



God is Our Refuge – Remember & Celebrate

Psalm 91 – A Mighty Fortress is Our Strength

God Statement: God is Our Refuge

KEY VERSE:

“He is my place of safety. He is like a fort to me. He is my God. I trust in him.”
(Psalm 91:2, 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 brings money for offering, allow them to put the money in the class offering bank. Thank them for sharing with others.

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: God is Our Refuge – A Mighty Fortress

In today's lesson, we are going to learn about how God is our Refuge.

Say: God is our refuge! That means God is our place of safety and protector! Let's say, "God is our Refuge!" Ready? God is our Refuge! God is like a fortress. That's a BIG word. A fortress is a FORT! A fortress is a place you can hide and be safe. Have you ever built a fort with your brother/sister/grownup? What do you do? *Let kids describe building a fort.* That's great! God is like a fort, He protects us and keeps us safe!

MAKE: A Fort

Supplies: blankets from kids area

Directions: Help the children arrange a few chairs. Put the blankets over the chairs so it makes a fort.

Say: *God is our fortress! He is like a fort! Let's build a fort together as we think about God. Can you help? Let's take turns getting in the fortress. Ooh, it's nice in here. God is our fortress. He protects us.*

While you are working with each child:

- Do you ever make blanket forts at home?
- It's fun to have a fort.
- If we are afraid of anything, we can ask God to protect us. He is our fortress. God says He will cover us like a mama bird covers her babies with her wings.

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.

OFFERING – ask: Did anyone bring money for an offering today? This money is used to help other people. You may put your money in the class offering bank.

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.**

- *My God is So Big*
- *Lord’s Army*

READ A BIBLE STORY

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

BIG IDEA:

God protected David and Jonathan. He protects Solomon. God protects YOU!

Read the Bible story provided. You can read the full story from the book provided or simply read the summary provided below. Try to engage the child(ren) as you share the story by showing pictures, allowing the kids to turn pages, or repeating key words and phrases. It's ok if you don't read every word of the story! 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 IS OUR FORTRESS

(Summarized from Psalm 91)

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.

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

Say: Hamilton, are you going to make a blanket fort? We just made one. Here let me help you. ***Drape the bandana over Hamilton's house.*** Ooh, Hamilton, that's very nice. You can feel cozy and safe in your fortress. Will you listen to our story with us? ***Hamilton nods excitedly.***

Read the God is our Fortress story below. Summarized from Psalm 91 in the Bible.

- We have been learning this whole month about how God is our refuge; he is our place of safety.
- God protected David.
- God protected Jonathan.
- God Protected Solomon.
- God protects you!
- Psalm 91:4 it says "God will cover you with his wings. Under the feathers of his wings, you will find safety. He is faithful. He will keep you safe like a shield or a tower".
- What this means is that God will protect us!
 - **Hamilton, do you have wings? (Have Hamilton shake his head no.) That's right! You don't have wings, you have arms. Boys and girls, do you have wings? No! You have arms. I don't think God has wings either but that's a picture of how God takes care of us.**
 - **Hamilton, God tells us that He is going to cover us with His wings, do you know what animal has wings? That's right a bird! Can you picture a baby bird under his mama's wings? The baby is safe with his mama under her wings, just like we're safe with God.**
- God is going to protect us!
- God is our Refuge; He is our Place of Safety.

Say: Thanks for listening with us today, Hamilton! It's time for you to go to your fortress though. ***Put Hamilton in his blanket fort house.*** Bye bye, Hamilton. We'll see you next time.

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 God is our refuge. He is our place of safety. (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: When are you afraid? **Let kids answer.**

Say: What can you do when you are afraid? **Let kids answer.**

Say: You can always pray to God. He is your refuge. He is your place of safety. Let's pray now together. Pray briefly that the kids will remember to pray to God when they are afraid.

Close large group time in prayer.

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.

Say: "He is my place of safety. He is like a fort to me. He is my God. I trust in him." (Psalm 91, NIRV). Friends, always remember that you can pray to God. He is your God. You can trust in Him.

CLOSING ACTIVITIES

(Until parents pickup)

MAKE: Protective Wings

Supplies: paper plate wings (2 per kid), feathers, gluesticks, crayons



Directions: Work one on one with each child as they work on their motor skills, and imagination while making this craft. Help each child participate in this creating wings craft as it acts as a reminder from the Bible passage of Psalm 91 that God is Our Refuge. Let each child decorate their wings with feathers and crayons.

Say: *What has wings? (Birds) A mama bird covers up her babies in the nest to protect them. This reminds us of God protecting us. Let's try on your wings. Help kids put the paper plate wings on each hand. Let them "fly" around the room using their wings.*

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)!"