

DAVID PLAYED FOR SAUL

1 SAMUEL 16



CHRIST CONNECTION: David knew he would be a king one day, and he still helped Saul. Jesus, the most special King, came to earth to help us by dying on the cross and coming back to life.

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Who is our King? Jesus is our King.

KEY PASSAGE: The LORD rules over everything. Psalm 103:19

STORY POINT: David played music for Saul.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

LEADER Bible Study

In 1 Samuel 16, we see that the newly anointed, future king of Israel served his predecessor with humility and grace. Though David was promised the throne of Israel, his time had not yet come. Therefore, David returned to his life as a shepherd. God would use the period of waiting and trials for David's good and to point us toward the Suffering Servant, Jesus, in whom we place our ultimate hope.

How did God use David's humility for His glory and David's good? How do we see this idea fully exemplified in Jesus?

When God rejected Saul as king, the Spirit of the Lord left him, and an evil spirit tormented him day and night. After one of Saul's young men heard David play the lyre, Saul sent his servants to retrieve the young David, believing he could relieve his distress. Previously, we learned David was a man after God's own heart, and here we see a humble, servant-like heart as David played the lyre in Saul's time of distress.

Saul didn't know then that David would be his successor. Saul loved David so much that he even gave him the role of armor-bearer, asking Jesse for permission for David to remain in his service. David faithfully and humbly served Saul.

We see an even greater picture of service in Christ, depicted as the Suffering Servant in Isaiah 53. While David's humble service offered temporary relief for King Saul, Jesus' humble and sacrificial death offers eternal rescue from sin for all who believe in Him.

May a humble, obedient adoration of the Lord mark us as His faithful followers. Pray that boys and girls see Christ's humility both as our example and the means of our salvation through faith. Like Saul, we need the peace that only God can provide through Christ.



PREPARE

THE WEEK PRIOR

Prepare your heart to teach; plan the session



WELCOME

10–15 MINUTES

Greet preschoolers and open the session



LEARN

25–30 MINUTES

Teach preschoolers the story of the gospel



LOVE

Lead preschoolers to love the God of the gospel

30–40 MINUTES



LIVE

Lead preschoolers to live the mission of the gospel



BONUS

60–65 MINUTES

Teach preschoolers for an additional hour



PREPARE

PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a supply of the following items available during all teaching sessions: Allergy Alert, Bibles, washable markers, crayons, scissors (adult use), blunt-tipped scissors, construction paper, copy paper, glue sticks, glue, tape, baby dolls, blocks, play dough, and a beanbag.



WELCOME

Follow the path

- ☐ Big Picture Question Poster
- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster
- ☐ painter's tape



LEARN

Listen to harp music

- ☐ personal music device

Tell the Bible story

- ☐ "David Played for Saul" video (optional)

Learn and practice the key passage phrase

- ☐ Key Passage Phrase Marker



LOVE

Guess the instrument

- ☐ toy instruments

Make a puzzle

- ☐ paper plates



LIVE

Paint with a harp

- ☐ art smocks
- ☐ rubber bands
- ☐ baking tray
- ☐ washable paint

Missions activity

- ☐ "New Believers Class" printable

Snack and transition

- ☐ hand sanitizer (optional)
- ☐ "Match Instruments" activity page, 1 per child
- ☐ Big Picture Cards for Families



BONUS

Find an instrument

- ☐ toy instruments

Say the key passage phrase

- ☐ Key Passage Phrase Marker

Dance and wave scarves

- ☐ artificial flowers
- ☐ toy vegetables
- ☐ brown craft paper, 6-foot length
- ☐ child-size gardening tools

Make a harp

- ☐ tissue boxes, 1 per child
- ☐ rubber bands
- ☐ assorted stickers



WELCOME Preschoolers

Provide as many learning activities as possible from the Love and Live sections to give preschoolers choices to learn. Incorporate the Bible story, the Christ Connection, and key passage phrase in your conversations as the preschoolers engage in learning activities throughout the session.

Use the following activity to greet children as they enter the room. Talk about the big picture question and answer. After each child completes the welcome activity, encourage him to participate in the activities provided from the Love and Live sections of the leader guide.

FOLLOW THE PATH

Use painter's tape to outline a path from the doorway into the room. Create a different path from the ones used in the previous sessions. Weave the path around obstacles in the room ending at a Bible. Place a copy of the Bible Story Picture Poster in the Bible. Post the Big Picture Question Poster near the entrance to the room. Greet preschoolers as they enter the room and point out the Big Picture Question Poster. Invite preschoolers to tiptoe along the path to the Bible to discover what David did for Saul. Meet the preschooler at the end of the path and encourage her to open the Bible to reveal the Bible Story Picture Poster and the answer to the question.

SAY “ I am so glad you are at church today. Our big picture question asks, **Who is our King? Jesus is our King.** The path ends at the Bible, where we learn that **DAVID PLAYED MUSIC FOR SAUL.** ”





LEARN the Bible Story

1 LISTEN TO HARP MUSIC

Before the session, find or download a recording of harp music. Play the music as children come to the group time area.

SAY “Listen to the beautiful harp music. People often listen to music when they are sad. **DAVID PLAYED MUSIC FOR SAUL** when he was feeling sad. Saul felt much better when David played for him.”

2 TELL THE BIBLE STORY

Open your Bible to 1 Samuel 16. Tell the Bible story using the following summary. You may choose to review the Bible story by showing the video.

DAVID PLAYED FOR SAUL

SAY “Saul was the king of Israel, but something made him very sad. God’s Spirit left Saul, and a mean spirit came and made him feel bad. Saul’s servants wanted to help him. They had an idea.

They said, “Let’s find someone who can play music well.” When the bad spirit bothers you, the music can make you happy again!” Saul thought it was a good idea.

One helper said, “I know a boy named David. He’s from Bethlehem, and he can play a small harp. He’s brave and handsome. It seems like God is always with him!”

So, Saul’s servants told David to come play music for Saul. When David played, Saul felt much better. Saul liked David so much that he asked David to stay and help him all the time. And whenever the bad spirit came, David’s music made Saul feel better.”

Christ Connection: David knew he would be a king one day, and he still helped Saul. Jesus, the most special King, came to earth to help us by dying on the cross and coming back to life.



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

3 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

Invite preschoolers to act out ways they can be a helper to those around them. Examples could include putting toys away, folding clothes, talking with a new friend, or feeding a pet.

SAY “David was a helper. He played music for Saul when he was feeling sad. We can be helpers too. David knew he would be a king one day, and he still helped Saul. Jesus, the most special King, came to earth to help us by making the way for our sins to be forgiven.”

4 SING A SONG

Sing the song to the familiar tune of “Mary Had a Little Lamb”:

The LORD rules over everything, everything, everything.

The LORD rules over everything.

Psalm 103:19

5 LEARN AND PRACTICE THE KEY PASSAGE PHRASE

Place the Key Passage Phrase Marker at Psalm 103:19. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Say the key passage phrase together several times. Each time you say the phrase, leave out a word, leading children to say the missing word.

SAY “Jesus is our King, and He rules over everything. David knew he would be the king of Israel one day, but the Lord is the ruler of all.”

6 PRAY

Pray, thanking God for people who help us, like David helped Saul.

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





LOVE

THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God because of what we learned

1 PLAY A SMILING GAME



Invite preschoolers to help you think of as many ways as they can to make someone smile. Encourage preschoolers to be specific with their answers. Ideas may include helping a friend clean up toys, calling a grandparent on the phone or on a video call, inviting someone to play, helping a parent prepare a meal, or just smiling at someone. Write the ideas on strips of paper. Invite a preschooler to choose one of the paper strips. Lead the group to act out the idea. End each reenactment with a smile.

SAY “We thought of several ways to help make someone smile. **DAVID PLAYED MUSIC FOR SAUL** to make him smile. God’s Spirit had left Saul, and a mean spirit came and made him feel bad. Saul’s servants asked David to come and play music for Saul. David knew he would be a king one day, and he still helped Saul. Jesus, the most special King, came to earth to help us by dying on the cross and coming back to life.”

2 GUESS THE INSTRUMENT

Place several rhythm instruments out for children to explore. Invite them to play the instruments and listen to the sounds they make. Once the children play each instrument and listen to the sounds, instruct them to turn around so they cannot see the instruments. Choose one instrument and play it for the preschoolers. Invite preschoolers to turn back around and see if they can guess which instrument you played. Lead preschoolers to take turns playing the instruments while their friends try to guess the instrument they played.

SAY “**DAVID PLAYED MUSIC FOR SAUL** when he felt bad. God’s Spirit had left Saul, and a mean spirit came and made him feel bad. Saul’s helpers suggested that David come and play music for Saul. When David played, Saul felt much better. Saul liked David so much that he asked David to stay and help him all the time.”

3 MAKE A PUZZLE

Place paper plates and crayons on a table. Invite preschoolers to draw a face on a paper plate. Suggest they draw one face that is sad on one plate and another face that is happy on another plate. Some preschoolers may want to draw other emotions such as surprised, angry, or frightened. Once a child has drawn the face on the paper plate, cut it into a two- or three-piece puzzle. Encourage preschoolers to complete the puzzle they made and talk about the emotion that is pictured. Place the puzzles in individual plastic bags to go home.

SAY “You made puzzles that show different feelings. Saul was the king of Israel, but something made him very sad. God’s Spirit left Saul, and a mean spirit came and made him feel bad. When **DAVID PLAYED MUSIC FOR SAUL**, Saul felt much better. Saul liked David so much that he asked David to stay and help him all the time.”

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE**





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE for God out of love

1 PAINT WITH A HARP

Place a piece of paper in the bottom of a baking tray or loaf pan. Stretch rubber bands across the pan. Demonstrate how to pluck the rubber band strings to make a sound like a harp. Assist a preschooler with placing a smock over her clothing. Spoon paint onto the rubber bands. Invite the preschooler to strum or pluck the rubber bands to splatter the paint on the paper.

SAY “ You painted and played the harp at the same time. **DAVID PLAYED MUSIC FOR SAUL.** Saul was the ruler of Israel for a little while, and David was to be the next ruler, but our key passage phrase reminds us that ‘The LORD rules over everything.’ ”

2 MISSIONS ACTIVITY



Remind preschoolers that the good news about Jesus is too good to keep to ourselves! God wants us to tell others about Jesus. A follower of Jesus who is sent to tell others about Jesus is called a missionary. Print and display a copy of the “New Believers Class” printable. Mention that many college students live in Thailand and missionaries help these students know about Jesus. Teach preschoolers the Thai words Châi (yes) and Mâi châi (no). Ask yes-or-no questions to the preschoolers and let them respond with “Chai” or “Mai Chai.” Questions might include the following: “Did you ride in a car this morning?” “Did you eat breakfast?” “Did you come to church in an airplane?” “Are you wearing tennis shoes?” Pray that Christians will start new churches in Thailand to help more young people learn about Jesus.

SAY “ Missionaries try to help people know more about Jesus in Thailand by helping Thai college students learn English. The missionaries hope to start a new church focused on helping the students. ”

3 SNACK AND TRANSITION



Post an Allergy Alert. Serve the snack. As children eat, review and talk about the Bible story. When children finish their snack, lead them to complete the activity page. As they work, continue talking about the Bible story and emphasize the Christ Connection.

SAY “ David knew he would be a king one day, and he still helped Saul. Jesus, the most special King, came to earth to help us by dying on the cross and coming back to life. ”

Remember to communicate helpful information to the bonus teaching hour leaders. If parents are picking up children at this time, tell them something their child did well during the session. Distribute Big Picture Cards for Families. Encourage parents to engage with the family discussion starters and family activities during the week.



BONUS Teaching Hour Group Time

1 FIND AN INSTRUMENT

Place room instruments around the room. Invite preschoolers to find an instrument and bring it to group time. Tell preschoolers that **DAVID PLAYED MUSIC FOR SAUL** when he felt sad.

2 TALK ABOUT THE BIBLE STORY

Open your Bible to 1 Samuel 16. Use the summarized points below to talk about the Bible story:

DAVID PLAYED FOR SAUL

- God's Spirit left Saul, and a mean spirit came and made him feel bad.
- Saul's helpers wanted to help him feel better. They said, "Let's find someone who can play music to make King Saul happy again!"
- Saul liked the idea. His helpers found a boy named David who played music on a small harp.
- When David played, Saul felt much better. Saul asked David to stay and help him all the time.

3 SING A SONG

Sing the song to the familiar tune of "Mary Had a Little Lamb":

The LORD rules over everything, everything, everything.
The LORD rules over everything.
Psalm 103:19

4 SAY THE KEY PASSAGE PHRASE

Place the Key Passage Phrase Marker at Psalm 103:19. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Say the key passage phrase together. Invite preschoolers to play the instruments they brought to group time as you say or sing the key passage phrase. If children do not have instruments, suggest they pretend to play an instrument as you say the phrase.

5 PRAY

Pray, praising God for being the ruler over everything.

BONUS Teaching Hour Activities

6 PASS THE FEELING



Invite preschoolers to sit with you in a circle. Practice making facial expressions to match different feelings such as happy, sad, angry, scared, and surprised. Turn to the child on your right and make a happy face. Lead him to turn to the friend on his right and make the same face. Continue all the way around the circle until the “feeling” has come back to you. Invite a preschooler to start another round of the game with a different feeling.

SAY “ You were able to make several expressions with your face that matched different feelings. Saul was very sad. God’s Spirit had left Saul, and a mean spirit came and made him feel bad. Saul’s servants suggested that David come and play the harp for Saul to make him feel better. When David played, Saul felt much better. Saul liked David so much that he asked David to stay and help him all the time. ”

7 DANCE AND WAVE SCARVES

Play worship music or familiar Bible songs on a music player or smart device. Invite preschoolers to dance and wave scarves to the music. Play a variety of songs with different tempos and styles so that children can move and dance in different ways.

SAY “ Music can help us when we feel sad or discouraged. **DAVID PLAYED MUSIC FOR SAUL.** Saul’s servants suggested that when Saul felt sad, music could help him feel happy again, and they asked David to come play his harp. When David played, Saul felt much better. ”

8 MAKE A HARP

Place tissue boxes, rubber bands, and stickers on a table. Invite preschoolers to stretch the rubber bands across the box over the opening. Demonstrate how to pluck the rubber band strings to make a sound on the harp. Encourage preschoolers to decorate their harps with the stickers. Play a recording of harp music to hear how a real harp sounds.

SAY “ Saul was the king of Israel, but he was very sad. God’s Spirit had left Saul, and a mean spirit came and made him feel bad. **DAVID PLAYED MUSIC FOR SAUL** to help him feel better. When David played, Saul felt much better and asked David to stay and help him all the time. David knew he would be a king one day, and he still helped Saul. Jesus, the most special King, came to earth to help us by dying on the cross and coming back to life. ”

Release preschoolers to parents according to your church’s security procedure. Tell them something that their child enjoyed doing or did well during the session.