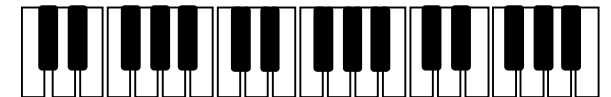
To live a holy life means that because of faith we act differently from others in the world. Our lives belong to God.

In accordance with = in harmony

To live *in accordance* with God's Word is to believe, obey and follow it. We follow Jesus Christ as our leader.

Musical Harmony

In music, *harmony* refers to notes that go together in a pleasing manner. Notes that go together are called a "chord."



Using a keyboard or piano, have one person play a single note. Have another person play a different note *in harmony* with the first. Then have a third person find a different note in harmony with the first two. You may need to listen closely.

Now have someone play a note that is in *dissonance* with the others (*dissonance* = **not in harmony**). How can you tell?

In our lives, God asks us to listen closely to his Word, so that we can tell whether our lives are in harmony with it and are in "accord" with His Word.

The Job of Ambassador

Consider political ambassadors sent to represent their country at the United Nations or in a foreign land.

- Where do ambassadors spend most of their time: among people like them, or people not like them? Why?
- In whose name does an ambassador speak? Who gives them their authority?
- Can ambassadors say anything they want about their country?
- To whom are ambassadors accountable?

Reading God’s Word

If we are ambassadors for Christ, what message does he want us to bring? Here are some Bible verses that tell the Gospel message of Christ.

Read: John 3:16-17

¹⁶ God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

Read: 1 Corinthians 15:3-4

³ I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, ⁴ that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures.

Read: Ephesians 1:13-14

¹³ In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.



Ambassadors for Christ

There is an old saying: “*YOU are the only Bible some people will ever read.*”

The saying is a reminder that our function as Christians in the world is to represent God and his Word. Often, what others learn about God — for good or bad — is what they see and hear in us!

Look up in the Bible: 2 Corinthians 5:17-20

In this passage, the Apostle Paul says that all Christians are “ambassadors for Christ.” We carry the message of Christ and represent his kingdom of faith. We are the people that our Lord has sent into the world, to reconcile others to Himself — that is, to bring them back together with God in faith as His friend.

If while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more surely, having been reconciled, will we be saved by his life. (Romans 5:10)

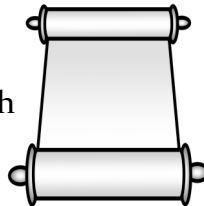
God’s Message: “The Gospel”

The Christian message is called the **Gospel** — from the Greek word *evangelion*, meaning “good news.” That’s why sharing the good news about Jesus is called *evangelism*.

The Apostle Paul was one of the greatest evangelists in the Bible. He traveled the ancient world spreading the message of Jesus. Read what he wrote about his work.

Look up in the Bible: 1 Thessalonians 2:1-12

Note that Paul speaks of being “entrusted with the Gospel.” The Good News is something Jesus has entrusted to all his followers!



- In what manner, or with what attitude, did Paul share the Gospel? How did Paul’s behavior match his words?
- In verse 11, how does Paul say that he wants **us** to imitate his example? In verse 12, what does he tell us to do? Why?
- Would someone be able to tell **you** are a Christian by looking at the example of your life? Why or why not?

Read & Discuss

In advance of class, read the assigned lesson from the Bible and write a brief answer to each question. When you meet together as a group, go through and discuss them together.

Read: Luke 11:14-23

In this passage, Jesus was questioned about his ability to cast out demons. Some claimed he was in league with Beelzebul, the ruler of demons. On the contrary, Jesus let them know that he had come as the One stronger than the devil.

1. Why would some people have complained about Jesus freeing people from the power of evil? What do you think was their motive?

2. Jesus told his accusers that their reasoning was ridiculous. Why did their argument not make sense?

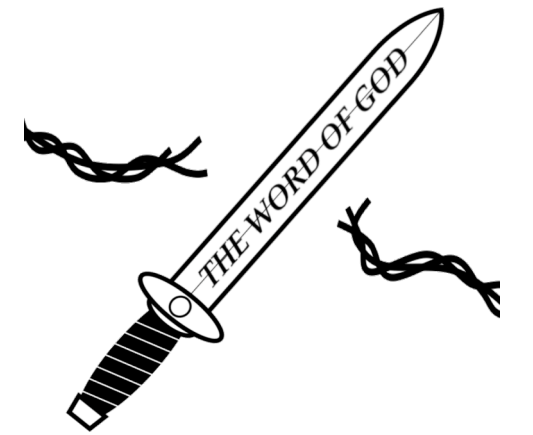
3. The name *Beelzebul* is related to the name of the false god *Ba’al* often mentioned in the Old Testament. Look up and read: **1 Corinthians 10:19-22**. What does the Apostle Paul say that pagan gods and idols really are? In what way are idol worshippers being deceived by evil?

4. Why would Jesus refer to the devil as “a strong man, fully armed”? In what way does the devil hold **us** captive?

5. Why is it important to know that Jesus himself is the stronger warrior? What has Jesus come to do about the devil? What has Jesus come to do for us?

6. Based on what you read in v. 23, can we (as human beings) afford to stay neutral in this battle? What does it mean to say that Jesus has made us part of his army? What does Jesus expect of us?

Memory Symbol 8 DELIVERANCE



By the power of God’s Word,
Jesus has come to deliver us
from our captivity to sin and evil.

Speaking to God

On the lines below, write a prayer asking for God’s help and protection (include the things that concern you most). Thank Jesus for being your Deliverer.

(Practice using the ADTRC Prayer Form: Address, Description, Thanks, Request, Conclusion)

A: _____

D: _____

T: _____

R: _____

C: _____
