

Postures of Worship

Quarter 9 • Lesson 4

Focus on Spiritual Formation

- 1. Connecting:** Do a movement activity.
- 2. Teaching:** Learn different postures of worship (Psalm 95:6; Nehemiah 8:6; 1 Chronicles 29:20).
- 3. Responding:** Choose a posture of worship and pray.

SUPPLIES

- Bible

Optional Supplies:

- Memory Verse Poster
- *The Action Bible*, images of postures of worship
- Crayons
- Student Pages

Teacher Devotion

*Come, let us bow down and worship him.
Let us fall on our knees in front of the LORD our Maker.*
Psalm 95:6

Bowing down, raising our hands, and lying face down in surrender to God are all postures of worship. We can clap, lift our hands in surrender, dance, or shout—all are mentioned in the Bible as appropriate ways to worship God. Our posture of worship is a reflection of what is in our hearts. He is worthy of our worship in so many ways because of who He is!

Reflect on the times you have worshipped God in the last few weeks. What is 1 thing that may be keeping you from fully worshipping Him? Ask the Lord to help you surrender that obstacle so you can come to Him with an open heart. As you prepare for this week's lesson, try a new posture of worship. It could be raising your hands, dancing before God, or something else you want to try. He is worthy of your worship!

Family Connection: Encourage families to think about postures that show respect to others. Kneeling and bowing may be just a few ways to show honour. Families may also encourage their children to choose a posture to use when praying to God.

LESSON TIME

1. Connecting: Do a movement activity.

Welcome the children. As they enter, ask the children to sit in a circle in the middle of the teaching space.

Teacher Tip: While this activity may be fun and a bit silly, it will teach children the postures of worship they will need for this lesson. When you move into each position, think about how you would position your body to worship using this posture. By allowing the children to have fun moving before discovering these are postures of worship, you will help them to become excited about worship!

Let's start our time together with some exercise! I will begin by showing you a movement. I will then pause to allow you to copy my movement. Ready?

After you do each movement below, pause to allow the children to also do the movement.

Teacher Tip: Be aware of the prayer and praise posture of other religions in your area. If any of the postures that follow might cause confusion for your children, feel free to make adjustments.

Stand up. Reach up to the sky with your hands.

With your hands up, look up to the sky.

With your hands still up, look down to the ground.

While still looking down, put your hands down.

While still looking down, kneel on the ground.

Look up and sit on your heels.

Look down while still sitting on your heels.

While still sitting on your heels, reach your arms out as far as you can in front of you.

Sit comfortably on the ground with your head facing forward.

Now, let's play a game using the movements you just learned. In a moment, I will put a few of these movements together in a sequence. When I stop moving, you will repeat the sequence.

Start with a simple sequence like this: Reach up to the sky with your hands, look down as you lower your hands to your sides, kneel on the ground. Pause for the children to repeat the 3 movements. Then, choose another set of 3 movements from the list above.

If the children are able to follow your movements without much difficulty, you can move from 1 movement to another more quickly. Call out the movements you are doing to help the children follow each one. Continue increasing the speed of your movements for about 3–5 more times.

That was a lot of fun! Let's sit down where we are and rest. Did you know that the movements we just did are the same ways we can stand, sit, and kneel to worship God? Today, you will learn how to position your bodies to worship God. Each of these positions is used to show honour and respect to God.

Have the children remain seated in the circle for the rest of class.

2. Teaching: Learn different postures of worship (Psalm 95:6; Nehemiah 8:6; 1 Chronicles 29:20).

You have learned a lot about worship. You learned true worshippers worship God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. You learned worship is an attitude of respect and honour for God who sits on His throne, just as you would respect a good and kind king. You learned there are many ways to honour God by worshipping Him in prayer, song, music, and dance. These are all good things to know about worship. Worship is all about honouring God.

The Bible tells many true stories about worshipping God. In them, we hear about people standing, sitting, kneeling, and even dancing in ways that show honour and respect for God. These are called postures of worship. As you listen to this verse from the Bible about worship, think about the postures of worship.

Optional: If possible, share the images from The Action Bible.

If possible, read this verse directly from your Bible.

*Come, let us bow down and worship him.
Let us fall on our knees in front of the LORD our Maker.*
Psalm 95:6

- **What postures of worship does this verse talk about?**

It talks about bowing and kneeling.

This verse invites us to bow down and kneel to worship the Lord, our Maker. When you position yourself in these ways, it helps you to show honour and respect to God. God made all things, including you! God loves His creation, and He desires His creation to love and worship Him.

- **Why do you think people honour and worship the One True God who made heaven and earth?**

Allow children to respond. He knows everything! He is powerful! He loves us! He is amazing!

Let's all kneel down and say a prayer.

Teacher Tip: Model how a kneeling prayer looks for your church community. Children may kneel with their eyes open or closed. The important thing is that they show honour to God.

God, You are so awesome and wonderful! Thank You for making us and loving us. We praise You for the amazing God You are. In Jesus' name, amen.

God knows everything. He is powerful! He is awesome! He loves you and He wants you to love Him in return. The purpose of worship is to honour God for who He is. Kneeling helps you honour God and show your respect for Him. It shows that you understand how amazing it is to have a relationship with Him. You can bow down or kneel to remind you that He is the awesome Creator.

When you are having a difficult day or something difficult is happening around you, take time to praise and worship God for who He is and all of the good things He has done. This can help you have hope as you remember that He is powerful and loving.

Ezra was a Jewish priest in the Bible who praised God for His greatness. As Ezra praised the Lord, all the people joined in to worship God. They lifted up their hands and turned their faces toward the ground and worshipped the Lord. At the beginning of class, you turned your face toward the ground as you bowed. Here is the verse in the Bible that tells about Ezra and the people who worshipped the Lord.

*Ezra praised the LORD. He is the great God.
All the people lifted up their hands and said,
"Amen! Amen!" Then they bowed down.
They turned their faces toward the ground
and worshiped the LORD.
Nehemiah 8:6*

All the people lifted up their hands when Ezra praised the Lord and declared His greatness! All the people worshipped the Lord and said, "Amen, amen!" Let's say that together: "Amen, amen!" When you say amen 2 times, it means something is true. Ezra said He is the great God, and all the people agreed by saying, "Amen, amen!"

I will pretend to be Ezra and say, "He is the great God." You will respond like the people and lift your hands up as you say, "Amen, amen!"

Say, "He is the great God!" and have the children respond with "Amen, amen!" Repeat this 2-3 times.

After the people said this, they bowed down with their faces toward the ground.

- Why do you think the people bowed as they worshipped?

Allow 2-3 children to respond.

Bowing is a way to honour and show respect to someone. People used to, and still do, bow to kings and queens to show their respect and honour for the leadership they provide. Some people today do this as well. When you bow in worship to God, you show Him honour and respect.

Teacher Tip: If people in your community from other faiths bow when they pray, make sure to clarify that your class is praying to the One True God.

Now let's all bow our bodies into the centre of the circle. Bend at your waist and stand back up. If you are able to, this time as we all bow into the centre of the circle, you will pause. As you are bowing, pause and say a silent prayer. Bowing helps you to have an attitude of respect for God. This shows you are being humble before God.

Pause for the children to say a silent prayer.

Here is another verse in the Bible that says the whole community fell down flat on the ground to worship.

*Then David said to the whole community, "Praise the LORD your God."
So all of them praised the LORD. He's the God of their people
who lived long ago. The whole community bowed low.
They fell down flat with their faces toward the ground.
They did it in front of the LORD and the king.
1 Chronicles 29:20*

That is amazing! David told the whole community to praise the Lord, and all of them praised the Lord. They worshipped God to show honour and respect.

3. Responding: Choose a posture of worship and pray.

Let's review the postures we can use to worship God. As I say a posture, move your body to show me what it looks like.

Sit

Stand

Raise your arms up

Kneel

Bow

Stretch your arms in front of you as you bow low to the ground.

Optional: If you are using Student Pages, give the children crayons and allow 2 minutes for them to colour their pages. Then allow them to use their pages to practice worship postures for 1 minute.

You will use these postures as you sing a song. This is a song we learned in the last lesson. Let's remind ourselves of the words.

Use the song you taught the children in the Connecting section of Lesson 3. If you used the psalm below, try to use the same melody as before. Read the words out loud to the children. Pause after each line and allow the children to repeat the words.

I will honour you, my God the King.

I will praise your name for ever and ever.

Every day I will praise you.

I will praise your name for ever and ever.

Psalm 145:1–2

As we sing this song together, use the postures of worship to respond to the music. Maybe you want to bow for part of it. Perhaps you want to sing the whole song standing with your arms up. However you move your body, make sure to respond in worship with your whole self.

Sing the song at least 2 times with the children.

Teacher Tip: Show the children what you are asking them to do by using postures of worship as you sing. Doing this while allowing the children to choose their own postures will help to reinforce the concept that there are many different postures of worship.

I appreciate that you all chose different ways to express your worship to God. The important thing is that your spirit responds to God's love in worship out of honour and

respect for who He is. Our memory verse today reminds us to worship God with both our bodies and our spirits.

If you are using the Memory Verse Poster, show it to the students.

*God is spirit. His worshipers must worship him
in the Spirit and in truth.
John 4:24*

Read the memory verse again with the children. As you read it, do the following movements. Then repeat the verse and the movements with the children 3 times.

God is spirit—Open hands raised toward heaven.

His worshippers must worship him—Lower 1 hand across your chest to touch the opposite shoulder. Repeat this with the other hand.

In the Spirit and in truth—Lift your hands 1 at a time up toward heaven again. (You will end with your hands in the same position they started.)

End class by saying this blessing, based on Nehemiah 8:6, over the children.

Blessing: May you praise God because He is great. May you bow down in respect and worship the Lord, your Maker.

Lead the children in singing this quarter's song, if possible.

"Agnus Dei" by Michael W Smith <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KVFzxazTQNM>