

Footsteps - At Hand

EG09

Bible Verses: Psalm 10, Psalm 12:6-8, Psalm 13, Psalm 121.

The aim of this session is to see that God is on hand to help and to encourage the children to ask for help when they need it.

Leader's notes

"I look unto the hills.... From whence cometh my help?"

We all need help! Help in little things, like keeping our mouths shut at inopportune moments; help with big things, like finding a job. And in some parts of the world, help just to find clean water and enough food to keep body and soul together. The amazing thing is that God doesn't grade the amount of help we need – doesn't leave us in the west to fend for ourselves while he helps those who really are desperate. No, he is willing to extend his help to all of us, in the same way that a mother will help her eldest child with quadratic equations and then help her youngest with counting up to 5! We all matter to God and we can come to him and ask for help in all areas of life.

While thinking about God's help I came up with several observations, most of which are expanded in the activities of this session:

Often we need help because we get ourselves into difficulties. God helps us out of our self inflicted problems, although we don't always escape the consequences!

Sometimes although we want help we are so busy holding our burdens that we don't let God help! We have to be willing not only to ask for help but to receive it when God gives it. (Remember the joke about the man who wanted God to rescue him from a flood....?)

We can trust God to help us because of who he is! He is so much more powerful and able and just than we can imagine! We come for help from a God who is able.

God helps us because he loves us.

Sometimes God helps us by changing our situation, sometimes he helps by changing our attitude to a situation.

Although the Psalms talk about physical help ("The waters are up to my neck!") we can also ask God for emotional and spiritual help.

Don't forget to ask God for his help when planning this session!

Name That Sweet

Warming Up

10 mins

 Quiz

Print out each of the sweet clues on separate pieces of paper and stick them up around the meeting

room.

Give each young person a piece of paper and a pen, or they could work in pairs, and see how many sweets they can identify in 5 minutes.

1. Little wobbly infants *Jelly Babies*
2. Meal outside *Picnic*
3. Hockey match on horseback *Polo*
4. Pirates' treasure *Bounty*
5. Roll a ball and bowl them over *Skittles*
6. Fourth rock from the sun *Mars*
7. All sorts without the trimmings *Liquorice*
8. An independent system of stars held together by a gravitational attraction *Galaxy*
9. King of the jungle *Lion Bar*
10. Old fashioned wandering musicians *Minstrels*
11. Luminous band stretching across the night sky *Milky Way*
12. Foreign Holiday *BreakAway*

After 5 minutes call everyone together again. Collect in the clues and enjoy sharing the answers together. If you want you could award a small sweet prize to those who identified the most sweets correctly.

The Point: Just for fun.


Equipment

Clues printed out (from Sweet Quiz Sheet), paper and pens, small sweet prize.

Help I Need Somebody

Getting Started

20 mins

 Music

If possible have a copy of 'Help I need somebody' to play to the group, if that's not possible then have a copy of the lyrics so that you can read (or possibly sing!) them to the group. Below is a link to the Beatles version with the lyrics so you could have a karaoke party!

[Help - You Tube with lyrics](#)

Ask everyone to sit themselves down comfortably and then listen to this golden oldie song by the Beatles, those that are familiar with it might enjoy singing along.

Ask the young people to work by themselves to make a list of the people they appreciate being around them, because of the help they give them. Reassure them that it doesn't matter if they make short or long lists, but hopefully as they begin to think about it their lists will get longer.

After a few minutes ask everyone to come back together again. Check that everyone has got some people on their lists. Say that it's only when we begin to think about it that we realise who helps us on a daily basis and from time to time. It's only when we begin to think about it that we appreciate who we

can depend on.

David, in one of his Psalms, looks back over his life and realises just how much God has done for him, how much God has helped him and as he does this his trust and faith in God is renewed.

The Point: To introduce David's psalm of appreciation for all the ways God has helped him.


Equipment

Help (I need somebody) song by the Beatles and the means to play it.

Help On The Way

Digging In

20 mins

 Bible Study

Read Psalm 121 to the children. Ask them to get into small groups and give each group a Bible. Ask them to look at Psalm 121 on their own and make a note, on scrap paper, of the dangers the writer of the Psalm wants God to help him with (these are implied rather than spelt out!) You will need to help them find Psalms – it is in the middle of the Bible!

Let the groups feed back their ideas about what dangers the writer is referring to. (There is danger of being attacked on the roads by bandits or robbers, danger of sun stroke, being lost in the dark and so on.)

Now ask the group what other things we get scared about and what might we ask God for help with? These things can be added to the lists, but groups don't need to share these back in the larger group!

Give each group a long piece of lining paper. Ask them to draw a road along the paper and to add hills in the back ground. On the hills they should draw pictures of the things that the Psalmist wanted God's help with and pictures of things that they need God's help with today. Ask the group to draw a picture to represent God on a separate piece of paper: something large which shows how God protects us. Then each child should draw a small picture of themselves and cut it out.

Read the Psalm again. As you read, one of the children should move the picture of themselves along the road while another moves the picture of God, slightly in front. When the first child gets to the end, the next children in the group should move their picture along, with someone else moving God's picture.

Each child in the group should move their picture of themselves along the road, with God being moved with them each time. Encourage them not to race their pictures along, but to take it slowly, really thinking (and praying!) about how God can help them in their lives. You may need to read the Psalm 2 or 3 times to allow everyone to take their turn.

At the end, pray a general prayer thanking God that he helps us daily.

The Point: To respond to the God who helps us.

Equipment

A long strip of lining paper, pens, scissors, Bible, scrap paper.

People Who Help

Response

10 mins

Illustrations

Divide the children into groups of 2 or 3. Each group should think about someone that we go to when we need help – for instance, a teacher, a fireman, a doctor and so on. They should dress one of the people in their group up to look like the person they have thought of.

Stand the dressed up children at the front of the room. Ask the children why they would go for help to these people. Say that God is much more powerful than any of these people!

Take each dressed up child in turn and ask how God is better than the person represented here – for instance: Fireman – God is braver than a fireman. He can make it rain to put a fire out. He can send angels to rescue people. Write their ideas onto post it notes and stick them on the children at the front.

Thank God that he is so wonderful and so able to help. You could give a cheer to God, because he is so powerful and able to help and then have a time of silence where children can pray quietly, asking God to help them with anything they need help with! Finish by praying that we will all learn to trust God to help us.

(Note: we are not saying that you shouldn't go to these people to help! We are looking at how much greater God's resources are than anything we can imagine.)

The Point: To look at how God's help is greater than human help.


Equipment

A selection of dressing up clothes, sticky labels and marker pens.

God Is Our Helper

Response

10 mins

 Memory Verse

“But joyful are those who have the God of Israel as their helper, whose hope is in the Lord their God.”

Psalm 146:5 (NLT)

Explain that they are going to make a memory verse banner. Organise the group so that a couple of people will write out the verse really large, others can then paint in the letters, others can cut out pictures from wrapping paper to decorate the words.

Try and encourage them to make the banner as joyous as possible. When it's completed, display it in a prominent position.

The Point: To learn a verse of scripture as an encouragement.

Equipment

Bible, large paper e.g. wall paper, paints, paint brushes, birthday wrapping paper, scissors, glue sticks.
