

The Gray Elephant From Delaware

PRESCHOOL LESSON PLAN

Theme: God's providence and our freewill

Scripture: Ephesians 1:11-23

Memory Verse: In him we were also chosen, Ephesians 1:11

The Children's Sermon

Hey kids, today we're going to talk about something really cool called Providence in God's Plan. It's a big idea, but I'll help you understand it with a fun little game. Are you ready? Let's go!

First, think of any number between 2 and 9. Got it? Now, multiply that number by 9. This might be a bit tricky, but you can do it! After you've multiplied your number, you'll get a new number. If that new number has two digits, add those digits together. Now, take the number you have and subtract 5 from it.

Next, we're going to switch gears a bit. Think of the letter in the alphabet that matches the number you have now. For example, if you have 1, that's A. If you have 2, that's B, and so on. Got your letter? Awesome! Now, think of a country that starts with that letter. Got one? Great!

Now, take the second letter of that country's name and think of the name of an animal that begins with this letter. Think of the main color of this animal. Is anyone else thinking of a gray elephant from Denmark? (Take a show of hands and include everyone. Most will be right with you. Some, however, may be thinking of evergreen

eels, apple-colored eagles, or whatever an active mind can come up with. Some will have lost track of the math altogether. Strongly emphasize the fact that most of the group just had its mind read).

God's plans for our lives are something like this. Just like we could choose any number we wanted to between 2 and 9, we can choose to go wherever, do whatever, and be whoever we choose to be. But we cannot escape God's plan. The will of God will ultimately be done in our lives. The lost will be found, and sinners will be made saints. And that, friends, is called Providence in God's Plan...even more wondrous than math.

Now, let's dive a bit deeper into Providence in God's Plan. Imagine you're playing a game where you can choose any path to walk on. Some paths might look really fun and exciting, and others might seem a bit scary or boring. But no matter which path you choose, there's a guide who knows the entire park by heart and will make sure you end up where you're supposed to be, safe and sound. That guide is like God, and the park is like our lives. God's Providence is His way of guiding us, even when we make our own choices.

Sometimes, it might feel like we're all alone, making decisions and hoping for the best. But just like in our number game, there's a bigger plan at work. Providence in God's Plan means that God is always with us, helping us through the tough times and celebrating with us in the good times. He knows where we're going, even when we don't.

You know, choosing our paths can be fun, but it can also be a bit scary. What if we make a wrong turn? What if we choose a path that seems right but ends up being really hard? Well, that's where Providence in God's Plan comes in. God uses everything, even

our mistakes, to bring us closer to Him and to the wonderful things He has planned for us.

Let's think about a butterfly for a moment. Before it becomes a butterfly, it starts as a tiny egg, then becomes a caterpillar, and after that, it turns into a pupa inside a cocoon. During each of these stages, the little creature might not understand what's happening. It might even feel scared or confused. But all these stages are part of a beautiful plan to turn it into a butterfly. Just like the butterfly, we go through different stages in our lives, and Providence in God's Plan is at work, making sure we turn into the beautiful creations God intended us to be.

Now, let's talk about how we can see Providence in God's Plan in our everyday lives. Have you ever had a day where everything seemed to go wrong, but then, out of nowhere, something really good happened? Or maybe you've been in a situation where you didn't know how to solve a problem, but then you got help in a way you didn't expect. Those moments, big or small, are examples of Providence in God's Plan. They're little reminders that God is with us, guiding us and taking care of us.

And here's something really important to remember: Providence in God's Plan doesn't mean we just sit back and do nothing, waiting for God to do everything for us. No, it means we do our best, make choices, and take steps, but we trust that God is with us, helping us along the way. It's like being on a team with God. We play our part, and He coaches us, making sure we're heading towards victory.

So, what can we do to be more aware of Providence in God's Plan? We can start by talking to God every day, just like we talk to our friends. We can tell Him about our hopes, our dreams, and even our worries. We can ask Him to show us the way and to

help us understand His plan for us. And we can keep our eyes open for those little signs that He's with us, guiding us every step of the way.

Let's end with a little prayer. Dear God, thank you for Your amazing plan for our lives. Help us to see Your hand in everything we do and to trust in Your Providence. Guide us, protect us, and help us to become the wonderful people You want us to be. Amen.

And remember, kids, Providence in God's Plan is always at work, even when we can't see it. So keep your hearts open, and let's walk this journey together, knowing that God is always by our side.

Bible Memory Verse

In him we were also chosen, Ephesians 1:11

You Will Need:

- Colored paper
- Scissors
- Markers
- Stickers

Get Ready:

- Cut the colored paper into large heart shapes, one for each child.
- Write 'Chosen' on each heart with a marker.

Do This:

1. Give each child a 'Chosen' heart and some stickers.

2. Explain that just like they are choosing stickers to decorate their heart, God chose us because He loves us.
3. Let them decorate their hearts with stickers and markers while you talk about how special and loved each of us is by God.

Bible Interactive Experience

You'll Need:

- A large puzzle with big pieces (a world map or simple shapes)
- Stickers of stars, hearts, and other simple shapes
- A small treasure chest or box

Get Ready:

- Prepare the puzzle by spreading out the pieces on a table or the floor.
- Place the stickers and the treasure chest nearby.

Do this:

1. Invite the children to help you complete the puzzle. Explain that just like we are choosing where to put each puzzle piece, God has a plan for where everything fits in the world.
2. Once the puzzle is complete, give each child a sticker to place on the puzzle. Tell them that the sticker represents their choices and how they can make the world a better place, showing God's love.
3. Show the treasure chest and explain that God has given us all a special gift: the freedom to choose and make decisions. Encourage them to make good choices to fill the world (the puzzle) with love and kindness.

Snack Activity: Providence Garden Cups

You'll Need:

- Chocolate pudding cups
- Oreo cookies (crushed)
- Gummy worms or candy insects
- Plastic spoons
- Small clear plastic cups

Get Ready: Crush the Oreo cookies into small pieces to resemble dirt. This can be done easily by placing the cookies in a ziplock bag and using a rolling pin or your hands.

Do this:

1. Begin by explaining that just like a gardener plans out a garden, God has a plan for each of us. This is part of God's providence. He has given us the world to live in and take care of, just like we would take care of a garden.
2. Have the children spoon chocolate pudding into the bottom of their clear plastic cups. This represents the soil in our garden, reminding us that God provides everything we need to grow.
3. Next, let the children sprinkle the crushed Oreo 'dirt' on top of the pudding. This shows that sometimes life gets a little messy, but God is always in control, taking care of us.
4. Finally, allow the children to choose and place gummy worms or candy insects on top of the 'dirt'. These candies represent the free will God gives us. Just like the gummy worms can move through the dirt, we can make choices within God's plan for us.

As they enjoy their snack, remind them that God's love and providence are always with us, guiding and nourishing us, just like the garden cups they are eating.

Game Activity: God's Garden Path

You'll Need:

- Sidewalk chalk
- Bean bags or small stones
- Pictures of flowers, fruits, and vegetables (optional)

Get Ready: Draw a large, winding path on the ground with the sidewalk chalk, making sure it's wide enough for the children to walk on. Along the path, draw several large circles or squares spaced out evenly. These will be the 'stepping stones'. If using pictures, place one picture in each stepping stone.

Do this:

1. Explain to the children that the path represents our life's journey, where God guides us, but we make choices (our freewill). The stepping stones are the choices we make, and God's providence is the path laid out before us.
2. Have the children line up at the start of the path. They take turns tossing the bean bag or stone onto the path, aiming for the stepping stones. Once a stone lands on a stepping stone, the child hops to that point, discussing a choice they might make that is good and pleasing to God (e.g., sharing, being kind, listening to parents).
3. After reaching the end of the path, the child picks up their bean bag or stone, returns to the start, and the next child takes their turn. This continues until all children have had a turn. Emphasize that even though we all have different paths (choices), God's love and guidance are always present, helping us to make good choices.

Craft Activity: God's Plan Puzzle

You'll Need:

- Construction paper (various colors)
- Markers or crayons
- Safety scissors

Get Ready: Cut the construction paper into large puzzle piece shapes, one for each child.

Do this:

1. Talk to the children about how God has a plan for each of us, just like how every puzzle piece has its own place. Explain that even though we make our own choices (our freewill), God's love and plan for us is always there.
2. Have each child decorate their puzzle piece with drawings or words about what they love, their dreams, or things they are thankful for. Assist the younger children in writing or drawing.
3. Once everyone is done, discuss how all our pieces are different but important, showing how God's plan works together with our free will to create something beautiful. You can optionally connect the pieces together on a bulletin board or wall to visually demonstrate this.

Prayer Activity: God's Big Plan for Me

You'll Need:

- Colorful construction paper
- Child-safe scissors
- Markers or crayons

Get Ready: Cut the construction paper into large, simple puzzle pieces - one for each child plus a few extra.

Do this:

1. Begin by explaining that just like each puzzle piece is different, God has made each of us special and has a plan for our lives. This is part of God's big plan, where He takes care of us and guides us.
2. Give each child a puzzle piece and markers or crayons. Ask them to draw or write something they love or something they are good at on their piece.
3. As the children work, talk to them about how our choices can show love to others and follow God's plan, like sharing, being kind, and helping. Explain that this is how we use our free will in a way that pleases God.
4. Once everyone is done, gather the pieces and together, try to fit them into a big, beautiful puzzle. Explain that when we all work together and make good choices, it's like building God's beautiful plan.