

On Track Map

Topical Lesson: Getting to know the book of Psalms

Runners

Know Right:	Psalms is a group of songs written to God.
Think Right:	"May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight." Psalms 19:14a
Do Right:	I will worship God.
Feel Right:	I can feel good about worshiping God any time.

This lesson is designed to introduce kids to the longest book in the Bible - Psalms. They'll learn some basics about the book, as well as some of the different types of psalms. Through the Psalms, God's people communicate with Him passionately and expressively, but no matter what they are feeling, the writers always go back to their trust in God and their desire to worship and obey Him.

Coming In Time

Joyfully greet children as they enter your class. Make sure they feel safe, special, and loved the moment they see your smiling face. Immediately engage them with toys or activities. Fun praise music is always encouraged in classrooms during playtime. Music options are in the appendix of the current curriculum.

Clean Up

Clean up together while listening to a song such as "Let's Clean Up".

Large Group Opening Time

Worship Time: All volunteers should assist children to the designated learning area for worship. Choose 2-3 worship songs to sing with the children. Options are in the appendix of the current curriculum.

Bible Basics: As children sit in the designated learning area, remind and reinforce basic sitting guidelines (refer to the "Five Steps to Learning" poster).

Hold up the Bible. What is this? (The Bible)

Let's make a Bible with our hands. *Have children make a Bible with their two hands.*

Is everything in the Bible true? (Yes, everything in the Bible is true!)

When we pray, we talk to God. *Have children fold their hands to pray.*

When we read the Bible, this is how God talks to us. I have a special marker in my Bible marking a very important verse. *Show your fun, bright bookmark and point to the correct verse.*

Think Right Verse: *We recommend reviewing the current Bible verse, rather than the Think Right verse from this lesson.*

Have children listen carefully as you read the current verse from your Bible. We want them to know that the verse comes directly from the Bible, God's Word! After reading the verse, review the hand motions with children and say it together several times. When a child can say the verse with little or no help, celebrate and allow them to pick something out of the prize basket.

Preparation for the Classroom

Pray: Pray that the children in your classroom will understand that the Bible is true.

Read: Psalm 19:14a

Know Right: Psalms is a group of songs written to God

Teacher's Notes: You will be using the words "psalms" and "songs" throughout the lesson. These words sound a lot alike and mean very much the same thing. Be conscious of articulating each word clearly each time you use it.

To keep the children from continually shaking their shakers, they should place them on the floor in front of them in between shaking times and place their hands on their knees.

Creative Teaching Supplies:

In advance, make shakers for each child by putting $\frac{1}{8}$ cup of dried beans or rice into small water bottles that are empty and dry. Secure the cap with packing tape.

Bible Lesson

I love my Bible. *Hold it close to show how you cherish it.* I love learning about what is in my Bible. *Hold your Bible up and then open it just about in the middle - a little toward the front.* Look, it opened to the book of Psalms.

Let's look at this special book of the Bible called Psalms. Can you say "Psalms"? *Have children repeat the word several times.* Do you like to sing songs? I do, too. This whole book of Psalms (*pronounce clearly*) are all songs (*pronounce clearly*). We don't know what the songs sounded like because we don't have the music.

The songs in the book of Psalms praise and worship God and thank Him. But that's not all! The Bible says to not just sing the songs; we can praise and worship and thank God with instruments, too.

Give each child a shaker and have them place it on the floor in front of them. They should put their hands on their knees in between shaking times.

I'm going to say something from the book of Psalms, and then I will pick up my shaker. When I pick up my shaker, you can pick up your shaker. While we shake, I want everyone to say, "Yes, God!" Then, when I put my shaker down, you put your shaker on the floor and your hands on your knees. Let's practice doing that.

We're going to use our shakers to praise and worship God using words from the book of Psalms:

- Psalms says, "I will praise You as long as I live." *Pick up shaker and say together, "Yes, God!"*
- Psalms says, "Everything on earth will worship You." *Pick up shaker and say together, "Yes, God!"*
- Psalms says, "Give thanks to the Lord for He is good." *Pick up shaker and say, "Yes, God!"*
- Psalms says, "I love the Lord." *Pick up shaker and say together, "Yes, God!"*
- Psalms says, "I will follow God's commands." *Pick up shaker and say together, "Yes, God!"*
- Psalms says, "You are a wonderful God." *Pick up shaker and say together, "Yes, God!"*
- Psalms says, "You are my helper." *Pick up shaker and say together, "Yes, God!"*

We can do more than read verses that praise and worship God. We can make our own songs to praise and worship God! We can praise God wherever we are, whatever we're doing, whenever we want to.

Verse Review Time: *We recommend reviewing the current Bible verse, rather than the Think Right verse from this lesson.*

Tracker Time

Note: Tracker should have the voice of a 4-year-old boy

Prop: *Teacher will need a Bible.*

Tracker: *(enters singing, tune can be your own)* God, You are so loving. God, you are so kind.

Teacher: You sure are in a good mood today, Tracker. What are you singing about?

Tracker: I was just thinkin' about how much God loves me ... and then I started singin'.

Teacher: That makes me really happy, Tracker.

Tracker: *(starts to sing another song)* I thank You for the trees and the streams and the fish, God. Thank You, thank You, thank You!

Teacher: Now what are you singing about, Tracker?

Tracker: Oh, we went camping the other day and everything we saw was awwwwwesome.

Teacher: Like what?

Tracker: There were so many big, giant trees, and there was a stream right by our tent, and I could see fish swimming in the bottom.

Teacher: Those are all things God made.

Tracker: I know. I learned that here in class.

Teacher: So why are you singing?

Tracker: 'Cuz I thought that would be a good way to tell God thank you.

Teacher: You're right - it is! Did you know there's a book in the Bible called Psalms? And it's all songs that people wrote to God. Some of them worship God and some of them say "thank you."

Tracker: Can you show me where it is?

Teacher: I sure can. *(open Bible to Psalms)*

Tracker: I'm writing songs to God, just like the songs in the Bible.

Teacher: You sure are. Well, you just keep on singing to God, Tracker. I'm sure He loves it when you sing praises and thanks to Him!

Craft or Activity

Supplies

- Six pictures of various things to thank God for

Advanced planning: Prepare six pictures of things to thank God for. These can be pulled from magazines or printed from free photo websites. Use pictures that depict things like a garden, all kinds of people, animals, food, a house, a church, doctors/medicine, a beach, or anything a little one might enjoy or associate with. Post these pictures in various parts of the room about your eye level, above the children's heads.

Instructions:

1. Have children huddle together in the center of the room.
2. Make a big deal about them crouching down all together.
3. Create a "thank you" sentence about one of the pictures, such as: "Thank You, God, for good food that makes us strong."
4. The children will look around at the pictures on the walls. When you say, "3, 2, 1... go!", all the kids will run to the picture that reminds them of what you said (picture of food).
5. Gather all of the children under that picture and have them repeat what you originally said, "Thank You, God, for good food that makes us strong."
6. Then have everyone go back to the huddle in the middle of the room. Call out a "thank you" sentence about another picture. Repeat with all of the pictures.
7. At the end, say: We praise and worship God when we thank Him for all the things He created and for taking care of us.

Snack and Lesson Review

Verse Activity: *We recommend reviewing the current Bible verse, rather than the Think Right verse from this lesson.*

Our Bible verse can be found in the book of _____, chapter _____, verse _____. Let's clap _____ times and then put our hands in our laps. After hands are in laps, say the current Bible verse.

Pray: *Take time to thank God for the snack and for giving us the Bible. Encourage children to fold their hands, bow their heads, and close their eyes. Remind them that praying is talking to God. Open prayer with, "Dear Heavenly Father" and close with, "...in Jesus' name, Amen."*

Review questions to ask during snack:

1. Did we learn about the book of Psalms or the book of Matthew today? (Psalms)
2. Is Psalms a book of stories or a book of songs? (Songs)
3. What can we use besides our voices to praise God? (Instruments, shakers, our hands to clap, etc.)
4. Who can praise God? (Everyone)
5. Name something you want to thank God for.