



Date: _____

Series: God is Our Rescuer
Summer Year 2, Lesson 1

Memorial Day: Taste and See that the Lord is Good

Primary Scripture: Psalm 34:1-3, 5, 8, 18

Key Verse: Psalm 34:8, "Taste and see that the Lord is good. Blessed is the person who takes refuge in him."

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

Kids are excited that summer is just around the corner. They're excited about the many opportunities they'll have for free time and fun. But even with summer vacation and all its advantages, refrains of complaining can be heard. Kids, like adults, can even complain when showered with an abundance of blessings. Complaining brings pain to the soul. We call it the pain of complain. The answer? By focusing on the blessings that we have through Jesus, complaining can be transformed into thanksgiving. This lesson uses marshmallows, chocolate syrup and a series of fun games to reinforce the central learning point, "Taste and see that the Lord is good." Praise and thanksgiving will be the antidotes against the pain of complain.

How does Jesus fill this need?

Jesus for us: Jesus gave his life for us and meets our greatest need—a relationship with God. This is the basis of all our praise and thanksgiving.

Jesus in us: Jesus dwells within us to give us his supernatural power to turn our focus to thanksgiving instead of complaining.

Jesus through us: Jesus lives through us so that our thankfulness would be a winsome witness to the world.

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 forward the worship symbols 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.

For this game, use the Praise Bullet Blaster from one of the *Learning Game* areas in this lesson.

Praise Bullet Blasters are made by cutting a $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch piece of PVC pipe into foot long lengths. Each one can be used like a blow-dart gun. A mini-marshmallow (called a *Praise Bullet*) is placed in one end. A person blows a blast of air in that same end and out comes a Praise Bullet!

Rather than simply pulling mini-marshmallows from a bag, mount them on a special ammunition pack. Prepare this before the lesson. This is made by taking an 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 11-inch piece of cardstock and painting a full sized cross on it with a glue stick (*two or three inches wide*). Place mini-marshmallows on the glue and it will be in the shape of a cross. We now will call these mini-marshmallows, "Praise Bullets." They can be easily peeled off and loaded into the Praise Bullet Blaster.

Run copies of the template, the "Pain of Complain" on 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 11-inch cardstock and then cut in half. Glue or tape a triangle-shaped piece of cardstock to the back so that the target can be free standing. Set up the target approximately ten feet away on a table. Practice beforehand so that you can accurately hit it at a reasonable distance.

Boys and girls, are you excited about summer vacation coming? There are a lot of fun things to do. What are you looking forward to doing? Take two or three answers from the audience.

Isn't it true that during summer vacation, even though you have so many blessings, it's easy to complain? What are some of the common complaints during the summer?

Use a whining voice. **How about, "I'm bored... I don't want to do my chores... There are no friends around..."** Take some suggestions from the audience.

One of the bad things about complaining is that it brings pain. It actually hurts our soul, because we are forgetting the more important blessings that we have. So I call it the pain of complain. We keep focusing on what we don't have instead of the many blessings that we do have. It is one of Satan's ways of robbing us of the joy we can have as followers of Jesus.

Show the targets, "Pain of Complain."

See this target? It reminds me of complaining. When we come to worship here and we praise God for whom he is and what he's done for us, it's just like taking a Praise Bullet and blasting away the pain of complain. Let me show you.

Unload a "Praise Bullet" from the "Cross Ammunition Pack," and load it into the blaster.

Now I will say, "I praise God for knowing him."

Shoot at one of the targets located about ten feet away. Load another bullet and continue shooting with the following phrases. Children can repeat the phrases with you.

- **I praise God for the gift of Jesus.**
- **I praise God for forgiveness.**
- **I praise God for him being with me always.**

What other things can you praise God for?

Take some suggestions from the audience as you continue to blast at the target. Conclude with Psalm 34:1-2.

"I will thank the Lord at all times. My mouth will always praise him. My soul will boast about the Lord. Those who are oppressed will hear it and rejoice."

Let's do that now as we worship him. Let's worship him with all of our hearts. If we do a great job of worshiping today, we'll let you use one of these Praise Blasters in one of our games.

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:

- *Large marshmallow*
- *Newspaper sheet. Cut a hole in the middle. Place over the child's head. The paper will serve as a bib to protect clothing.*
- *Small bowl or saucer with a small pool of chocolate syrup.*
- *Warm bucket of water and washcloths*

Ask for a volunteer from the audience. Select a volunteer who will not mind getting chocolate syrup on his or her face. Place the volunteer on a chair, cover them with newspaper and dip a marshmallow in the chocolate syrup. Begin to blot it on the person's face.

The Bible shows us that many times we sin against God. That's like having a blotch on our face. How would you like to walk around with one of these big chocolate blotches on your face? It would be quite embarrassing wouldn't it? Sometimes our sin is just like that. We're often very embarrassed in front of others when we make mistakes or even embarrassed in front of God.

Think of some of the sins we do. Continue to blotch the child's face with each phrase.

One terrible sin is complaining. Watch the kids' reactions.

Maybe when we get angry and hurt someone else... Maybe when we hurt them with our words... or hit them... Maybe when we don't honor our parents or teachers... We might even lie or steal. Can you think of something that you've done this week that was not God pleasing? That would be just like one of these blotches, wouldn't it?

God wants to take care of those sins. He invites us to come to him and confess our sins. That means we tell him we need his forgiveness. Remember that Jesus gave his life for us and wipes away our sins (take a clean wipe and wash off the student's face), so

that our faces can be bright and radiant. That's what it says in today's lesson, from Psalm 34.

Verse 4 and 5 say this.

"I went to the Lord for help. He answered me and rescued me from all my fears. All who look to him will be radiant. Their faces will never be covered with shame."

Let's pray to him now and have our faces become radiant... and not be covered with shame.

Dear God, thank you for giving us Jesus. Thank you for the forgiveness he won for us by going to the cross. We're sorry for the times we've sinned against you... especially for times we've complained or forgotten to be thankful. Please wipe away our sin and make our faces radiant. We want other people to see the power of your love and forgiveness in our lives. Help us to live in ways that are completely pleasing to you. In Jesus' name. Amen.

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.

Read Psalm 34:3

"Praise the Lord's greatness with me. Let us highly honor his name together."

Place some mini-marshmallows by the altar and let the children come and lay their offerings in the basket. If they did not bring an offering, let them symbolically lay their hearts into the offering basket. As they do so, point out that they are praising the Lord's greatness and are honoring his name together. This is a sweet thing to the Lord and also to us.

Let each child pick up a mini-marshmallow and eat it as they taste the sweetness of giving to the Lord.



The Word

Learning Games:

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.

All the teachings for Kids Church will be done in learning games today. Please adjust according to your own time schedule and the level of activity that is appropriate for your group.

Learning Game 1: “Marshmallow Bombardment”

- **Key Verse:** Psalm 34:5 *“All who look to him will be radiant. Their faces will never be covered with shame.”*
- **Teaching point:** Kids will have a fun time having their faces bombarded with chocolate blotches in an effort to catch chocolate covered marshmallows in their mouths. As their faces become chocolate messes, they are reminded of the verse that tells us that we can look to Jesus and be radiant. Their faces won't be covered with shame. Forgiveness is offered up through Jesus as earlier described in the *Power of the Cross*.
- **Supplies:** Lots of newspaper for the floor, marshmallows, saucer for chocolate syrup. Consider having warm water and washcloths...or Wet Wipes available for clean-up.

Let a child lay down on clean newspaper covering the floor. Cover the child's upper torso with newspaper. Take one newspaper sheet and tear or cut a small hole in it so it will frame the face when put on. The face should be the only part showing.

Another child will be given a saucer with a little chocolate syrup in it. They will dip a large marshmallow in it and drop the marshmallow into the opened mouth below. The trick is that they cannot bend their knees. They must hold the marshmallow at the level of their chin so that it will be difficult to hit the opened mouth. If the marshmallow

misses, it may be picked up and reloaded for several shots. It might be best to have four children being bombarded at the same time with their partners. If there is one team for each age level (e.g. first grade, second grade, etc.) then everyone will have a team to cheer for.

Depending on time, you might have other teams ready to go when one of the current teams successfully drops a marshmallow into someone's mouth. Use the warm water and washcloths to clean up the players' faces. Get rid of dirty newspaper and replace with clean ones before inviting the next team forward.

Learning Game 2: "Praise Bullet Blasters"

- **Key Verse:** Psalm 34:1 *"I will thank the Lord at all times. My mouth will always praise him."*
- **Teaching Point:** The blasters and mini-marshmallows will represent the praises of our mouth in thanking him for all his blessings.
- **Supplies:** Blasters, Clorox wipes or masking tape, mini-marshmallows, targets and a table.

Have five shooters to hit five targets set on a table 20 feet away. These targets are free standing. They are made from copying the template on cardstock and attaching a cardboard triangle on the back that will help them stand up. They are labeled, "The Pain of Complain." The shooters or blasters are made from one-foot pieces of ¾ inch PVC pipe. Ammunition (mini-marshmallows) can be peeled off a pre-prepared sheet. Attach them in the shape of a cross to a sheet of cardstock with glue sticks. Each team will send a contestant forward for five chances with five marshmallows and then they must pass their blaster to the next child on their team.

For sanitary reasons, have Clorox wipes available to clean off the mouth of the blasters or put a fresh bit of masking tape around the mouth end of the blaster between each child.

After the game, discuss how praising God is a way we can keep from having a complaining spirit and battle the "pain of complain."

Learning Game 3: "Chocolate Drawings"

- **Key Verse:** Psalm 34:8 *"Taste and see that the Lord is good. Blessed is the person who takes refuge in him."*
- **Teaching Point:** Because the children are using marshmallow paintbrushes to illustrate blessings, they may, on occasion, eat a few. Relate to them that this is like "Tasting and seeing that the Lord is good."
- **Supplies:** Paper plates, mini-marshmallows, toothpicks, chocolate syrup, wipes for cleanup.

Each child will receive a paper plate. There will be one saucer or small bowl with a small portion of chocolate syrup per table or grouping. The children can dip their toothpicked mini-marshmallows in the syrup and paint a drawing on their plates depicting a special blessing they've received from the Lord. It is okay for the children to eat some of the marshmallows. Relate this to "tasting and seeing that the Lord is good."

Since it is difficult to draw using only chocolate and mini-marshmallow paintbrushes, it may be difficult for others to recognize what the picture is. Let the children show their pictures to one another. They may choose tell about their picture or have others guess what they drew.

Learning Game 4: "Name Snack"

- Key Verse: Psalm 34: 3 *"Praise the Lord's greatness with me. Let us highly honor his name together."*
- Teaching Point: Discuss ways we can honor the Lord's name. (*Worship, prayer, witness*)
- Supplies: One double square of graham cracker, chocolate syrup, mini-marshmallows, saucer or small bowl.

Divide children into groups of five. Each group will receive five double-square sections of graham cracker to write the name J-E-S-U-S. Each child will make one letter on their graham cracker with chocolate syrup and mini-marshmallows. The syrup will help glue the marshmallow to the cracker. Together the group or table has written the word JESUS.

Discuss how we honor the Lord's name (*worship, prayer, witness*). Let the children eat their artwork as they "taste and see that the Lord is good."

Learning Game 5: "Marshmallow Relay"

- Key Verse: Psalm 34:18 *"The Lord is near those whose hearts are humble. He saves those whose spirits are crushed."*
- Teaching Point: This is a quiet gentle game. If we seek forgiveness, the Lord is gentle with us and will save us.
- Supplies: Each team has two spoons, large marshmallow and one chair per team.

Each team needs a large marshmallow and a spoon. This relay involves all teams running around a chair placed in the middle of the room and back to their line while carrying a marshmallow in a spoon. They may not touch the marshmallow while passing the marshmallow to a team member who is holding another spoon. If a marshmallow falls on the ground, they must take it to the marshmallow "hospital" which is in another location in the room where it can be put back on their spoon. Then they can continue the relay.

Discuss how when we fall, God is gentle and picks us up. Being humble means that we are not relying on our own strength but on him who picks us up. It's much like going to the marshmallow hospital in the game.



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.

Let children give thanks for the blessings they expect from the Lord this summer.

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.

Have a prayer line where children come through and thank God for his many blessings and pray for any other special requests they might have.

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.

Safety and Security: Safety and security procedures are important for each church to carefully define and implement according to their unique needs. The security, safety, illness and accident procedures described in this curriculum are provided for example purposes only and may not be appropriate, applicable or adequate for every situation. Each church is responsible for determining whether any security, safety, illness and accident procedures contained in the curriculum are appropriate, applicable or adequate for its unique situation. The activities described in this curriculum require adult supervision and may not be suitable for each child and each situation. Each church is responsible for ensuring that adequate adult supervision is provided for all activities and for determining whether an activity is appropriate for each child and each situation. Kids Kount Publishing disclaims all liability for the implementation of any procedures or the performance of any activities described in this curriculum.

Supplies:

Attention Grabber:

- Praise Bullet Blaster – 1 foot long, ¾ inch PVC
- mini marshmallows
- “Pain of Complain” targets—copy template on cardstock, cut in half, and make a triangle support taped or glued to back so that it can stand

Songs of Worship:

- your choice of music

Power of the Cross:

- large marshmallow
- newspaper sheet. Cut a hole in the middle. Place over the child’s head. The paper will serve as a bib to protect clothing.
- small bowl or saucer with a small pool of chocolate syrup
- warm bucket of water and washcloth

Offering:

- mini-marshmallows

Learning games:

Number 1:

- lots of newspaper for the floor
- marshmallows
- saucer and chocolate syrup

Number 2:

- Praise Bullet Blasters—see construction detailed above
- Clorox wipes or masking tape
- mini-marshmallows
- “Pain of complain” targets and a table

Number 3:

- paper plates
- mini-marshmallows
- toothpicks
- chocolate syrup
- wipes for cleanup

Number 4:

- one double square of graham cracker per child
- chocolate syrup
- mini-marshmallows
- saucer or small bowl

Number 5:

- two spoons per team
- large marshmallow
- one chair per team

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