

Praise to Our Father

By Lea Vaverchak

for use as

STEP 1

**Lesson 3****Focus:**

We can choose to praise God.

Lesson 3**Bible Basis:**

2 Chronicles 30:1–27

Lesson 3**Memory Verse:**

Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; bring an offering and come before Him. Worship the LORD in the splendor of his holiness.
—1 Chronicles 16:29

To introduce the lesson focus, preteens will identify what it means to praise someone as they watch the response of some students to a beloved teacher returning from Afghanistan.

Materials:

- Internet access

Today is Father's Day. Some students may not have fathers in their lives. Adapt the lesson as necessary to fit with your particular group dynamic.

- **What does the word *praise* mean?** (Allow students to speculate and accept all reasonable answers. The dictionary defines praise as: worship; celebrate; to show approval; to say or write good things about someone; to express thanks, love, and respect to God, etc.)
- **Who do you give praise to?** (Answers may include: My dad when he helps me with my homework; my teacher when she does a fun lesson; I praise God when I'm singing in the car, etc.)

With today being Father's Day, we should all understand what it means to show our dads, uncles, grandfathers or mentors how much we care about them. We want them to know how thankful we are for them. We want to praise them for all of the wonderful things they've done for us.

A group of high school students who are surprised by the return of their favorite teacher from his deployment in Afghanistan can give us a good idea of how to praise someone. Let's watch how they respond to their beloved teacher and coach.

Play the following clip [0:43]:

Watch as teacher makes surprise return from Afghanistan

<https://www.today.com/video/watch-as-teacher-makes-surprise-return-from-afghanistan-1453666371605>

- **How did the students celebrate their teacher and his return?** (Answers: they hugged him; cheered, cried, etc.)
- **Why do you think these students responded to their teacher/coach in such a way?** (Answers may include: He's a really good teacher, he kept in touch with them while he was in Afghanistan, he really cares about his students, etc.)
- **How do you think the teacher felt about his students' reactions to seeing him?** (Answers will vary but might include: They made him feel loved and appreciated and so happy he's back home, etc.)

Undoubtedly, Captain Olson knew how much he was loved after he left the classroom that day. Showing someone how much they mean to you matters. It can change someone's day, lift someone's spirits, or remind someone how amazing they really are.

Today we're going to see how the Israelites were so excited that they chose to celebrate their heavenly Father by stopping everything else and praising Him for two whole weeks. Let's find out what would cause them to have such a huge celebration.

Additional resources:

Definition: praise

<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/praise#synonyms>

(Continue on to Steps 2 and 3 in your teacher's guide; your Step 4 appears below.)



Lesson 3 / June 16, 2019

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Materials:

- Internet access
- Balloons (1 per student; allow for a few extra in case some pop)
- Permanent markers
- Straws
- Curling ribbon
- Scissors

Earlier we learned God’s people chose to repent of their sin and turn to God. Overjoyed at the gift of forgiveness and being able to start fresh with God again, the people wanted to praise Him for an extra week during Passover to “ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name.”

As we saw from the example in the story, praise can happen in different ways; at the festival they praised God through songs and feasting on special food. Did you know you can praise God through food?

Let’s look at some other ways we might be able to praise God. Remember praise means to celebrate someone, to say good things about a person or to worship them.

Show the following links to pictures of kids praying, reading the Bible, singing, and giving an offering. Scroll to the picture in each link and ask the corresponding questions to each picture.

Show the following link:

How to Pray a Powerful Prayer

<https://billygraham.org/decision-magazine/march-2003/powerful-prayer/>

- **Is prayer a form of praise? Explain.** (Answer: Yes, coming to Him when we need help honors Him as the source of everything we need; talking to Him regularly tells God how much He means to us and how amazing He is.)

Show the following link:
Girl Reading Bible
<http://menolan.org/portfolio-view/girl-reading-bible/>

- **Is reading the Bible a form of praise? Why or why not?** (Answer: Yes! Taking time to read God's Word shows that you regard it as important and worthy of your time and attention. As you read the Bible and see all of the awesome things God has done, you can't help but start praising Him; His greatness is all over the Bible. When we read it, we really see why we should praise Him to begin with, etc.)

Show the following link:
<https://newcommunity.us/wp-content/uploads/sites/36/2018/02/Youth-Worship-Header-01.png>

- **Is singing worship songs praise? Explain.**(Answers: Yes, singing to God is usually what people consider praise; Singing is worship if it comes from the heart, otherwise it's not any different than singing a regular song.)

Show the following link:
What's this in the church offering plate?
<https://factsandtrends.net/2018/04/13/e-giving-vs-old-giving-new-research-on-church-donations/>

- **Is giving an offering (whether money or your time or something of worth to you) praise to God? Why or why not?** (Answer: Yes, giving an offering to God shows Him you think He is worthy of gifts and your time and attention; yes, an offering shows Him you know that everything you have comes from Him and you want to honor Him by spending money on Him rather than something else.)
- **Think back over our story today as well as any of your own experiences, are there any other ways we can praise God?** (Accept all reasonable answers.)

I think you can see there are so many ways to praise God. What matters most is that it comes from our hearts. Think back over all of the ways we've discussed that you can praise God. Are there any that stuck out to you as new ways to praise Him? Were there any you heard that come naturally to you already? Any you want to try this week?

Pass out a balloon to each student along with permanent markers, curling ribbon, and a straw. Have them gently write at least one way they'll choose to praise God this week. Show your students how to curl the ribbon and use it to tie their balloon to a straw.

As students work, play the following worship song [stop at 4:40]:
The Heart of Worship-Matt Redman// Worship Cover by Tommee Profitt & McKenna Sabin
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aXcaHf3I2_Y

Today we celebrate the important father-figures in our lives. But let's not limit it to one day—let's give them and our heavenly Father praises as often as we can and let them know they are loved.

Let your balloon decorate your room this week and serve as a reminder of all the ways you can praise your heavenly Father. Every time you see it, stop and celebrate Him. Choose to praise God!

Pray to close.

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