Preschool Sunday School Lesson

Teacher Meditation:
What is my purpose? We ask ourselves this question at different points throughout our lives. I seem to average every five years wondering and examining just what it is I am doing in this spot of time and space in the history of the world and what difference it makes anyway.

On my better days the answer comes quickly. I am a child of God, full of light and promise. I am raising children in my home and through my vocation to also know that they are children of God, full of light and promise.

On harder days I can’t see past my nose. I see my darkness, not light. I have doubt, not promise. But then someone blesses me. My head is lifted. My gaze turns upward and outward. I am reminded of who I am, to whom I belong, and that my gifts serve the world.

On whatever day you read this – whether a day of confidence or a day of doubt – may God send a “Samuel” your way to affirm you and reenergize you with the power of God’s Spirit already within you. May you radiate the blessing and light of Christ in your family as well as in your ministry with preschoolers and in our world.

Entering the Environment:
Arrive in enough time to prepare the classroom. If you have access to a small child-sized table, place it by the door where parents sign-in their children. Place a piece of cloth on it along with a Bible opened to the story (I Samuel 16). On a piece of paper or dry-erase board write the name of the story, scripture reference, and Bible thought for parents.

Written By:
Rev. Rachel Sciretti, Freemason Street Baptist Church, Norfolk, VA

Scripture:
I Samuel 16:1-13—God calls David for a purpose

Spiritual Truth:
God has plans for you. (Jeremiah 29:11)

Objective:
Preschoolers (age 3–kindergartners) will learn that God chose David to do special work and that God has special work for them, too.
Set the stage for a great morning by greeting children by name on their eye level. Ask if you might hug them or simply offer a high-five or a pat on the back. The point is to connect with them in a personal way and make them feel welcomed. As we know from today’s story, touch is a powerful indicator of blessing.

Learning Centers:
(40-45 minutes)
It has been said that play is the child’s work. Children learn best when they may follow their interests. Prepare the environment with activities that fit your group of children and the capabilities of your classroom. Be present to children in their play. Listen as they talk and work out situations from their lives. Offer support to new learning about how God works in and through people.

Homeliving/Dramatic Play – Birthday Party
David was called out and blessed in a special way. For a child, nothing makes her feel more special than having her friends gather around her and sing her name.

Materials: Child sized table & chairs, birthday party supplies such as colorful paper plates and napkins, a birthday banner, and a play cake or cupcake set. Children might enjoy the challenge of making their own cake out of a box, foam, or packing material. Use real birthday candles or chenille sticks to poke into the foam.

As children take turns celebrating each other, play with them. In your conversation, point out special characteristics of each child. Use “I wonder” statements.

You take such good care of people. I wonder how your hands will help others...
You are a good thinker. I wonder how God will need your mind to help others...
David in the Bible took care of sheep for his father but then God called him to be king.
I wonder what special job God has for you...

[Utilize a basic set-up of kitchen and dress-up materials such as plastic plates, bowls, utensils, pots, baking pan, empty food boxes and containers, apron, vest, simple skirt, purses, hats, cookbook, church directory, notepad and pens, flowers in a plastic vase, baby dolls, baby bed & blanket.] 

Blocks
Materials: a variety of vehicles such as cars, trucks, and helping vehicles plus a basic set of unit blocks, Bible.

Encourage children to build roads and ramps with the blocks for the vehicles. As children play, sit beside them on the floor. Respectfully watch them and enter into the play scenario with them. Say things like…

What is this vehicle built to do? How do you know?
Where is your truck going? How does it help people? How did David help his father and brothers?

Writing
Materials: crayons, 12” X 18” drawing paper, index cards & pen for the teacher, Bible.

Lay the materials on the table. Sit at the table and as children approach, use one of the prompts listed below. Use one index card per child and write (manuscript) what each child says. Encourage them to draw pictures. Display the children’s work and comments on a bulletin board in the hallway or around the classroom.

- God called David for a special job. What is a special job you think God has for you?
- Samuel helped David know God’s plan for him; God planned for David to be king. Who helps you know about God?
Kindergartners may work on their skills by copying the day’s Bible truth. Some preschoolers might make letter-like markings. This should be encouraged and praised. Ask preschoolers to read to you what they wrote. They may want to draw pictures to accompany their writing.

Puzzles
Materials: puzzle of David, families, and community helpers. Your church may have a file of Bible pictures; check for duplicate Bible pictures of David to use to make puzzles. (teaching tip: place duplicate Bible pictures of David at child’s eye-level in the learning centers; remember to remove the pictures at the end of the teaching session.)

As children interact with the puzzles, talk with them about the picture of the puzzle.

How did you decide to put that piece there?
How many people are in this family? How many people are in your family?
What kind of job do you want to have when you grow up? What do you like about that job?

Nature Option 1: Oil & Water
Materials: small container of oil (such as olive, canola, vegetable), a water bottle, water, food coloring, dropper, smock.

Fill the plastic bottle about halfway with water. Color the water with a drop of food coloring. Cap the bottle and allow the child to blend the color around. Take the cap off. Give the child the dropper so that she might fill the dropper with the oil and then release drops of oil into the water. Put the cap back on the bottle. Observe with the child how the oil and water don’t mix. (Preschoolers may want to smell, touch, and taste the oils; allow them to do so.)

Oil was a special substance used to pour on people’s heads as a way to show they were special and had a special job to do.

Samuel put olive oil on David’s head to show that David had a special job to do.

Nature Option 2: Smallest To Largest
Materials: place mat, small basket with four objects from nature of varying sizes such as rocks, leaves, sea shells, or pine cones but they need to be four of the same thing.

Encourage children to lay the objects out on the place mat and order them from smallest to largest or largest to smallest.

David was the youngest son; he helped his family by caring for the sheep. When David became a man, his job was to be king. He helped many people when he was king.

Sensory
Materials: If your classroom is not equipped with a sensory table, make your own. Spread a vinyl tablecloth on the floor with a plastic tub filled less than halfway with sand. Provide a basket of a small variety of the following: measuring cups, scoopers, spoon, fork, craft stick, or mini-rake.

Children may scoop, pour, and spread the sand. Interestingly, children are prone to become quiet and meditative. Teachers may choose to quietly talk with the children. Some questions might include “What makes you feel safe?” “When do you feel God’s love?” “I wonder what David thought about while caring for the sheep.”
**Reading/Library**

Materials: large pillows or a beanbag or a quilt, 3 or 4 books about helping, stories about people who had special jobs to do, a Bible with a bookmark in I Samuel 16, a Bible storybook opened to a story about David. (Remove the pillows, beanbags, quilt, etc. from the classroom at end of session for sanitation purposes.)

**Art: Texture Collage**

Materials: 12” X 18” construction paper or cardstock, glue sticks, collage materials like fabric squares, ribbon scraps, feathers, foil squares, sandpaper squares

Set the table with small baskets containing each collage material. Have the glue ready as well. Allow children to glue the materials on their paper. Ask them about the texture. *What does this feel like?* Introduce them to words like *smooth, fuzzy, slick, bumpy, rough, soft,* and *scratchy.* Have you ever felt a lamb? I wonder what a lamb feels like. David cared for his family’s sheep. He took them to find good grass to eat and water to drink.

**Group Time:**

(15 minutes for 3’s & 4’s; 20 minutes for kindergartners)

Materials:

- a scarf for each person
- a simple musical instrument like a bell, drum, or tone block
- Bible marked in I Samuel 16

**Gathering**

Follow the same gathering routine used each week with the children. Sing a song. Play an instrument. Play a song on a CD.

**Singing & Moving**

If you know the song, sing “There’s No One Exactly Like Me”:

*Look all the world over, there’s no one like me,*  
*No one like me, No one like me.*  
*Look all the world over, there’s no one like me;*  
*There’s no one exactly like me.*  
*Some people are short and some people are tall,*  
*God loves them all, God loves them all.*  
*Some people are short and some people are tall,*  
*But no one’s exactly like me.*

Sing it through several times. Once the children feel comfortable with the song, distribute scarves and sing the song while waving and dancing with the scarves, interpreting the lyrics of the song.

**Listening**

Clap a simple rhythm pattern and ask the children to clap back to you what they heard. The first couple of times count each clap (1-2-3-4). The next time clap a rhythm while you say the Bible thought (God has plans for me). Change the rhythm but say the same words. (Note: Young preschoolers will do either action—say the words or clap the rhythm; their developmental level prevents them from doing both simultaneously.)
Telling
Open your Bible to I Samuel 16 and have on your lap. Tell the story in an animated yet authentic way. Know the story well enough that you don’t have to read it.

Our Bible story today comes from I Samuel in the Old Testament.

Samuel was one of God’s special helpers. God gave Samuel messages and Samuel would listen and obey. God told Samuel to choose a new king from the family of a man named Jesse, who lived in Bethlehem.

So Samuel traveled to Bethlehem to meet with Jesse and his seven sons. Samuel met each of Jesse’s sons to see which one God wanted to be the new king of Israel, but it was none of them. Samuel asked Jesse, “Are these the only sons you have?” “No,” Jesse answered. “My youngest son is taking care of the sheep.”

Jesse sent for his youngest son; the youngest son was named David. When Samuel saw David, God told him “Get up and anoint him, put the special oil on his head. He is the one.” So, in front of David’s brothers, Samuel anointed David to be the king. God had plans for David.

Possible Comprehension questions:
1. What was the name of God’s helper? (Samuel)
2. What was the job God had for David? (to be king)
3. What do you think David felt when Samuel chose him to be king?

Listening
Repeat the rhythmic hand clapping patterns. Say the Bible thought “God has plans for me” as you clap.

Praying
Follow the same prayer routine normally practiced by the children, but here are some ideas if needed.

- Teacher prays: Dear God, thank you for (say each person’s name). Each of us is your special child. You love us and have plans for us, just like you did with David. Amen.
- Each child that chooses may pray and then make a sound on the preselected instrument. If a child chooses not to pray, allow him to make a sound on the instrument.

Continue learning until parents arrive.

Sing a song, read a book, or play a matching game using Bible pictures cut in half. One teacher should be stationed at the classroom door to greet the parents and follow the church’s security procedures. Teacher should touch the child on his shoulder, whispering that his parent has arrived and helping child collect his materials from the session. Thank the preschooler for being part of the group; tell him that you anticipate seeing him next Sunday!

Footnotes: