

Let every living thing praise the LORD! Praise the LORD! (Psalm 150:6)

Praise the Lord – Psalm 150

Prepare to Wonder

Faith Word: PRAISE

The Book of Psalms is an incredible book of Hebrew poetry. There are poems that express great gratitude and praise to God, but that's not all that's in the Psalter. The Psalter contains several genres: prayers for help and lament (both for individuals and communities), hymns of praise to be sung in worship, songs of thanksgiving for individuals and communities, instructional psalms, royal psalms relating to the king, and liturgies used in worship at the temple.

The Psalter could be read as one whole book or is divided into five books. If we side with The New Interpreter's One-Volume Commentary on the Bible, then the five books are Book I (1–41), Book II (42–72), Book III (73–89), Book IV (90–106), and Book V (107–150).

Psalm 150 is the Closing Doxology of Book V and of the entire Book of Psalms. If you were to read the Book of Psalms from Chapter 1 through Chapter 150, you'd conclude the experience is that of moving from lament to praise, both individually and in community. What we see in many of the psalms is praise and thanksgiving for all that God has done and will do for the people of God. Psalm 100 tells every being to praise God in every way and with every kind of music.

Spiritual Practice for Adults

Find some time to praise God through playing music! You don't have to be a musician to play music either. Whether you have an instrument or you make a beat by clapping, playing music is one way of expressing praise.

Come Together

Come Together

Supplies: *Class Pack, Celebrate Wonder Bible Storybook, Wonder Box, green cloth, battery-operated candle, musical instrument*

Prepare Ahead: *Set up a Wonder Table (see p. 3) with a green cloth, battery-operated candle, and a Wonder Box (see p. 3). Display the Unit 2 Bible Verse Poster (Class Pack—pp. 12 & 13) and Faith Word Poster (Class Pack—p. 4). Place the musical instrument inside the Wonder Box.*

- Point to the Unit 2 Faith Word Poster (Class Pack—p. 4), and invite the children to wonder about what the word *praise* means.
- Invite the kids to join you in a circle.

SAY: This month we will hear stories about praising God. This week we will read a psalm (a special song) all about playing different instruments to praise God.

ASK: Do you know how to play an instrument? Is there an instrument you'd like to learn to play?

- In this curriculum, we recommend reading stories from the *Celebrate Wonder Bible Storybook*. Allow an elementary-age child to read the stories, "Praise the Lord" (pp. 116–117) from the storybook.

PRAY: Dear God, we are so grateful for you and all of our blessings. Amen.

Praise the Lord – Preschool

Supplies: *Reproducible Kids' Book, crayons*

Prepare Ahead: *Photocopy "Praise the Lord" (Reproducible 7A) for each child.*

- Invite the preschoolers to use crayons to color the picture.

SAY: We can praise God by playing music.

ASK: How else can you praise God?

Dot to Dot – Younger Elementary

Supplies: Reproducible Kids' Book, crayons

Prepare: Photocopy "Dot to Dot" (Reproducible 7B) for each child.

- Hand out a copy of "Dot to Dot" to each child.

SAY: Praise is one of the many ways we say thank you to God.

ASK: What is one way you can praise God?

SAY: The writer of Psalm 150 encourages everyone to praise God through music. Connect the dots to see how this person praises God through music.

- Invite the kids to connect the dots and then color the picture.

Song of Praise – Older Elementary

Supplies: Reproducible Kids' Book, pens or pencils

Prepare Ahead: Photocopy "Song of Praise" (Reproducible 7C) for each child.

- Hand out a copy of "Song of Praise" to each child.

SAY: The writer of psalm 150 encourages everyone to praise God through music. The Jewish people would have sung Psalm 150 as a song of praise.

ASK: Can you write your own song of praise like the writer of Psalm 150?

- Invite the kids to write their own songs of praise.
- Encourage the kids to share their songs with the group.

Psalm 150:6 – All Ages

Supplies: Reproducible Kids' Book, crayons or markers

Prepare Ahead: Photocopy "Psalm 150:6" (Reproducible 7D) for each child.

- Hand out copies of "Psalm 150:6" (Reproducible 7D) to each child.

SAY: Take a deep breath, then color this picture while you pray.

- Invite the kids to color the picture while they pray.

PRAY: Dear God, we are so grateful for our family—chosen and given, for our friends, and for our pets. We are so grateful for food and a safe place to sleep. Help us make sure everyone has food and a safe place to sleep. Amen.

Wonder Time

Interactive Bible Story

Supplies: Reproducible Kids' Book

Prepare Ahead: Photocopy "Praise the Lord" (Reproducible 7F) for each child.

- Invite several readers to take turns reading the story one section at a time.

WONDER: What is your favorite instrument?

Share a Story

Supplies: Celebrate Wonder DVD, TV, DVD player

- Invite the children to join you and to sit in a circle on the floor.
- Watch the Session 7 video (Celebrate Wonder DVD).

Wonder with Me

Supplies: Class Pack, Wonder Box, scissors

Prepare Ahead: Lay out the Wonder Story Mat for Unit 2 (Class Pack—pp. 8 & 17).

Cut out the Bible story figures (Class Pack—p. 19).

- Place the Wonder Box on the Unit 2 Wonder Story Mat.
- Show the children the Unit 2 Faith Word Poster (Class Pack—p. 4).

SAY: Today's faith word is *praise*. Praise is one of the many ways we thank God.

- Show the children this week's figure—a musician.

WONDER together:

- What kind of music makes you feel like praising God?
- What are you thankful for?
- What is your favorite way to praise God?
- Place the figure on the Wonder Story Mat.
- Open the Wonder Box to reveal the music instrument.

WONDER: Why do you think a music instrument is in the Wonder Box this week?

Experience Wonder

Match the Rhythm

Supplies: none

SAY: Praise is one of the many ways we say thank you to God. One of the ways we can praise God is through playing music. Let's make some music with our bodies!

- Invite the kids to sit in a circle.
- Encourage them to follow your rhythm. Pat your knees. Once they have that down, do a pat, pat, snap, pat, pat snap.
- Choose another child to make up a rhythm.
- After the mirroring the first child's rhythm, choose another.
- Continue playing until the group is ready to move on.

ASK: What is your favorite music?

Examine the Bible Verse

SAY: Our Unit 2 Bible verse is Psalm 150:6. Find it in your Bibles.

ASK: Is Psalms in the Old or New Testament? (*Old*) Where is the Book of Psalms located in the Old Testament? (*nineteenth book, almost exactly in the center of the Bible*) In what chapter of Psalms is our verse located? (*150*) What is the verse number? (*6*)

SAY: Our Bible verse is all about praising God!

ASK: What's your favorite way to praise God?

- Gather the kids around the Bible Verse Poster (Class Pack—pp. 12 & 13). Read it together.

Peaceful Place

Supplies: Leader Guide—p. 114, Celebrate Wonder Bible Storybook, book: The Giving Tree, by Shel Silverstein; musical instruments; paper; crayons or markers

Prepare Ahead: Photocopy the Unit 2 Faith Word coloring sheet (Leader Guide—p. 114) for each child.

- Assist the children, as needed, as they interact with the items provided.
- Invite the children to explore instruments.
- Have each child color the Faith Word coloring sheet.

Tip: All of the supplies/activities suggested for the Peaceful Place are optional.

Go in Peace

Spiritual Practice – Exploring Praise Through Worship

SAY: A spiritual practice is something we do to help us be present with God. A spiritual practice can be anything because you can be with God any time, anywhere, and any way! This month we are going to praise God through gratitude.

- Guide the children through a spiritual practice:
 - **SAY:** We're going to think about five things we're grateful for. You'll close your eyes and I will say a place. You will think of something you are thankful for at that place.
 - **SAY:** Get comfortable and close your eyes.
 - **SAY:** At home, I am grateful for...
 - **SAY:** At school, I am grateful for...
 - **SAY:** In nature, I am grateful for...
 - **SAY:** At church, I am grateful for...
 - **SAY:** At the park, I am grateful for...

SAY: We can praise God for all of the things we are grateful for.

ASK: Would any of you like to share what you are grateful for?

PRAY: Repeat after me: "God, thank you for our many blessings. Help us always be ready to praise you. Amen."

- Bless the children before they leave. Touch each child on the hand as you say this blessing: "May you feel God's love all around you every day."

Family Spiritual Practice

Supplies: *Reproducible Kids' Book; Leader Guide—pp. 111, 112*

Prepare Ahead: *Photocopy "Celebration Chart" (p. 111) and "Family Letter" (p. 112) for each child.*

SAY: Let's take a look at your Take-Home Pages (*Reproducibles 7F–7G*). Ask your family to read the Bible story and participate in this week's spiritual devotion with you. There's an extra activity for you to do sometime this week.

- Send home a copy of the Take-Home Pages, a copy of the Family Letter, and a copy of the Celebration Chart with each child.

Supplemental Activities

Preschoolers – Jingle Bell Shaker Bracelet

Supplies: jingle bells, chenille stems

SAY: Praise is one of the many ways we say thank you to God. One way we can praise God is through playing music. Let's make some jingle bell shaker bracelets!

- Give each child a chenille stem and five jingle bells.
- Invite the kids to string the bells onto the chenille stem.
- Help the kids twist the ends together to make a bracelet.
- Encourage the kids to put on their bracelets and make some music.

Early Elementary– Paper Plate Shaker

Supplies: Reproducible Kids' Book, paper plates, pony beads, stapler, glue, crayons, scissors

Prepare Ahead: Photocopy "Shaker Decoration" (Reproducible 7E) for each child.

SAY: Praise is one of the many ways we say thank you to God. One way we can praise God is through playing music. Let's make some paper plate shakers!

- Give each kid a copy of "Shaker Decoration" to color.
- Invite the kids to color the picture and then cut it out.
- Give each child two paper plates with a handful of pony beads in the bottom plate.
- Place the other plate on top so there is a pocket of space in the middle of the plates. Help the kids staple the plates together.
- Help the kids glue their "Shaker Decoration" onto the top paper plate.
- Encourage the kids to shake the instrument to make some music.

Older Elementary – Mixed Media Instrument

Supplies: clean recyclables

SAY: Praise is one of the many ways we say thank you to God. One of the ways we can praise God is through playing music. Let's make some instruments from recycled materials!

- Invite the kids to make their own instruments using recycled materials.
- Encourage them to be creative.
- Invite the kids to show off their creations.

Intergenerational Activity – Name That Tune Game

Supplies: none

SAY: Praise is one of the many ways we say thank you to God. One way we can praise God is through playing music. Let's see if we can guess the names of some famous songs.

- Invite the participants to guess the song you hum.
- Hum the song "Amazing Grace."
- The participant who guesses correctly gets to hum the next song. If the group cannot guess the song, help the participant.
- Continue playing until everyone is ready to move on.

ASK: What is your favorite song to praise God?

PRAY: Dear God, thank you for our blessings. Amen.