

# Psalm 150

## Scripture

Psalm 150

## Bible Background

(written by Phyllis Wezemann, from [www.rotation.org](http://www.rotation.org))

Psalm 150 is a song of praise that serves as a fitting culmination for the Book of Psalms, calling for everything that breathes to "Praise the Lord!" While no one knows exactly who wrote Psalm 150, it is clear that the words are a hymn of praise. It is believed that the Psalm was used on festival occasions when crowds of people gathered to worship together in praise and thanksgiving. When we offer praise to God it is different than offering our thanksgiving which seems dutiful and is rendered in response to specific blessings. Praise is focused completely on God and who God is and is not focused in any way on us or on what we have received.

The word "praise" occurs no less than thirteen times in the six verses of Psalm 150, commanding the reader or listener to direct his or her praise to God. The structure of the Psalm suggests not only that God should be praised but where, why, how, and by whom God is to be praised. God is to be praised in God's "sanctuary" -- not just the small area in the church chancel, but also in the human heart and throughout all the Earth. God is to be praised for the "exceeding greatness" that defines God's very nature. -- not just thanked like an equal, but praised as One Who is elevated beyond ourselves and is worthy of exaltation. God's praise is to be done in every possible way -- from powerful musical instruments to the humble human voice -- and praise is due from everyone, whether a priest or a peasant.

Psalm 150 is a familiar text which many people have read, maybe even memorized, at some point in their Christian study. The challenge for the education setting, however, is to help learners move beyond surface knowledge of a Biblical passage to explore and experience new levels of understanding in familiar words.

## Memory Verse

We will be working to memorize the entire psalm (it's short)

1Praise the Lord! Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in his mighty firmament!  
2Praise him for his mighty deeds; praise him according to his surpassing greatness!  
3Praise him with trumpet sound; praise him with lute and harp!  
4Praise him with tambourine and dance; praise him with strings and pipe!  
5Praise him with clanging cymbals; praise him with loud clashing cymbals!  
6Let everything that breathes praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!

# Psalm 150 -- Gratitude Journals

ALL workshops will be working with the kids to create gratitude journals. We will have small journals to pass out (and pass out again, and again when they are lost and forgotten). Children are going to be asked to record three things each day that they are grateful for that day.

Praise flows from gratitude. Having a grateful heart, aware of all that God has already done, is an important piece of offering God our praise. Unfortunately, in our culture we are taught to complain. Gratitude does not come easily for many children. Some children in our program live difficult lives with difficult family situations. We are not trying to sugar coat bad situations. But it is possible to find blessings even in the midst of bad.

For instance, you can be grateful for a beautiful blue sky, even when kids are picking on you at school. Help the children find three good things in this day.

You will begin each class every week asking the children to name some things from their gratitude journals. If they don't have anything, brainstorm writing things together. (Hand out new journals if they forgot or lost their journals from the week before.)

At the end of class, remind children to take the journals home with them, write three things each day, and bring them back next week.

## Lesson Summary

<i>Creation Station -</i>	Children will be painting instruments of praise.
<i>Fisherman's Net -</i>	Children will work with Cal and Marty's Scripture Memory Game to work on memorizing the psalm and Let's Talk to explain to an alien what "praise" means.
<i>Mountaintop Movies -</i>	Children will watch clips from Pocahontas, Tangled and Madagascar to show that in real life praise gets mixed in with other feelings.
<i>Moved by the Spirit -</i>	Children will use the instruments they created in their art rotation to practice acts of praise. (Note, if possible have this rotation follow the creation station rotation.)
<i>Temple Courtyard -</i>	Children will delve into the meaning of the vocabulary as they memorize Psalm 150. They will have a chance to rewrite the psalm using music making devices that are part of their own lives.

## Bibliography

# Psalm 150– Opening Time

## Song/s

*Opening* – “Everything We Need”

*Closing* – Song created in the Moved by the Spirit rotation

## Memory Verse/s

Psalm 150

## Discussion/Questions

*Allow closing time to be a time for sharing. This psalm was a festival event and some children are going to arrive each week with a version of the psalm to share with others. Encourage the sharing!*

## Prayer

Encourage prayers of gratitude.

End with the Lord’s Prayer.

## Other

This is the first mid-week session this fall. Be aware that children tend to arrive as the weeks progress. Work hard to make sure that late comers don’t feel left out.

# Psalm 150– Creation Station

## At a Glance

Children will be painting instruments of praise.

## Outcome Objectives

- 1) Children will share things that they are grateful for using their gratitude journals.
- 2) Children will learn the names of the instruments in Psalm 150.
- 3) Children will wonder and reflect on what this would have sounded like.
- 4) Children will create their own instruments, which they will dedicate to praising God.

## Supplies Needed

Tempera paints, brushes, water containers, newspapers, etc.

Wooden instrument packs

CD player and soothing music (optional)

## Advance Preparation

Decide ahead of time if you will have every child in each group make the same instrument, or whether you want to mix instruments in each group. It is easier to make projects if everyone is working on the same thing. However, for the later drama rotation, it would be nice to have multiple instruments represented.

Use Google Images or another application to copy pictures of the instruments mentioned in Psalm 150.

## Opening Activity

Begin with gratitude journals. (See the page after the Bible background.) If children have brought them back from last week, go over things they have written about their week. If they have not, you will have to spend some time creating a list of things that each child is grateful for. As the weeks process, we want to be moving children from general things (sun, blue sky) to more specific things unique to their lives. So go gently week one, but by week 4 or 5 push them a little to find things that are more specific, even if it is only coming here on a Wednesday night to be with friends, teachers, eat a good meal. You can include things that weren't as bad as you thought they would be, or as bad as they usually are. You can also be grateful for something that happened to a friend or family member, even if the outcome wasn't great for you personally. (I am grateful that Sandi got an A on her spelling test, even though I only got a C)

Explain that being grateful is the starting point for praising God. Read Psalm 150:2. What does it say? (Praise him for his mighty deeds; praise him according to his surpassing greatness!) What are some of God's mighty deeds? What makes God great? (allow for various answers) These things sound like what we've been writing in our gratitude journals, don't they?

## **Main Lesson**

Read Psalm 150 together.

Show the children the pictures of each of these instruments.

Together make the sounds that the instrument makes, or imagine what it sounds like if you don't know.

Assign a child to make each instrument sound.

Have the children close their eyes. You may also want to turn off some lights.

Lead them in a guided meditation. Instruct them that when you name their instrument, they are to make that instrument sound. Other than that, there is to be no talking.

### ***Guided meditation:***

Imagine your grandmother is waking you up gently. It is a cool, crisp morning, and the breeze feels good. You want to snuggle under your covers a little longer, but your grandmother won't let you. "Today is the festival" she reminds you, "you don't want to sleep in and miss everything, do you?" You wake up quickly and wash your face in the bowl of water near your bed. You get your clothes on quickly. In the kitchen there is no fire, only a few cool barley loaves left over from last night's dinner. You eat one quickly. It doesn't do much to fill you up. You see other plates and bowls piled high with good things to eat, but your mother shakes her head. We are taking those to the festival. Some of the food you pack on your donkey. Other things your father and mother and grandmother carry on their heads or on their back. The sun is barely up, and you start walking on the dry, rocky trail that leads out of town toward Jerusalem. Your best friend's family is also packed up and ready to go and the two of you run far ahead on the trail and back again, until your mother tells you to stay close. More and more families are entering this road from all different directions. A few of them you recognize, like the man who sells fish in the market, but most of them are strangers. And yet, nobody feels like a stranger. Everyone is happy, bringing their food and instruments for the celebration and their offerings for the altar. By noon you are at the city gates. You have never seen so many people. Your father leads the way through the busy city streets to the temple. There is singing and shouting. As you get to the temple you hear this song:  
(read Psalm 150, leaving time for the children to make their instrument noises)

Ask some "wondering" questions:

What does it feel like to be at the temple?

What does it feel like to praise God in this place?

How do you think it felt to be one of the people playing their instruments at this festival?

What do you see? What do you hear? What do you smell?

What will you remember most about this day?

## **Life Application**

Explain that we are going to make some instruments. They won't be lutes and harps. But they will be instruments like the ones in the psalm because we are going to make them special. What is going to make them special is that we are dedicating these instruments to God.

Ask: What do you think the difference is between an instrument dedicated to God, and an instrument that you just play with around the house and make noise with?

Get out the paints for decorating the instrument. Suggest that they paint their instrument with colors that make them think about God. Maybe you want to paint the colors of a sunrise because that's what makes you think about God. Or maybe you will decorate it with a flower because that makes you think about God. Perhaps you want to use a Christian symbol, like a cross, or a lamb. You may do whatever you want. The only requirement is that while you are working, you are not talking. While you paint, use this time to talk to God in your mind. Tell God why you are choosing the decorations you are choosing. Tell God that you will use this instrument to give God praise.

You may want to put on soothing music while the children work.

Make sure the children help with clean up.

### **Journaling**

If there is time, the children can add something to their gratitude journals. They can also write in their gratitude journals something about their instruments and how they will use their instruments to praise God.

### **To take home**

Instruments will NOT go home. They will use them next week for the drama rotation. They can take them home after that. Make sure they are labeled. The shepherd will make sure that these instruments make it to the drama rotation.

### **Adjustments for age levels and abilities**

For younger children, give them fewer options for painting. Perhaps just pick the one color that reminds them of God.

### **If you have extra time...**

You can take time to share what each child painted on his or her instrument.

### **If time runs short...**

### **Be creative**

Use any supplies in the supply cabinet to help you decorate – yarn, raffia, feathers, beads, etc.

# **Psalm 150 – Fisherman's.Net**

## **At a Glance**

Children will work with Cal and Marty's Scripture Memory Game to work on memorizing the psalm and Let's Talk to explain to an alien what "praise" means.

## **Outcome Objectives**

- 1) Children will share things that they are grateful for using their gratitude journals.
- 2) Children will work toward memorizing Psalm 150.
- 3) Children will answer an "alien's" questions about what praise is.

## **Software Summary**

Summaries of both programs are in the binders in the computer room. They are also available at [Rotation.org](http://Rotation.org).

Cal and Marty is a scripture memory game. The verse is typed into the computer then it is scrambled. Children work against the clock to put it back in order.

Let's Talk allows children to type in the computer and have their answers read aloud by the computer.

## **Supplies Needed**

Bibles

Programs are already loaded on the hard drive, but should be checked before use. Disks are in the cabinet if needed.

## **Advance Preparation**

Be familiar with both programs. Descriptions of both programs are in the binder in the computer lab, or you can look up information at [Rotation.org](http://Rotation.org).

With Cal and Marty's Scripture Memory Game the children type in the verse (or it can be typed in ahead of time for them, or by the previous class) and then work against the clock to unscramble it. There is also an optional three question quiz that can be written up for each question.

With Let's Talk, the children will use the option to dialogue between two characters. One character is to be an alien, the other the expert. The words the alien and expert type in will be read aloud.

## **Opening Activity**

Begin with gratitude journals. (See the page after the Bible background.) If children have brought them back from last week, go over things they have written about their week. If they have not, you will have to spend some time creating a list of things that each child is grateful for. As the weeks process, we want to be moving children from general things (sun, blue sky) to more specific things unique to their lives. So go gently week one, but

by week 4 or 5 push them a little to find things that are more specific, even if it is only coming here on a Wednesday night to be with friends, teachers, eat a good meal. You can include things that weren't as bad as you thought they would be, or as bad as they usually are. You can also be grateful for something that happened to a friend or family member, even if the outcome wasn't great for you personally. (I am grateful that Sandi got an A on her spelling test, even though I only got a C)

Explain that being grateful is the starting point for praising God. Read Psalm 150:2. What does it say? (Praise him for his mighty deeds; praise him according to his surpassing greatness!) What are some of God's mighty deeds? What makes God great? (allow for various answers) These things sound like what we've been writing in our gratitude journals, don't they?

### **Main Lesson**

Children will use Cal and Marty's Scripture Memory Game.

Set up a new verse (see program instructions in binder)

Look up Psalm 150 in your Bibles. Read it aloud one time in unison.

Give the child or children at each computer a verse number. There are six computers and six verses to Psalm 150 so each computer should have one verse. Hand these out in order. Help children know where their verse starts and ends.

The child or children at each computer will type in their verse only. Check spelling and punctuation before they start playing the game.

Have the children unscramble their verse.

Rotate to the next computer and unscramble that verse.

Continue to rotate until you've gone through all six verses.

### **Life Application**

Using Let's Talk, the children will explain to an alien what "praise" is.

Begin by brainstorming what kinds of questions an alien who wants to know about praise might ask. Write these on the easel for children to refer to. As a group, think of how you might answer these questions.

There needs to be two children at a computer, so pair them up if there is only one at a particular computer.

Choose the conversation option.

Have the first child create the alien persona. This child will be asking all the questions.

Have the second child create the expert persona. This child will be answering the alien's questions.

### **Journaling**

Encourage children to write more in their gratitude journals. They should take these home, write three things they are grateful for each day, and bring them back next week. (But if they fail to bring them back, we will give them another one.)



## **To take home**

Gratitude journals.

### **Adjustments for age levels and abilities**

This lesson will be difficult for early readers – kindergarten and first grade. You could take a team approach to the memory game with half the kids with the teacher and half the kids with the shepherd. The children on each team take turns suggesting the next word. The team that finishes first for each verse gets a point. A similar approach can be used in “Let’s Talk” with one team being the aliens that ask questions, and one team being the ones who give answers. In both cases, the adult leader types in the responses.

Say Your Prayers with Little Angelina includes prayers of gratitude. Use these to supplement your gratitude journals at the beginning of the lesson.

### **If you have extra time...**

Unlikely. But if it happens here are some options:

- 1) Use Kid Pix to create a poster. Type the words of the psalm into the poster.
- 2) Return to Cal and Marty and have a contest to see who can complete each verse the fastest. Or have a contest: you against the kids on the verse of their choice.
- 3) Type in words of the Psalm into either Let’s Talk or into Kid Pix and hear it read back to you using the read aloud feature.
- 4) Ask older kids to come up with three quiz questions for Cal and Marty that the younger kids can then use (check these before using, please)

### **If time runs short...**

Memory work will be done elsewhere, so leave plenty of time for the “Let’s Talk” part of the lesson.

### **Be creative**

At the beginning of the lesson: Because we now have internet access, you could pre-select several you tube videos that show Christians in various cultural contexts offering praise to God. These could be international worship services. Or it could be something like looking up liturgical dance, or a Pentecostal service where people speak in tongues. This might be particularly helpful for the younger children who will have a hard time with the writing based nature of the lesson’s activities.

You can pre-program the memory verses on all six computers, including a three question quiz for each verse. If you do that, you only need to type the information on one machine. You can copy and paste the file into the other machines. Then all six computers have all six verses ready to go. The downside of this, is that actually typing in the verse is part of memorizing it. The physical moving between machines will help some of your more physically active kids enjoy what would otherwise be a sedentary lesson.

# Psalm 150– Mountaintop Movies

## At a Glance

Children will watch clips from Pocahontas, Tangled and Madagascar to show that in real life praise gets mixed in with other feelings.

In many ways, this is one of the most important lessons of the rotation. The point is to help kids see that the good and bad are intertwined. They can focus on what is bad, or they can focus on what's good. They will be much happier if they learn to focus on the good. That's the reason we're encouraging "gratitude journals."

For this reason, it is very important that you "teach the child, not the lesson." You may find after showing only one clip, a lot of discussion is generated. If that happens, cultivate the discussion. Go to the life application section and give children paper and crayons and have them write a movie scene about their own life, where the good and the bad are happening at the same time.

## Outcome Objectives

- 1) Children will share things that they are grateful for using their gratitude journals.
- 2) Children understand that praise is often mixed in with other emotions in the psalms.
- 3) Children can see these feelings mixed with praise in movie clips.
- 4) Children are introduced to the idea that these mixed feelings are present in their own lives. Time for discussion around this idea will be allowed for.

## Movie Summary

*Tangled* is a retelling of the story of Rapunzel. The story set-up is that Rapunzel has been locked away in a very nice tower all her life. She wants to go and see the lights that are in the sky every year on her birthday, but her mother (the wicked witch) forbids it. With the help of a young thief, Flint, Rapunzel escapes from her tower. Begin the movie as Rapunzel uses her hair to climb down the tower, and is going to put her foot on the ground for the very first time in her life. End when Flint, exasperated with her mood swings, decides to bring her to her senses. (Note: A scene from this movie "I Have a Dream" will also be used in the next rotation. It occurs not long after this scene ends, when the sign of the fluffy duck appears, so don't keep going.)

*Madagascar* is the story of New York City Zoo animals who find themselves knocked overboard on their way to the San Diego zoo. They end up on the African island, Madagascar. It is a beautiful place, but they aren't equipped for life in the wild. The scene you will watch is when the animals are walking through the wilderness to the Louis Armstrong song "What a Wonderful World." The scenery is breathtaking, but danger is lurking all around. End when the song ends.

*Pocahontas* is about the first encounter between British settlers and native American people, and the romance that developed between John Smith and the princess Pocahontas

which helped the two sides understand each other. (Other than the names, there is absolutely no correlation to actual historical events). The scene you will watch is Pocahontas singing “Colors of the Wind.” She has a great appreciation for the natural world, and is angered by the Europeans, who only love the earth, trees, and animals for what wealth it can bring them. End when the song ends.

### **Supplies Needed**

Popcorn supplies, ice water and cups

Bibles

Paper and crayons and a surface for writing on

Paper easel (or one page taped to the door) and markers

Make out three notecards with a psalm number (22, 42, 69) on each of them. You will hand these out to the children when they look up those Bible passages. You can even bookmark the Bibles with the card.

### **Advance Preparation**

Watch the scenes of all three movies to know where you are going to start and end.

Cue DVD to the starting point.

Be aware of what you need to cue to for other DVDs.

Start making popcorn about 20 minutes before your lesson begins. Bag it up, but don’t hand it out until after Bible work is done.

### **Opening Activity**

Begin with gratitude journals. (See the page after the Bible background.) If children have brought them back from last week, go over things they have written about their week. If they have not, you will have to spend some time creating a list of things that each child is grateful for. As the weeks process, we want to be moving children from general things (sun, blue sky) to more specific things unique to their lives. So go gently week one, but by week 4 or 5 push them a little to find things that are more specific, even if it is only coming here on a Wednesday night to be with friends, teachers, eat a good meal. You can include things that weren’t as bad as you thought they would be, or as bad as they usually are. You can also be grateful for something that happened to a friend or family member, even if the outcome wasn’t great for you personally. (I am grateful that Sandi got an A on her spelling test, even though I only got a C)

Explain that being grateful is the starting point for praising God. Read Psalm 150:2. What does it say? (Praise him for his mighty deeds; praise him according to his surpassing greatness!) What are some of God’s mighty deeds? What makes God great? (allow for various answers) These things sound like what we’ve been writing in our gratitude journals, don’t they?

### **Main Lesson**

Explain that the mistake people sometimes make is that they think that praising God is something we should do all the time without any other feelings mixed in.

Ask: When you write in your gratitude journal, do you sometimes find it hard to find things to be grateful for because there are so many bad things happening? (allow for answers, nods, shrugs, or silence. Let them sit with the question a minute before continuing.)

Say: In the book of psalms, there are a lot of songs of praise. There are also a lot of psalms that express other feelings.

Pass out Bibles, and have a group of two or three children look up each of these verses:  
Psalm 22:1 (My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?)  
Psalm 42:1 (longing)  
Psalm 69:1 (save me, the waters come up to my neck)

What do each of these psalms start out saying? (answers in parentheses above)  
Look down later in each psalm. Now what do they say?  
22:25 (from you comes my praise in the great congregation)  
42:11b (hope in God; for I shall again praise him)  
69:30 (I will praise the name of God with a song)

Say “Being grateful to God, or praising God, doesn’t mean we don’t have other feelings, too. In fact, most of the time our gratitude feelings get mixed up with other feelings. We are grateful that we got a good grade on a test, but a little sad because our best friend got a worse grade; or we are grateful because it is a beautiful sunset, but a little bit sad because grandma isn’t there to watch the sunset with you. Or you have a great day at school, but you know that when you get home, there are going to still be the same problems there. It is important to remember that *praising God* doesn’t mean you forget all that other stuff, but that you learn to praise God even in the middle of all the bad stuff.”

Explain that we are going to watch three movie clips that seem to say something about praise. None of the movies that we are watching actually say the word “praise” or the word “God” so you are going to have to look closely. If the character were going to say “praise God” what would they be praising God for?

(Write “What are they praising God for?” in the first column of the paper easel)

Explain that there is also a second feeling going on in each of these movies. What is the other feeling.

(Write “What is the other feeling?” in the second column of the paper easel)

Watch your three movie clips.

Tangled Praising:

*[Begin the movie as Rapunzel uses her hair to climb down the tower, and is going to put her foot on the ground for the very first time in her life. End when Flint, exasperated with her mood swings, decides to bring her to her senses. (Note: A scene from this movie "I Have a Dream" will also be used in the next rotation. It occurs not long after this scene ends, when the sign of the fluffy duck appears, so don't keep going.)]*

Rapunzel is glad to be free, out of the tower for the first time in her life, able to run, experience the natural world.

Other feeling: guilt at going against her mother's wishes.

Madagascar

*[The scene you will watch is when the animals are walking through the wilderness to the Louis Armstrong song "What a Wonderful World."]*

You may ask the children to pay close attention to the words of the song lyrics to get what is worthy of praise.

Praising: It is a beautiful world.

Other feeling: fear. There is also a lot of danger.

Pocahontas

*[The scene you will watch is Pocahontas singing "Colors of the Wind."]*

This is the hardest one to get from the clip. It is rather subtle. You may need to instruct the children that it is Pocahontas' first words in the song that give the answer to the other feeling.

Praising: Pocahontas is very in touch with the splendor of the created world.

Other: Anger. She doesn't like the way the British settlers are treating the earth. ("you think you own whatever land you land on. The earth is just a dead thing you can claim.")

### **Life Application**

Ask children to create a scene from a movie. It is going to be a movie from the life of someone like them (it is less threatening to phrase it that way than to call it a scene from their own life.) It is going to be a scene where there is something bad going on, or some feeling that is not completely happy. But there is also something good and beautiful happening at the same time. How can you show both things at once?

For younger children, you may ask them to draw a scene from the movie clip they liked best. Have them draw both the thing that was beautiful and good and the thing that was bad, angry or scary.

If you think your group is open to it, share your movie scenes with the rest of the class. You may want to create your own scene ahead of time, and be the first to share.

### **Journaling**

You can use a page in the prayer journal and set it up with two columns: Thing to be grateful for/thing to praise on one side, other feeling on the other side. Is it easier to write things in your gratitude journal when you can write both side by side?

### **To take home**

Any pages they colored. Gratitude journals (with a reminder to write in them each day and bring them back next week.)

### **Adjustments for age levels and abilities**

Younger children should be able to get the idea of two things happening in the movie at the same time. They may find it harder to connect that with their own lives. For the Life Application section you will either have to help them decide what two things are going to be in their movie clip. Or simply let them draw a scene from a movie you watched.

### **If you have extra time...**

Please, please, please have the children give some extra attention to cleaning up all the popcorn on the floor.

Draw a second movie scene of “what happens next.”

### **If time runs short...**

You do not have to watch all three clips. In fact, for older groups, one or two clips may be enough to start generating discussion and applying it to their own lives – which, after all is the point!

### **Be creative**

Instead of writing the movie scene on a small piece of paper, what about drawing it on a huge roll? Several children could work together on one movie scene. This might work particularly well with younger children, who will be re-creating a scene they saw in an actual movie.

There are other movies that express praise mixed with other emotions. Can you think of any that would serve the lesson better?

# Psalm 150 – Moved by the Spirit

## At a Glance

Children will use the instruments they created in their art rotation to practice acts of praise. For this reason, if possible, skip drama the first week and teach the art lesson for each age group in the previous week's timeslot.

## Outcome Objectives

1. Children will share things that they are grateful for using their gratitude journals.
2. Children will explore the meaning of the word "praise" in Hebrew
3. Children will create a psalm that uses modern language and instruments to praise God and will teach their creation to the other children at closing time.

## Supplies Needed

Paper easel, marker, masking tape (for hanging finished song on the wall)  
Pictures of unfamiliar instruments  
The instruments the children made last week in art  
Box of rhythm instruments, ribbons and scarves, etc.  
Bibles (optional)

## Advance Preparation

Read and be familiar with the 7 different words in Hebrew that are sometimes translated as praise: <http://buddysheets.tripod.com/hebrewwordsforpraise.htm> (It is the first example Hallel – the root of Hallelujah – that is in Psalm 150, but older children may enjoy learning that there are several different words)

Pictures of less familiar instruments are sometimes helpful for children to understand. We have actual tambourines and cymbals.

Write out the words to Psalm 150 in large letters on several sheets of paper and place the paper on the wall.

## Opening Activity

Begin with gratitude journals. (See the page after the Bible background.) If children have brought them back from last week, go over things they have written about their week. If they have not, you will have to spend some time creating a list of things that each child is grateful for. As the weeks process, we want to be moving children from general things (sun, blue sky) to more specific things unique to their lives. So go gently week one, but by week 4 or 5 push them a little to find things that are more specific, even if it is only coming here on a Wednesday night to be with friends, teachers, eat a good meal. You can include things that weren't as bad as you thought they would be, or as bad as they usually are. You can also be grateful for something that happened to a friend or family member, even if the outcome wasn't great for you personally. (I am grateful that Sandi got an A on her spelling test, even though I only got a C)

Explain that being grateful is the starting point for praising God. Read Psalm 150:2. What does it say? (Praise him for his mighty deeds; praise him according to his surpassing greatness!) What are some of God's mighty deeds? What makes God great? (allow for various answers) These things sound like what we've been writing in our gratitude journals, don't they?

[Older children] explain that in Hebrew there were 7 different words for "praise." There were seven different ways of praising God! Give them one or two different definition. Teach them the Hebrew word "halel" which is in Psalm 150. Explain to them that is the root of the word we sometimes use "hallelujah" ("jah" is the first syllable in Yahweh/Javeh's name. The whole word means "praise to Yahweh!")

### **Main Lesson**

Explain that this is the final Psalm in the book of psalms and that it was probably used at a time of celebration. Go over the different instrument names. Give each child a real (i.e. cymbals) or imaginary (i.e. trumpet) instrument. Also assign a dancer. Read the psalm and have each child "play" their instrument at the appropriate time.

Do it a second time, this time with all the children speaking the words of the psalm with you as they play their instruments.

### **Life Application**

You are going to create your own song of praise. (Or Psalm 150 rap)

It does not have to rhyme, but it can.

Children can figure out how and where and how to add their instruments that they made in art.

The things that they listed in their gratitude journals can be a starting place for their praise song.

Write it in big letters and hang it on the wall.

Practice it a couple of times together.

You will be teaching it to the rest of the children at 7:20.

If you have enough children and a willing shepherd, you can divide in two groups and make two different songs.

### **Journaling**

Encourage children to write the "psalm" they created into their gratitude journals. If there is extra time at the end of class, have the children write or draw a picture of some additional things that they are thankful for that may have come to their mind.

### **To take home**

Gratitude journals (Please bring them back!)



### **Adjustments for age levels and abilities**

Younger children will not understand the definitions of praise in Hebrew.

They will enjoy going through the psalm multiple times.

Younger children may use the creations of the older groups if their lesson is on a later week.

Or with younger children you can use the “God gives us not just \_\_\_\_” praise song from dinner grace.

Younger children can decorate the copy of the psalm that you have written out.

Older children, particularly boys, will react to this better if you ask them to create a rap, rather than a song.

Even though the words are written out, learning to look things up in the Bible helps children with Biblical literacy.

### **Be creative**

Invite children to choreograph (add movement, gestures)

If you can find someone who plays guitar, they can strum chords under the words and the children can create a melody.

# Psalm 150– Temple Courtyard

## At a Glance

Children will delve into the meaning of the vocabulary as they memorize Psalm 150. They will have a chance to rewrite the psalm using music making devices that are part of their own lives.

## Outcome Objectives

- 1) Children will share things that they are grateful for using their gratitude journals.
- 2) Children will understand the meaning of the words in Psalm 150.
- 3) Children will improve their ability to recite the Psalm.
- 4) Children will explore the psalm's meaning by substituting music making devices from their own lives.

## Supplies Needed

Dictionary

Paper and markers or pencils or pens.

Prepared notecards and pictures (see Advance Preparation)

## Advance Preparation

For Rebus, place the following words on notecards:

Sanctuary

Firmament

Deeds

Surpassing

Use Google Images to get a picture for each of the following:

Trumpet

Lute

Harp

Tambourine

Dance

Strings

Flute or Recorder (pipe)

Cymbals (2X)

## Opening Activity

Begin with gratitude journals. (See the page after the Bible background.) If children have brought them back from last week, go over things they have written about their week. If they have not, you will have to spend some time creating a list of things that each child is grateful for. As the weeks process, we want to be moving children from general things (sun, blue sky) to more specific things unique to their lives. So go gently week one, but by week 4 or 5 push them a little to find things that are more specific, even if it is only coming here on a Wednesday night to be with friends, teachers, eat a good meal. You can include things that weren't as bad as you thought they would be, or as bad as they usually

are. You can also be grateful for something that happened to a friend or family member, even if the outcome wasn't great for you personally. (I am grateful that Sandi got an A on her spelling test, even though I only got a C)

Explain that being grateful is the starting point for praising God. Read Psalm 150:2. What does it say? (Praise him for his mighty deeds; praise him according to his surpassing greatness!) What are some of God's mighty deeds? What makes God great? (allow for various answers) These things sound like what we've been writing in our gratitude journals, don't they?

### **Main Lesson**

#### ***Rebus***

You will begin by making a rebus for each of the vocabulary words. A Rebus is a kind of word problem. For instance, if you saw a picture of a bee "+" and a picture of a seagull "=" the answer would be beagle. For sanctuary one possibility could be a ship at the bottom of the ocean (sank) "+" "U" + a picture of a canary "-" a can "=" sank+U+ary.

If the children understand the concept, put them in groups of two or three and give them one or two words. Work between groups. Have the children quiz each other.

If the children are unsure, but your shepherd understands, divide into two groups and have one adult work with each group of kids. Have the teams quiz each other.

If everyone is fuzzy on the concept, create your Rebus together and try and "stump the chump" by quizzing a teacher or pastor during closing time.

[For younger children, use a Rebus made by a previous group and work with them to solve it, or make up your own for them to guess. Work with them, because they have probably not done a picture puzzle like this before.]

Now define what each word means. Use the dictionary. Some words, like "sanctuary" have more than one meaning. Which meaning do you think the psalmist was using?

Draw a picture for each of these four words.

#### ***Memory Work***

Look up Psalm 150 in your Bibles, and read it in unison once or twice. Tell the kids that they need to remember what order things come in. Put the Bibles away.

Hand out pictures, shuffled, one to each child. Some children may get more than one. Explain what they are pictures of, if there are any that they are not sure of. Explain that some of these came in pairs, some of them were said by themselves. Challenge them to put the pairs together.

(The pairs should be lute and harp; tambourine and dance; strings and pipe)

After the three pairs are together, put everything in order. The order should be:

Trumpet

Lute and harp

Tambourine and dance

Strings and pipe

Clanging cymbals

Loud crashing cymbals.

Have the children check their Bibles to see if their order is correct.

Now add the other four picture words you made. Put them in order, too.

Add a picture for Praise the Lord at the beginning and the end.

Add a picture for “everything that breathes”

Say the Psalm together while reading the Bible, and then again while looking at the pictures.

Now take all the pictures and shuffle them. Can you put them back together in correct order?

Can you say the psalm correctly?

Allow children to work as a group (early weeks) or individually (later weeks).

### **Life Application**

With all the pictures in the correct order, encourage children to draw new pictures on a journal page that are more modern in place of the ones in the original psalm. They can use a page in their gratitude journals if they would like. Take turns sharing these new psalms. If there is one that is particularly good, you can ask that child to share it at closing time.

### **Journaling**

Have children write their reworked psalm in their gratitude journal. Encourage them to take these home and write three things every day that they are grateful for (younger children can draw pictures). Please bring them back next week! But... give out new journals even to the kids who keep forgetting them week after week.

### **To take home**

Gratitude journals

Re-formulated prayers

Rebus, if not using for a younger children’s class next week.

### **Adjustments for age levels and abilities**

Younger children will struggle with creating the Rebus, and will need prompting to understand existing ones. They will need help with looking up definitions. But they will

let you reshuffle the psalm time and time again! You can try leaving one or more pictures out when you shuffle to see if they can figure out what is missing. They will memorize much faster than the older children.

**If you have extra time...**

Have children go through the book of Psalms as a scavenger hunt, looking for other psalms that are all about praise (Psalm 100 is the best known). They can take turn reading these to each other.

**If time runs short...**

Encourage them to rewrite the psalm using their own words in their gratitude journals at home, rather than as a class activity.

**Be creative**

What if your picture prompts weren't for the actual words, but for sound-alike words? Trampoline instead of tambourine; carp instead of harp; boot instead of lute. It would be very silly, but laughter can sometimes help information sink in.

## Shepherd Notes

### Weekly Responsibilities

Your role is to nurture the group, by providing continuity from week to week. Remember that the teachers have different students every week and don't get to know them all very well. That's where you come in. Some suggestions include:

- ❖ Greet children from your group as they arrive to opening time – try to remember specific things about each one of them, and ask them about their week.
- ❖ Take attendance (stamp passports if they are being used)
- ❖ Get complete information on any visitors and give that information to the church office for a mailing. Introduce visiting children (and their parents) to teachers, students, and other church members.
- ❖ Make a note of any children who have missed more than one week and either send them a note yourself, or make a note for the church office to contact them.

In addition you are responsible for:

- ❖ Keeping track of each student's journal and placing journal pages in their journals. (If being used)
- ❖ Reminding teachers to leave time for journaling.
- ❖ Running errands, i.e. to get more glue or make extra copies.
- ❖ Discipline problems that involve a child leaving the classroom.
- ❖ Escorting children to and from the bathroom.

### Specific Responsibilities this rotation

<i>Creation Station -</i>	<i>Help keep painting under control. Help with clean up. The instruments the children make today will be needed in drama either next week or in a couple of weeks. Keep track of them. Make an extra for a child who wasn't here.</i>
<i>Fisherman's Net -</i>	<i>Type information for younger children, if needed.</i>
<i>Mountaintop Movies -</i>	<i>Help hand out popcorn and water before movie; papers and crayons after movie.</i>
<i>Moved by the Spirit -</i>	<i>Make sure you have instruments from last week's art rotation for use in drama.</i>
<i>Temple Courtyard -</i>	<i>Talk to teacher ahead of time. Make sure you understand what a rebus picture puzzle is. Discuss whether you can help a small group create a rebus.</i>