



LESSON PLAN

Scripture Texts:

Psalms 95:1-7 and 150

Colossians 3:12-17

Session Theme:

Worship

a. Welcome to Class

Teachers should arrive in the classroom well in advance of class. Welcome students as they enter, and inquire about their week. Pass out name tags and record attendance on a classroom chart.

b. Icebreaker: Hymns of Praise

Bring a variety of different hymnals or song books to class and set them out on a table. Ask kids if they have seen any of these books before, and if so, where. (*In the church sanctuary, possibly in Sunday school classrooms or homes as well.*) Encourage kids to look through the different books. What do they all contain? (*Songs, prayers, worship services, etc.*) Invite kids to compare the hymnals and point out how they are similar and how they are different.

Christians worship God in many different ways — for example, some of us use hymnals in our churches, while others do not. But regardless of our traditions, what matters most is that we praise the Lord! Let's begin our lesson and learn how to do that.

c. Opening Prayer

Heavenly Father, it is a privilege and an honor to gather together and worship you. May we never take it for granted. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

d. SEED Video or Song (Optional)

The teacher may introduce the lesson by playing the video clip from the SEED website. This time may also include an opening song or two, using a commercial Sunday School music CD.

Song suggestions for this lesson:

- "Hallelu/Praise Ye the Lord!" (children's song)
- "Praise to the Lord, the Almighty" (hymn)

e. Brief Bible Background

Read together the introduction to the lessons for the day, and briefly summarize the context and setting:

- Today's Lesson is from the Old Testament
- Scripture Section: Writings

Throughout the Old Testament are books of poetry, proverbs, and songs. Most of these writings are not attached to a particular time or place, but reflect the good and bad times we all experience.

f. Communicate the Bible Story

Always keep in mind that the main purpose of Sunday School is to put people in contact with Bible stories. Use a version that is appropriate to the age level.

Upper Elementary: Read the Bible Story and Rhyme

Youth/Adults: Read the Scripture text from the Bible

For Upper and Lower Elementary, use the Storyteller questions to help the students think about the events of the story.

g. Complete the Worksheet(s)

Continue with the handout sheets appropriate to the age level of the students in class:

Upper Elementary: Worksheet and Drama

Youth: Bible Study (Maps, Timelines, Questions)

Adult: Bible Study Sheet (Introduction and Discussion)

h. Craft and Activity Time

If there is time after covering the Bible story, the class may move to craft and activity time, described on the following page. (Do not let the activity time supersede the actual time spent on the Scripture lesson.)

i. Summarize and Review

Before ending class, briefly summarize the day's lesson one last time. If you have not already done so, introduce the Theme Word for the week, providing the definition, and asking how the lesson connects to that theme.

Youth/Adult: Discuss "Reflection for the Week Ahead"

j. Closing Prayer

Close the session in prayer before dismissal:

Upper Elementary: Practice a prayer from memory (e.g., the Lord's Prayer, Luther's Morning Prayer, etc.)

Youth/Adult: Use the ADTRC Prayer format

Bible Study Leader's Guide

The following is a discussion and answer guide for the Youth and Adult Bible Study sheets. For all leaders, it can serve to provide some background on the Bible lesson.

Discuss: Psalm 95:1-7 and 150

1. The Book of Psalms is a collection of songs, poetry, and prayers directed to God that express many different emotions. How does having written words like this help us to pray together as people of faith?

We, too, have hymnals and prayer books we use in worship. God himself provides us with words. As Paul wrote, "The Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us" (Romans 8:26).

Because we have a common source in the Word of God, we share the same songs and texts with believers throughout the ages, and we are able to pray together "with one voice" (Romans 15:6).

2. In what way(s) do the Psalms remind us that we all share the same human experience? Why is that important to know?

Sometimes, people think that they are the only ones who have ever felt or experienced troubles, and that no one else can understand. One thing the Psalms show is the broad range of circumstances and emotions that we all go through. As Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 10:13, "No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful...." We can take heart from the people of faith who have gone before us and were held in God's care.

3. When you read Psalm 95:1-7, what attitude do you feel expressed by the writer? In what way might reading this Psalm help *you* to have that same attitude? How does God's Word change us?

This psalm is one of joyful praise. To "praise" is to say good words about someone or something for who they are and what they have done. The psalm says the Lord God is worthy of our praise.

4. Thankfulness and praise often go hand in hand. Write down some specific things you are thankful for. Then express your praise to God for the gifts he has given you.

Praise is an expression of thanksgiving and appreciation. The psalm says "everything that has breath" should praise the Lord. All living things have life in him. For "in him we live and move and have our being" (Acts 17:28). We all have reason to praise and thank God!

5. What does Psalm 95:7 mean when it says "we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand"? What is God to us?

This phrase draws on a very familiar image in Scripture. Psalm 23:1 says, "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want." Likewise, Jesus says, "I am the Good Shepherd. I know my own and my own know me" (John 10:14).

He is our caretaker and protector. Because we belong to him, he will never let us go. Again, as Jesus said, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand" (John 10:27-28).

6. In Psalm 150:2, for what reasons are we told to praise God? What example can you give from the Bible that exemplifies this? What examples from your life also show that this is true?

We praise God for his mighty deeds and for his greatness. Many stories in the Bible reveal God's power and might. Many of us can share stories of the ways God has helped us, too. God's nature and faithfulness have been revealed time and again throughout history. From this, we can take courage in our own life struggles.

7. In Psalm 150:3-5, what musical instruments are mentioned? In our lives of faith, why do you think we use music and song to praise and worship God?

The psalm lists trumpet, lute, harp, tambourine, strings, pipe, and cymbals. These instruments are still used today, and are often used to lead worship in modern-day congregations. Over the years, more types of instruments have been invented and added to this list. Music can add beauty and emotion to words, to give glory to God. We praise the Lord with the best and most beautiful offerings we can give.

8. Read Colossians 3:12-17. How do our everyday actions and the way we treat each other express our thanks and praise to God? How should our actions match our words?

In this passage, Paul talks about how our faith is lived out in everyday life and shown in our attitude and actions. The qualities described here are nothing miraculous, but simple and down-to-earth expressions of love and caring. If we really want to show our faith and give God our thanks, he has provided us daily opportunities to do so. As Martin Luther once remarked, "God does not need our good works, but our neighbors do." We have the opportunity to pour out the love we have for God on the people that God has put into our lives.

Classroom Craft and Activity Page

Listed below are in-class activities and craft projects related to the theme for the day. Choose one of the following based on the age and capabilities of the students. (Never let the activity or craft time take precedence over the biblical story.)

Activity 1: Call and Response Game

Materials Needed:

- Large open area to play a game, either inside or outside

Instructions:

When we read a psalm in a worship service, we sometimes do it in a call and response format, where a leader says one line and the people answer back. This call and response tradition was used in Bible times, too.

In today's game, which is played similarly to Marco Polo, kids will use a call and response from Psalm 150 to reunite with their partner in a large space.

- Divide the class into pairs and assign each child as A or B. Explain that Person A in each pair will be the caller and Person B will be the responder. Their job will be to find each other by voice alone while walking across an open space with eyes closed.
- Have all the A's stand on one side of the room and all the B's stand on the opposite side. Be sure kids are not standing directly across from their partners.
- Tell kids to close their eyes and spin around in place three times.
- When you say, "Go," Person A in each pair will call out: "Let everything that breathes praise the Lord!" Person B in each pair will respond: "Praise the Lord!" Both will continue this call and response as they begin walking towards their partner, still keeping their eyes closed.
- Kids will have to listen well to make sure they are walking towards the correct person.
- Whichever pair reunites first wins the game.

In today's game, we echoed a small portion of Psalm 150 to help us find each other. A call and response helps people stay connected as they join together in prayer, too.

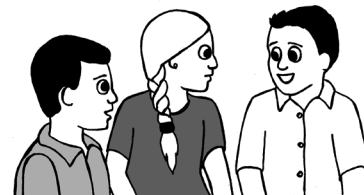
When do we do a call and response at church? Often, while reading a psalm. We also may do this while singing a hymn or saying a prayer. The next time you are in worship, notice where you hear a call and response.



Activity 2: Order the Worship Activity

Materials Needed:

- White board and marker
- Index cards
- Pens or pencils
- Timer
- Little treats



Instructions:

For this activity, kids will challenge themselves to see if they can recreate a typical order for worship in your church. As they do so, they will also be learning the parts of the service.

To make it fun, let kids try to beat a timer as they work!

On the white board, write the following parts of worship in this order: Prelude, Gathering Song, First Lesson, Psalm, Second Lesson, Gospel, Sermon, Holy Communion, Sending Song, Postlude. (If your church uses different terms, feel free to substitute those.)

Divide the class into teams of three or four kids.

Give each team 10 index cards and pens or pencils so each person can write on an index card.

Invite each team to write one term from the board on each index card. When they have done this, give them a few minutes to look at the order of worship on the board. Then, erase the board.

Have kids shuffle their cards. Explain that they will have a certain amount of time to work together and put the cards in the same order they saw on the board.

Set a timer for 3-5 minutes and let teams try to put their cards in order.

When the timer sounds, kids have to stop working.

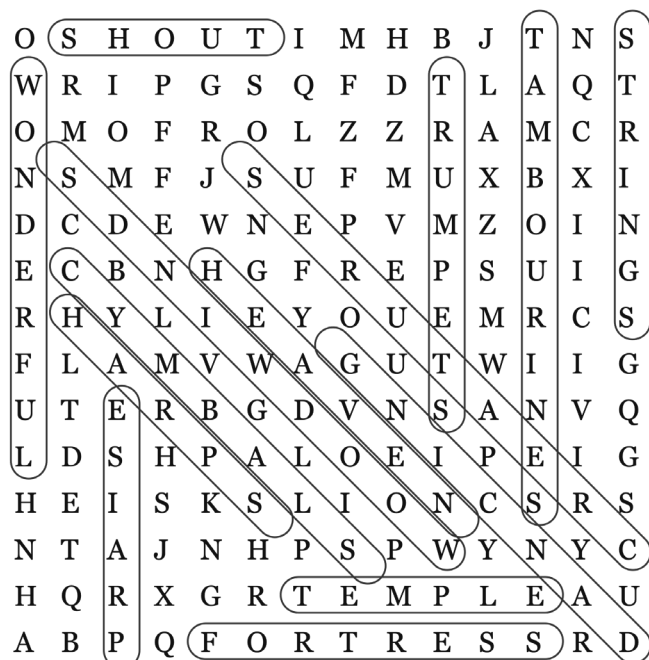
Check each team's work and see if anyone got it right on the first try. If something is out of order, let the group know and give them an extra two minutes to reorder their list. The goal is for all teams to get the order correct.

Depending on how competitive your class likes to be, you can have a little award for the group that gets it right first, or you can award the whole class if all teams get it correct within a certain amount of time.

Worksheet Answer Key

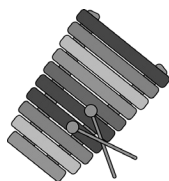
Shown below are the answers and solution to the children's worksheet for this week's lesson:

Wordfind Solution:

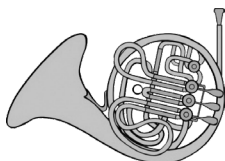


Musical Instruments:

1) Xylophone



2) French Horn



3) Violin



4) Trumpet



5) Snare Drum



6) Tambourine



Vocabulary Word for the Week:

Teachers may want to introduce the theme word for the week to help expand students' biblical vocabulary:

Worship

to give thanks and praise
and express that God is worthy of honor

When we worship, we not only pray and sing to God but we listen for what God has to say to us in Scripture and preaching.

Reflection for the Week Ahead

In Church, we often use what a worship book or hymnal. This book not only has the words we speak and the prayers we pray in worship, but it also contains many songs about God that tell of what God has done for us. These songs allow us to express our faith.

The Book of Psalms in the Bible was the hymnbook of Israel. The ancient Israelites used them in worship, and Christians still use them as well. They are beautiful songs that convey God's love for his people, and we also hear the people's love for God. There are 150 hymns in the book of Psalms!



- Look together at the book of Psalms and find a couple that demonstrate God's love and mercy, and find a couple where the psalmist praises the Lord.
- Talk together about what you see in those psalms. Are there any words that touch your heart?
- Take some time to look through a hymnal and talk together about your favorite hymns. What do you like about the ones you chose?

The Practice of Prayer

On the lines below, write a prayer thanking God for his Word and for the opportunity to spend time in the Scriptures. Ask the Holy Spirit to open up your heart to God's guidance and give you the power to do his will.

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