

LESSON 5

I CAN PRAISE GOD WITH A JOYFUL HEART

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Is Worthy of Praise**SCRIPTURE:** Psalm 63; 108**GOD'S BIG STORY:** Throughout the Psalms, David expresses that God is worthy of praise. He models that no matter our circumstances, we can praise God with a joyful heart!**WORD OF WONDER:** You created the deepest parts of my being. You put me together inside my mother's body. How you made me is amazing and wonderful. I praise you for that. What you have done is wonderful. I know that very well. —Psalm 139:13–14

- PRE SERVICE:
 - OPTION 1 Multisensory Activity: Desert Delights
 - OPTION 2 Multisensory Activity: Oasis
- Welcome Question: When have you been so excited about something that you couldn't stop thinking about it?
- SMALL GROUP
- Declaring God's Wonder
- Prayer of Invitation
- Worship: All of Me, This Little Light
- God's Big Story:
- Connecting the Wonder Truth
- In Awe of God's Wonder
- Responding in Worship: Reckless Love
- Blessing Your Kids



INVITATION

We invite you to pause, listen, and shift your gaze toward the Father ...

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Is Worthy of Praise

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 63; 108

WORD OF WONDER: Psalm 139:13–14

Have you had a wilderness experience?

When my family moved to our “new” house, we had a bug problem. The home had been vacant for months; spiders and insects were all too glad to take up residence. You can predict the reactions of my children.

I eradicated the bugs and cleaned the cobwebs, but I also thought the family needed a camping trip. See, I figured if we were out in nature—where the kids would see lots of bugs—maybe they would overcome their phobia. Unfortunately, our excursion did not have the desired effect.

David’s wilderness experience had more serious challenges. In the Judean desert, he had to locate water and forage for food. Even though David was God’s anointed king, he had to run from people who wanted him dead. He could have accused God of deserting him.

Yet even in the wild, David recognized God’s provision. Perhaps while observing a winged eagle sheltering its young, David compares himself to the eaglets under a protective wing (Psalm 63:7). As you prepare for teaching this week, I invite you to read Psalms 63 and 108. Ask yourself, “Do I ever find it difficult to give praise to God?” Perhaps the next time you are in the wilderness—physically or otherwise—you might remind yourself that God is worthy of praise, no matter the circumstances.

—**Jason Hitchcock**

Theology Editor and Ministry Volunteer

Contributor to Wonder Ink

LESSON 5 **FOR LEADERS**
I CAN PRAISE GOD WITH A JOYFUL HEART

DID YOU KNOW?

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

Israel's King David is attributed with writing Psalms 63 and 108, which are among the 73 psalms he is believed to have penned. Throughout the psalms, David praised God in a variety of ways—calling to God for help, bringing Him his questions, and offering Him praise.

WHAT?

David had many enemies who wanted to kill him, and he spent a good part of his life fleeing from those who wanted to take his life. Both Psalm 63 and Psalm 108 speak of how God helped and delivered David from his enemies.

WHERE?

David wrote Psalm 63 when he was in the Desert of Judah. David spent a lot of time in the Judean wilderness—as a boy when he was fleeing from Saul, the king who wanted him dead—and when he was fleeing from his own son, Absalom.

WHEN?

Because David is mentioned as the king in Psalm 63 (v. 11), it is thought that David wrote this psalm when running from his son. Absalom was attempting to take the throne from David, and David and those loyal to him had to flee (2 Samuel 15–19).

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY:

David wrote Psalm 63 in the wilderness of Judah, likely while fleeing from his son Absalom. In that desolate place, he sought God's strength and praised Him. Centuries later, the Spirit led Jesus into the *erēmos*—a lonely wilderness—where, like David, He looked to the Father for sustaining strength.

LESSON 5 ELEMENTARY & PRETEEN

Large Group

Spark curiosity and get kids thinking about the wonder of God.

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Is Worthy of Praise

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 63; 108

WORD OF WONDER: Psalm 139:13–14

As kids arrive...

20 minutes before service begins, leaders are in place ready to welcome kids.

Display series theme loop. Play high-energy music in the background.

LG Leader walks around the room on mic and greets kids by name as they enter the room. Be intentional about introducing yourself to new parents and kids.

SLIDE: SERIES THEME LOOP

VIDEO: COUNTDOWN (2min OR 30sec) Start a countdown to begin game 10 minutes prior to service start)

OPTION 1 Multisensory Activity: Desert Delights

SUPPLIES: paper cups, marker (prep only), various beverages (such as water, soda, juice, milk, tea, lemonade, etc.), various other liquids (such as vegetable oil, broth, pickle or lemon juice, thin salad dressings or sauces, etc.), tray, towel or dark cloth, whiteboard, dry-erase marker, various fruits (such as grapes, oranges or apples; optional)

Allergy Caution: Be aware of any food allergies or sensitivities among your kids and volunteers before doing this activity.

Ahead of time, use the marker to label each cup with the kind of liquid that will be inside it. Gather the beverages and other liquids and place a small amount of each in its labeled paper cup. Place the cups on a tray. If you're using fruit items, place these on the tray as well. Then carefully cover the tray with the cloth or towel. Using the dry-erase marker, make two columns on the whiteboard. Label one column "Quenches Thirst" and one "Does Not Quench Thirst."

Imagine you're in a desert. You've been in the desert for days and days. It's so very hot, the sun is so bright, and the sand is so dry. You haven't had any water in a long time. Are you thirsty? Allow kids to respond.

Display the Desert Delights Slide. **What does it mean if something will quench your thirst?** Allow kids to respond.



Yes! Something quenches our thirst if it helps us not feel thirsty anymore. Let's play a game where you decide what will quench thirst and what won't quench thirst. It's a game that will test your memories too!

Place the covered tray where all the kids can see it. **On this tray are a variety of items. Some of them are things that will quench thirst, and some of them are not. When I uncover the tray, you'll have 20 seconds to study the tray and memorize everything that is on it.** Carefully remove the towel or cloth from the tray. Give the kids 20 seconds to study the items on the tray without touching them. If you have younger kids or non-readers, have older kids or a leader read everything that is labeled once. After 20 seconds, place the towel or cloth back over the tray and move the tray out of the kids' sight.

Can you remember everything that's on the tray? Let's find out! Invite kids one at a time to share something that was on the tray. As they share an item, ask them if that item would quench their thirst or not and write the name of the item on the whiteboard in the respective column. Once kids have shared everything they can remember, bring the tray back out and uncover it. Together, check to see if they remembered everything. **Display the Praise Wonder Truth Slide. Great job remembering the items on the list and deciding what would quench our thirst and what wouldn't! Today in God's big story, we'll read psalms, or song poems, that David wrote to God. David loved praising God so much! He said his desire for God was like longing for water in a hot and dry desert. He also said praising God was like eating a delicious and satisfying meal. Praising God—or telling Him how wonderful He is—satisfies our souls the way a nourishing meal or a thirst-quenching drink satisfies our bodies. Today we get to praise God like David did. Our Wonder Truth is **GOD IS WORTHY OF PRAISE.****



OPTION 2 Multisensory Activity: Oasis

SUPPLIES: tray or table, pitchers of various clear beverages (5–8 options such as water, clear soda, herbal tea, lemonade, salt water, sugar water, white grape juice, water mixed with lemon juice, etc.), sticky notes, paper, marker (prep only), paper cups (1 per kid), whiteboard, dry-erase marker

Allergy Caution: Be aware of any food allergies or sensitivities among your kids and volunteers before doing this activity.

Ahead of time, set out a tray or table with 5–8 pitchers. Fill each pitcher with a different kind of clear beverage. Use the marker and sticky notes to label each pitcher with a number. On the sheet of paper, make a list for yourself of which number contains which type of drink. Don't let the kids see your list!

Leader Tip: If you have a larger group, divide your kids into smaller groups of 10–12 for this activity.

Imagine you're in a desert. You've been in the desert for days and days. It's so very hot, the sun is so bright, and the sand is so dry. You haven't had any water in a long time. Are you thirsty?

Display the Oasis Slide. Give each kid a paper cup and draw their attention to the tray or table. **Let's play a game to see if you can identify which drinks will help quench your thirst. In each pitcher, there is a different type of drink. You get to taste each one and see if you can guess what it is. Then we'll decide which one you think will help quench your thirst the most.**



Make It Inclusive: Some kids may not be able to taste the drinks if they don't know what they are ahead of time, particularly if they have certain medical conditions or dietary needs. If you aren't sure about the needs in your group, consider having kids try to identify drinks based on smelling and looking at them instead of tasting them. Kids can discuss how thirst-quenching the drinks might be based on their guessed identities. Then you can reveal what the drinks are at the end before they vote.

Give each kid an opportunity to taste each drink and guess what it is. Write each guess on the whiteboard. Beside each guess, write a check mark if kids think it'll quench their thirst and write an X if they think it won't. Then reveal what drink is in each pitcher. Ask the kids if they want to revise any of their answers about which ones will quench their thirst.

Great job identifying the drinks and figuring out which ones would really help you if you were thirsty! Now we're going to vote on which drink you would want the most if you were in the desert. I'm going to point to each pitcher, and you get to cast your vote by saying, "glug, glug, glug." If you think it won't quench your thirst, "glug" quietly. If you think it'll quench your thirst, "glug" loudly! The pitcher that gets the loudest vote wins.

Let kids vote with their voices. Circle the winning drink on the whiteboard. If time allows, let the kids have another cup of the winning drink.

David said that his desire for God was so great, it was like desperately longing for water in a hot and dry desert. He also said praising God—or telling Him how wonderful He is—satisfies our souls the way a nourishing meal or a thirst-quenching drink satisfies our bodies. Today we get to praise God like David did. Display the Praise Wonder Truth Slide. Our Wonder Truth is **GOD IS WORTHY OF PRAISE.**



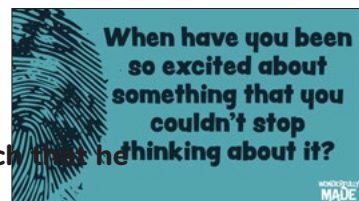
Welcome Question

SUPPLIES: paper, coloring utensils, poster board OR , whiteboard, dry-erase markers (if needed)

SLIDE: WELCOME QUESTION

At service start time, draw kids' attention to the Welcome Question. Invite kids to write answers on the poster board or whiteboard.

Today we'll hear about a man named David. He loved praising God so much that he couldn't stop thinking about Him all through the night!



Small Group

Introduce small group time. While kids are in small group, consider sitting in the groups for a few minutes each. Engage and interact as is appropriate.

Countdown

After about 15 minutes of small group, give a 5 minute warning and begin the countdown.

VIDEO: COUNTDOWN

"Hey everyone! Welcome to our Large Group Worship time! My name is _____ and I'm excited to take this time to worship God, review what we just read, and talk about ways we can respond to what we are learning about God! We are going to pray as we prepare our hearts to worship God!"

Declaring God's Wonder

Display the Praise Declaration Slide. Read each line boldly and invite kids to repeat after you.

Thank You, God, that You are good! (Kids repeat.)

You made me on purpose, for a purpose. (Kids repeat.)

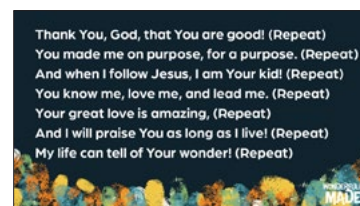
And when I follow Jesus, I am Your kid! (Kids repeat.)

You know me, love me, and lead me. (Kids repeat.)

Your great love is amazing, (Kids repeat.)

And I will praise You as long as I live! (Kids repeat.)

My life can tell of Your wonder! (Kids repeat.)



Prayer of Invitation

Lead kids in a prayer of invitation before entering into worship and God's big story: **God, thank You for being our God—a God who is worthy of praise! With the help of the Holy Spirit, help us to overflow with awe, amazement, and so much love for You that we sing Your praises morning, noon, and night. In Jesus' name, Amen.**

Worship

God is worthy of praise, so let's worship Him now through music.

Play [All of Me, This Little Light](#) and encourage the kids to sing and dance as they praise God.

God's Big Story

[Display the Praise Title Slide](#). Explain that the book of Psalms is a collection of song poems, many of them written by King David.

Today we are learning what it looks like to seek God with your whole heart. As you watch, think about why David wanted to be close to God even during a hard time and how spending time with God can change the way you face your own challenges. Let's start by watching part of God's big story directly from the Bible. Afterward, we'll watch and experience more of the story!

[VIDEO: GODS BIG STORY](#)



LESSON 5 I CAN PRAISE GOD WITH A JOYFUL HEART

EXPERIENCE IT! SCRIPT

SUPPLIES: pool noodles (1 half per kid), knife or scissors (prep only)

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: Experience It! Script, Sound Clips

Ahead of time, recruit a teen or adult volunteer to be the sound tech. Give her a copy of the Experience It! Script and ask her to test the Sound Clips before kids arrive. Cut the pool noodles in half to make enough for each kid to have a half pool noodle.

Before you begin, divide the large group into groups of four and have each small group sit on the floor. If your group is small, everyone can stay together as one group.

Leader Tip: Allow kids to use their imaginations as they create today. You'll be surprised just how creative they are with minimal instruction. If you don't have pool noodles available, have kids create the scenes using another simple object, such as a bath towel or paint stir stick.

Today let's pretend you're on a movie set. The Props Master, the person in charge of gathering props for the movie, ran out of time and wasn't able to get all of the props needed. He asked you, the Props Team, to help him create the movie scenes with only these ... Give each kid a half pool noodle.

Oh, no! How in the world are you going to use these pool noodles to make the movie come to life? I have full confidence you can do it! During today's part of God's big story, I'll give you different scenes to create or parts to act out in the story. You must use at least one pool noodle to help the Props Master create each scene! Are you up to the task? Allow kids to respond. Awesome! And one last thing, you must create as quickly as possible. The movie's completion deadline is fast approaching, and we don't have much time. If you're ready, let's roll the film!

Play the Film Projector Sound Clip. Then fade the volume of the sound clip.

David wrote many psalms as he prayed and worshiped God. A lot of them were song poems that were meant to be sung to God, who is worthy of our praise.

David had seen God do amazing things in his life. God had helped him defeat a giant warrior named Goliath. Props Team, go! Play the Epic Giant Battle Sound Clip as kids create the scene of David defeating the giant Goliath using the pool noodles. Then fade the sound.

God had protected David from wild animals and from men who wanted to kill him. Props Team, go! Play the Growling Lion Sound Clip as the kids create the scene. Then fade the sound. **God made David king over all of Israel, and He gave him a kingdom that would never end. Props Team, go!** Play the King's Triumph Sound Clip. Then fade the sound. **God was always willing to forgive David when he sinned and repented and turned back to God and His good ways.**

Because of all the ways God had been faithful to him, David knew that God was worthy of praise. David wanted to sing songs of joy to Him because our God is amazing! Props Team, go! Play the Joyful Sound Clip as kids create the scene. Then fade the sound.

When David was in the desert in Judah, the southern part of Israel, he wrote Psalm 63. It would have been hot and sunny, which is probably why he starts out this psalm talking about being thirsty. Props Team, go! Play the Desert Sound Clip as kids create the scene. Then fade the sound. **David says his desire for God is like wanting water when you're in a hot desert! God is the only one who can satisfy that thirst!**

David wrote, "I have seen you in the sacred tent. There I have seen your power and your glory" (Psalm 63:2). David had praised God and had seen His power and glory in the tabernacle, the place where God's people worshiped Him and where God's presence was.

Because he had experienced the amazing love of God, David said, "I will praise you as long as I live. I will call your name when I lift up my hands in prayer" (Psalm 63:4). Props Team, go! Play the Prayer Sound Clip as kids create the scene. Then fade the sound. **When David joyfully praises God, he feels like he's just eaten a delicious meal—nothing is better!**

All night long, David remembers how God has helped him and cared for him. He holds on to God, who protects him with His power. Props Team, go! Play the Night Ambience Sound Clip as kids create the scene. Then fade the sound.

In another song poem, Psalm 108, David praises God joyfully because of all He has done. He says he will sing songs of worship on the harp and the lyre—instruments he can use to praise God. David is so excited to praise God that he wants to get up before the sun, so he has all day long to worship!

God is worthy of praise in all parts of the world—every nation and every people need to hear about our amazing God! David wrote, "LORD, I will praise you among the nations. I will sing about you among the people of the earth" (Psalm 108:3). Props Team, go! Play the Around the World Sound Clip as kids create the scene. Then fade the sound.

The love of God stretches beyond the heavens, and His faithfulness reaches to the sky. God's love and faithfulness are bigger than anything we can imagine. Because of all of God's great works, He is worthy of honor everywhere. His glory and amazingness reaches throughout the earth—He is good to everything He has made.

David praised God with a joyful heart because God had been faithful to him. God had shown David His great love. God does the same for us—He loves us so much. God created all things, He's Lord of everything, His great love is amazing, and His glory is incredible. God is worthy of praise! Props Team, go! Play the Final Joy Sound Clip as kids create the final scene. Then fade the sound. Encourage and congratulate the kids for their creativity and hard work in making all the scenes with just those simple props!

Connecting the Wonder Truth

Display the Praise Wonder Truth Slide. Our Wonder Truth today is **GOD IS WORTHY OF PRAISE**. Where did you see our Wonder Truth in action in the story? Allow kids to answer freely.

In the hot, dry, lonely place of the desert in Judah, David looked to God to give him strength and help (Psalm 63). Hundreds of years later, Jesus also went into a desert and faced difficult things. Jesus looked to God His Father for strength to keep Him going. When we face hard things, we can remember that God gives us strength and help too.



In Awe of God's Wonder

Spend a few moments allowing kids to think about the wonder of God's story.

Wow! Out of all the things God did in David's life, what amazed you the most? If necessary, help kids recall some of the details in David's life: facing wild animals, defeating a giant, and being the king of Israel. Encourage kids to share their answers with a neighbor.

How do you think God felt when He heard David praise Him? Encourage kids to share with their neighbor before sharing their answer with the group.

Responding in Worship

SLIDE: RESPONDING IN WORSHIP

Talk about ways we can respond to what we are learning with next steps such as tithing, prayer, asking questions, and worship. Encourage kids to ask their SG leaders any questions they were wondering during the lesson.

***Introduce this next song and invite kids to respond and participate in worship. See the "Worship Posture Tutorial" on the RBKids Resource Page.



WORSHIP VIDEO: Reckless Love

Blessing Your Kids

Encourage the kids to hold their hands out in front of them, with palms up, as if their hands are open to receive something. Tell them to listen and receive the blessing as you speak it over them.

Blessing: God promises to uphold you with His right hand. May you seek God earnestly all the days of your life. May your thirst for God be stronger than your thirst for anything else this life could offer. God alone fully satisfies, and He alone is worthy of all our praise!