



## God Helps Us Grow

Ephesians 2:1-10

### God Statement: Jesus is Our Hope

KEY VERSE:

**“Jesus said, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life.”” John 14:6a, NIRV**

## CHECK-IN

**(until 15 minutes after the start of each service)**

*Purpose: To build relationships with families and help parents feel comfortable leaving their child.*

*As parents check-in their child at your classroom, try to welcome them by name to help them feel secure in leaving their child in your care. Once you’ve completed each of the check-in procedures, welcome the child into your classroom and encourage him/her to play with the classroom toys and activities. If you have LITs in your classroom, this is a great time for them to help engage with the kids while you continue checking in the kids.*

*If a child is upset or reluctant to enter the room, encourage him or her by offering toys, books or other fun items. If a child is still upset, let the parents know that we will text them if their child continues to be upset. Then, offer to carry the child into the classroom and try to calm the child with toys or other activities.*

*Use the “Connect” reminder (listed below) to help kids feel comfortable and safe in your class!*

## CONNECT WITH KIDS

*Purpose: Building relationships & prioritizing safety for our youngest children.*

Our goal, first and foremost, when serving babies and young toddlers is to prioritize building trusting relationships and the feeling of safety. We build trust with our littlest kids by meeting needs and helping them learn that church is a secure place where they are loved, known and safe.

**The 4 Ss are a simple way to keep our hearts and minds focused on this:**

When a child feels... *(most of the time)*

**SAFE:** physically and emotionally

**SEEN:** known and understood  
**SOOTHED:** calmed and supported  
 They can become **SECURE.**

## EXPLORE ACTIVITY

(10 minutes)

*The Explore Activity is a chance to get the kids thinking about the upcoming Bible story for the day. Encourage your kids to engage with the activity as they prepare for the lesson.*

### **DISCUSS: Jesus is Our Hope!**

In today's lesson, we are going to learn that God helps us grow. He changes us. He transforms us.

**Say:** Did you know that God helps us grow? Let's think about things we've seen that grow! Hmm... do flowers grow? Do trees grow? Does grass grow? Does your hair grow? What else grows? You and me! If you have a baby brother or sister, you probably remember when they came home for the first time. They were probably so little and small! So cute! But, did they stay that same size? No! They grew, and they are still growing! And so are each of you! God helps each of us grow, not just on the outside, but on the inside too!

### **MAKE: Seed Cups**

**Supplies:** cups, markers, potting soil, plastic spoons, seeds, ziploc bags

**Directions:** Invite kids to come up a few at a time to make their seed cups. Encourage them to draw a face on their cup and color it. Then, help them scoop dirt into the cups using plastic spoons until the cup is about 2/3 full. Next, have the kids scoop a few seeds from the packet into their dirt cup using the spoon. Then, put a little bit of water in the cups to pack it down and place the finished cup in a ziploc bag labeled with each child's craft tag to take home. Help kids wash their hands and clean space up.

**Say:** *Friends, we're going to plant some seeds today. What happens when you plant a seed? It grows and grows and grows! Let's work together to plant these seeds that we each can take home and watch grow. When you get home, you can keep putting a little water on your plant each day and put it by a sunny window. In a few days, you might see the seed growing!*

**Say:** *God helps us grow too, just like this seed! Did you know that another word for grow is transform? God transforms us on the inside and out because He loves us.*

#### **While you are working with each child:**

- Talk about how God transforms us. He helps us grow. Like these little seeds. God helps them grow too.

- Talk about how each of us were tiny babies at one point and how much we've grown.
- Talk about how God helps us grow, not just on the outside, but on the inside. God shows us how to love and be kind!

## CLEAN UP

(5 minutes)

*Have the children begin cleaning up as you transition into Large Group time. All the toys should be put away by the end of clean up time.*

*Try singing: "Clean up, clean up, everybody do your share. Clean up, clean up, everybody everywhere."*

## LARGE GROUP

(15 minutes)

*After clean up, have your class gather around the story time rug/blanket/squares and Hamilton's house for Large Group time.*

## WELCOME & PRAYER

Tell the kids you are so excited to have them joining you this morning and give them a brief explanation of Large Group and the expectations of them during this time. After going over the expectations, pray to open large group time.

## WORSHIP

*Purpose: Engage our youngest children through the power of music!*

Use the Little Kids music videos on Plex (Miss Mindy) to sing some simple songs with your class. To access these videos, go to Plex > Videos > EC > 2s/3s folder.

**This month, please introduce the following songs:**

- *My God is so big*
- *Only God can do*
- *God is so Good*

## READ A BIBLE STORY

*Purpose: Engage our youngest children in a meaningful way by teaching God's word!*

Using Jesus Calling Bible Storybook, read **page 248 about the Fruit of the Spirit.**

### **BIG IDEA:**

**God transforms us. He helps us grow, just like the flowers and plants and grass we see outside. God**

As you read, try to engage the child(ren) even more by pointing to the pictures as you read, allowing the kids to turn the page or repeating key words and phrases. It's ok if you don't read every word on the page! Kids have very short attention spans (1 minute for each year of age) so try to keep your interactions short and don't get discouraged if a child loses focus!

### **BIBLE STORY (5-7 minutes)**

#### ***THIS WEEK'S LESSON: God Helps us Grow***

*Using the props and Hamilton puppet, tell the story for the day. Make sure to keep it brief and engaging by asking the kids questions throughout and using Hamilton to keep their attention.*

Hamilton has a giant leaf or flower or branch or vine in his arms.

***Invite Hamilton to come out and see the class. Hamilton is holding a flower.***

**Say:** Hi Hamilton! What do you have there? ***Hamilton whispers in your ear.*** Wow! That used to be a tiny seed? ***Hamilton nods.*** Did you plant it? Ham nods. It grew and grew and grew! That reminds me of a special story in the Bible about growing! Do you want to read this story with us, Hamilton? ***Hamilton nods excitedly.***

**Read the story from Jesus Calling: Bible Storybook on page 248 – Paul the Writer & the Fruit of the Spirit.**

**Say:** God changes us! He transforms us. Remember, transforms means God helps us grow on the inside. He gives us the fruit of the Spirit to help us be like Him. He gives us love and joy, peace and patience and other things to make us more like Him. I'm so glad that God helps me grow! Let's all say, "Thank you, God!" for helping us grow. Ready? Thank you, God!

**Say:** Hamilton, do you think you should plant your plant back in the ground? ***Hamilton nods.*** Why don't you do that right now? See you next time. Bye Hamilton. ***Wave goodbye to Hamilton. Put Hamilton away in his home.***

### **SAY IT OUT LOUD! (30 seconds)**

*This is the opportunity to remind the children of the God Statement for the day. Even if they struggle to pay attention during the lesson, this part is important to do every week.*

We are learning that Jesus is our Hope. *Point to the large poster that will be on the wall in your class all quarter: "Jesus is our Hope!" (Have the kids shout it out together multiple times) "*

**WORSHIP RESPONSE (2 minutes)**

Worship Response is an opportunity for the kids to apply what they just learned and to respond to what God is doing in their life. *Have the kids sit in a place where they can be still and reflect independently.* Then read through the Worship Response prompts below as you lead the kids through the time.

***Encourage class to sit quietly.***

**Say:** Remember when you were a tiny baby? Let's pretend we're babies.

***Have kids act out laying down and kicking their feet like little babies.***

**Say:** What do babies say?

***Some cute coos and tiny cries would be good.***

**Say:** Now let's see how we have grown. Let's get into a tiny ball. Squat down and squish yourself into a ball. Now let's grow. Grow just a tiny bit. Now a little more. Now a little more. Now all the way up. Great! You grew. We were just pretending but God has helped us grow from a tiny baby into these big kids that you are.

**Say:** He will help you keep growing and getting bigger and stronger. He helps our insides; our hearts grow too so we can be loving and kind like Jesus is.

***Pray to close Large Group time out.***

**BLESSING (1 minute)**

*Read the verse and blessing over the kids before closing Large Group. Encourage the kids to stand and open their hands to receive the blessing as a truth that they can take with them this week and hide in their hearts.*

**All Kids:** May you always remember that God loves you and changes you to grow, grow, grow!

**CLOSING ACTIVITIES**

**(Until parents pickup)**

**MAKE: Grow Coloring Page**

***Supplies:*** coloring page, crayons

**Directions:** Encourage the kids to use the crayons to color their pages as bright and colorful as they can. Make sure to send the paper home if they don't have time to color, so that parents can see what they learned from the day.

***While you are working with each child talk to them:***

- Talk about the objects on the page. Remind the kids that Jesus helps us grow!
- Talk about the colors they are using to color their papers.

- Talk about the story and ask the kids to tell you what they learned.

## PLAY!

*Purpose: Engage our youngest children by playing games and having fun!*

While your class can participate in free play for most of the remaining classroom time, please try to lead at least one structured activity with your class. This is a great opportunity to introduce kids to classroom games and encourage interaction and participation with others.

### Suggestions of activities:

- Hide an object and let kids find it
- Name and count parts of the body
- Discuss colors & numbers
- Turn on music and play freeze dance
- Have kids follow simple instructions (hop, sit down, clap, etc.)
- Read a board book
- Build a tower and let kids knock it down
- Play with a ball

## CHECK-OUT

### (End of service)

As parents arrive for check-out, the kids can continue participating in free play. Follow the check-out procedures for your classroom, making sure to send all of the child's belongings (diaper bag, bottle/sippy cup, pacifier, blanket, etc.) with the parent.

Give the parent encouragement about how the child did in your class and say "Bye (child's name)!"

**Note: Please keep "Jesus Calling: Bible Storybook" Bibles at your campus**

GROW

in

*grace*

