

WEEK 1

Story Focus: God has a plan for me. We will begin week one by introducing Joseph, his brothers, and the unplanned trip he makes to Egypt. We see Joseph trusting that God has a plan for me in the way he chooses to work hard and do the right thing, even though he is far from his home and family.

WEEK 2

Story Focus: I can trust God's plan even when it's hard. Week two, we will hear about how, even though Joseph works hard and does the right thing, he is thrown in jail for something he didn't do. Was that hard for Joseph? It had to be! And yet we see Joseph trusting that God has a plan for me as he chooses to help those around him instead of feeling sorry for himself.

WEEK 3

Story Focus: God's plan has good things for me to do. Week three, we see God using Joseph to help save a nation from starvation. Because Joseph patiently waits on God and trusts that God has a plan for me, he is able to see the good things God had planned for him to do along.

WEEK 4

Story Focus: God's plan is always best. And, week four, we see Joseph's brothers make their way to Egypt to look for food. They have no idea that they are going to find so much more than food when they get there. They find a brother and forgiveness waiting on them. And, we have the privilege of seeing the end of the story—that God's way is always best.

Just as it was with Joseph, trusting in God's plan is what empowers us to keep going when things are hard. If we were to take away one part of Joseph's story and just focus on it, it would be hard to believe that God's plan is always best. But, when we put all of the parts of Joseph's story together—just as with an ice cream sundae—it gives us a sweet reminder that we can trust that God has a plan for me, and it is always best. We just have to wait until God is done putting all of the parts together.

Our hope this month is that preschoolers will begin to understand that God loves them, and He has a plan for them—a plan they can trust is always best, no matter what.

Today's Suggested Schedule—September 2020, Week 3

Today's Bible Story: God's plan has good things for me to do.

Joseph Saves the Grain • *Genesis 41*

Memory Verse: "For I know the plans I have for you," says the LORD." Jeremiah 29:11, NLT

Key Question: Who has a plan for you?

Bottom Line: God has a plan for me.

Basic Truth: God loves me.

10:30-11:00 SMALL GROUP (30 minutes)

SOCIAL: Providing time for fun interaction

Bed Time Routine

Feed Me

11:00-11:10 Clean Up

11:10-11:30 LARGE GROUP (20 minutes)

WORSHIP: Inviting people to respond to God

"Really Awesome Plan"

"I Love the Way"

STORY: Communicating God's truth in engaging ways

Bible Story

Memory Verse

11:30-11:50 SMALL GROUP (25 minutes)

GROUPS: Creating a safe place to connect

Sweet Dreams

Pass the Ice Cream

Medallion

Prayer

11:50 Clean Up and Snack

SOCIAL: Providing Time for Fun Interaction (30 minutes)

Activities that encourage preschoolers to enter the classroom and begin engaging with peers and Small Group Leaders by providing age appropriate and hands on fun while introducing new concepts they will hear in the day's Bible story.

Prepare to offer the following activities as your preschoolers arrive. Let one or two teachers lead activities in different areas of the room while another teacher greets parents and children at the door.

1. Bed Time Routine

What You Need: Several plush animals, blankets, and books; *optional* doll bed

What You Do:

Before the Activity: Place the plush animals, blankets, books, and doll bed, in your activity area.

During the Activity: Encourage the children to put the plush animals to bed. They can “read” a bed time story, hug them goodnight, and tuck them in.

After the Activity: Gather all the items for clean-up.

What You Say:

Before the Activity: “Friends, do you know what time it is? It’s bed time! Let’s put our plush friends to sleep. You can read a bed time story, give them a big hug, and tuck them in with a blanket. You might also sing a sweet song before they go to sleep.”

After the Activity: “Sometimes, when we sleep, we have dreams! Has your mommy or daddy ever said, ‘Sweet dreams,’ before you went to sleep? A dream is like a story that we see when we close our eyes. In our Bible story today, we’ll hear about a dream someone had. He was very powerful. Let’s go find out about his dream.”

2. Feed Me

What You Need: Butcher paper, markers, laundry basket, scissors or box cutter, tape, plastic bin, and ball pit balls

What You Do:

Before the Activity: Draw a large face on the butcher paper with a mouth large enough for the balls to fit through. Cut a hole inside the mouth for the balls to pass through. Tape the butcher paper face across the top of the laundry basket and set it in your activity area. Place the ball pit balls in the plastic bin a foot away from the “face.”

During the Activity: Line up the children next to the balls and encourage them to “feed” the hungry person by tossing the grain (balls) into the mouth. Give each child three chances, then play passes to the next child. Continue until every child has had a turn. Be sure to sanitize ball pit balls before shared with next child.

What You Say:

Before the Activity: “Oh, look! Our friend is SO hungry! (*Hold up the bin of ball pit balls.*) And here’s our food. Let’s take turns feeding our friend by tossing this grain into their mouth. We’ll take turns. Each friend will have three chances to feed the face!”

During the Activity: “You can do it! Toss it underhanded like this. (*Demonstrate.*) Remember to grab any balls that don’t make it in and return them to the bin for another friend.”

After the Activity: “Thanks for feeding our friend! You did an awesome job! In our Bible story today, we’ll hear about some people who were very hungry. Let’s go!”

Transition: Move to Worship and Story by calling out different things to eat as children pantomime eating those foods. Examples include: a sandwich, an ice cream cone, a bowl of cereal, an apple, a banana, a milkshake, a stack of pancakes, a popsicle, yogurt, and a big pretzel.

LARGE GROUP (20 minutes)

WORSHIP: Inviting people to respond to God

Play music or dance videos for -“Really Awesome Plan”
“I Love the Way”

STORY: Communicating God’s truth in engaging ways

Bible Story
Hand motion Memory Verse

GROUPS: Creating a Safe Place to Connect (25 minutes)

Create a safe place to connect through activities that are written to reach every learning style while reinforcing the Bottom Line that was introduced during the Bible Story and applying it to real life experiences. In addition, these activities provide preschoolers with an opportunity to build relationships with their Small Group Leader.

Offer as many of the following activities as your time, facilities, resources, and leadership allow. You may want to lead one activity at a time. Or, offer two activities at once and allow half the children to participate in each. Then switch groups and repeat the activities.

3. Sweet Dreams-Bible Story Review

What You Need: No supplies needed.

What You Do:

During the Activity: Guide the children to pretend to sleep. When you wake up, talk about the dreams in the Bible story.

What You Say:

Before the Activity: “Hey, I want everyone to sit in a circle with me!”

During the Activity: “First, we’ll pretend to be Pharaoh, the king, and go to sleep like this. (*Pretend to sleep with the children for a few seconds, some snoring noise would be fun.*) Time to wake up! (*Sit up and stretch.*)

“While Pharaoh was asleep, he had a dream. The dream had cows in it. What do cows say? (*Pause.*) That’s right! Cows say, ‘MOOOO!’ The dream also had grain in it. We can use grain to make bread. Let’s pretend to eat some yummy bread. (*Pretend to eat bread with the children.*) Nom-nom-nom. I love bread!

“Pharaoh didn’t know what his dream about cows and grain meant, so he asked Joseph to help him. Joseph told Pharaoh that his dreams were from God. God wanted him to start saving lots of grain so all the people would have enough food to eat later. Pharaoh was so happy, that he put Joseph in charge of all of Egypt so he could help save the grain. Everything happened just like Joseph said because he had trusted God’s plan.”

After the Activity: “God had good things planned for Joseph to do. And because Joseph trusted God’s plan, he was able to save lots and lots of people! God loves you, and has good things planned for you to do, too. That’s right! God has a plan for you! **Who has a plan for you? [Bottom Line] God has a plan for me.**”

4. Pass the Ice Cream-Activity

What You Need: Floor tape, beige or white paper, black marker, clear tape, and ball pit balls

What You Do:

Before the Activity: On each piece of paper, draw a large grid pattern: several horizontal lines intersected with vertical lines about an inch apart to create a grid. Then, roll up each piece to create a cone shape and secure with tape. Make one “cone” per child. Tape a line on the floor in your activity area for children to line up shoulder to shoulder.

NOTE: If you do not have enough time to draw the grid lines on each piece of paper, you can skip this step. It’s simply to make it look more like an ice cream cone when rolled up.

During the Activity: Gather the children to stand shoulder to shoulder on the tape line in your activity area. Give each child a paper cone. Place a ball pit ball into the first child’s “cone” and instruct that child to share it with a friend by passing the ball from one cone to another down the line.

What You Say:

Before the Activity: “Friends, come stand on this tape line! I have some ice cream cones for you to hold. But something very important is missing. What’s missing, friends? *(Pause.)* The ice cream, of course! Let’s pass some ice cream from friend to friend, down the line, so we can share.”

During the Activity: “Keep sharing, friends. Let’s pass it all the way down the line, so we can share with everyone.”

After the Activity: “That was SO fun. Great sharing, friends. In our Bible story today, we learned that Joseph shared something, too. Was it ice cream? *(Pause.)* Nope! It was grain. God had a plan for Joseph to do something good—share food with others. It was a very good plan! Tell me, **who has a plan for you? [Bottom Line] God has a plan for me.**”

5. Medallion-Craft

What You Need: “Medallion” Activity Page, cardstock, hole punch, scissors, yarn, tape, and paper straws

What You Do:

Before the Activity: Copy “Medallion” onto cardstock and cut out, one cutout per child. Punch a hole in the top of each cutout. Cut yarn into two-foot lengths and tape around one end, one length of yarn per child. Cut straws into one-inch pieces.

During the Activity: Encourage children to thread straw pieces and the medallion onto the yarn. Write child’s name on the back on their medallion.

After the Activity: Talk about how God has a plan for me.

What You Say:

Before the Activity: “Friends, **who has a plan for you? [Bottom Line] God has a plan for me.** That’s right!”

During the Activity: “Let’s make a necklace to help us remember that **[Bottom Line] God has a plan for me.** That’s what your medallion says. String some of these straw pieces and the medallion onto the yarn. *(Pause.)* Did you add all the pieces you wanted? *(Pause.)* Great job! Let me knot your necklace so you can wear it. *(Pause.)* There you go! Put your necklaces on. *(Pause.)* Repeat after me, **[Bottom Line] God has a plan for me.**”

After the Activity: “In all the things that Joseph went through, he loved God. Joseph knew God had a plan for him, and he knew that God was always with him. There will be times that are hard for us, but we can know that God loves us, God is with us, and God has a plan for us. God’s plan is the best plan. **Who has a plan for you? [Bottom Line] God has a plan for me.**”

6. Prayer

What You Need: Paperclipped “Memory Verse Card” in Bible, journal, and fun-shaped pen

SMALL GROUP LEADER (SGL): “It’s prayer time

Okay, let’s sit down and talk about today’s Bible story. One, two, three, sit down with me! (*Open the Bible and lay it in front of the children.*) Joseph trusted that God had a plan for him while he was in jail. He looked for good things to do, and he did them, like when he helped the other men in jail. When Pharaoh heard about Joseph, he wanted Joseph to help him, too! Before long, Joseph was helping Pharaoh save grain for all of Egypt, so they would have enough food.

“It was important that Joseph trusted God had a plan for him, even when bad things happened. It’s what helped Joseph see the good things God had planned for him to do.

“The Bible verse we are learning will help us remember that God has a plan for you, and **[Bottom Line] God has a plan for me**, too! It says . . . (*Turn the pages of your Bible to the Memory Verse Card.*)

“*For I know the plans I have for you,’ says the Lord, Jeremiah 29:11. (Close Bible and lay it down.)* Let’s stand up and say that together with the motions.”

CHILDREN and SGL: “*For I know (point to head) the plans I have for you (march),’ says (hands to mouth like yelling) the Lord (point up), Jeremiah 29:11, (NLT).*” (*Open your hands like a book.*)

(*Repeat the verse with motions a few times.*)

SGL: “Fantastic! (*Fist bump.*) God loves you, and He has a plan for you. **Who has a plan for you?**”

CHILDREN and SGL: **[Bottom Line] “God has a plan for me!”**

SGL: “That’s right! And God’s plan has good things for [child’s name] to do and good things for [child’s name] to do and . . . (*continue with each child*). Okay, it’s time to sit down and talk to God.

“Since we’re talking about God’s plan for us to do good things, I think we should make a list of good things we can do. Sound good? (*Pause.*) Great! When I say your name, I want you to tell me one good thing you can do.”

(*Say each child’s name.*)

SGL: “This is a great list! We can use it when we talk to God. Would anyone like to pray before I pray?” (*Give each child who wants to pray the opportunity to do so.*)

Prayer

SGL: “Dear God, thank You for (*name each child*). Thank You for all of the good things You have planned for them to do. Help us look for good thing to do, even when bad things happen. Good things like (*read the list the children made*). We love You, God. In Jesus’ name, amen.”