



Uh Oh Topher

Jehoshaphat Sings to God

BIG IDEA: I can praise God with singing.

BIBLE BASIS: 2 Chronicles 20:1-30

KEY VERSE: “With people, this is impossible. But with God, all things are possible.” Matthew 19:26

SCHEDULE

PLAY TIME ACTIVITIES

10:30-11:00

LARGE GROUP LESSON

11:00-11:30

SMALL GROUP ACTIVITIES

11:30-12:00

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LEADER DEVOTIONAL

I met Margie on a flight from Charlotte to St. Louis. She and Jackie, her best friend of sixty years, were on their way back from visiting Margie's daughter.

I took the aisle seat and prepared to avoid two hours of small talk by pulling out my headphones. Margie said, "Now, are you going to cause any trouble on this flight? Because this row only has enough room for one trouble-maker and I've already got that role covered."

"No," I said. "The flight attendant asked me to sit here, so I could keep you in line."

I put my headphones away.

We talked for the rest of the flight.

What I learned is that Margie hasn't had an easy life. When her first husband lost his battle to cancer, she took a job in the hotel management industry that kept her on the road and away from home most of the time. She remarried in her mid-fifties and enjoyed two decades with her second husband before he lost his battle to Parkinson's. Margie is eighty-seven now. She moved into assisted living a couple months ago. Her health is declining and the pain in her left hip has stripped her of the independence she loved.

But, she has no complaints and no regrets.

I asked her how she had cultivated such a joyful spirit despite all the heartache she had experienced.

"God has been so good to me," she said. "Even in the darkest times, He gave me reason to be grateful. You can't choose *what* God will ask you walk through, but you can choose *how* you walk through it. Oh, there's been heartache, to be sure. I've cried a lot of tears and I still deeply miss the people I've lost. It's just that I decided a long time ago I didn't want to waste a single minute of my time dwelling on what might or should have been. Cranky old people start out as cranky young people. Don't be a cranky young person, Casey."

I won't be.

Thank you, Margie. I'm glad I took my headphones off.

Casey Jordan
GO! Contributor



SMALL GROUP SKILL BUILDING

Using Kid-friendly Language

It may be true that we've been washed in the blood of Jesus for the atonement of our sins and the redemption of our souls, but you might want to pause before telling that to a kid. The Christian faith is rich with imagery and vocabulary! To a kid, though, some of it might be confusing, overwhelming, and even frightening at times. If you don't want your kids to look at you like you're speaking Klingon, consider the following advice:

Be mindful of your language. The biggest part of solving a problem is recognizing that it exists. For some of us, we don't even realize that the words we're using with kids are a little advanced.

Develop a kid-thesaurus. No — that's not a dinosaur! Begin developing kid-friendly language to replace some of the bigger words you might use. For example, instead of saying "redeemed," you might say "set free." Instead of saying "washed in the blood," you might say "forgiven of our sins."

Be intentional with new words. Not only is it okay to introduce new words to kids, it's instrumental. Part of developing kids into functioning members of the church is helping them understand the language, but be purposeful with your new words instead of just using them haphazardly.

Don't introduce too many new words too quickly. It can take kids a little bit of time to understand and absorb new words and concepts. If you throw too many new words at them too quickly, they may not remember any of them.

Use the word, define the word, use the word. When you introduce kids to a new word, first use it in its right context. Next, define the word using simple and clear language. Finally, use the word multiple times so kids can really digest it. You may even want to have the kids repeat the word after you so they can really familiarize themselves with it.



☆ PLAY TIME ACTIVITY

WORSHIP WORKOUT

Supplies: None

Directions: Have the children perform the fitness actions listed below one at a time while singing the first verse (chorus optional) of “Jesus Loves Me, This I Know.” When finished with the first action, sing the song again while performing another action. Continue until every action has been performed, then ask the children if they would like to make up their own actions.

Actions:

- Jumping jacks
- Run in place
- Hop on one foot
- Sit ups
- Reach for the sky, then touch ground
- Hop on two feet

Say: Morning workouts are so good for you! And so is singing praise songs to God! Today we’re going to hear a story about some people who sang songs to God. We’re going to learn that **we can praise God with music.**

Question: Do you have a favorite song to sing?

BIBLE BALANCE (Bible Memorization Activity)

Supplies: Tape (1 roll)

Today’s Bible verse:

*“With people (point to self with thumbs),
this is impossible (make big “X” with arms).
But with God (point up),
all things are possible (two thumbs up).”
Matthew 19:26 (extend hands like you’re holding a book).*

Preparation: Using painters or masking tape, create a tape line on the floor approximately 10 feet long to make a “balance beam.”

Directions: Practice the verse together several times. When ready, challenge the children to cross the tape-line balance beam while saying the verse and without stepping off. For each additional round have the children cross the balance beam using a different method from the list below.

Methods of Movement:

- Giant steps
- Tiny steps
- Backwards
- Hop on two feet
- Sideways
- Bear crawl
- Tippy-toes
- Hop on one foot
- Crab walk

Large Group: Room 207 at 11:00 AM



☆ SMALL GROUP ACTIVITIES

After the large group story time is over, help the children transition into the small group activity time. There are multiple activity options designed to help kids remember the Bible story and Big Idea, discover personal application, and to respond to God through art, prayer, and Bible reading. Offer as many activities as your time and space allows.

MARCH AND SING (Application Activity)

Supplies: None

Say: In today's true Bible story, the people of Israel marched toward the battlefield while singing praise songs to God. Let's play a game where we march and sing praises to God too.

Directions: Ask the children to answer the question below in a sing-song voice. If they need help, they can just answer the question, then you repeat it in a sing-song voice. After the child answers, have the whole group march in place or in a circle while singing the answer together. Continue until every child has had a turn.

Question: Why do you think God is so special?

FREEZE PRAISE (Application Activity)

Supplies: Music player with praise song (1 per group)

Say: God loves when we sing praise songs to Him. When we sing songs to God, it shows Him that we love Him and we think He's wonderful. Let's play a fun game that helps us sing praises to God.

Directions: Play an upbeat praise song that is familiar to the children in your group. Encourage them to sing and dance along with the song. After 5–15 seconds, pause the music and shout, "Freeze!" The children must freeze in place. Count to 3 aloud then have the children shout the Big Idea together, "**I can praise God with singing!**" Repeat the above instructions until the song is over. If you want to add some variety, have the children use a different voice from the list below each time they say the Big Idea.

Voice List:

- | | | |
|----------------------|---------------|------------|
| • Whisper | • Silly voice | • Sleepy |
| • Holding their nose | • Opera voice | • Robot |
| • Mouse | • Space alien | • Dinosaur |

3.2 Small Group Lesson | Preschool



UH OH TOPHER! (Bible Story Review Activity)

Supplies: “Uh Oh Topher” story review page (1 per group), Topher the Gopher character cards (1 per child)

Say: I’m going to read you today’s Bible story again, but there’s a little problem. Topher the Gopher got into the story and chewed up some of the words, then he replaced them with the wrong words. Listen carefully to see if you can hear the wrong words. If you hear something that is wrong, hold up your “Topher the Gopher” card, then say, “Uh Oh, Topher. That’s not right!” Then you can tell me what really happened in the story.

Directions: Use the “Uh Oh Topher” story review page to read today’s story to the children. The page will indicate in bold which words are wrong, followed by the right words. If necessary, help the children remember what really happened in the story.

COLORING SHEET AND SNACK TIME (GO! Deeper Activity)

Supplies: Bible story coloring sheet (printed on back of GO! Home Guide, 1 per child), markers or crayons, snack of your choice, napkins.

Directions: Give each child a Bible story coloring sheet and some crayons or markers. While the children are coloring, give them a snack to eat and ask the following questions to help them go deeper into the story:

Say: The Bible says that Jesus is God. When we sing praises to God, we’re also singing to Jesus. Let’s say a prayer and tell Jesus all of the things we love about Him.

Prayer: Begin by asking if any of the children would like to pray. Allow any children who want to pray the opportunity to do so. When they’re finished, close the prayer by telling Jesus some of the reasons shared by the children as well as the reasons why *you* love Him so much.

Question: Why do you think King Jehoshaphat and the people of God sang praise songs to God?

Question: How does it make you feel when you sing praise songs to God? Why do you think you feel that way?