

Philip Tells the Ethiopian About Jesus

Acts 8:26-40



Worship Theme:



We respond to God through worship.

Weaving Faith Into Life:



Kids will choose to worship God in their everyday lives.

Session Sequence	What Children Will Do	Supplies
1 Let's Praise God! <i>(about 25 minutes)</i>	Sing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Worship Christ" (1 Peter 3:15) • "Christ Arose" • "Doxology" • "Praise Him" • "I Believe" (John 1:12) • "Doin' It for the Lord" (Colossians 3:23) • "Go and Make Disciples" (Matthew 28:19) 	KidsOwn Worship Kit: <i>KidsOwn Worship DVD</i> Classroom Supplies: Video equipment, large sheet of newsprint or poster board, marker, tape

Preschool

Session Sequence	What Children Will Do	Supplies
2 Let's Learn the Point! <i>(about 25 minutes)</i>	Praise Parade Make praise shakers, and have a worship parade.	Classroom Supplies: Plastic egg and strip of crepe paper per child, bag of rice, colored electrical tape, scissors
	Chalk Talk Praises Draw praises to God to worship God through artwork.	Classroom Supplies: Sidewalk chalk for each child
	* Green Light Praise Use words and motions in a game to praise God.	

Session Sequence	What Children Will Do	Supplies
2 Let's Learn the Point! <i>(about 25 minutes)</i>	* Filled With Praise See a demonstration of being filled with praise.	KidsOwn Worship Kit: Rocket Balloon 
	Loving God Write good things kids and parents like to hear, and then praise God.	Classroom Supplies: Index card and pencil for every 3 children
	* Worship Every Day Act out ways to respond to situations.	Classroom Supplies: Paper, pen, basket

Session Sequence	What Children Will Do	Supplies
3 Let's Pray! <i>(about 10 minutes)</i>	The Offering Offer their gifts to God.	Classroom Supplies: Offering bowls
	Balloon Praises Praise the Lord while tapping a balloon to each other.	KidsOwn Worship Kit: <i>KidsOwn Worship DVD</i> Classroom Supplies: Balloon, Video equipment
	A Joyful Noise Noisily praise the Lord.	KidsOwn Worship Kit: <i>KidsOwn Worship DVD</i> Classroom Supplies: Video equipment

* Starred activities can be used successfully with preschool and elementary children together. Customize your session to fit your needs. You can separate preschoolers and elementary children for Section 2. Or, if you keep the children all together for the entire worship session, we suggest you choose from the starred activities.

Philip Tells the Ethiopian About Jesus

Acts 8:26-40

Philip was a deacon, chosen by the apostles to help with ministry in the early church. He had gone to Samaria and established a wonderful ministry there. According to Acts 8:4-8, Philip was preaching about Christ, healing people, and bringing great joy to the city. But God had another plan for Philip, which included guiding the first non-Jew to faith in Jesus and resulted in Christianity being taken to Ethiopia. Philip responded in obedience.

Since the Ethiopian eunuch had gone to Jerusalem to worship, we can assume he knew something of the Jewish faith. He may have been quite fully committed to the faith because he had traveled quite a distance to worship, perhaps as far as 200 miles! He had likely been inspired by his time of worship, because he was reading from Isaiah as he rode along. We might find it strange that Philip could hear what he was reading, but it was common in ancient times to read aloud. In fact, the language was such that sounding out the words was almost necessary.

Notice that at the Holy Spirit's prompting, Philip overcame not only any fears or questions about non-Jews becoming Christians, but also any racial prejudice he may have had. God is not concerned with the color of our skin, and neither was Philip.

Philip had no difficulty answering the Ethiopian's questions. He had probably been answering the same types of questions from the Samaritans. God had prepared the right person to present the gospel to the Ethiopian on the road.

When Philip told the man about Jesus, the Ethiopian apparently expressed belief immediately. Baptism was taken very seriously in the early church. Philip must have been fully convinced of the certainty and sincerity of the Ethiopian's belief, because he consented to baptize this traveler.

Having completed his task, Philip was again sent on his way by God. The text seems to indicate that God miraculously swept him away, on to his next mission. The Ethiopian continued on his way, and tradition tells us that he spread the message of Christ in Ethiopia, soon baptizing the queen and others there.

We often don't know why God guides us to do certain things. Sometimes what he leads us to do seems difficult, even illogical. But when we know what God wants us to do, we must respond in faith and action. Philip's actions opened Christianity to non-Jews, and if we accept tradition as true, they also resulted in many Ethiopians following Christ. Who knows what God will do through us if we respond faithfully to the guidance of his Holy Spirit?

Devotion for Leaders

It's natural to turn to friends for advice. Through your friendship with Jesus, you can get the ultimate "advice" and guidance. Jesus' leading is *always* worth following.

Weaving Faith Into Your Life: When have you felt that still, small voice prompting you to say something or do something? How did you respond? It's tempting to explain away those nudgings from the Holy Spirit without following them. But what if Philip had done the same thing? This week resolve to listen more closely to—and obey immediately—the directions God lays on your heart.

Why We Worship for Leaders

Philip obeyed when he was told by an angel of the Lord to travel down a certain road from Jerusalem to Gaza. The result of Philip's obedience was that he was in the right place at the right time to tell a searching Ethiopian man the good news about Jesus. The Ethiopian received the news eagerly, and he excitedly went on his way worshipping the Lord.

Children love to praise God for the things he does, just as Philip must have when he realized why God had sent him down that road. Children also respond to praising God for who he is, just as the Ethiopian man did when it was revealed to him that the Scriptures spoke of Jesus. Through the activities in this session, children will learn that it's a good thing to respond to God through worship.

Easy Prep for Leaders

Let's Praise God!—Make sure your video equipment is ready. Tape a large sheet of newsprint or poster board to the wall.

Worship Every Day—Write the following situations on slips of paper, and put the slips in a basket or hat. You'll need one situation slip for every three or four children.

- A friend brings you a dozen cookies he made himself.
- Someone finds a lost phone and returns it.
- Your cousin is healed of cancer.
- Your dog jumps in a lake and saves you from drowning.
- Your little sister knows an answer for your homework.
- Your grandma gives you a new computer.
- You go camping and get up early to watch the sunrise with your dad.
- You go fishing and break your rod landing a 10-pounder.

Preschool Activities—Refer to the preschool pages for preparations.

1 Let's Praise God!

Play the music videos on the *KidsOwn Worship DVD* as children arrive. Also ask some children to stand at the door and welcome everyone who comes into the room. Ask these greeters to smile, shake hands, and say, "Welcome!"

As each child comes in the door, tell this knock-knock joke:

"Knock-knock."

"Who's there?"

"Wa."

"Wa who?"

"Wahoo! Let's worship!"

When you're ready to begin, welcome everyone warmly.

Say ▶ **Wahoo! Let's worship! We're here today to tell God we love him. That's worship! When we see all the wonderful things God has done, responding to him in worship should be as natural as asking, "Who's there?" when you hear the words *knock-knock*. When you respond to God through worship, it makes God happy. Today the most important reason we've come here to church is to worship! Praising Jesus and his love is what we've come here for. Let's stand and sing "Worship Christ" (1 Peter 3:15).**

 Sing "Worship Christ" (1 Peter 3:15).

Say ▶ **Today we're going to talk about a man the Bible tells us about who found out for the first time about Jesus' love. This man learned who Jesus is. The man was so excited that he immediately responded to God with joy and worship.**

Ask ▶ • **What is the good news about Jesus?** (That he's alive; that he saved us from our sins.)

Say ▶ **One of the best things about Jesus is that he is alive today. Jesus was killed 2,000 years ago, but he lives today. Let's respond to that by worshipping Jesus with the song "Christ Arose."**

 Sing "Christ Arose."

Ask ▶ • **We sang, "He lives forever with his saints to reign." What are some things that happen to you that help you know that Jesus reigns in your life?** (He helps me make good choices; he gave me a good family and great friends; I know he forgives me.)

Say ▶ **The God of the universe lives inside us! Wow! That makes me want to praise the Lord! Let's respond to God by singing the song "Doxology."**

 Sing "Doxology."

Ask ▶ • **What is the best thing that's ever happened to you?** (I won a contest at the fair; my parents surprised me with a trip to Disney World.)

Say ▶ **When good things happen, we feel happy inside. We can respond to those feelings by praising God. For example, let's say you get the snowboard you've been wanting for a long time. Or let's say you wake up early one morning and see a beautiful sunrise. At those times, we can turn to God and thank him and tell him how happy we are. That's responding to God in worship. Sometimes you'll hear people say, "Hallelujah!" or "Praise the Lord!" or "Hosanna!"**

When we worship God, it's as if we're giving God compliments. We tell God things we like about him. Tell me some good things about God.

As kids respond, write their comments on the newsprint you taped to the wall earlier. Divide the list into two columns: one for things God does and the other for things about God.

Say ▶ **Let's look at our list. There are so many good things about God. He does many wonderful things for us. It's good to praise God for things he does, and he also loves it when we worship him for who he is.**

If the list includes more things God does than things about God, help kids translate their responses into words that describe who God is. For example, if kids say, "God loves us," or "God forgives us," write, "God is loving," or "God is forgiving." Encourage children to come up with at least five or six responses in each column.

Say ▶ **I need someone to be a praise leader now and stand and read these phrases out loud to us. The rest of us will answer by saying "Hosanna!" after each one. For example, if the praise leader reads, "God is loving," the rest of us will answer, "Hosanna!"**

Choose a volunteer to come to the front and lead everyone in the responsive praise. Then thank the volunteer, and have him or her join the other kids.

Say ▶ **Let's stand now and sing "Praise Him." Let's praise God all the time.**

 Sing "Praise Him."

Say ▶ **We just exalted the Lord with our singing. That means we lifted God up and acknowledged that he's more important than we are. Choose one of the phrases from our list. When I say "hosanna," let's all praise God at the same time by saying aloud one or two things from our list. For example, you could say, "I praise you, God, for being loving" or "You are powerful, Jesus," or "You are holy, Lord!" It won't matter if we all say different things because God will understand them all. Ready to worship with your words? Hosanna!**

When everyone has called out a praise statement, have kids remain standing.

Say ▶ **Psalm 149:4 says, "For the Lord takes delight in his people." You just made God happy! He delights in hearing you praise him!**

**I have another joke to tell you. Why is six afraid of seven?
Because seven, eight (ate), nine!**

What do we usually do when we hear jokes? We laugh if they're funny and groan if they're not. It's like that with worship. When we're happy about what God does or who he is, we respond in worship.

Our next two songs talk about all the earth praising God, and praising him in all we do. Imagine that! It's not only people praising God; the earth praises God, too! Let's sing "I Believe" and "Doin' It for the Lord." Let God fill your heart with joy as you respond to him in worship!

 Sing "I Believe" (John 1:12).

 Sing "Doin' It for the Lord."

Say **God is here with us today. He wants us to respond to him in worship. Our love for God will grow when we do that. Today's Bible story tells about another man who followed the advice of our next song. It tells us to go into the whole world to tell people about Jesus. You know, when we're filled up with God's love, we just can't help but share it with others. We naturally respond to the good news about God by telling others about him so they can worship him, too. Let's worship God with the song "Go and Make Disciples."**

 Sing "Go and Make Disciples" (Matthew 28:19).

Pray **Lord, we worship you today. We love you and say that you are worthy of all our praise! Help us respond to you in worship every day. Fill us with your love and joy, and help us tell others about you. You are awesome! Amen.**

2 *Let's Learn the Point!*

Preschool Activities, pages 129-130

At this time, have the preschool leader invite the preschoolers to go to their own room for this section of activities. Tear out the Preschool Activities page, and give it to the preschool leader. Have the preschool leader bring the preschoolers back to participate in Let's Pray! with the older children. If you prefer to keep all the children together, do the starred (*) activities. They will work well with both elementary and preschool children.

(continued on page 131)

Philip Tells the Ethiopian About Jesus

Acts 8:26-40

Worship Theme:



We respond to God through worship.

Easy Prep for Leaders

Praise Parade—Set out a plastic Easter egg, a small container with a lid, and an 18-inch strip of crepe paper for each child. Also set out a small bag of uncooked rice, a roll of colored electrical tape, and scissors.

Using Theo

Consider using Theophilus the FaithRetriever puppet today in these ways:

- Have Theo lead the preschoolers from the main worship area to the preschool room.
- Have Theo lead the praise parade.
- See the KidsOwn Worship Kit for a puppet skit written for today's worship session.



Praise Parade

Gather kids near the supplies you prepared before the session.

Have each child put a small handful of rice into a plastic egg and close it. Help children put a strip of electrical tape over the seam of each egg. As children work on the praise shakers, tell the Bible story.

Say **A friend of Jesus named Philip met a man from Ethiopia who was traveling in a chariot. A chariot is a cart on wheels pulled by a horse. Philip told the man about Jesus. The man was very excited and believed everything Philip told him about Jesus. The man was so happy to hear about Jesus that he went away praising God.**

We can be like the Ethiopian man. He worshipped because he was so happy to hear

about Jesus. Are you happy to hear about Jesus? Me, too! So let's tell God that. Let's worship by having a praise parade to the song "Happy Christians."

Distribute crepe paper streamers to the children. Lead the children in singing "Happy Christians" to the tune of "Camptown Races" while they move around the room praising the Lord and shaking their shakers and streamers.

Happy Christians sing to God

Praises! Praises!

Happy Christians sing to God praises all day long.

From when I rise and shine

'Til I go to bed.

Happy Christians sing to God praises all day long.

Chalk Talk Praises

You'll need colored sidewalk chalk.

Say It's fun to worship God and to tell him we love him. Let's think of reasons to worship God.

Ask

- What are some things you like about God?
- What are some things you want to thank God for?

Say God is good to us, isn't he? When we love someone, we like to tell that person. When we tell God we love him, it's called worship. Let's make worship pictures to show God our love. You can draw the things you told me about. They can be things that make you happy about God or things you're thankful for. Or you can just make pretty designs for God.

Take the children outside, and have them use the sidewalk chalk to draw pictures for God on a section of pavement. For fun, provide a bucket of water, and let children dip their chalk into it before drawing. Be sure to get permission to draw on the sidewalk or parking lot. And be sure to choose a safe place.

Preschool Leader Tip

If the weather isn't nice when you do this session, give each child a piece of construction paper on which to draw a worship picture.

* Green Light Praise

Ask

- What words can we use to praise God?
- What are some motions we can do to praise God?

Say Let's play a game and use our motions and words to praise God.

Have the children stand to play this variation of the game Red Light, Green Light. Choose one child to be "It." Explain that "It" will call out several different colors of light such as red light, blue light, yellow light, and purple light. When "It" calls out,

"Green light," all of the children should respond with excited praise, doing motions and calling out praise words. Then choose another child to be "It." Play the game several times. Then have the children sit down.

Ask

- Did you enjoy praising God in this game?
- Why do we praise God?
- When can you praise God in your life?

Say Every day God does things that are worthy of praise. Every day we can have fun responding to God with praises.

(continued from page 128)

Elementary Activities

* Filled With Praise

You'll need the Rocket Balloon from the KidsOwn Worship Kit.

Say There's a Bible story from the book of Acts about a man who worshipped God because of the amazing way he learned about Jesus. This man is a great example of someone who responded to God with worship. Let me tell you the story. I have a balloon here to help me tell it.

The man was from Ethiopia and was traveling near Jerusalem. One day as he sat in his chariot, which is a cart on wheels pulled by a horse, he was reading the Scriptures and wondered what they meant. Blow a little bit of air into the balloon. Immediately pinch the balloon so air doesn't escape and make noise.

Suddenly a man named Philip ran up to him and began explaining the Scriptures to him! Philip taught the man that the Scriptures he was reading were all about Jesus. Blow a little more air into the balloon, and pinch the balloon so it doesn't make noise.

The Ethiopian man was very excited and believed everything Philip told him. He was filled with wonder and joy in the Lord. Finish blowing up the balloon.

What's happening to the balloon? It's expanding, getting filled up just as the Ethiopian did. The Ethiopian's heart filled up with praise and love for God when he learned about Jesus.

Then worship just spilled right out of him!

Stop pinching the balloon, and let the balloon fly through the air and make a "joyful noise."

Say The Ethiopian went on his way, rejoicing and praising Jesus. I'm sure he told many others what God had done. God wants us to be filled with praise, too, just as the Ethiopian was. It's good to respond to God with worship when we learn about him.

Loving God

Have kids form small groups of three or four. Give each group an index card and a pencil.

Say The Ethiopian rejoiced when he learned about God's gift of salvation. It's natural for us to respond to God's good gifts by thanking and praising him. Let's take a few moments to compare God's good gifts to the good gifts we receive from parents. Kids need their parents for lots of things—food, clothing, and shelter. But they also need other things.

Ask • What other things do kids need from their parents? (Love; kind words; encouragement.)



Warning

Children under 8 yrs. can choke or suffocate on uninflated or broken balloons. Adult supervision required. Keep uninflated balloons from children. Discard broken balloons at once. Balloons may contain latex.

Ask • What do parents need from their kids? (Love; thanks.)

Say Kids need love, don't they! Parents need love, too! We all need to get hugs and be told we're loved. Work in your groups now to write down three things. Each group on this side of the room will write three things kids need or like their parents to say to them. Each group on the other side of the room will write three things parents like to hear their kids say to them. Choose someone in your group to be the writer.

Give kids several minutes to brainstorm and write ideas. If kids need help, prompt them with ideas such as "Good job"; "I'm sorry"; "I like you"; "You're good at that"; "Thank you"; "Please"; "I did what you told me to do"; and so on.

Have a few groups share the things they wrote down.

Say Parents and kids like to be told good things. It makes us feel loved. It builds relationships. There's someone else who likes to be told good things—God! God likes it when you appreciate and thank him. That's because he wants to have a personal relationship with you. Turn your index card over now, and write one or two things you think God might like to be told.

Give kids a few minutes to do this. Ask several groups to share what they wrote.

Say Those are good examples of things to tell God. When we give compliments to God, it's called worship. Sometimes we might not feel like worshipping God—especially if we're having a bad day—but we can choose to worship. It's good for us to respond to God that way. It helps us grow in our love for him. Let's use the things you wrote to worship God now.

Have each group choose a reader. Have all the readers stand while everyone else remains seated. Have the readers take turns reading their praises to God.

* *Worship Every Day*

Have children remain in their small groups from the previous activity.

Ask • What might have happened in the Bible story about Philip and the Ethiopian if Philip had decided he didn't want to talk or if the Ethiopian had said, "That's ridiculous! I don't believe you!" (The Ethiopian would have never gotten to know Jesus; the Ethiopian wouldn't have experienced worshipping God.)

Say If Philip hadn't told the Ethiopian about God, the man might never have heard about Jesus. If the Ethiopian had made fun of Philip, he would never have experienced the joy of the Lord. Both men loved God. They responded to God in worship.

Have each group draw one slip of paper from the basket you prepared before the session.

Say On your piece of paper is a situation. With your group, act out one negative, or bad, way to respond to the situation and one positive, or good, way to respond to it. Then we'll act these out for each other.

Give kids time to plan their actions. Then have each group read aloud its situation and perform the actions. Have the group tell which action is positive and which is negative. Give every group a chance to share its ideas.

Say When things happen in our everyday lives, sometimes we respond positively and sometimes negatively. It's like that with God. We can choose how we respond to him. The Ethiopian responded with joyous praise. So let's be like the Ethiopian and choose the best response—worship—every day!

3 Let's Pray!

The Offering

Say Today we've been talking about responding to God in worship. Our offering is also a way to worship God and to thank him. Second Corinthians 9:7 says, "God loves a cheerful giver." Let's give our offerings joyfully today. But before we bring our offerings, think of the one thing you love most about God. Praise God for that thing when the offering bowl comes to you.

Pass the offering bowls.

Balloon Praises

Blow up a balloon.

Say Since one way we respond to God is through worship, let's praise God in a fun way. We'll tap this balloon around the room to each other. When the balloon comes to you, tap it and say something to praise God. For example, you might say, "God, you're great!" or "We praise you!" or "We love you, God!" Or you might just say one word such as "hallelujah" or "hosanna" or "glory." You might praise God by thanking him for something. Let's see how long we can keep up our balloon praises! Think of your praise now so when the balloon comes to you, you'll be ready. Then tap the balloon to those who haven't had a chance to speak yet.

 While you do this activity, play "Doxology" in the background.

Warning

Children under 8 yrs. can choke or suffocate on uninflated or broken balloons. Adult supervision required. Keep uninflated balloons from children. Discard broken balloons at once. Balloons may contain latex.

A Joyful Noise

Say ▶ **It's important that we respond to God through worship. It makes God happy, and it makes us happy! One translation of Psalm 98:4 says, "Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth" (Revised Standard Version). We're going to make joyful noises right now as we end today's session.**

Have children form four "joyful noise" sections: clappers, foot stompers, whistlers or hummers, and singers.

▶ Play "Christ Arose," and have each section do its part. Vary the volume from soft to loud and then from loud to soft. Have sections take turns making different joyful noises.

Pray ▶ **Lord, you are worthy of all our praises. Thank you for being a God we can worship in so many joyful ways. You are a good and loving and fun God. We love you, Jesus, and want to worship you always. In Jesus' name, amen.**



Encouragement for Leaders

Dear Lord, thank you for always giving us just what we need. Help us to trust you in every situation. In Jesus' name, amen.

From Heartfelt Thanks for Sunday School Teachers.

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