

Teacher's Instructions for the Praise Page

Beginning the teaching time with praise helps set the mood for the entire session. During this time we want to help the students develop an attitude of praise to the Lord at all times. As David said, "I will bless the LORD at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth." (Psalm 34:1) Encouraging the students to actively participate in this praise is an important role of the teacher. Praise can be quiet, while you are seated, and praise can occur all during the day while you are up and busy physically. Praise can happen in groups, and it can flow forth from you during the day when you are by yourself. Psalms 51:15 states, "And my mouth shall show forth Your praise." We are told of groups praising the LORD in II Chronicles 23:5, "...4,000 praised the Lord with musical instruments..."

Praise lifts our focus to the Lord and reminds us of His greatness and faithfulness to us. Even when we are having a "bad" day, praise lifts our spirits and our hope, for when we are praising God, our attention goes from our circumstances to the God of all hope who is loving and kind and whose mercy endures forever. Let's help our students develop an outlook that embraces and expresses praise for our awesome God!

Following are suggestions to encourage the students to become involved in their praise for the Lord:

1. Practice praising the Lord, yourself. When the teacher practices the habit of praising the Lord, the teaching becomes genuine!
2. Have the students stand or walk or raise their hands, etc. as you begin the lesson on praise. It is good to have organized ways for the students to move in class. Bodies are created to move, and moving helps the students pay attention as well as learn ways of expressing praise to the Lord. Praise can be quiet, or it can be buoyant in dance, flagging, singing, clapping or raising hands to the Lord.
3. A "rule" that will bring success to both teacher and students is: If you have talked for 30 seconds, you have talked too long! After 30 seconds of listening to someone talk, the students will begin to lose focus and their minds will wander. Keep talking time by the teacher crisp and focused by using as few words as possible.
4. Watch your students' eyes! If you have lost eye contact, you have lost them.

5. Help keep the students involved by giving them physical actions to use with the words of praise, or by bringing in musical instruments or flags to supplement the praise times. This is a great time to incorporate music as a way of praise, so come ready to sing. If you don't sing, you can ask someone who does to come and help, or you can always use CD's for your music.

6. As you teach, develop the skill of keeping the attention of your students by asking questions that keep the students involved in the learning process. As students articulate answers to your questions, learning is occurring! Their answers will also tell you if they are understanding the lesson. If you hear confusion, this is the perfect time to re-teach and clarify.

The following are *examples of questions* that help keep students involved during the Praise time:

1. Teacher: Is God good?
Students reply: YES!

2. Teacher: Even when things aren't going your way, is God good?
(This question could branch into an interesting discussion.)
Students reply: YES! – God is always good!!

3. Teacher: So we can praise God all the time?
Students: YES!

4. Do you know someone in the Bible who praised God all the time?
(If they don't know, teach them a QUICK (1minute or less) story about David, and remind them that David praised the Lord all the time. In fact, he said, "I will bless the Lord at all times, His praise shall continually be in my mouth!"

5. Teacher: Let's practice thanking God by saying this week's fruit of the Spirit definition together.

6. Teacher: An example of helping the students understand the fruit of the Spirit is as follows: When doing "Peace" as the fruit of the Spirit, you could bring in pictures of a green meadow or a quiet stream, etc. and discuss with the students how these images help us understand the peace of the Holy Spirit. You can always be creative in introducing and teaching these topics.

7. At this point, you can have the students sit down and write a way that God has blessed them during the week or on that day.

You are on your way now. May the Lord bless you and inspire you as you Praise Him and teach the next generation of His children the beauty of praising our Lord!

The following are a few verses to inspire praise:

Ps. 139:14 I will praise you for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.

Ps. 149:3 Let them praise His name with dance; let them sing praises to Him with timbrel and harp.

II Chr. 7:6b His mercy endures forever!

Ps. 7:17 I will praise the Lord according to His righteousness.

Ps. 138:2 And praise Your name for Your lovingkindness and truth.

Ps. 118:21 I will praise you for You have answered me, and have become my salvation.

Ps. 118:28 You are my God and I will praise You; You are my God, I will exalt You.

II Chr. 20:19 The Korahites stood up to praise the Lord God of Israel with voices loud and high...

Ps. 42:4b I went with them to the house of God with the voice of joy and praise with a multitude that kept a pilgrim feast.

Ps. 74 21 Let the poor and the needy praise Your name.

Ps. 117:1 Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles! Laud Him, all you peoples!

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