

The Language Of Peace

LOWER ELEMENTARY LESSON PLAN

Theme: Knowing God's peace

Scripture: Philippians 4:4-9

Memory Verse: Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! - Philippians 4:4

The Children's Sermon

You'll Need:

- Sign - "PEACE" on one side, "SHALOM" on the other

Now that you know peace in two different languages, I'd like to teach you what PEACE looks like in American Sign Language. It's a three-part sign, so watch closely! (Look up an illustration or video online)

First put one hand on top of the other hand, clasped together, like this!

Next switch your hands around.

Now push both of your hands down and away from you.

That's the sign for "PEACE". Let's do the whole sign together. That's Great!

This sign really reminds me of what God tells us about peace in Philippians 4:6-7. (Read passage.)

When I start the sign for peace, it feels like I'm worried, I'm wringing my hands, they are not settled down, are they? But God says, "Don't be anxious about anything!" He doesn't want us to worry about things in our families, or school, or in the world. (Hold hands still together.) God tells us to pray to Him and let Him know what's bothering us. Then He can give us peace. "Do final sign motion." This final part of the sign is like God smoothing out and taking away all our worries. We won't even be able to understand it, but He will protect us from being afraid, from being worried, and He will calm us down. So the next time you are worried or afraid, what are you going to do? Pray and ask God to help you, and He will calm you down and give you a beautiful feeling of Peace!

Now, let's talk more about this peace from Philippians 4:4-9. Peace is like a big, warm hug from God. It's Him saying, "Don't worry, I've got this." When we feel scared or worried, God's peace can wrap around us like a cozy blanket.

Imagine you have a worry. Maybe you're scared of the dark or worried about a test at school. That worry is like a heavy backpack. Every time you think about it, it feels like the backpack gets heavier. But God tells us in Philippians 4:4-9, we can give Him our heavy backpack. We can tell Him about our worries and He will give us peace. That's like Him taking the heavy backpack and giving us a balloon instead. The balloon is light and makes us feel happy and calm.

Remember, God's peace is not like the peace we find when everything is quiet or when we get what we want. God's peace is special. It's there even when things are noisy or not going our way. It's a peace that stays in our hearts, no matter what's happening around us.

In Philippians 4:4-9, Peace is also about thinking good thoughts. God tells us to think about things that are true, noble, right, pure, lovely, and admirable. When we fill our minds with these good things, there's less room for worry. It's like planting beautiful flowers in a garden. When the garden is full of flowers, there's no space for weeds. The flowers are like good thoughts, and the weeds are like worries. We want our minds to be like a beautiful garden, full of flowers.

God also talks about being thankful. When we say "thank you" to God for the good things in our lives, it helps us remember all the ways He takes care of us. It's like making a list of all the wonderful gifts God gives us every day. Maybe it's a sunny day, a hug from a friend, or a yummy dinner. When we think about these gifts, it helps us feel happy and peaceful.

And do you know what's really cool? When we live with God's peace, we can share it with others. It's like having a candle. When your candle is lit with God's peace, you can help light other people's candles too. Soon, there's a lot of light and everyone feels a bit more peaceful. That's how powerful God's peace is!

So, kids, let's keep Philippians 4:4-9 close to our hearts. Let's remember that God's peace is always with us, and it's a peace like no other. And whenever you make the sign for peace, remember it's a reminder of how God takes our worries and gives us His wonderful peace in return.

Let's fold our hands now and pray! Dear Heavenly Father, Thank you for giving us peace when we are afraid. Help us to have "SHALOM" all the time. IN Jesus' Name we pray, AMEN.

(Instructions for Signing "Peace": The hands are clasped together. They are then reversed so that the other hand is on top; both hands are then opened and move downward and outward assuming the "five" hand position.)

Bible Memory Verse

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! -

Philippians 4:4

You Will Need:

- Colored paper
- Markers or crayons
- Stickers or glitter

Get Ready:

- Cut the colored paper into large heart shapes, one for each child.
- Set up a table with markers, crayons, and decorations like stickers or glitter.

Do This:

1. Give each child a heart-shaped paper and ask them to write 'Rejoice in the Lord always' on one side using markers or crayons.
2. On the other side, invite them to draw or write things that make them happy and thankful to God.
3. Encourage them to decorate their hearts with stickers or glitter to make it sparkle. Share that just like their hearts are sparkling, God's peace and joy make our hearts sparkle too.

Bible Interactive Experience

You'll Need:

- A large jar with a lid
- Water
- Glitter (multiple colors)
- Paper and markers
- A Bible

Get Ready:

1. Fill the jar almost to the top with water.
2. Add a generous amount of glitter to the water and secure the lid tightly.
3. Write out Philippians 4:4-9 on a piece of paper in large, readable letters.

Do this:

1. **Introduce the Theme:** Explain to the children that today we're learning about God's peace, which is calm and beautiful, even when things around us are not. Show them the jar and explain that it's like our minds when we're worried or upset - all shaken up!
2. **Read the Scripture:** Have the children sit in a circle and read Philippians 4:4-9 together from the Bible or the prepared paper. Highlight phrases like "Rejoice in the Lord always," "Do not be anxious about anything," and "the peace of God, which transcends all understanding."
3. **Shake the Jar:** Shake the glitter jar vigorously to mix the glitter into a swirling storm. Explain that sometimes, our thoughts and worries can make us feel all mixed up inside, just like the glitter in the jar.

4. ****Set the Jar Down:**** Place the jar in the middle of the circle and have everyone watch silently as the glitter starts to settle to the bottom. Explain that when we pray, ask God for help, and think about good things (like the list in Philippians 4:8), it's like letting the glitter settle. Our minds become clear, and we can feel God's peace.

5. ****Reflection and Prayer:**** Hand out paper and markers. Ask the children to draw or write about a time they felt worried and how they think God can help them find peace. Share in a circle, then close with a prayer asking God to help everyone know His peace this week.

6. ****Weekly Challenge:**** Encourage the children to look for moments when they feel worried or upset during the week and to remember the glitter jar. Remind them to pause, pray, and think about good things, trusting God to bring them peace.

Snack Activity: Peaceful Pudding Parfaits

You'll Need:

- Instant vanilla pudding mix
- Milk (for the pudding mix)
- Clear plastic cups
- Blue food coloring
- Whipped cream
- Gummy fish or any peace-themed candy
- Spoons

Get Ready: Prepare the instant vanilla pudding according to the package instructions. Add a few drops of blue food coloring to the pudding and mix well to create a 'peaceful' blue.

Do this:

1. Fill the bottom third of a clear plastic cup with the blue pudding to represent the peaceful sky.
 2. Add a layer of whipped cream on top of the pudding to symbolize the clouds of peace that God provides us.
 3. Place a few gummy fish or peace-themed candies on top of the whipped cream.
- Explain that just like the candies are resting on the clouds, we can rest in God's peace when we pray and think about good things, just like Philippians 4:4-9 teaches us.

Game Activity: Peace Path Hopscotch

You'll Need:

- Sidewalk chalk
- A small stone or beanbag
- A list of Philippians 4:4-9 phrases printed on paper

Get Ready: Draw a large hopscotch grid on the sidewalk or playground. Each square should have a number from 1 to 8. Next to each numbered square, write a phrase from Philippians 4:4-9. For example, next to the number 1, write 'Rejoice in the Lord always.' Prepare enough squares for each phrase from the scripture passage.

Do this:

1. Players take turns tossing their stone or beanbag onto square 1. Before hopping through the path, the player must read the phrase next to their landing square aloud and say one thing that makes them feel peaceful or thankful.
2. The player then hops through the squares, skipping the one with their stone or beanbag, and returns back. If they complete the course without stepping on a line or losing their balance, they move on to the next number in their next turn.
3. The game continues with players advancing through the numbers and reflecting on each scripture phrase. The goal is to complete all the squares while discussing and internalizing God's peace as described in Philippians 4:4-9. The game ends when all players have completed the course, helping each child to learn about God's peace in a fun and active way.

Craft Activity: Peaceful Heart Bookmark

You'll Need:

- Colored cardstock or heavy paper
- Markers or crayons
- Scissors
- Glue
- Ribbon or yarn
- Stickers (optional)

Get Ready: Cut the cardstock into strips about 2 inches wide and 6 inches long. These will be the bookmarks.

Do this:

1. Read Philippians 4:4-9 together. Talk about what it means to have the peace of God in our hearts. Explain that we can remember God's peace every time we read a book and see our bookmark.
2. On one side of the bookmark, write 'God's Peace is in My Heart' with markers or crayons. Let the kids decorate around the words with stickers or drawings that make them think of peace, like hearts, doves, or smiling faces.
3. Cut a piece of ribbon or yarn about 6 inches long. Glue one end of the ribbon to the top of the bookmark to create a tail that sticks out of the book. This will make it easy to find your place.
4. On the other side of the bookmark, encourage the children to write or draw something specific from Philippians 4:4-9 that speaks to them about God's peace. It could be a phrase like 'Rejoice in the Lord always' or a simple drawing that represents peace to them.

Prayer Activity: Peaceful Prayer Garden

You'll Need:

- A large piece of green poster paper (this will be your garden)
- Flower stickers or cutouts
- Markers or crayons
- Sticky notes

Get Ready: Lay the green poster paper on a flat surface where all the children can reach. This will be your 'garden'. Scatter the flower stickers or cutouts, markers, and sticky notes around the edges of the paper.

Do this:

1. Read Philippians 4:4-9 together as a class. Explain that this passage teaches us about God's peace and how we can pray to feel that peace in our hearts.
2. Ask each child to think of a time they felt worried or scared and how they would like God's peace to help them feel better. Have them draw or write that prayer request on a sticky note.
3. Invite the children to come up one by one to place their sticky note in the 'garden' and then decorate around their note with flower stickers or cutouts, creating a beautiful, peaceful garden. As they place their note, encourage them to say a silent prayer, asking God to fill them with His peace.