



Date: _____

Series: Discover the Design
Summer Year 1, Lesson 1

In God We Trust

Primary Scripture: Galatians 5:1

Key Verse: Psalm 33:12a, “Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD.”

How does this address a need in our kids' lives?

Our kids need a full understanding of the importance of trusting God. This is a personal choice each individual must make and will help shape his entire view of life. When we trust God, we see him as the source of all our blessings and life itself. On this Memorial Weekend we honor the memories of those who gave their lives protecting our country and its ideals. One of those treasured ideals is that we are free to worship and trust God. Though our country never established a state religion, the founding fathers advocated “In God we trust.” Our entire nation is blessed when we, as its citizens, trust God. Our kids need a sense of understanding and appreciation for this foundation of our country and the importance of personally trusting God.

How does Jesus fill this need?

Jesus for us: Jesus made a way for us to have a relationship with God through his death and resurrection in our behalf.

Jesus in us: Jesus empowers us to trust God and see him as the source of all blessings and life itself.

Jesus through us: Jesus can use our lives as a witness to him and bring blessing to our country as we trust God.

Stamp of Excellence:

Remind the kids what excellent worship looks like. We are in God's presence to honor him. Put on your best manners. This might include wearing your name tag, participating eagerly at all times, listening when the leader is talking, raising your hand to speak, not distracting others, playing the learning game with cooperation, singing enthusiastically, and praying reverently. Offer rewards or positive reinforcement to those who worship with excellence.



Worship

Invocation:

Let kids bring the worship symbols forward such as the cross, candles, Bible, and offering plate. Invite God's presence and call by name Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Attention Grabber:

Capture the children's attention and help them focus on the worship theme for the day.

Supplies:

- a quarter, a dime, a nickel, and a penny
- whiteboard or overhead projector
- marker for whiteboard or overhead projector

Invite four kids to come forward and give each a different coin: a quarter, a dime, a nickel, and a penny. Tell the kids in the audience they have to guess which coin each child has. Have each volunteer read only the words on their coins rather than how much they are worth as the audience tries to guess the values. Record on a whiteboard or overhead projector the words the kids read from their coins: "United States of America," "Liberty," "In God We Trust," and "E Pluribus Unum," (which in Latin means "From Many, One"). Then say:

Can we guess which coin each of these kids has by only knowing the words written on them? The values may not be able to be guessed, but notice the coins all say the same things. Even our money, something we value, has the words "In God we trust." That is what we are talking about today. In church we certainly would say, "In God we trust." But some might be surprised to know that our nation was founded with the motto "In God we trust."

We are thankful our founding fathers wanted us to have liberty and the freedom to worship and trust God. Today, Memorial Day, we recognize all who died to fight for that liberty.

Each one of us can show our trust in God as we worship him today. Let's sing songs to him and tell him we love him.

Songs of Worship:

Choose two or three songs. Briefly introduce songs so kids can better understand what they are singing and be drawn into a more focused worship. Keep the attention on God!

Your choice of music.

The Power of the Cross:

Jesus has given his life for us that we might have forgiveness and power to live for him.

Supplies:

- *picture of the National Cemetery on an overhead or Power Point slide*

Show the National Cemetery and its acres of crosses.

What is it that oftentimes marks graves? (A cross.) Why do people mark graves with a cross? The cross reminds us of what Jesus has done for us. He died on the cross so our sins might be forgiven and we would be able to go to heaven after we died. That means we are freed from the power of death and sin.

This is just what it says in the Bible in 1 Corinthians 15:55 and 57, *"Death, where is your victory? Death, where is your sting?...Thank God that he gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."*

The greatest victory we could ever have is when we trust Jesus as our Savior. Let's pray to him now and make sure we have that victory in our lives.

Dear God, thank you for sending your Son Jesus to be our Savior. He took all of our sins on himself when he died on the cross. Because of that, we can have victory over sin. If there are times when we haven't trusted you or done what you wanted, we are sorry. Please forgive us and give us your victory. Help us to trust you more and more. Help our whole country trust you and do what we've written on our coins: "In God We Trust." In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Optional Prayer Topic: Sometimes when we think of our country, we think of a country of people who have forgotten God and think God doesn't matter. We can go to God in behalf of our country and ask for forgiveness.

Lead children in a prayer confessing the sins of our nation. These may include not valuing life as in abortion, violent crimes, turning away from God, sins not considered sins on TV and in movies, etc.

Conclude the prayer of confession with forgiveness of sins and announcing:

“Christ has freed us so that we may enjoy the benefits of freedom. Therefore, be firm in this freedom, and don’t become slaves again.”
(Galatians 5:1.)

Song of Response:

Choose a song to help the children turn to Jesus. Or, you may want to help them celebrate what God has done by singing a song of praise.

Offering:

Teach the importance of giving. Talk about the mission activities they are supporting.

As the kids bring their offerings forward and place their money in the plate, let each child say the words that are written on the currency – “In God we trust.” Explain that when we give offerings to God, it is our way of saying thank you to him. It is also a way that we show we trust God to give us whatever we need. It’s a way to act out “In God we trust.”



The Word

Learning Game:

Some churches dismiss children from the adult service at this time to join Kids Church. The learning game provides a fun kinesthetic activity to help kids connect with each other. The learning point will help reinforce the theme of the day.

Capture the Flag:

Supplies:

- *a flag for each team (For this lesson a plastic American flag that is attached to a plastic bendable stick or straw to be posted in the ground might have an added effect.)*
- *two different colors of construction flagging tape or athletic foam tape*
- *cones, ropes, or hula hoops to mark boundaries for jails*

Play one round of Capture the Flag. This game is best played outside and needs to be set up before the children arrive.

Divide the kids into two groups. To distinguish between teams, use two different colored construction flagging tape or athletic foam tape to make wrist ties for each child.

The object of the game is to steal the opposing team's flag and bring it back to one's territory without getting caught.

Divide the playing field in half with cones. Children are safe from getting caught if they are on their team's half of the field. Each team posts its flag deep into its own territory. A jail is also designated with cones or lines (which can be made from jump ropes or hula hoops). Who will be brave enough to run into the opposing territory and steal the opponent's flag?

Once an opponent enters the other team's territory, he may be tagged and have to go to the opponent's jail. He must wait captive in jail until one of his own teammates comes to free him by tagging him. Then both captive and liberator are free to escape back to their own territory or try to capture the flag. If they are not careful, they can get tagged again.

Discussion Questions:

After the game, select a few kids and interview them with these questions:

- **What did it feel like to guard the flag?**
- **What made it easier to keep the flag from being captured?**
- **What did it feel like to be a captive in jail? Describe how it felt to be liberated or freed.**
- **What was the person who freed you, the liberator, risking? How is this like those who helped liberate our country? How is this like Jesus?**

Many people died in wars to liberate our country and help us keep our freedoms. Jesus, our liberator, also gave his life to free us from sin and the power of death.

Learning Game Option:

United States Flag Pin:

On the first four safety pins slide on four blue beads, two red beads, two white beads, and two red beads. On the next four pins slide on two red, two white, two red, two white, two red. Slide the ninth safety pin through the bottoms of the other eight safety pins to form a symbol of the American flag. The ninth pin is also used to pin onto clothing.



Bible Presentation:

Help children pay attention by giving them a word or concept to listen for as you read. Consider letting a child read who could do so with excellence.

Before reading the Bible verse, read the following quote from Patrick Henry, a great American Revolution leader.

“It cannot be emphasized too strongly or too often that this great nation was founded, not by religionists, but by Christians; not on religions, but on the Gospel of Jesus Christ. For this very reason peoples of other faiths have been afforded asylum, prosperity, and freedom of worship here.”

Patrick Henry, a founding father, said our great nation was founded on the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Our Bible Presentation says, “Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD.” This is a promise that God will bless not just our nation, but also any nation whose people trust God.

Application:

Supplies:

- *Video: America’s Godly Heritage (1992, David Barton, Wall Builders, www.wallbuilders.com)*

Let’s watch a video about the early days of our nation and a miraculous event in the life of our first president, George Washington, who was a praying believer in God.

Show the first five-minute segment of the video, *America’s Godly Heritage*, by David Barton.



Witness

Witness and Tell:

Give children opportunities to share how God is working in their lives. It is best to use a microphone to ask children interview questions around the theme for the day.

Invite a veteran to speak about some of his experiences while defending our country. Visit with him beforehand to see if the theme “In God We Trust” can be part of his testimony. Or, some kids may have some stories of family members who fought in a war. If so, let children share these stories.

Prayer:

Let the kids pray out loud. If you are using a microphone, invite children to form a prayer line and speak their thanksgivings or requests. If you have portable microphones, you can roam the audience. Kids can also go to prayer stations set up for specific types of prayer.

Close in prayer having children give thanks for the many ways God has blessed our country and for the many men and women who have fought for our country. Thank Jesus for giving his life for us so we can have freedom from the power of sin and death.

Kids can also add prayers for those who are currently serving in the military.

Blessing:

Speak a blessing prayer over the children. Personalize this to your setting. Use a special scripture verse or blessing around the theme of the day.

Song of Sending:

Choose one song. Briefly introduce song so kids can better understand what they are singing and be drawn into a more focused worship. Keep the attention on God.

Supplies:

Attention Grabber:

- a quarter, a dime, a nickel, and a penny
- whiteboard or overhead projector
- marker for above

The Power of the Cross:

- picture of the National Cemetery on an overhead or Power Point slide

Learning Game:

- flag for each team (For this lesson a plastic American flag attached to a plastic bendable stick or straw to be posted in the ground might have an added effect.)
- two different colors of construction flagging tape or athletic foam tape
- cones, ropes or hula hoops to mark boundaries for jails

Learning Game Option:

- nine 1-inch safety pins for each child
- small red, white, and blue beads

Flag Beaded Pin Craft Kits (IN# 48/1403) can be ordered through Oriental Trading Company, Inc. at www.orientaltrading.com.



Bible Presentation Application:

- video: *America's Godly Heritage* (David Barton, Wall Builders, 1992, http://www.wallbuilders.com/Merchant2/merchant.mv?Screen=PROD&Store_Code=W&Product_Code=DVD01&Category_Code=DVD)

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