

A Sure Foundation *His Praiseworthy Deeds*

Introduction

HOW TO USE THIS CURRICULUM

There are 13 stories for toddlers in the Nursery Coordinator's Kit for *A Sure Foundation*. This booklet that you are holding, *A Sure Foundation: His Praiseworthy Deeds*, includes all 13 of those stories. It is intended for use with children 24 to 36 months.

The booklet that is intended for use with children 18 to 24 months is titled *A Sure Foundation: The Wonders He Has Done*. That booklet includes only four of these 13 stories. So if *The Wonders He Has Done* has been taught in repeated cycles as suggested with the 18- to 24-month-olds, the children in your group (24- to 36-month-olds) should already be familiar with the following stories when they come to your classroom:

- Lesson 1: God Made Everything
- Lesson 8: Jesus is Here!
- Lesson 9: We Love Jesus
- Lesson 11: Jesus Loves Me

You can adapt the 13 stories in *His Praiseworthy Deeds* to your unique situation by choosing one of the following options:

- Tell each story for two consecutive weeks. By telling the story two weeks in a row, you will be able to reinforce the story the second week. This increases the potential for truth to take hold in the child's mind and heart. Also, because the children are familiar with the stories, they may be able to participate in telling them to the rest of the class. And if any of the children are absent, there is a greater likelihood that they will hear all the stories at least one time. After teaching the 13th story for two weeks, begin again with the first story.
- Tell each story four times before moving to the next story. This option is especially helpful if you are teaching children who are not familiar with Bible stories, if they will receive little reinforcement at home, or if they are very young. Repeat the cycle three times, and then tell each story one more time.

FOUNDATIONAL BIBLE STORIES FOR TODDLERS

Bible stories can be taught to children as early as 18 months of age. Stories should be told in small groups, and they should be very brief. Because toddlers do not have a long attention span, you may want to split up the elements of the lesson. For example, you may want to tell the story and then ask review questions later when children are playing. This could be done in casual conversation one-on-one or with a small group of children.

Toddlers are more apt to benefit from short sentences or phrases frequently sprinkled through your interaction with them than by sitting still for a long "lesson." The teacher should be very familiar with the story and the truths emphasized so that he or she can slip them into her interactions with the children naturally and frequently.

The children should be taught to sit quietly for a short time while the story is told. If the children are not too restless, you may be able to sing a few songs with them at this time and pray with them. If not, call them together later to sing with them, or you may sing with them as they play. If you are caring for the children for more than one session on a given morning, you may be able to repeat the story during their stay with you—once during each session.

If you are working with a large group of toddlers, you may want to split the children into small groups and tell the story several times, rather than try to keep the attention of the whole group.

TELLING THE STORY

The story can be told using pictures, puppets, objects, or flannel board figures.¹ Pictures are included for each story. (See the Older Toddler Story Pictures packet.) However, you may want to vary the medium at times. If you choose to use puppets with the children, a few words of caution should be observed:

- Puppets may be appropriate for 24- to 36-month-old children, but children younger than 24 months *may* be afraid of puppets.
- It is appropriate to use puppets of Bible characters to tell the story, but other puppets (e.g., animals) may cause confusion in the children. Children this age have difficulty distinguishing what is real from what is pretend. Using a puppet of a funny character or an animal to tell a Bible story may make it difficult for the child to understand that the story is real.
- Puppets are sometimes effective in catching the children's attention and quieting them so that they are prepared for the story. After the puppet quiets the children, the puppet can be set aside while the story is told.
- Puppets can be used to review the story with the children.

There are Instructions for facial expressions and motions for each story. Tell the story with enthusiasm and emotion. Speak loudly enough for children to hear easily, and vary the

¹A good flannel board set is available through Betty Lukens, www.bettylukens.com.

pitch of your voice. It is important when telling stories to toddlers to be VERY expressive. This means being expressive with your voice, facial expressions, and gestures. You will even want to exaggerate some of your expressions to make your point.

REVIEWING THE STORY

The review can be done immediately following the story or later during the class time. It is important to train children to sit quietly and listen to the story, but do not to push them beyond their capabilities. The story can be reviewed or reinforced periodically throughout the session in casual conversation with the children. For example, if you taught the first lesson, "God Made Everything", you can comment as children are playing, "Wiggle, wiggle, wiggle those fingers. Who made your fingers?" If a child loses his shoe, tickle his foot as you're putting it back on and say, "I can't make a foot. Can you make a foot? No! Only God can make a foot!"

You can also use puppets to ask the review questions. Toddlers will often respond to a puppet more readily than to an adult. In addition, there is a set of parent resource sheets with the stories in this booklet. Make an extra set of these sheets and laminate them for use in the classroom. Keep them in a handy spot so adults can refer to the conversation suggestions and reinforce the story concepts during free play times. Over time, children should be able to repeat the story back to you. Practice this by helping them tell the story using the pictures and gradually let them fill in more of the story.

SINGING WITH TODDLERS

Little children love music, and music can set a happy tone in the toddler room. Although there are many "fun" songs to sing with young children, having fun is not the primary goal of toddler ministry. These fun songs can be sung anywhere, at any time, by anyone—Christian or non-Christian. The world has many opportunities to influence young children, but the church's opportunity to influence children is very limited.

Church ministry to children should be intentional and strategic. It should go beyond providing "fun" for children and aim to nurture faith. If you sing songs in the toddler room that contain truths about God, the Spirit of God has the opportunity to work through the music to touch the children's souls.

We have included a list of suggested songs (with words) in this booklet for 24- to 36-month-old children. We suggest limiting the number of songs taught to children at this age so they learn the songs well. It is better to teach a few songs well than to teach many songs that they cannot remember. If the children learn the songs well, they will sing them at home throughout the week. Thus, the truth will be constantly before them. The songs in *A Sure Foundation: His Praiseworthy Deeds* have been carefully chosen and are limited to those that reflect accurate biblical truth and reinforce the truths taught in the curriculum. Make a copy of the handout with the song words to give to the parents.

You may have other songs to add or substitute to the list. Words should be simple, and God should be shown as good and great. The number of songs you will be able to sing and the frequency with which you can introduce new songs will be determined by how familiar the children are with the songs

PRAYING WITH TODDLERS

It is important to teach toddlers about prayer. Begin instructing children in prayer by showing them how to fold their hands. Tell them that you will be talking to God, and explain that God hears us when we pray.

At first, you may want to pray yourself. Use simple words and short prayers. After the children are familiar with prayer, you may want to ask them to repeat a phrase or sentence or even a few sentences. If there are other adults in the room, they can help model prayer. Sometimes children will respond when an adult sings a prayer rather than just saying it.

Prayer should not be limited to formal prayer times, but should also be spontaneous. For example, if a child falls and bumps her knee, you could pray aloud while comforting the child, "Jesus, please fix Jenny's knee." Or if a child is having fun with a toy, you could pray, "Thank you, God, for toys. You are good to us."

MEMORIZING BIBLE VERSES WITH TODDLERS

Very young children can begin to memorize Bible verses. Although there will be parts of verses they may not understand, they will be able to understand the main idea of appropriately chosen verses. Once again, the child is building a bank of biblical truth to "grow into." Understanding often comes at an earlier age simply because the child is consistently exposed to the truth. The Holy Spirit will bring situations where these simple verses can be understood as true. If the adult helps the child label the situation, understanding is even more likely to occur. When the child has memorized a verse, that verse can run through his mind and minister to his spirit. He begins to see things from a biblical perspective because the Bible becomes a frame of reference. With a memory verse, a child can label a situation or analyze it biblically.

Many life-long habits are formed in the very young years. If we want children to be life-long memorizers of the Word of God, we must impress on them the benefit of memorization. (See the section titled "Scripture Memory and Children" in this booklet.) Toddlers can memorize Bible verses simply by hearing an adult repeat the verses often. Setting a verse to music is also an easy way for a young child to memorize scripture.

Perhaps a child has memorized the verse "Every good and perfect gift is from above" (James 1:17). Ideally, the adult has given some explanation of the verse such as, "From above" (point up) means "from God." "Everything good comes from God." (Although it is not necessary to "teach the verse" to the children, it is helpful to define difficult words or concepts.)

We recommend doing memory work at a separate time from the lesson time. Do it casually by periodically repeating the verse during the session. If you bring the children together at an additional time during the session, have the children repeat the memory verse four or five times with you. Start by teaching a phrase at a time and then expand the verse as the children learn its parts. Work on a verse until most of the children know it well, and review it frequently. Once the children have learned a verse, move on to the next verse.

There are 12 verses to memorize in class. The Resource Packet contains posters of these 12 verses (which are extracted from a larger Foundation Verses Pack²). Use them as teaching tools or room decorations to remind the children and the workers of the verses. We suggest emphasizing one verse per month.

The Resource Packet also contains pages with small verse cards to copy and cut apart. You could attach each card to a magnet and send one card home each month with each of the children, or you could make the 12 cards into a booklet and use a metal D-ring (available in craft stores) to bind them together. Either way, the cards that you send home can be used by the parents to help their children learn the memory verses. Ideally, parents should teach the memory verses at home, and the church session should be used to support that teaching. Because young children memorize quickly and effortlessly, it is important for parents to seize the opportunity to help their children memorize at home. With the encouragement of their parents, most toddlers can memorize more verses than the 12 verses emphasized in the actual curriculum.

FREE PLAY WITH TODDLERS

Children at this age should be allowed much “unstructured” play. This does not mean that the room should be in chaos or that there is not a plan. It means that children should have the freedom to move from activity to activity, and to talk. Encourage inside voices and calm play, while discouraging running and excited play. You may want to set up the room into various centers using mostly manipulative toys (Playdoh®, Duplos®, blocks, etc.).

This time can still be seen as valuable teaching time. Children will learn from your casual conversation as well as by imitating your behavior. It is important to model righteous behavior and a gentle, humble, loving spirit. If you are conscientious about learning the stories, you will find many opportunities to naturally weave in the truth during free play activities. You will also be able to weave in memorized Bible verses and the biblical truth statements.

INSTRUCTION IN RIGHTEOUSNESS

Part of ministry to toddlers is to train them in righteousness. This means teaching children to be respectful of others, to be polite, to take care of toys and equipment, etc. Young children should be taught to say, “please” and “thank you.” When a toddler grabs a toy from another child, an adult should gently take the toy away and instruct the child in proper behavior—“This is his toy. We don’t take toys away from each other. Here is a toy for you.” Young children can be taught to wait for their turn. For example, if you are passing out a snack and a child yells, “Cracker!” an adult can use the opportunity to instruct a child in righteousness—“Jimmy’s cracker. Susie’s cracker. We wait nicely for our crackers...now it is your turn! Joey’s cracker!” If a child is sad, another child can be encouraged to hug the child. Although righteous behavior is an outgrowth of heart attitudes, it is also encouraged by proper training.

²A set of Foundation Verses has been included in the Nursery Coordinator’s Kit for *A Sure Foundation*. Parents could be encouraged to obtain Foundation Verses for use with their children at home. Additional Foundation Verse Packs are available through Children Desiring God, www.childrendesiringGod.org.

PRAYER

Prayer for the children should be a part of the toddler ministry just as it is in nursery ministry. Although these prayer moments are harder to snatch, they are still possible. The prayer sheets found in the Curriculum Resource Packet can be posted on the walls of the toddler room. (A copy of these sheets can be found in the Appendix of the curriculum.)

PARTNERING WITH PARENTS

It is important to realize that although there is great opportunity to spiritually influence toddlers while they are at church, the primary responsibility and greatest opportunity for faith nurturing belongs to the parents. Therefore, a crucial part of toddler ministry is to encourage the parents to take their faith nurturing role seriously. For this reason, there are Parent Resource Sheets provided for each lesson. In addition, workers in the toddler ministry should be intentional about encouraging parents to help their children learn verses, to review Bible stories, and to pray with their children.

We suggest holding an open house for the parents of toddlers. This would provide a good opportunity to share the goals of the toddler ministry, to introduce the materials you will be using, to explain how the church and home partner together, and to challenge parents to be actively involved in nurturing faith in their children. The parent letter, and song and memory verse sheets (all included in this booklet) can be sent home at this time and given to new parents as their children join the toddler department.

We suggest copying all the Parent Resource Sheets at the beginning of the year and placing them in file folders numbered according to the story number. Each Parent Resource Sheet can be copied on a different color of paper. In addition, the coloring page can be copied on the back of the sheet or copied separately onto a white sheet of paper. If you copy the picture onto the Parent Resource Sheet, you will probably want to choose light-colored papers.

ADAPTATION

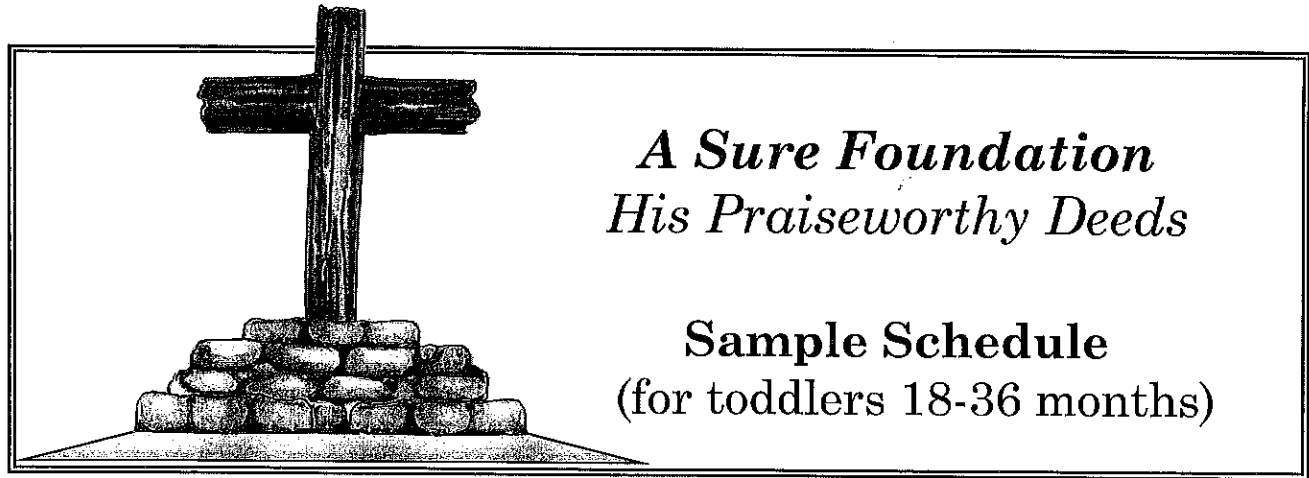
There is no "right" way to structure a toddler ministry, although there are some definite mistakes that can be made (chaotic atmosphere, no Bible training, etc.). What works for one church may not work in another. Because each situation is unique, it is important to pray and think through what will work best in your situation. Get your heart in tune with the heart of God and wrestle with what will best serve the children and parents in your church. The elements of good Bible teaching have been provided for you in this curriculum, but you will need to make the toddler ministry effective for the unique group of children with which God has blessed you. Although frequent change can be confusing to children, don't be afraid to change structures or room arrangements until you find one that works well for your situation.

CONCLUSION

The difference between a toddler ministry that is basically good child-care and one in which spirits are nurtured and truth is imparted is mainly a question of intention. Are you intentional about what happens during that time with young children? Weaving God's truth

into the toddler time is not difficult, but it is of great importance—it must be an intentional goal.

Obviously, this will be best accomplished by a team of people who are dedicated to toddler ministry; a team that is committed to working with the toddlers every week. The size of the team in the toddler ministry will depend on the number of children in the class. A team leader should be in charge of the organization and schedule of the class, a teacher should lead the teaching time, and then helpers are added according to the number of children in the class. If the whole team cannot make a weekly commitment to the toddler ministry, helpers can be rotated in and out while the weekly team leader and teacher maintain stability in the department. (**Note:** There are reproducible handouts for occasional toddler classroom volunteers available in the Appendix of the Nursery Coordinator's Notebook.)



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Sample Schedule
(for toddlers 18-36 months)

20 minutes: Free Play

(Book corner, Playdoh® table, coloring table, puzzle table, Lego® or other manipulative toy table, train/car table, magnetic table, etc.)

Prepare children for the lesson through informal interactions.

20 minutes: Prayer/Snack

An early snack helps comfort children who are upset.

Practice Foundation Verse—18 to 24 months old

Can be done while sitting at the table, after snack is complete.

Diaper Changing/Bathroom Break

Diaper changing usually takes place after snack. Children may go back to free play until diaper changing, and bathroom breaks are complete.

15 minutes: Worship Time/Lesson Time

Begin with higher intensity action songs and end with quieter songs to help children prepare to listen to the lesson.

Prayer

Pray for the children, for general or specific needs.

Lesson

The lesson should be no more than 5 minutes for children 18 to 24 months, or 10 minutes for children 24 to 36 months.

Remaining Time

Free play—18 to 24 Months

Teach Biblical truths informally during free play.

Small Group Table—24 to 36 Months

Practice Foundation Verse and color the back of the Parent Resource Sheet. While children are coloring, talk about the Biblical truths taught during the lesson.

SAMPLE RATIOS

Nursery 1 (Birth to 12 Months)

1 Adult : 2 Children

Nursery 2 (12 to 18 Months)

1 Adult : 3 Children

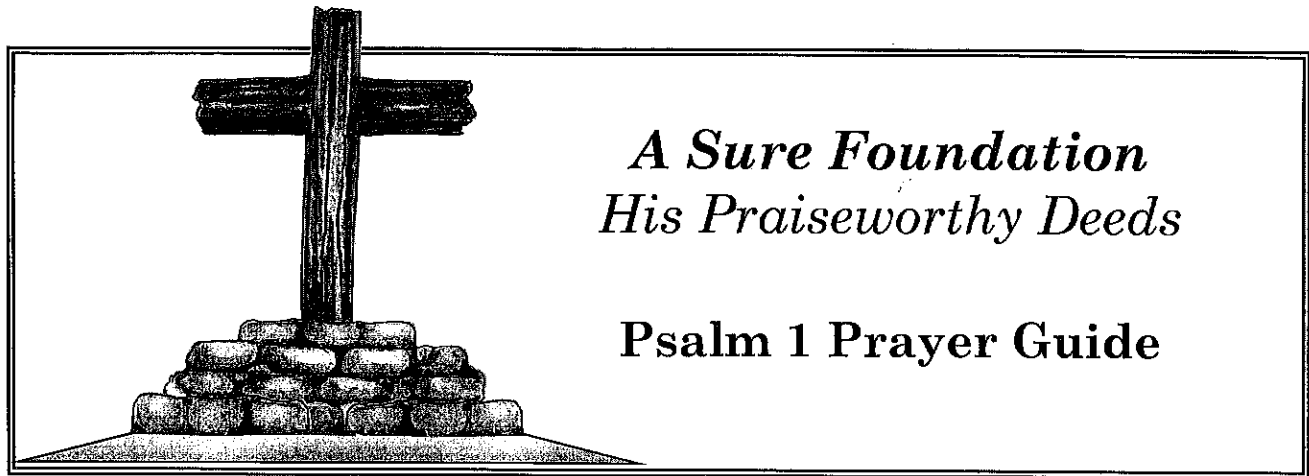
Nursery 3 (18 to 24 Months)

1 Adult : 4 Children

Beginners (24 to 36 Months)

1 Adult : 4 Children

Note: This schedule and these ratios are used at Bethlehem Baptist Church of Minneapolis. They were compiled by Claudia Mosley.



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Psalm 1 Prayer Guide

HOW TO TURN SCRIPTURE INTO PRAYERS

The words of Psalm 1 can serve as prayer topics. Use the verses as reminders or springboards for prayer. Beneath each verse is a sample of how it can be used as a prayer guide.

Verse 1: Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers.

"Don't let him listen to ungodly advice or follow the wisdom of this world; help him not to listen to the suggestions of evil men or be swept up into untruth. Don't let him follow ungodly friends or associate with those who despise the truth and sin against You; help him to choose good friends and to love the people of God. Help him to love those who love Your Word and listen to the advice of those who would seek Your counsel. Don't ever let him mock the things of God or make fun of truth; help him not to be ashamed of the gospel."

Verse 2: But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night.

"May he love Your Word; may the things of God be a delight to him. Help him to know the Word and to memorize the Word; may it be a ready defense for him in time of temptation or trial."

Verse 3: He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers.

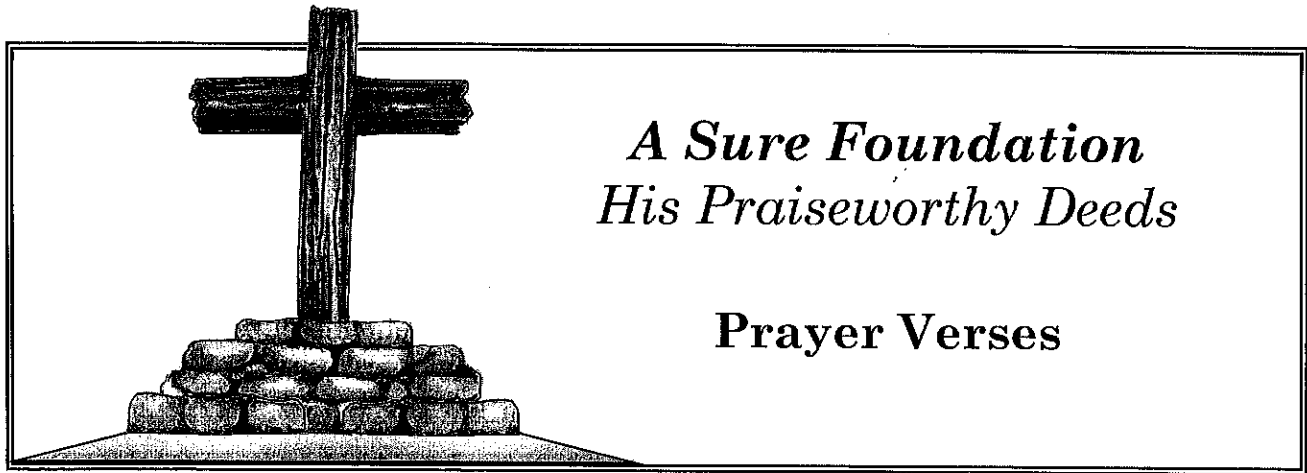
"Make Him strong in You; may he abide in You and bear much fruit. May he always prosper in the things of God; may he be full of truth and overflowing in love. May his life and character be marked with love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control."

Verses 4&5: Not so the wicked! They are like chaff that the wind blows away. Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.

“Unlike the wicked, may he stand strong in faith through all the storms of life. May he stand victorious to the end of his life so that he can stand before You pure and blameless claiming the blood of Jesus, his Redeemer.”

Verse 6: For the LORD watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.

“Watch over his way all the days of his life. Thank You for being a faithful God and for working for Your children.”



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Prayer Verses

The following verses can easily be turned into prayers:

Psalm 63:1-4

O God, you are my God, earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you, my body longs for you, in a dry and weary land where there is no water. I have seen you in the sanctuary and beheld your power and your glory. Because your love is better than life, my lips will glorify you. I will praise you as long as I live, and in your name I will lift up my hands.

John 1:12-13

Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

John 15:5

I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

Psalm 119:10-11

I seek you with all my heart; do not let me stray from your commands. I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.

Psalm 119:33-37

Teach me, O LORD, to follow your decrees; then I will keep them to the end. Give me understanding, and I will keep your law and obey it with all my heart. Direct me in the path of your commands, for there I find delight. Turn my heart toward your statutes and not toward selfish gain. Turn my eyes away from worthless things; preserve my life according to your word.

Philippians 4:8

Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.

Colossians 3:1-2

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.

Proverbs 6:20-23

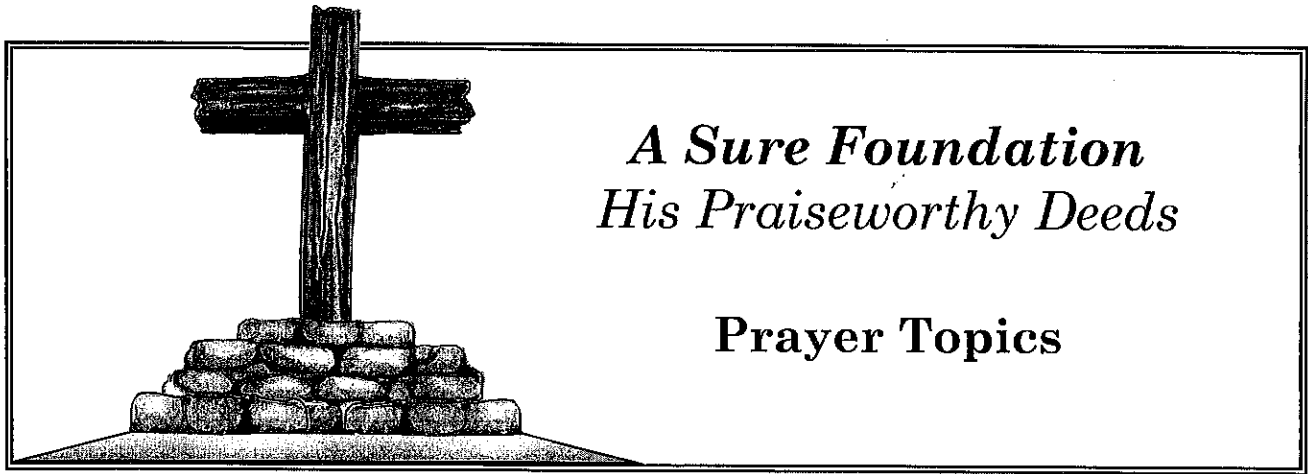
My son, keep your father's commands and do not forsake your mother's teaching. Bind them upon your heart forever; fasten them around your neck. When you walk, they will guide you; when you sleep, they will watch over you; when you awake, they will speak to you.

Proverbs 4:20-27

My son, pay attention to what I say; listen closely to my words. Do not let them out of your sight, keep them within your heart; for they are life to those who find them and health to a man's whole body. Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life. Put away perversity from your mouth; keep corrupt talk far from your lips. Let your eyes look straight ahead, fix your gaze directly before you. Make level paths for your feet and take only ways that are firm. Do not swerve to the right or the left; keep your foot from evil.

ADDITIONAL VERSES

(Note: Use a permanent marker to add your own verses to the prayer charts included in the Resource Packet.)

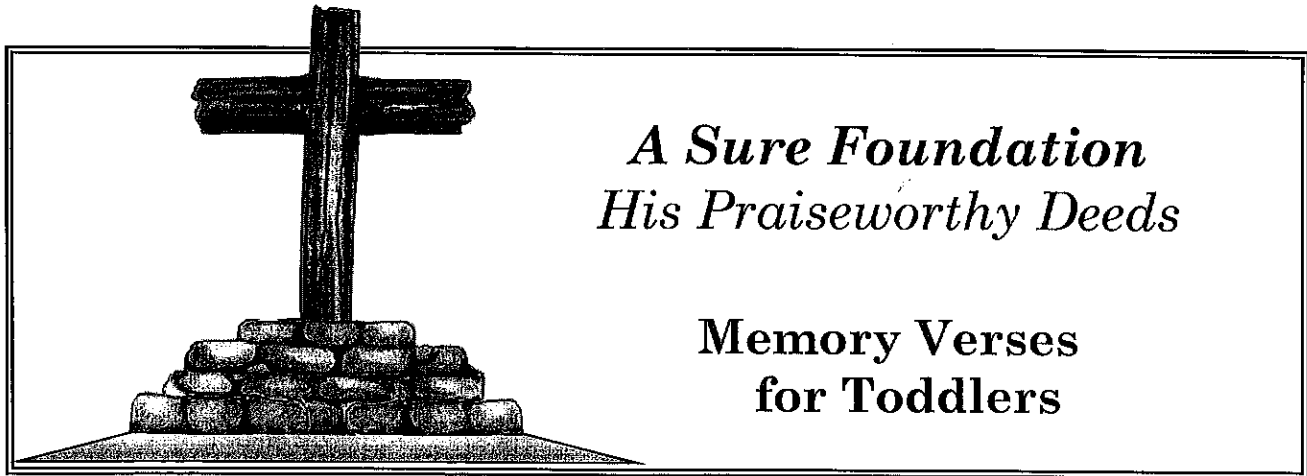


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Prayer Topics

1. Pray that the children will know Christ as Savior early in life and treasure their inheritance as children of God, that they will not accept Satan's design against them but walk in the light as heirs of the kingdom, and that they would love God with all their hearts, minds, and souls.
2. Pray that they will have a hatred for sin.
3. Pray that they will appreciate discipline and instruction, that they will be quick to repent, and that they will be caught when guilty.
4. Pray that they will be protected from the evil one in each area of their lives: spiritual, emotional, and physical.
5. Pray that they will have a responsible and loving attitude in all their interpersonal relationships.
6. Pray that they will accept God's lordship over them and that they will respect those He has placed in authority over them.
7. Pray that they will choose godly influences, that they will desire the right kind of friends and be protected from the wrong friends, that they will be "hedged in" so that they cannot find their way to wrong people or wrong places and so that the wrong people cannot find their way to them, and that they each will be kept from a wrong mate and saved for the right one.
8. Pray that they would desire inner beauty and godly character, that they would grow more Christ-like daily, and that they, as well as those they marry, will be kept pure both before and after marriage.
9. Pray that they will learn to totally submit to God and actively resist Satan in all circumstances.
10. Pray that they will be single hearted, willing to be sold out to Jesus Christ and joyfully invested in the cause of the kingdom.

11. Pray that they would grow in faith and obedience and in love for God, and that they would "love not the world, nor the things of the world."
12. Pray that they would treasure God's Word and stand up for truth, that they would be free from deception and the lies of the evil one, and that they would have great understanding of the Word.



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**Memory Verses
for Toddlers**

When teaching verses, first say the reference, then the verse, and then repeat the reference.

SEPTEMBER: "Genesis 1:1. In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Genesis 1:1."

OCTOBER: "Romans 3:23. All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. Romans 3:23."

NOVEMBER: "Psalm 1:6. For the LORD watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish. Psalm 1:6."

DECEMBER: "James 1:17. Every good and perfect gift is from above. James 1:17."

JANUARY: "Matthew 6:24. No one can serve two masters. Matthew 6:24."

FEBRUARY: "Philippians 2:14. Do everything without complaining or arguing. Philippians 2:14."

MARCH: "Psalm 56:3. When I am afraid I will trust in you. [God] Psalm 56:3."

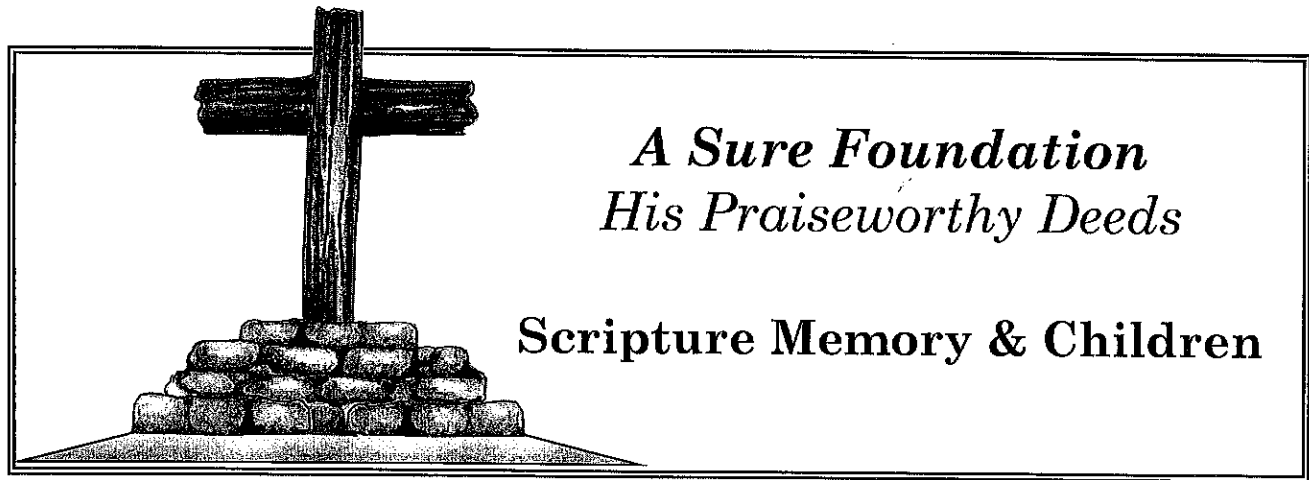
APRIL: "Psalm 118:24. This is the day the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it. Psalm 118:24."

MAY: "Ephesians 6:1. Children, obey your parents in the LORD, for this is right. Ephesians 6:1."

JUNE: "Proverbs 18:10. The name of the LORD is a strong tower; the righteous run to it and are safe. Proverbs 18:10."

JULY: "Proverbs 3:5. Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. Proverbs 3:5."

AUGUST: "Proverbs 17:17. A friend loves at all times. Proverbs 17:17."



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Scripture Memory & Children

There are at least four reasons to encourage children to memorize scripture:

1. Children have amazing memories.

Children memorize easily. In fact, they often memorize effortlessly. Since memorization is so easy for them, they are memorizing constantly. They will memorize either what the world has to offer them or what we offer them. Why not take advantage of this God-given gift for the benefit of our children's spiritual growth? This "window of opportunity" is open for about 12 years. After age 12, memorization is harder—unless a child has been trained in the habit of memorization.

2. What is learned in childhood is often retained for a lifetime.

It is so much harder for adults to memorize scripture than children. We often feel handicapped because we do not have more scripture memorized. For many adults, the verses they know well (those which come to mind as an automatic response) are verses learned in childhood. So seize the moment!

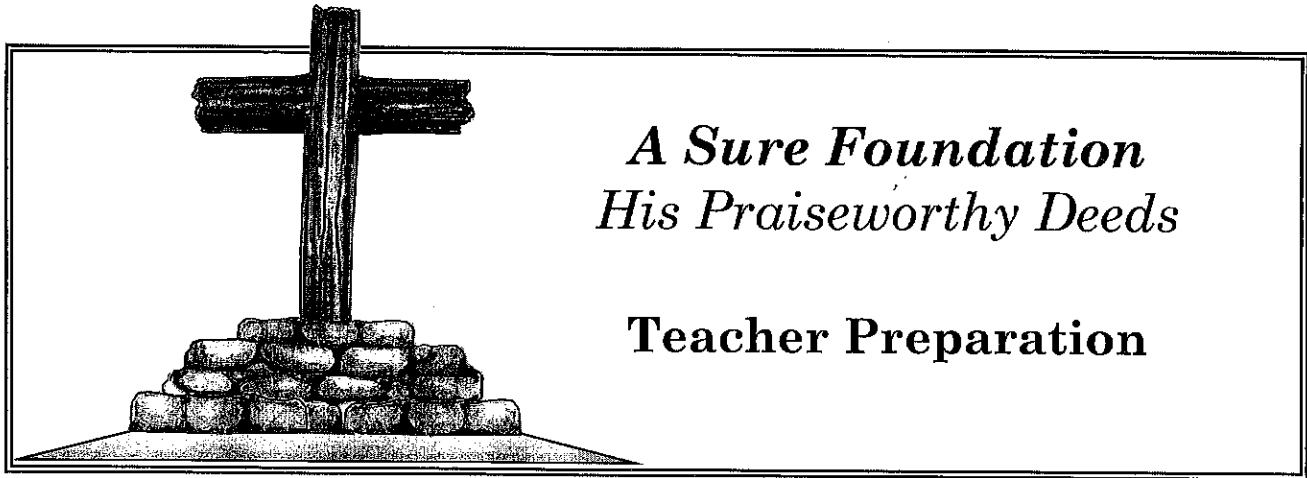
3. Memorizing scripture provides children with an ever-present counselor and protector.

We cannot always be with our children. If the Word of God dwells richly in them, they have wise counsel with them at all times. In addition, God's Word is so much more powerful than our words; it will protect them from the attack of the enemy.

4. Memorizing scripture makes application and response to the Word more likely.

Situations arise in all of our lives that either demonstrate a spiritual truth or demand a word of Biblical counsel (e.g., What do you do when someone speaks harshly to you?). Often in those situations, the Holy Spirit brings to mind a verse you have memorized (e.g., "A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger." Proverbs 15:1). This is less likely to happen when we have memorized only a few verses. When we recognize a Biblical truth demonstrated in a situation, it is often impressed on our hearts, and a heartfelt godly response is more likely to occur. That response can come in the form of appropriate behavior, correct attitudes, or in worship of God as we are awed with the truth of his Word.

Note: This section is taken from the Fighter Verses Handbook, which is included in the Fight Verses Pack, published by Children Desiring God, www.childrendesiringGod.org.



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Teacher Preparation

Although the curriculum stories are very simple, the person teaching the story will still need to spend time in preparation. The most important preparation is spiritual preparation. Before telling the story to children, it is crucial that the teacher's heart be right before God. If a teacher is to minister in the power of the Holy Spirit, he or she cannot tell a Bible story while harboring a bad attitude or a sin issue. So heart examination is imperative.

In addition, the teacher should read through the scripture passage for each story and pray that God would make the story live in his or her own heart. The teacher should also pray during the week that God's truth might sink into the children's hearts.

Before telling the story to the children, the teacher should practice telling the story in a variety of ways. This will help the teacher to learn the story, to experiment with facial expressions and voice inflection, and to become adept at using the visuals. It is also helpful to practice the story in front of a mirror and then in front of children.

The goal in telling Bible stories to the toddlers is to give them a foundation of simple truths that will help them move into preschool. There are 13 simple truths, represented by each of the stories (four for the young toddlers, 13 for the older toddlers). The stories are intentionally written out so that the children are sure to learn these truths. They should then be reinforced through all the activities (e.g., free play, snack time, etc.) all year long. The stories are repeated because the attendance of nursery children is sporadic, and their attention span very short. By hearing the stories often, the children should learn these truths well. Once children learn the general concept, there is opportunity for you to branch out. This gives children the foundation for moving into preschool where the preschool teachers have more freedom in telling stories according to the Spirit's leading because the foundation has already been laid.

Vocabulary for toddlers needs to be very simple. For this reason also, the stories are written out for the teacher.

If you will be using flannel board, place the figures in order of usage so that you can move smoothly through your story. Then practice using the figures several times. Instructions are given for using the **Older Toddler Story Pictures** from the Resource Packet. Adaptations can easily be made if you choose to use flannel board figures.