

Thankful for God's Creation

Lesson 15a — Thankful for the Earth, Stars, Moon, and Sun

Lesson 15b — Thankful for Animals and Plants

Lesson 15c — I'm Thankful for My Body

Lesson 15d — I'm Thankful for My Soul

Lesson 15e — I'm Thankful for My Mind

OVERVIEW

This unit deals with the Creation, approaching it from the aspect of thankfulness. The act of creation does not occupy a great deal of space in the Bible, but it is clearly presented in Genesis 1 and 2, and reinforced many times in later parts of the Bible.

The word *Genesis* means "origin." It is a book of beginnings. The word "God" is translated from the Hebrew "Elohim," which is used over 2500 times in the Old Testament. Elohim is plural in form, but singular in construction, indicating a plurality of persons in the Godhead. The reality of the Divine Trinity is made evident in this first chapter of the Bible which speaks of the God of Creation, the Spirit of God moving upon the face of the water, and God's saying, "Let **us** make man . . . after our likeness."

Our first two lessons focus on the creation of our world and universe, and the plants and animals that inhabit our earth. You will want to emphasize why we should

be thankful for these things: they provide us with all that we need to exist. Stress the beauty of God's world the first week. During week two, relate this aspect of creation to things they are familiar with and love: their pets, their favorite foods, etc.

Our last three lessons of this quarter feature something of great importance to every primary child — themselves! As they begin to study the human body in school, they are becoming more aware of what a marvelously complex instrument it is. This is the perfect opportunity to reinforce that thought, combining it with an emphasis on the fact that God created us in His image. As your students think about and discuss the various abilities God has given us, thankfulness for these abilities seems to be a natural progression. As you study these three lessons together, you will want to bring out to your class that we show our thankfulness to God by using our body, soul and mind in a way that is pleasing to Him.

GAMES FOR REVIEW

Make a large copy of the Word-Find of things for which we can be thankful (see Patterns). (Or you may prefer to create one of your own.) Display, in large print, a list of the words hidden in the puzzle. Have your group help find and circle all the words.

Play Bible Tic-Tac-Toe, boys versus girls. On a board or wall, have construction paper squares displayed in the tic-tac-toe pattern. Let the children take turns choosing a square and answering a question (teacher selects the question). If they answer correctly they mark that square with an X or O (or B-boys, G-girls). The object, of course, is to get three in a row.

Make different colored balloons from construction paper and add a string to each one (see Patterns). On each balloon write the first letter of something for which

we can be thankful. Put the balloons on the board. Let the children guess what the letter stands for. There will probably be many answers for each letter. Talk about why we should be thankful for each thing.

CONTEST IDEAS

This month begin your contest by giving each student an envelope on which you have attached or drawn a round pattern of the world (see Patterns). Let the students earn points for attendance, knowing memory verse, bringing Bible, etc. For each point, give a symbol card of that week's lesson (see Patterns). These symbol cards should be kept in the students' envelopes. At the end of the month they may turn in their cards for prizes.

Write down the first names of all the students in each class (keep classes separate). Give each student a

copy of their class list and a blank sheet of paper. Have them combine the letters from their list of names to make as many words as they can of things for which they are thankful. The following Sunday, combine the lists of the students in each class. The class that has the longest list of words (correctly spelled) wins.

On your board, put up a large tree with bare branches. Assign each class a leaf color. Let them put up one of their leaves for attendance, bringing Bible, knowing memory verse, or missionary work. At the end of the month the winning class gets a treat. Or, as a class contest, have the students write their names on their leaves, giving the winning student a prize.

BULLETIN BOARDS

Title your board, LORD, WE THANK THEE (see Patterns). Surround the title with pictures of the sky (including clouds, sun, etc.). Also have pictures of plants, animals, and most importantly, people. Frame the pictures with colored construction paper.

Make banners which picture a symbol of each of the lessons that will be studied (see Patterns). Title your board, I'M THANKFUL!

Use the memory verses as your theme. Across the top of your board put the title, IN THE BEGINNING WAS THE WORD (see Patterns). The words of each memory verse will form the shapes pertaining to each lesson.

Title your board, HE'S GOT THE WHOLE WORLD IN HIS HANDS (see Patterns). With the world at the center, place at random a crescent moon and large and small stars. Around the edges of the large stars, write the words of the song, "He's Got the Whole World in His Hands." Around the edges of the small stars write Scripture references that pertain to each lesson.

Start the unit with an empty board that has only a background, border, and the title I AM THANKFUL FOR . . . at the top. Each week have the students draw symbols or pictures pertaining to the lesson, and attach them to the board. Ideas: star, sun, moon, world, flower, tree, two or three animals, man and woman.

CHART IDEAS

Prepare an "I'm Thankful" book for each student in your class (see Patterns). Use different colors of construction paper to prepare the covers. White typewriter-bond paper would work best for the inner pages. Copy several inner pages for each student. Staple the book together along the edge where indicated. At various times during the month (either in pre-class time or during your class session) allow your students to fill in some blank pages in their own books and then illustrate and color those pages. At the end of the month let the

students who want to, share their books with the class so each student can see what the other students have composed.

For each student, make a book in the shape of a turkey (see Patterns). Cut the cover from construction paper and the inside pages from white typewriter-bond paper. Each Sunday let the children write their memory verses on one of the pages or draw a picture of the lesson.

Make a round clock face from construction paper. In place of the numbers write the letters from the word THANKSGIVING around the clock face. Glue the clock on construction paper of a different color. Under the clock, glue a piece of paper in the shape of a base. On the base write TAKE TIME TO GIVE THANKS. Put appropriate stickers on the clock face each Sunday.

UNIT PROJECTS

Teach the children this poem about God's creation. Here is one colorful way to help them learn. Give each child a piece of colored paper, using the colors that are mentioned in the poem below. Also use other colors for flowers, etc. When each color is mentioned the children holding that color will lift it high for all to see.

God's creation is a rainbow
of color everywhere
These colors show us God's in charge
They show us that He cares

Silver (is) for the twinkling stars
Orange (is) for the moon
Yellow (is) for the sun He made
It shines above at noon

Green plants He made, and trees so tall
He added flowers and food
They come in colors bright and bold
Our world is very good

Then God made people, every kind
There's black, red, yellow, white
He gave us all a living soul
We're special in His sight

UNIT SUPPORT MATERIAL

My Thank You Book — By Diane Stortz and Frances Hook, Standard Publishing
Thank You, God — Coloring Book, Standard Publishing
God Made Everything — Happy Day Book, Standard Publishing
Saying Thank You Makes Me Happy — Happy Day Book, Standard Publishing
God's Gifts — Classroom Pictures to color, 8 each of 6 pictures, Standard Publishing
We Give Thanks — Coloring Book, Concordia
God Made the World — Coloring Book, Concordia

TEXT Genesis 1:1-8,14-19

OBJECTIVE The students will be able to explain why we should be thankful that God created the universe.

MEMORY VERSE The heavens declare his righteousness, and all the people see his glory. — Psalm 97:6

Thankful for the Earth, Stars, Moon, and Sun

MEMORY VERSE IN ACTION

THE HEAVENS — Wave arm left to right, pointing up and looking up.

DECLARE HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS — Place both index fingers on lips. Move right hand in semicircle to right, and left hand in a semicircle to left.

AND ALL THE PEOPLE — Point to others.

SEE — Point to eyes.

HIS GLORY — Extend left palm facing up. With right fingertips touch left palm; raise right hand wiggling fingers.

MEMORY VERSE VISUALIZED

The visual representation of our memory verse for this week features a portion of God's heavenly creation. (See pattern at the end of this lesson.) Cut along the heavy black lines to separate the star, moon, and clouds. Reassemble the complete arrangement with your group, a piece at a time, as they learn the verse.

BIBLE LESSON OUTLINE

Introduction: Bring a scenic photo of one of your favorite places — perhaps someplace where you took a vacation at one time. Describe how beautiful the place was. Ask your students to tell you about some of their favorite places and why they like them so well. Develop the discussion by talking about how good it was of God to provide spots like this for us to enjoy.

1. God followed a step-by-step plan in creating the universe and the world. On the first day God created light, and divided it from the darkness.

2. On the second day, God made a firmament in the midst of the waters which divided the waters above from the waters below.

3. On the fourth day [note that day three, the creation of plant life, will be studied next Sunday], God made the sun, moon, and stars, and established that these would be for seasons, days, and years.

Climax: God made a beautiful world for us to enjoy,

and the firmament is a testimony to His greatness.

Conclusion: We must remember to express our gratitude to God for the beautiful world He has given us. The endless variety of scenic wonders, and the vastness of space, tell us of God's goodness to each of us.

Response: Your students will be able to describe how God created the firmament — the earth, stars, moon, and sun. They will see the necessity of thanking God for all of these.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Creation account does not take up much space in the Bible but it is clearly presented in the first chapter of Genesis and confirmed in Hebrews 11:3. The Bible clearly and emphatically teaches that our universe and all matter came into existence through the will and the Word of the eternal God. The order of creation is important. There was light before plant life was created because it couldn't exist long in total darkness. There were both light and warmth from the sun, moon, and stars before man was created so that he might be comfortable on the earth on which God placed him. The perfect order of the universe is reason for all men to believe in the God of Creation and to give thanks to Him for His goodness to man.

IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES

Have your students cut out stars, moon, sun, and clouds from felt fabric (see Patterns). Give each student a plain square of blue felt to use as a background. Give each of them a globe-shaped pattern of the world (use pattern given under contest ideas in Unit 15) which you have backed with felt fabric. Let them place these objects on the blue background as they tell why they are thankful God created each thing.

Give each child copies of the daytime and nighttime pictures (see Patterns). Help them compare the pic-

tures to find what is different in each and why (we play during the day and sleep during the night, etc.).

Using construction paper, start with a black sheet to represent the darkness “in the beginning.” Overlay a half sheet of yellow to represent the division of light and darkness. This happened when “God said . . .” Next, show the children a sheet of dark blue. Overlay this with a piece of lighter blue so only a small strip of the dark blue shows. This represents the firmament (the sky) that God made to divide the waters above from the waters below. This happened because “God said . . .” To the light blue, add cutouts of the sun, moon, and stars as you speak about the importance of each one (light, heat, time, seasons, etc.). Impress on the children that all this happened because “God said . . .” There is power in God’s word.

Prepare the “God’s Word says . . .” activity for your class (see Patterns). Be careful to center the pages as you reproduce enough copies for each child. On the first page, cut around the heavy solid lines of the clouds, making sure to leave the top of the clouds intact, so they can be lifted to see the pictures underneath. Position the first page so the clouds are over each of the pictures on the second page. Glue the pages together, being careful not to glue the clouds shut. As you and your students read each verse, lift up the cloud to see what that verse is referring to.

Give each of your students a copy of the “Thank You, God, for the . . .” activity (see Patterns). On each of the blank lines have them write either what the object is (star, sun, moon), when they see it in the sky (day, night), or what it does in the heavens (twinkles, shines, glows, etc.).

Use Viewmaster scenic reels to illustrate the beauty of God’s world.

QUESTIONS

How do we know that God created the universe?

Why did God give us the sun? Tell some of the ways the sun helps us. Describe what the earth would be like without the sun.

Talk about the sun and its effect on the earth — sunrise, sunset, rays in a window — and all the beauty in the way God designed it. What if God had just put a big flashlight up in the sky?

If there weren’t any night, when would you sleep?

What does the moon do for us? (Talk about how the moon controls the ocean, gives direction, etc.).

How do we recognize the different seasons? Why do we have summer, fall, winter, and spring?

How can we show God that we are thankful for the sun, moon, stars?

How do the heavens declare God’s righteousness? Who wrote those words?

What is your favorite place on earth? Tell what it looks like and why you like it. Do you ever thank God for that special place?

PRESCHOOL SUGGESTIONS

Give each child a star-shaped lacing card and a length of yarn (see Patterns). To prepare the cards, copy the star onto heavy paper and cut it out. Punch holes in the marked places. While the children work on their stars, talk about how easy it was for God to make the stars. He just had to speak the words. We can’t make things like God did but it is fun to make copies of them.

Make a copy of the dot-to-dot sky for each child (see Patterns). The “dots” are made from figures other than dots so the children will have an easier time keeping the symbols separate. As they “discover” each of the creations, talk about why God made it and why we should be thankful.

Sugar cookies cut into the shapes of stars, moon, and sun will make a big hit at snack time. Decorate them with yellow sprinkles to help them “shine.”

Make paper-plate puppets for each of your students by putting the right sides of two plates together and stapling around the edges. (Be sure to leave an opening for the hand to fit into.) Color each plate one of these colors: orange (moon), yellow (sun), and blue (sky). Put star stickers on the blue plates. Give one plate to each child. Have them hold up the correct color of plates as you talk about each of the things that God created.

REVIEW IDEAS

Construct a cardboard rocket and a foil-covered space helmet. Prepare a cassette tape of quiet “rocket” sounds. As you “journey through space” describe all the wonderful things you are seeing. Express to the children why you are thankful for each thing — the sun for light and heat, the moon for seasons, the stars for guidance, etc. Then “look” toward the earth. Tell how thankful you are that God made the air perfect for mankind — you don’t have to wear an oxygen tank on earth. God made the world beautiful to look at and to live in. Again, express your thanks to God for all His creation.

Use enlarged copies of the daytime/nighttime pictures given under IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES. As the children help you to compare the two pictures, talk about how thankful you are for each of the elements that God created.

COORDINATING SONGS

"It's a Miracle" — by William Gaither

"He's Got the Whole World in His Hands"

"This Is the Day" — by World Music

SUPPORT MATERIAL

The World God Made — Arch Book, Concordia

I am . . . the Sun — B. and J. Marxhausen, Concordia

I am . . . a Cloud — B. and J. Marxhausen, Concordia

God's Plan for Weather

God's Plan for the Seashore

God's Plan for the Seasons

God's Plan for Air — All of the "God's Plan" material from the "God in Creation" Series by Judy Hull Moore,

Gospel Publishing House

God's World of Colors — Happy Day Book No. 3640, Standard Publishing

MEMORY VERSE SONG

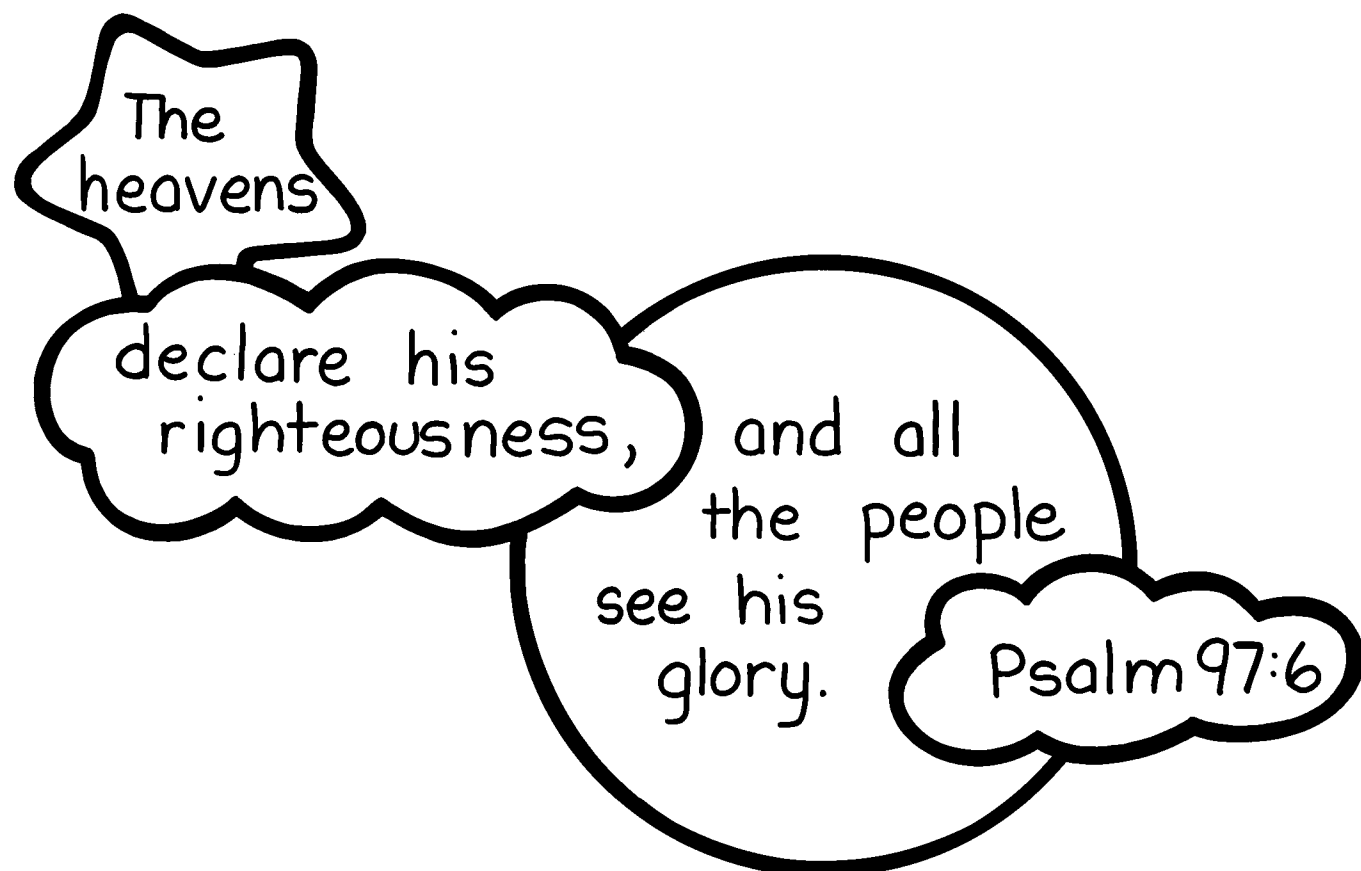


The heavens declare his righteousness, the heavens declare his righteous-



ness, and all the people see his glory. Psalm nine-ty sev-en verse six.

MEMORY VERSE VISUALIZED



TEXT Genesis 1:9-13,20-25

OBJECTIVE The students will be able to describe how God created the plants and animals, and will see that He made them for us to enjoy.

MEMORY VERSE O LORD, how great are thy works! — Psalm 92:5

Thankful for Animals and Plants

MEMORY VERSE IN ACTION

O LORD — Point up.

HOW GREAT ARE THY — Place hands, touching, in front of body, and move to sides.

WORKS — Tap fists together at wrists, right one on top of left one.

MEMORY VERSE VISUALIZED

A little boy in an outdoor scene is the visualization of the memory verse for this week. (See pattern at the end of this lesson.) Cut apart the four pieces on the heavy black lines and place them on your board in the correct sequence as your students recite the verse.

BIBLE LESSON OUTLINE

Introduction: Bring a live animal (a bird, hamster, goldfish, or something of this sort) to class this week. Allow the children to watch it move about. Discuss the things that make it unique from other animals. Talk about the infinite variety of living things, even within the animal families.

1. On the third day of creation, God gathered the dry ground together to form land.
2. He commanded the earth to bring forth plant life, with seed in itself to reproduce after its kind.
3. On the fifth and sixth days, God created living things to inhabit the earth — sea life, fowls, and animals.

Climax: Try to imagine what our world would be like without plants and animals. We could not exist!

Conclusion: God created an awe-inspiring variety of animals and plants for our use and enjoyment. We must remember to thank Him for all of these.

Response: Your students will be able to tell how God created the plant and animal kingdoms, and give some reasons why we should be thankful for them.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

God created plant and animal life for man's need and

his pleasure. The infinite variety and beauty, the complexity and detail all speak of God's love and concern for mankind.

Throughout Scripture God is said to be the Creator of all and thus deserving of our worship. In Psalm 104 the writer recounts the various aspects of God's creation and is thus inspired to give praise and thanks (verse 33). Why should men worship a creation of their own hands or some part of nature when it is possible to worship the One who created and sustains the entire universe? See Nehemiah 9:6, Psalm 104, and Isaiah 40:12-28.

God's astonishing power is seen in even the smallest parts of His Creation. The elm tree produces in its lifetime approximately 1,584,000,000 seeds, and each of these tiny seeds has the power within it to reproduce the same number.

Each bird, animal, etc., was made after its own species and remains the same until this day. Although different members of the same species can be interbred, making a different variety, yet an orange cannot be made from an apple, a cat from a dog — or a man from an ape!

God's timing was perfect. He created the grass, fruits, herbs, and other plants in abundance before creating other forms of life that would need them for food.

IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES

Prepare enough of the popsicle-stick puppets of plants and animals so that each child has at least two (see Patterns). Attach a popsicle stick to the back of each puppet. As the children hold up their puppets have them tell the name of each and then say "Thank You, God for"

The pattern given for the previous activity can also be

run off on a single sheet of paper and given to the children to color.

This is a good lesson for showing pictures. There are usually many pictures available to the teachers. Good sources are animal calendars and also packets of pictures from school supply stores. All children like to name the animals and imitate their sounds.

Give each child a copy of the Nature Walk activity (see Patterns). Have them start at the top of the page and as they “walk” along the path tell them to circle the correct name of each animal or plant they see.

Copy a complete set of the plant and animal dot-to-dot cards for each child (see Patterns). Copy them onto four different colors of paper and cut them apart so there are eight separate cards in each set. Let the children connect the dots to discover one of God’s creations. Comment on each creation and why we can be thankful for it.

Make animal napkin rings with your class (see Patterns). Trace the animal shapes onto colored posterboard. You or the students can cut out the shapes. Cut a 1½” hole in the center of each shape. Or omit the hole and paste the shape onto a ring made from a 5”x1” strip of construction or other heavy paper. Glue the ends together. Then the students can take them home. Whenever they use them they will be reminded that God made the animals.

QUESTIONS

How did God create the plants and animals?

How many different plants did God make?

What do you get when you plant a tomato seed? a bean seed? a sunflower seed? Why do you get a tomato from a tomato seed, a bean from a bean seed, and a sunflower from a sunflower seed? Why is this important?

Name some plants. Children often think of plants as just the house plants around their homes. Help them to realize that plants are also trees, bushes, grasses, grains, flowers, fruits, and vegetables.

Little boys and girls do a lot of things with plants. Name some of these things (climb trees, pick flowers for Mom, etc.).

Why did God create the plants first?

Talk about how God even provides for (takes care of) the animals by making plants — trees for birds, shrubs for baby rabbits, jungles for monkeys, etc.

Where did God get the different patterns for all the animals?

How would you like to visit the zoo if all the animals looked alike?

Why are some animals tame and some wild?

What is your favorite animal? Why do you think God made that animal?

Think about a world without animals and plants. What would it look like? Would you like it?

How can we show God that we are thankful for the plants and animals He created?

PRESCHOOL SUGGESTIONS

Give the children animal crackers as their treat. Have the children tell the name of that animal before they eat each cracker. They would probably even enjoy telling you what sound that animal makes.

Bring miniature replicas of animals and plants to class. Playskool, Fisher-Price, and Legos are good sources. Help the children to talk about some of the animals they are especially thankful for. Impress upon the children how beautiful the flowers are and how yummy the food is that God made.

Bring simple stencils cut from cardboard, of flower and animal shapes (see Patterns). Let children trace around these and color them while you talk about how God created all of these things for us.

Make animal and flower masks for the children (see Patterns). Let them wear them as you talk about each one. God made the animals and flowers and they are all special. Or mount the cut-out shapes on sticks and give each one to a child to hold.

REVIEW IDEAS

Tell your group that you have brought the ingredients to mix a cake. Talk about how good the cake is going to taste and how much you will enjoy it. Then, as you take out the various ingredients, put up a big poster illustrating where each ingredient came from: flour — wheat field, egg — chicken, sugar — cane field, butter — cow, etc. Talk about how God created all of these things for us.

Bring a variety of stuffed animals and let the children hold them while you talk about how God made animals. If possible, you may also wish to bring something alive to class: goldfish, bird, kitten, or puppy. A beautiful house plant, especially one that is blooming, could rep-

resent growing things. Another way to feature this aspect of God's creation would be a basket of fresh fruit for the children to share when the review is over.

Review the creation lessons with the flannel board and finger play activity (see Patterns). Greatly enlarge the patterns and color them to make them exciting.

COORDINATING SONGS

"All Things Bright and Beautiful" — by World Music
"If I Were a Butterfly" — Celebration Services

SUPPORT MATERIAL

God's Fall Gifts
God's Spring Gifts

God's Summer Gifts
God's Winter Gifts — above by Gail Linam, Broadman Press
I am . . . a Tree — by B. and J. Marxhausen, Concordia
God's Plan for Seeds
God's Plan for Plants
God's Plan for Insects
God's Plan for Birds
God's Plan for Animals — above by Judy Hull Moore, Gospel Publishing House
God Made Kittens — Happy Day Book, No. 3636, Standard Publishing
God Made Puppies — Happy Day Book, No. 3635, Standard Publishing
How God Gives Us Apples — Happy Day Book, No. 3627, Standard Publishing

MEMORY VERSE SONG



O LORD, how great are thy works! O LORD, how great are thy works!



O LORD, how great are thy works! Psalm nine-ty-two verse five.

MEMORY VERSE VISUALIZED



TEXT Genesis 1:26-31

OBJECTIVE The students will be able to relate how God made our bodies, and will recognize that we should be thankful that He breathed into us the breath of life.

MEMORY VERSE Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us.
— Colossians 1:12

I'm Thankful for My Body

MEMORY VERSE IN ACTION

GIVING THANKS — Place hands in a praying position as you look up.

UNTO THE FATHER — Point up.

WHICH HATH MADE — Strike fists together, one on top of the other.

US — Point around the group of people.

MEMORY VERSE VISUALIZED

This week's memory verse is illustrated with three children walking in a line. (See pattern at the end of this lesson.) Cut the four pieces apart on the heavy black lines and display them as your students learn their verse.

BIBLE LESSON OUTLINE

Introduction: Bring a sack in which you have placed a number of articles which your students should try to identify through their various senses: for example, a jar of spice (smell), a comb (touch — be sure to have them close their eyes), an alarm clock (hearing), a chocolate candy (taste), and a rose (sight). Bring out what a complex and marvelous creation the human body is.

1. God created man in His own image.
2. He gave man dominion over all animals and living creatures on the earth.
3. God ordained that the plant life upon the earth would be food for mankind and the animals.

Climax: God's greatest creation occurred when He made man in His own image.

Conclusion: Our bodies are marvelous and complex instruments, with senses and abilities beyond the understanding of man. We should remember to thank God for them.

Response: Your students should be able to tell how God created our bodies, and to detail some of the amazing things our bodies are capable of doing. They should recognize that we were created in the image of God, and see the importance of giving Him thanks for this.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Man is truly unique in God's creation. The Hebrew word *bara*, which means "to create out of nothing," is used in Genesis 1 only three times: once in reference to the elements (Genesis 1:1), once in reference to life in general (Genesis 1:21), and finally, in reference to the image of God in man (Genesis 1:27). God spoke into existence all creation except man. He carefully formed man's body out of the dust of the earth and breathed into him the breath of life (Genesis 2:7). Man's ability to think and communicate is infinitely above any of the animals'. It is abundantly clear that we are a special creation of God, created for a unique purpose. God created the earth for a habitation for man but God created man for a habitation for Himself. See I Corinthians 6:19,20; II Corinthians 4:6,7; Ephesians 2:22; I John 3:24; and Revelation 3:20.

We see in our text that man was the crowning achievement of God's creation. It has been said that all other parts of creation are the effect of God's Word. But man is the **work** of God, created in His image and likeness, by God's hand. Man was not spoken into existence; he was not born but was made from the dust of the earth. Biologists today confirm this: the basic elements from which man's body is composed are all found in the dust. One making the most cursory study of the human body, its systems, and the intricacies of each, can only exclaim with the Psalmist: "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made."

IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES

Bring to class several small objects (orange, spoon, fluffy toy, rattle, etc.). Put all of them into a brown paper bag. Blindfold one of your students and let him reach into the bag and try to identify one of the objects. He may first try to guess by the feel, then the sound (if any), then the smell (if any), and finally by sight (take off the blindfold). Let each child have a turn. Then talk about each of the senses and why we should be thank-

ful for the body God gave to each of us. Example: There are some people who do not have the sense of smell but the other senses take over and help them to identify what something is. Not included here was the sense of taste so you might like to include a treat for each student.

On a large posterboard, sheet of butcher paper, or a chalkboard, draw the form of a child without completed hands, feet, eyes, nose, etc. (see Patterns). Let your students finish the missing items one at a time, by connecting the dots. Each should tell how the part he is completing can be used and why he should be thankful for it.

Give each child a copy of the ME! poem and picture frame (see Patterns). Have them draw a self-portrait in their picture frames and then sign their names on the line below the picture. Then help them to recite the poem. This would be fun with actions.

Have students draw themselves — head to toe, about 10" to 12" tall, color, cut out and put on bulletin board. Put each student's name underneath his picture.

QUESTIONS

Why were people God's last creation?

What if everyone looked exactly alike? Why are you glad you look different from everyone else?

What if God had designed you to look like a potato? How would you feel about that?

Does each part of the body have a purpose? Explain your answer by giving some examples.

Talk about touching, smelling, seeing, hearing, tasting. Why do we need to be thankful for each of these senses?

What are some things people do to hurt their body? Does this please God?

How can we take care of the body God gave us?

How can we show God that we are really thankful that He created us?

PRESCHOOL SUGGESTIONS

Using white paper, trace around the hands of each of your children. Let them color and put in details as you talk about all the different things that our hands can do. Encourage the children to suggest things they like to do with their hands.

Bring modeling clay and make the form of a person. Let

the children try to make the "person" live. Help them to realize that only God can create a living being.

Give each child a copy of the picture of a girl (see Patterns). Have them point to each detail as you name each one listed. Talk about why we should be thankful for how wonderfully God created us.

Prepare a boy and a girl stick puppet for each child (see Patterns). Attach a popsicle stick to the back of each puppet. Help the students talk about things that children can do for Jesus as a way of showing how thankful they are for the way He created all of them. They can sing with their mouths; they can look with their eyes and see things to do for Him; they can obey when they hear Mommy or Daddy telling them something; they can clap their hands for joy, etc.

Using different colors of construction paper, trace around both hands of each child (a different color for each child if possible). Cut these out and form a wreath with them, gluing them in place so they can be mounted on a wall in your classroom. Tell the children you are going to display this wreath for a period of time. Each time they look at the wreath it should remind them of how wonderfully God made each of them. Talk about how each child can be Helping-Hands for Jesus to show Him how thankful they are.

REVIEW IDEAS

If you have the time and resources, it would be fun to put together a slide-show of all the children in your Sunday school department. You can bring out how special each of these children are to God and how thankful each of them should be for all they are able to do.

A simple overhead review can be done by using the God's Creation fill-in sheet (see Patterns). Copy the pattern onto an overhead transparency. Display it on a screen for all the children to see. Ask the students to help you with ideas for filling in the details concerning each part of the boy shown on the transparency. Example: Eyes — What color do you think they are? What can he do with them? (See to read, tell colors, tell which way the ball was thrown, etc.) Do this with each of the six parts listed.

Bring a mechanical toy robot. Demonstrate the different things the robot can do: walk around, pick up objects, etc. Talk about what a fantastic little invention this is. Then call a student volunteer forward. Have him follow some simple commands: do a math problem in his head, tie a shoe, etc. How much more unique is the human than a robot! He moves and thinks and functions without any programming, cables or batteries — the human is God's creation.

COORDINATING SONGS

"Oh, Be Careful Little Eyes" — Cherub Choruses III
"Father Abraham" — Sing and Celebrate for Kids
"Oh, Who Can Make a Flower?"

SUPPORT MATERIAL

God Made Me Special — Happy Day Book, Standard Publishing
God Made Me — Happy Day Book, Standard Publish-

ing

I am. . . People — by B. and J. Marxhausen, Concordia
God's Plan for Me — by Judy Hull Moore, one of the
"God in Creation" Series, Gospel Publishing House
You're One-of-a-Kind — by Joy Wilt Berry, "Ready-Set-
Grow!" Series, Gospel Publishing House
Keeping Your Body Alive and Well — by Joy Wilt Berry,
Gospel Publishing House
Five Little Gifts — by Paul Ricchiuti, Pacific Press Pub-
lishing Association, Mountain View, California

MEMORY VERSE SONG

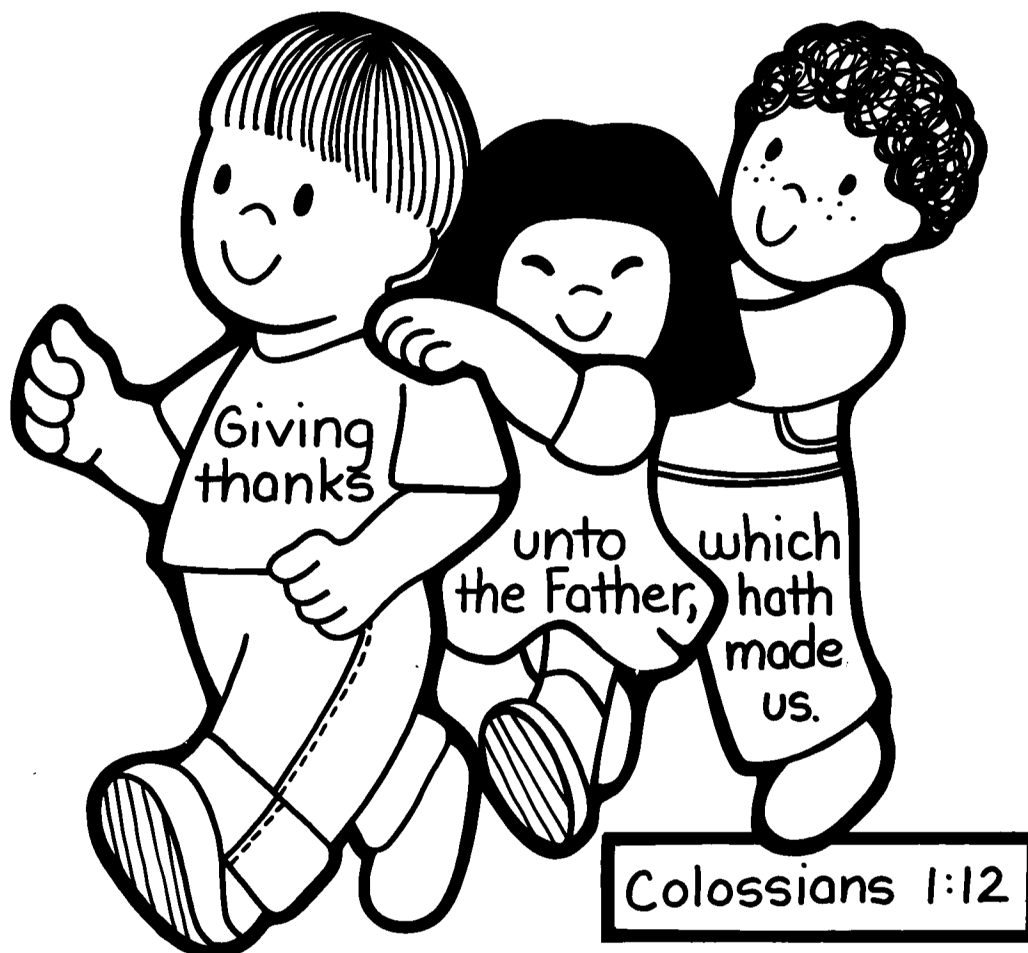


Giv-ing thanks unto the Fa-ther, the Fa-ther, which hath made us.



Giv-ing thanks unto the Fa-ther. Col-os-sians one verse twelve.

MEMORY VERSE VISUALIZED



TEXT Genesis 2:7; John 3:3-7

OBJECTIVE The students will be able to tell how God gave man a living soul, and will recognize that our soul will live on eternally.

MEMORY VERSE The LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. — Genesis 2:7

I'm Thankful for My Soul

MEMORY VERSE IN ACTION

THE LORD GOD — Point up.

FORMED — Strike fists together, one on top of the other.

MAN — Point to others.

OF THE DUST OF THE GROUND — Rub fingertips of both hands with thumbs as if to feel soil, and make counter-clockwise circle with right, open hand, palm down.

AND BREATHED INTO HIS NOSTRILS — Place both palms on chest and move in and out to indicate breathing.

THE BREATH OF LIFE — Make an L with thumb and index finger of both hands. With index finger of both hands pointing toward each other, move hands up from waist toward neck.

AND MAN — Point to others.

BECAME A LIVING SOUL — Shape left hand like an O. With right hand, place the thumb and index fingertip into the left hand O and draw right hand upward.

MEMORY VERSE VISUALIZED

Our memory verse this week is illustrated by a graphic display of God's creating man. (See pattern at the end of this lesson.) Cut apart the four sections on the heavy black lines and reassemble them, one piece at a time, as your group recites each portion of the verse.

BIBLE LESSON OUTLINE

Introduction: Bring an egg to class, and use this as your opener. Ask your students when they talk about having an egg for breakfast, which part do they eat? They eat the inside, although the outside is what they see. Compare the egg and its interior to our body and our soul. We see the body — the shell — but the "real" us is our soul, which will live forever.

1. When God created man, He formed man's body from the dust of the ground. But when He breathed into man the breath of life, He gave him a living soul.

2. Explain to your students that our soul is the part of

us that is made to love and worship God.

3. Nicodemus came to Jesus and asked the Lord what it meant to be born again. Jesus explained to Nicodemus that a person needed to be born of the Spirit.

Climax: When a person is born again, the soul is made ready to spend eternity in Heaven.

Conclusion: Man is unique among all of God's creations in that he alone has a living soul. Because that soul will live eternally, it is vital that it be made ready for Heaven.

Response: Your students will be able to explain what the soul is and how man received this. They will be able to tell why a person needs to be born again.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

SOUL (Hebrew **nephesh**, Greek **psyche**) is the word commonly used in the Bible to designate the non-material ego of man in its ordinary relationship to earthly and physical things. It is one of a number of words relating to the non-material self. We can see our body but we can't see our soul — the visible and the invisible parts of us.

When God created man He breathed life into him and he became a living soul. The physical body will die and go back to dust but the soul lives eternally, and man himself, having been given his own will, makes the choice for his soul's eternal destiny. Both **soul** and **spirit** refer to man's non-material self but the word "soul" is used most often when thought of in relation to one's earthly existence. "Spirit" is the self when thought of apart from earthly connections, where the direct relationship of the individual to God is the point of emphasis.

How thankful we can be that God made us living souls that not only may have fellowship with Christ while in this life but may also spend eternity with Him. Man does not die like an animal. That is not all there is to it.

On the primary level, *soul* may be explained as the “part of me that loves God.”

IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES

Give each child a copy of the Soul puzzle (see Patterns). Provide plenty of the correct colors of crayons. When they have colored the spaces with the right colors they will find a red heart in the center. Explain to the children that our soul is very special. It is the part of us that will live forever, but it is also the part of us that lets us love Jesus and choose to live for Him.

Make a full-sized (or even larger) copy of the Love Poster for each child (see Patterns). In each of the big letters, have the children write or draw something they can do to show their thankfulness to God for filling their souls with love. Let them color their posters. Tell the children to take their posters home and put them up in their rooms. Each time they look at their posters they should be reminded that their soul will live forever.

Enlarge a copy of the Thank You, God! heart and use it as a prop in teaching your class about the soul (see Patterns). Cut the heart apart and put it together, one piece at a time, for the class. Start with the bottom piece and talk about when God first gave man a soul. With the second piece, bring out that Jesus is the Savior of the soul and He loves us very much. The third piece should bring out that we need to make a choice — will we choose to love Jesus? It will be the best choice we ever made. Then the last piece brings out how thankful we should be that God loved us enough to give us a soul and to send Jesus to be our Savior.

QUESTIONS

What was different in the way God created people and animals?

Why does having a soul make us different from an animal, which doesn't have a soul? (Talk about how we can choose right or wrong.)

We eat the right food to take care of our body. We sleep at night so that our body will be rested. We exercise so that our body will be strong. How can we take care of our soul?

How can you be born again?

Is it important to be born again? Why?

When we die, what happens to our soul? our body?

What does a soul look like?

Why should we be thankful for our soul?

PRESCHOOL SUGGESTIONS

Give each child a copy of the dot-to-dot Thankful Heart (see Patterns). Help the children to connect the dots. Talk to them about thanking Jesus for a clean and happy heart.

Show the children pictures of animals. Ask them to name each one. Talk about how special they are because God made each one. Relate to them that God made man much more special than the animals because we are made in God's image — we have a soul. Give each child his own flip-sided stick puppet (see Patterns). Attach a popsicle stick between the front and back of each puppet. Tell the children that whenever they find themselves being sad (hold up sad face) they should think of how special they are to God and then they can smile (hold up happy face) and thank God.

Bring a large heart-shaped candy box to class. Inside the heart, place pictures mounted on cut-out white hearts which illustrate good behavior: sharing, loving, praying, etc. Talk about the kinds of things Jesus likes to see in **our** heart.

REVIEW IDEAS

Using an overhead transparency, show the students a large, empty heart (see Patterns). Remind them that the soul is the part of us that will live forever. It is the part of us that makes us different from everything else because the soul can love God (overlay the word LOVE in the heart). One at a time, overlay the love-verses given. Have the students read them aloud with you. Reserve the verses I John 4:7 and 8 until last. Just before you overlay this verse, remind the students that this is a lesson on being thankful for the soul. One way of telling God “Thank You” is to obey. Tell them the next verse you put onto the screen is also a song. Some of the children may already know the song. It is a catchy tune, fun to sing, and most importantly, a good reminder of one way to thank God. (The song, “Beloved, Let Us Love One Another,” can be found on the Bible Sing-A-Long cassette tape or record by Maranatha For Kids.)

God gave man a soul when He said, “Let us make man in our image.” The soul is what makes us different from all the rest of God's creation. Our soul makes us able to talk with God, to love God, and to obey God. Our soul will live forever and is the most valuable part of us. Teach the children the song called, MADE IN THE IMAGE OF GOD (see Patterns). It will help to impress on the children the great value of a soul, and, in particular, that their own soul is precious to God.

Enlarge the simple puzzle which is in the shape of a person (see Patterns), making the head, arms, and legs all separate pieces. Leave an empty space in the

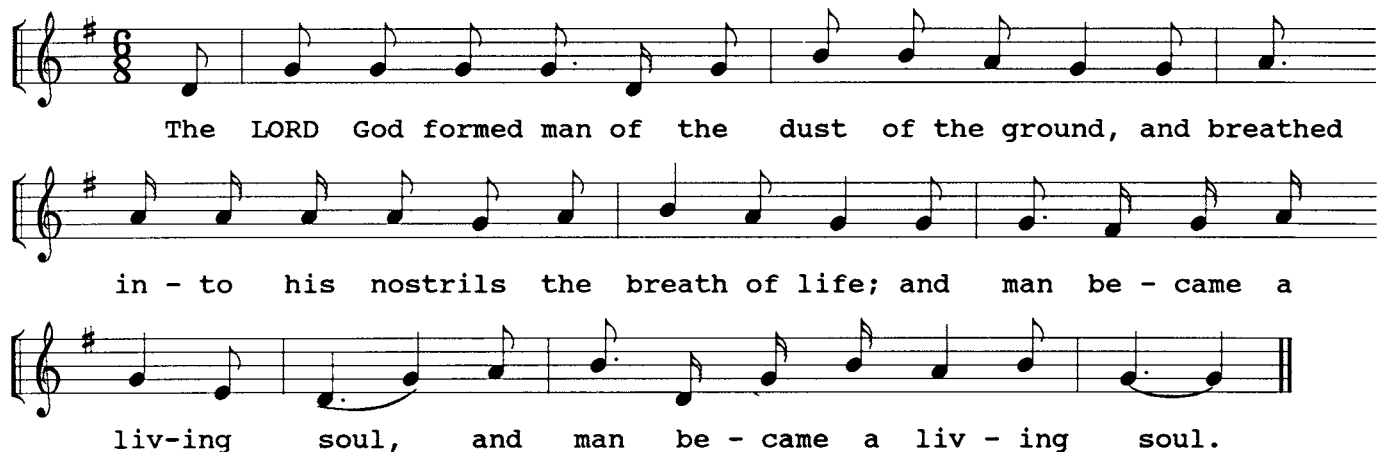
middle, shaped like a heart. Assemble the whole form, piece by piece, with your group, allowing volunteers to tell how we use each part. When the puzzle is completed, point out the blank space. Explain that Jesus created each of us with a soul. He gave us that soul so we could love and worship Him. Fill the blank space with a heart-shaped piece containing a picture of Jesus.

Bring a dying plant, broken toy, etc. How long will these last? Relate them to how our soul lives forever.

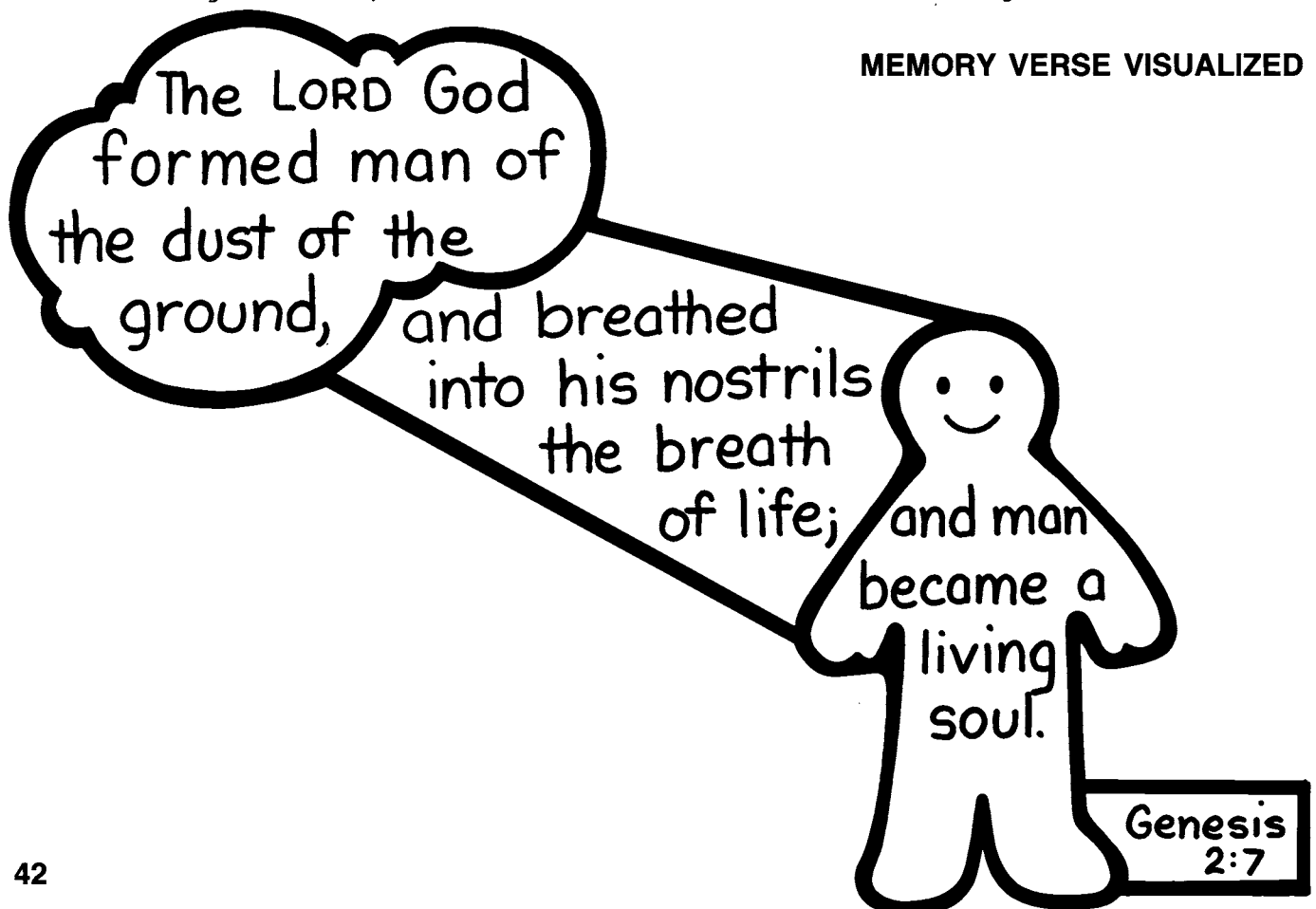
COORDINATING SONGS

"Even Before I Was Born" — Sing and Celebrate for

MEMORY VERSE SONG



MEMORY VERSE VISUALIZED



Kids II

"Into My Heart" — Sing and Celebrate for Kids II

SUPPORT MATERIAL

God Made Me Special — Happy Day Book, Standard Publishing

God Knows You — Happy Day Book, Standard Publishing

God's Plan for Me — by Judy Hull Moore, Gospel Publishing House

You're One-of-a-Kind — by Joy Wilt Berry, "Ready-Set-Grow!" Series, Gospel Publishing House

TEXT Genesis 6:5-7; Psalm 119:113; Philippians 4:8; Isaiah 26:3

OBJECTIVE The students will understand that God made our minds, and will be able to list specific ways they can use their minds to honor God.

MEMORY VERSE Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. — Matthew 22:37

I'm Thankful for My Mind

MEMORY VERSE IN ACTION

THOU SHALT — Point to others.

LOVE — Cross fists over heart.

THE LORD THY GOD — Point up.

WITH ALL — With right hand flat, palm down, make large circle.

THY HEART — With index fingers, draw a heart shape over own heart.

AND WITH ALL THY SOUL — Shape left hand like an O. With right hand, place the thumb and index fingertip into the left hand O and draw right hand upward.

AND WITH ALL THY MIND — Tap forehead with right index finger.

MEMORY VERSE VISUALIZED

A cluster of hearts is the visual representation of this week's memory verse. (See pattern at the end of this lesson.) Cut the five pieces apart on the heavy black lines. Put the arrangement back together, one section at a time, as your students learn the verse.

BIBLE LESSON OUTLINE

Introduction: For your opener, use the In-Class activity focusing on skills your students have learned.

1. Thinking is one of the functions of our mind. In Noah's day, men's thoughts were so evil that God was sorry He had ever created them.

2. In his letter to the Philippians, Paul gives a list of things that would be well for us to think about.

3. We must guard what things we allow to stay in our mind, being sure they are things which would please God.

Climax: If we keep our mind fixed on good things, God promises us that we will have "perfect peace."

Conclusion: Our mind (brain) controls our body, and is the entrance to our soul. We should be thankful for all the things our mind helps us do, and be sure that we keep it attuned to the leading of God's Spirit.

Response: Your students will be able to give a number

of specific ways we use our mind, and will explain why it is important to keep our thoughts in conformity with God's instructions regarding profitable things to think about.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Mind is a word denoting the faculty of memory or recollection, moral thinking, the seat of knowledge. Like soul and spirit, this is a part of man that is invisible, but also an essential part of man. It is with the mind that we think and reason, have understanding and intelligence. The source of all these functions is the brain.

God gave man a brain — a mind and a will of his own — that God and man might enjoy fellowship. There can be no knowledge, understanding, or comprehension without a mind, so friendship without a mind is impossible.

The brain is the master organ of the body, more complicated and wonderful than any machine ever built by man. It stores information from past experiences which is why we can think, learn, and remember. Man can speak, solve difficult problems, and produce creative ideas because God gave him a mind.

Sometimes, through impaired development or some accident or injury, the brain doesn't function up to its fullest capacity. That person's mind may be unable to comprehend many things, or maybe the powers of memory are gone. We are sorry when someone has a handicap such as this and can be especially thankful to God that our mind can still learn and understand, especially those things that help us to know Jesus and to be ready for Heaven.

IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES

Focus on skills your students have learned, such as tying a shoe, putting together a puzzle, using a calculator, telling time. Bring some props to class so the

children can demonstrate these abilities. Bring out the thought that God gave them a mind which makes them able to perform these skills.

Play a game of concentration, using the pictures given (see Patterns). Make two copies of each picture. Mix them and lay them face down on your table or floor. Let each child take a turn trying to find matching pictures by remembering where they were in each of the previous turns. If the pictures match correctly he may choose again; if not, it is the next child's turn to try. This game will emphasize the use of the mind.

Help your class to talk about things their minds think of to do for the Lord. Have each student draw something he can do.

As a class project, give each of your students a cutout of one of the silhouettes (see Patterns). Give a boy silhouette to each boy, a girl silhouette to each girl, and choose one student to fill in the Jesus silhouette. Have the children draw or write in some things that their minds have thought of during the past week. Let the child with the Jesus silhouette fill in something that shows how Jesus loves us. The silhouettes can then be made into a mobile, with Jesus at the top, or they can be mounted on a contrasting colored paper and placed on a bulletin board for display.

The following activity, Using the Mind for Jesus, is a little paper game that most children already know (see Patterns). Every part of the activity involves using the mind: reading the instructions, putting the puzzle together, working the game, and involving others as you tell them about Jesus. Make one of the puzzles ahead of time so you will be able to help the children in constructing their own. When the puzzles are together, explain to the children how the game works and let them practice on each other. Tell them to take their puzzle home and use it as a tool in telling others about Jesus. Be sure to stress the fact that they were able to put together and play the game only because Jesus gave them a mind. Every time they play this game they should remember to give thanks to God.

Scramble the words of the memory verse. Ask the students to unscramble them. Point out how thankful we should be for our mind.

QUESTIONS

When we get saved, how does Jesus change our thoughts? What happens to all the bad, evil thoughts?

What advantage does the devil have if we are willing to listen to negative thoughts?

Bad thoughts lead to bad actions. Explain.

Good thoughts lead to good actions. Explain.

What kinds of things does God want us to think about? Why? (See Philippians 4:8)

How can we keep the bad things out of our mind?

How can we keep our thoughts on good things?

What are some of the advantages of keeping our thoughts on good things?

Who are some of the people who teach us how to think right? (moms, dads, teachers, etc.)

PRESCHOOL SUGGESTIONS

For each child make a copy of the "Windows to a Mind" (see Patterns). Cut around the three sides of each of the "windows" on the top section of the pattern. Attach the top section of the pattern (the child thinking) over the bottom section (four small illustrations of action figures). Let the children lift the hinged windows to show the pictures of things our minds may think of and cause other parts of our bodies to do — talking, walking, praying, singing.

Have the children repeat after you; A, B, C, etc. Tell them they could not do this if they did not have a mind. Wiggle your fingers at the children and tell them that your mind helps you to move every part of your body. Your mind helps you to know what you see, to understand what you hear, etc. We should be very thankful for our minds.

Focus on the things your little ones have learned to do, such as dressing themselves, drawing with a crayon, saying their name, singing a song. Do some of these things together or show pictures of children doing them. With each item, emphasize, "God gave you a mind so you could . . ."

Bring a doll and show how it cannot run, jump, pray, or sing, but we can do these things.

REVIEW IDEAS

Describe some everyday situations. Compare the reactions of different people in each case. Example: It is raining outside — One child says, "Oh, yuck, it's raining." Another says, "Oh, the flowers are getting a drink from God." Talk about how our thoughts can make us feel good or bad. We can control our thoughts if we want to. Zero in on the Scripture: "Whatsoever things are true . . . honest . . ." Enlarge the Think on These Things fill-in (see Patterns) and copy it onto brightly colored posterboard. As you fill in each of the blank spaces, have the children say each line aloud with you.

This pattern can also be copied onto a transparency and used as an overhead review.

Bring a computer, and display on the screen a simple math program. (Mathblaster is the name of a good one which has a large display.) Demonstrate that the computer can give the answer to the problems. Ask your group what kind of person must have invented a computer. They should conclude that he was very smart! Then bring out that God gave that man his mind and the ability to think and invent. Our mind is the greatest computer of all.

Use puppets or have a skit where a child is studying the Bible or Sunday school lesson. Also show his being attentive to teachers, preachers, etc. We can use our mind to make these choices.

SUPPORT MATERIAL

God Made Me Special — Happy Day Book, Standard Publishing

God's Plan for Me — by Judy Hull Moore, Gospel Publishing House

Using Your Head — by Joy Wilt Berry, "Ready-Set-Grow!" Series, Gospel Publishing House

MEMORY VERSE SONG



Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart. Matthew twenty-two thir-ty sev - en.

MEMORY VERSE VISUALIZED

