



SPARKHOUSE DIGITAL CHILDREN'S MESSAGES

The following pages contain children's messages and skits you can use throughout the year during worship. The first three are object lessons, and the last three are skits. Script and direction are included in each, along with easy-to-gather supplies and ideas for engaging with children—and the rest of the congregation too.

The Rhythm of Life

Psalm 139:14 "I am fearfully and wonderfully made."

God made us different, but God also made us the same.

We are one big family together.

Preparation

- Gather several stethoscopes, if possible, and a few adults to help.
- Arrange for a song to be sung (suggestion: "Father Welcomes" by Robin Mann) as children take time to listen to their own hearts before returning to their families.
- Make paper hearts with Psalm 139:14 written on them for children to place on their refrigerators at home.

Supplies

- Stethoscopes (several)
- Adult helpers
- Song (such as "Father Welcomes" by Robin Mann)
- Paper hearts
- Markers

Message

As the children come up, be very preoccupied as you listen to your own heart using one of the stethoscopes. **Do you know what I'm doing?** Pause for responses. I'm listening to my heart. Make the sound of your heart out loud so they can hear the beat.

Wow! This is amazingly wonderful. Did you know my heart started pumping like this before I was even born? Isn't that wonderful? It's pumped like this for many years. So far, it hasn't quit. I just keep going and going and going! I am wonderfully made. Pause and look a little concerned.

Too bad you don't have a heart like mine. Pause and wait for someone to correct you. If no one does, prompt them. **Do you have a heart like mine?**

You do . . . wow! You're wonderful too. You mean God gave everybody a heart? That's wonderful! Well, that makes us like . . . family. Look out at the congregation.

Whoa! We have a BIG family. God made us all . . . wonderful! Do you want to hear how wonderful you are? With the help of other adults, use extra stethoscopes to let each child listen, or take turns using yours. Whisper to each child: **Amazing! You are wonderfully made.** Pass out hearts as children return to their seats.

Hide and Seek

Psalm 139:7 “Where can I go from your spirit? Or where can I flee from your presence?”

God is always with us no matter where we go or what happens to us.

Supplies

- Tornado alert recording
- Sound system
- Bible
- Referee whistle

Preparation

- Find a recording of a tornado alert on the internet and set it up to play. Bring a Bible and a referee whistle.

Message

As children come up, start the tornado alert recording. As it plays, state in your best radio voice: **This is a test. I repeat, this is a test. If this had been a real alert . . .**

Where have you heard a sound like that? Pause. **We hear alerts when there’s a bad storm, tornado, or earthquake, or when we’re practicing for something like that. Where would you go if there was a big storm in our town?** (basement, under bed, outside, door frame)

In our Bible somebody asks God some questions about hiding. Open to Psalm 139:7 and read: **“Where can I go from your spirit? Or where can I flee from your presence?”** Continue on through verse 10.

Do you hear what God is saying? If you were under your bed or in your basement, God would know it. God always knows where to find us. God is everywhere and can find us even when we’re hiding.

I need your help. I need you to remember three words. Ready? Repeat after me: God (God) is (is) there (there). Good. Say it together: God is there. (God is there.)

Now whenever I blow this whistle (blow it) I want you to say the three words you just learned: “God is there.” Okay? Blow whistle. (God is there.)

I’m going to talk to the grown-ups now. And you’re going to help me, okay? Here we go. Look out at congregation. **Sometimes we ALL forget that (whistle) God is there. It’s important to remind them that (whistle) God is there, so they don’t forget. So, what do we remember when we are worried about life’s storms? (whistle) God is there. And when things are feeling a little shaky? (whistle) God is there. And if you feel a little alone and left out? Well, I really only have one thing to say (whistle). God is there! Don’t forget it!**

As children return to their families, play the recording. Repeat opening line: **This is a test. I repeat, this is a test. If this had been a real alert . . .**

Add It Up . . . Add It All Up

Psalm 139:17-18 “How weighty to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them! I try to count them; they are more than the sand.”

We need each other to get God’s work done. God is big.

Preparation

- Create a poster with several large numbers that will be added together. The numbers should be written big enough for all to see.
- Have available a sealed envelope with the answer to the above problem clearly written, and a marker.
- Prepare several smaller cards with the numbers 1 to 5 written on them, one per card.
- Bring a jar of sand and a Bible.
- Print out today’s verse on cardstock with instructions to display it at home and think about it.

Supplies

- Poster board
- Markers
- Envelope
- Paper
- Index cards (5)
- Jar of sand
- Bible
- Cardstock

Message

As children come up, be reading from the Bible in one hand while holding a jar of sand in the other. Look back and forth between the two as if thinking. **Man, my head hurts. I’ve been doing a lot of thinking. Do you think God thinks? Pause. Listen to what the Bible says.** Read Psalm 139:17-18 (stop at “sand”). Slow down for the last phrase.

How many grains of sand are in this jar anyway? Pause for guesses. Is there anyone who would like to take this home and count them? Pause. It would be a hard job. Let’s just say that if each grain of sand is one thought, God must do a lot of thinking.

Today we’re going to do some thinking. Older kids, I want you to work on this addition problem. Hand them a marker and the poster. **The rest of you, gather around me. I need another one of you just to start counting out loud by 2s and keep going until I tell you to stop.** Pick an older student.

Show the smaller cards one at a time to the younger children. **Who knows what number this is?** Hand them to individual children as they name each number.

Let’s think a little harder. Combine the cards to make an equation. **Who has the 1? Who has the 2? How much would I have if I added these two numbers together? (3) Who has the 3?** Continue with $2+3=5$ and so on as time allows. **Good, everybody knows a little, and together we can solve the problems. Let’s see how our older kids are doing.**

Hold up the envelope. **I have the answer in this envelope. Do you think you’re right?** Take it out and check it. If they were wrong, put them back to work again. Turn to the child who should still be counting by 2s. **Oh . . . are you still counting? You can stop now, but remember your number.**

Whew! That was hard work. It took a lot of thinking. Take out a few grains of sand from the jar. **All that thinking would only equal about this much sand. But the Bible says that God thinks so much that we couldn't even count God's thoughts if we used all the grains of sand in the whole world! God has tons of ideas for us to make the world a better place. It takes all of us working together using what we know to get all of God's work done. That's how it works in our families, in our church, and even in our town. We need each other. God wants us to work together, to share what we know to get the job done.** Reread Psalm 139:17-18.

I want you to go home and think about how many ideas God has for us to bless people, and then ask God what you can do to help. Hand out the take-home cards as children return to their seats.

Change That Channel!

Philippians 4:8-13

By focusing on the blessings in our lives, we will experience God's peace, no matter what kinds of situations we may face along life's journey.

Supplies

- Cardboard boxes (2)
- Markers
- Remote control
- Youth volunteers (4)

Preparation

- Make two simple “TVs” out of large cardboard boxes by cutting a screen-sized square in the front of each one. Decorate the boxes to look like television sets.
- Have a remote control available.
- Find two junior high or high school students to stand with their heads inside the boxes, playing the roles of television newscasters on two competing networks: “The Grumpy Channel” and “The Gratitude Channel.” Make a copy of the script below for each one.
- Recruit two more youth to “remove” The Grumpy Channel during the skit.

Message

Leader: **Good morning, everyone. It looks like we have not one, but two televisions in church today. How strange! What do you think I should do?** Let kids give responses. **Okay, let's see if these things work.** Pick up a remote control and “click” on the first TV.

TV #1: (Speaking in an irritated voice.) **Welcome back to Channel 13, the Grumpy Channel, where we're all grumpy, all the time. So what's going wrong today? Lots of stuff. We've got a 24-hour litany of complaints to share. From the fashion faux pas of the rich and famous, to the crummy meals we've eaten at local restaurants, we're here to point fingers and name names. But first, the weather report: The Doppler is predicting more sunny weather. Again! We all know what that means—sunburns and heatstroke.**

Leader: (Clicking off the television abruptly.) **What kind of show was that? How depressing! Do we even dare find out what's playing on the other TV?** Let kids respond, then click on the other TV.

TV #2: (Speaking in an upbeat manner.) **Good morning, friends! You're watching the Gratitude Channel, and we're glad to have you with us. Today, in the news: Rain is predicted again, for the seventh day in a row. Just imagine how beautiful the flowers will be later this spring. And while we were disappointed to hear that our baseball team lost the championship, we heartily congratulate the opposing team for a game well played.**

The Grumpy Channel suddenly turns itself back on again, while the leader looks in disbelief at the remote.

TV #1: **Hey! That's a bunch of hooley! Shut that off! Stuff like that is going to ruin our ratings! I mean, come on—GET REAL! Who wants to hear that kind of garbage, anyway?**

Leader tries in vain to click off the Grumpy Channel.

TV #2: **Wait a minute, Grumpy. We're just trying to keep in line with our station's mission statement. In fact, you just heard it a few minutes ago: "Whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things." At the Gratitude Channel, we're actually trying to help our viewers do that.**

TV #1: **Blah, blah, blah. I'm not listening! La la la la!**

Leader: (Still trying to click off the Grumpy Channel.) **Would someone please unplug that TV and remove it from the building? It's giving me a headache.** Two students walk up and begin to drag the television away.

TV #1: (As it is removed from the scene.) **Wait! You can't do this to me! I'm calling the FCC! You'll pay for this!**

Leader: (When the TV is gone.) **Well! That Grumpy Channel certainly lived up to its name! I wonder how we'd feel if we listened to that all day long.** Pause. **But how might we feel if we tuned in to the Gratitude Channel instead?** Pause. **You know, sometimes our minds are like TVs. We can tune in to the Grumpy Channel and only notice the bad things around us. Or we can tune in to the Gratitude Channel instead and look for the blessings in our lives—even when things aren't perfect. When we do that . . .**

TV #2 suddenly clicks on, seemingly by itself.

TV #2: **"The God of peace will be with you." Sorry, I just couldn't resist! So remember, ladies and gentlemen, we're on the air 24 hours a day, rain or shine, broadcasting in 89 languages across the globe.**

Leader: **Okay, okay. We don't really have time for a commercial. But I do think we got the point. We'll stay tuned in. Thanks for coming up, kids.**

Fear and Trembling

Philippians 4:4-7

Trusting God frees us from anxiety and enables us to better serve others.

Supplies

- Adult or youth volunteer
- Papers

Preparation

- Find an adult or youth to play the part of a very nervous, edgy person who's been asked to give the children's sermon. The person could have a disheveled appearance and be dressed in rumpled clothing. Provide a copy of the script below to your helper.

Message

Leader: **Well, hello, everyone! Are we ever in for a treat today—we have a guest speaker with us to give the children's sermon this morning. So, without further ado, I'm going to turn things over to [name]!**

Person: (Looking very nervous and shuffling through papers.) **Ahhh. Could you talk a little bit longer? I'm not quite ready.**

Leader: **Oh, sure. I know how that can be. Sometimes I get a late start on the day too.**

Person: **Oh no, I've been here since five this morning working on this.**

Leader: **Five this morning? Why did you get up so early?**

Person: **Well, actually, I got up at three this morning.**

Leader: **You've got to be kidding—three in the morning?**

Person: (Sounding nervous.) **Well, I didn't want to risk being late. I mean, what if I overslept?**

Leader: **Don't you have an alarm clock?**

Person: (Getting increasingly upset, talking louder and faster.) **Yeah, but what if the electricity went out and the battery died? What if I slept right through the children's message? What if I slept so late that I forgot what day it was?** (Getting up and starting to pace back and forth.) **Then, what if I had to run here, still in my pajamas, and I tripped and banged my head on a rock, and I had to be taken to the hospital, and no one knew who I was, not even me! Huh? What then? I've put a lot of thought into this! There are a lot of things that could go wrong!**

Leader: **I think they just did go wrong.**

Person: (Not listening.) **No, you don't understand! I have a lot of other worries that are occurring to me even as I speak! For instance, what if . . .**

Leader: (Talking louder.) **Hey! “What if” you slowed down for a minute, and said a prayer? What if, instead of getting all worked up with anxiety, you handed your worries over to God? Maybe then you wouldn’t have such a wild look in your eyes. Maybe then you would have had a chance to do something more productive this morning, like take a shower.**

Person: **Do I really have a wild look in my eyes?**

Leader: **Yes. But it’s okay. Everyone gets worked up sometimes. We all need to remember to say a prayer and ask God to help us with our worries. That’s really the only way to find true peace in this world.**

Person: **I don’t think I understand.**

Leader: **That’s okay too. When you pray and ask God to help you with your worries, God will give you a peace that surpasses all understanding. That peace will guard your heart and your mind, and will stop your worries from running away with you. Then you’ll be free to do the things God wants you to do . . . like give children’s messages.**

Person: **I need that. I really do.**

Leader: **Well, then. Let’s not waste anymore time. Let’s say a prayer right now! Would you pray with me, kids? OK. Fold hands and bow head. Dear God, sometimes we feel scared or worried. But we know that you are with us, and that you carry our burdens and our stresses when they become too much. Please help us to let go of our worries, so that we can use our energy to serve you and share your love. We ask these things in Jesus’ name. Amen.**

Person: **Wow! Do I ever feel better! In fact, I think I’m even ready to do that children’s message now.**

Leader: **You know what? I think you already did. Thanks for coming up, kids.**

Have I Got a Plan for You!

Jeremiah 29:11-13

God knows our true needs, and God's plans for us are good.

Supplies

- Adult volunteer
- Large box
- Blueprints (real or fake)

Preparation

- Find a volunteer to play the part of a pushy architect. The architect could be dressed in business attire and should carry a large box and a bunch of "blueprints." Make a copy of the script below for your architect.

Message

Leader: **Good morning, everyone! Today we're going to talk a bit about "plans." You know, plans are important . . .**

Architect: (Suddenly interrupting, walking up with a large box and a bunch of blueprints.) **I couldn't agree more! In fact, that's why I'm here today, myself, to talk to you about plans!**

Leader: **Excuse me, but I'm not sure I know you.**

Architect: **What? WHAT? You've got to be kidding! I'm one of the most famous architects in the country! I've come up with plans for everyone, EVERYONE who's ANYONE!**

Leader: **Oh. Interesting. No offense, but I don't think we're talking about the same kind of plans . . .**

Architect: **OF COURSE WE'RE NOT! My plans are not just ordinary plans. Mine are spectacular! Amazing! Fan-tabulous! Here, let me give you a little sample of what I'm planning for your church. Opens up a large blueprint.**

Leader: **But . . . we were going to talk about plans for the future.**

Architect: **RIGHT! Exactly. Now, look here. These are my plans for the future of your church. As I thought about what would work, I thought, "Future . . . future." Then it came to me. Future . . . SPACE!** (Looking dreamy.)

Leader: **Uh-oh. I don't think I like the sound of this.**

Architect: (Pointing to blueprint.) **Look here, a space theme would be great for this big, cavernous place. You could have planets hanging from the ceiling, and we could knock out this wall here and make, like, an entrance to a spaceship, and electronic space music could continuously pour out of those speakers and . . .**

Leader: (Shaking head.) **No. No.**

Architect: (Not listening, getting very excited.) **And the best part is . . . THIS. Handing over the box. Just for you!**

Leader: (Warily.) **What's in here?**

Architect: (Delighted.) **It's only . . . your very own HELMET! Like an astronaut would wear! Isn't that just AH-mazing?**

Leader: **Listen, I'm really sorry to disappoint you. Clearly, you've put a lot of . . . um . . . thought into this. But when I said "plans for the future," I didn't mean *building* plans!**

Architect: **What? WHAT?**

Leader: **You heard me. I wanted to talk to the kids about *God's* plans for their future. Didn't you hear the reading from Jeremiah? "For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope."**

Architect: **But my plans were about the future! And mine were . . . exciting!**

Leader: **I know, I know. But God's plans are exciting too. And do you know why?**

Architect: (Sullenly.) **Why?**

Leader: **Because God has a plan for each person's life. Each person! We may not know what it is, but we know that God's plans for us are good. Therefore, we can have hope, and we can face the future with confidence and courage.**

Architect: (Perking up again.) **Okay. I like those plans. Those work for me. But I do have one little question.**

Leader: **Ask away.**

Architect: (Dramatic pause.) **Can we wear helmets?**

Leader: (Chuckling.) **Why not? Thanks for coming up, kids.**