



## **School Days – Sample Lesson**

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**Created by [PreteenMinistry.net](http://PreteenMinistry.net)**

**Note: Sample lesson does not come with PowerPoint slides. However, the purchased version does come with PowerPoint slides and series artwork.**

## School Days

### Sample Lesson - See God's Works

Scripture - John 5:17; Colossians 1:17; John 14:3; Psalm 121; Philippians 2:13; Psalm 8; Psalm 145:7-13

**Bottom Line: When we realize that God is working every day, all day, and He doesn't even have to, it can help to encourage us as we work.**

## SERIES PREPARATION

- Create a large wall calendar. This should be a one-week calendar, seven squares in a row with "S, M, T, W, T, F, S" written above each square. In the top left-hand corner of each square, write the numbers 1-7. These will correspond with Lessons 1-7. During each of the first 7 lessons, you will write something in each square that starts with the letters "S", "M", "T", etc. Write "School Days" in large letters above this one-week calendar.
- Look ahead to Lesson 8. In Lesson 8, notice that you'll use selected props from Lessons 1-7. **In Lessons 1-7, these props are marked in the supplies list with an asterisk.** Make sure to hold on to these supplies for the culminating lesson.
- Spend some time considering your preteen's attitudes toward work and your own attitudes toward work. Pray that God would do a work in your heart and theirs during this series, so that you may all enter God's rest as a result of these lessons.

## SUPPLIES

### OPENING ACTIVITY: IF I HAD A MILLION DOLLARS

- 2-4 pool noodles
- 1 large bed sheet
- *NOTE: If you have a group of leaders that could do an example 3-D picture (see steps 6-9 below), it would help the students to visualize what you are going for. Plus it's fun for the leaders.*

## LARGE GROUP

- Download the YouTube video "Creation Calls" posted by The Branch, and prepare to show it to your students. You can use "Keepvid.com" to download YouTube videos in a format that works for you.
- Large "School Days" wall calendar. See the "Series Preparation" section at the beginning of this lesson for instructions on how to create this.
- \*\*\***"GOD WORKS" poster.** This is a poster board you have created in advance. On the poster board, draw pictures or glue pictures from magazines or the internet of some of your favorite works of God. For this lesson, it would be best to focus on His works in creation, such as rainbows or planets. You could also have pictures of babies or animals. Leave some space at the top of the poster to write.
- An easel or some way of displaying your "GOD WORKS" poster

- Poster marker to write on the wall calendar and on the “GOD WORKS” poster
  - One medium sized square of paper for each student
  - Markers or crayons for students to use
- \*\*\*Save this for use in lesson 8

### **SMALL GROUP**

- 1 Poster Board with “GOD WORKS” written at the top
- 1 bottle of glue or glue stick
- 1 Bible for each student

## INTRO

Hello. Welcome to “School Days”, a new and exciting series during a new and exciting season – fall! It’s fall, and school is starting. The smell of sharpened pencils is in the air. Many of you have gone shopping for new clothes. There’s a certain excitement about beginning in a new classroom with a new teacher for a new school year. The excitement is hanging in the air; it’s like there’s this gigantic question mark in our minds about what this school year is going to be like. After all, this could be the best school year ever! You could make some new and fantastic friends, or discover some new and fantastic things about yourself, or you could even have the greatest teacher ever.

Most everybody’s school year begins with some amount of promise and excitement. There are things that people look forward to at the beginning of the school year.

But – there is one thing about starting back to school that many people DON’T look forward to. There is something about “School Days” that many kids are not excited about. What do you think that is? (Take responses.) That’s right – the WORK. Because school is starting, we all know that there is going to be work to do. Homework. Classwork. Studying for tests. Group projects. Make up assignments. Pop quizzes. Standardized tests. Essays. Reports. Yes – there is definitely going to be work to do. And because you’re in a higher grade this year, the work will probably be more difficult than last year.

Today, we are starting the “School Days” series, and it’s a series about work. We are going to take a look at our feelings and attitudes about work. We are also going to look at God’s feelings and attitudes about work. My hope is that you’ll look at work in a much different way at the end of these eight lessons. My hope is that, because of what you learn through this series, your school days will be joy-filled days. Each lesson builds on the one before, so try to be here for all of them if you can.

Have you ever really thought about work? I mean, why do people work anyway? (Take responses.)

We know that one of the reasons adults work is so they can have money. Therefore, one of the reasons we work hard at school as kids is to get an education, so we can get a job when we grow up. Also, working in school as a kid helps us to practice working, so that when we are an adult, we know how to work. But what if we didn’t need to work? What if we had an endless supply of money and didn’t have to lift a finger? Imagine if you had even \$1,000,000,000. What would you do?

# OPENING ACTIVITY: IF I HAD A BILLION DOLLARS

## Supplies:

- 2-4 pool noodles
- 1 large bed sheet
- *NOTE: If you have a group of leaders that could do an example 3-D picture (see steps 6-9 below), it would help the students to visualize what you are going for. Plus it's fun for the leaders.*

## Directions:

1. Have the preteens get into groups of 4-8.
2. When they are in their groups, have them think of one activity that they would do if they were given \$1,000,000,000. They need to agree on one activity that they would do as a group if they were given \$1,000,000,000.
3. Tell them that they are going to imagine that somebody has taken a life-sized 3-D photo of them participating in their chosen activity, and the rest of the class is going to get to see that "photo" right here in the front of the room.
4. Each group will need to choose one student to be the spokesperson. The spokesperson will explain the "photo". The rest of the students will pose to create the "photo".
5. Let the students know that when their group comes forward to show everybody their "photo", they can use the pool noodles as props. (i.e. they can be swords, or hats, or ....)
6. After you have given the groups some time to plan, have one group come to the front of the room.
7. Have two adult volunteers hold up the large sheet in front of the group to hide them from the audience while they get into their pose. They can use the pool noodles, if they choose, to form their life-sized 3-D picture.
8. The spokesperson, in front of the large sheet, explains what activity their group would do if they were given \$1,000,000,000.
9. Drop the sheet to reveal the group, frozen in place acting out their activity. This is the "photo". After a few seconds, have the adult volunteers lift the sheet to hide the group.
10. Thank them and have another group come forward. Repeat as you have time or until all groups have shared.

## Discussion Questions:

- Did anybody see a group doing something that they would want to do if they had \$1,000,000,000? What was it?
- Did any of the groups choose "Do homework!" as their activity? (probably not) Why do you think that is?
- Did any of the groups choose any kind of work as their activity? (probably not) Why do you think that is?
- Raise your hand if you think that, if you were an adult and had an endless supply of money, you would CHOOSE not to work?

# LESSON

## Supplies:

- Download the YouTube video “Creation Calls” posted by The Branch and prepare to show it to your students. You can use “Keepvid.com” to download YouTube videos in a format that works for you.
- Large “School Days” wall calendar. See the “Series Preparation” section at the beginning of this lesson for instructions on how to create this.
- \*\*\*“**GOD WORKS**” poster. This is a poster board you have created in advance. On the poster board, draw pictures or glue pictures from magazines or the internet of some of your favorite works of God. For this lesson, it would be best to focus on His works in creation, such as rainbows or planets. You could also have pictures of babies or animals. Leave some space at the top of the poster to write.
- An easel or some way of displaying your “GOD WORKS” poster
- Poster marker to write on the wall calendar and on the “GOD WORKS” poster
- One medium sized square of paper for each student
- Markers or crayons for students to use

[Slide 1 – School Days]

If most people are asked to make a list of what they would do if they had an endless supply of money, they wouldn't put “WORK” on their list. Why do you suppose that is? (Take responses.)

Even though most people wouldn't choose to work if they had an endless supply of money, I know ONE who does work, even though He has an amazing amount of money. In fact, the ONE I'm thinking about already has everything He needs. He owns the cattle on 1,000 hills. The earth and everything in it are HIS. The stars are His. Everything that ever was made is His! Who am I talking about? (Pause for response.) Of course, I'm talking about God. But did you know that God WORKS. God works! And He doesn't have to. He is lacking nothing. He needs nothing. And yet He works!

Look at this verse:

[Slide 2 – John 5:17]

God is working. He is holding all things together (Colossians 1:17). He is preparing a place for us called heaven (John 14:3).

Every second of every day, God is at work. The Bible says that He never sleeps (Psalm 121). And God is doing a lot of work, all over the universe, all at once. Philippians 2:13 says that God is doing work in the heart of every believer. Psalm 8 declares that the moon, the stars, all that is in the universe, are the work of God's “fingers”.



One thing that can really help us during our school days is to see God's work. When we realize that God is working every day, all day, and He doesn't even have to, it can help to encourage us as we work.

On the wall, you see this giant "School Days" calendar. Now, normally, on a calendar like this, what would the "S, M, T, W, T, F, S" stand for? (Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, etc.) That's right; but for our "School Days" series, each letter is going to stand for something we can do which will help us have a better attitude about work. Each letter is going to be something that will help us to have more peaceful and joy-filled school days. Today we are starting at the "S". The "S" is for (write "See God's Works" in the "S" square as you say it) See God's Works.

I want you to watch this video, showing some of the works of God, and as you SEE GOD'S WORKS, I want you to think of one word that you'd use to describe **the way** that God works. And keep in mind, God's not doing it to get an "A" from some teacher. He's not doing it to earn a living. He's not doing it to get something He doesn't already have. He's doing it because of who He is.

(Show "Creation Calls" YouTube video (posted by The Branch). *It's a 6 minute video but always holds the interest of the preteens when I have shown it and is well worth the time invested.*)

(As the video is playing, bring your "GOD WORKS" poster to the stage.)

Look at this poster up here. On it, I've put pictures of some of my favorite works of God. At the top of this poster, I want to write some words about God, words that you guys think of when you think about God's amazing work. (Take responses and write those responses on the poster in large letters using a poster marker.)

It's crazy to think about the ways in which God works, even when He doesn't have to. And when we realize that God is working every day, all day, and He doesn't even have to, it can help to encourage us as we work. We can see that work isn't just something that HAS TO be done because we see God doing work, even though He doesn't have to. We can see that work is actually an awesome thing as we consider God's work. And then we get to participate in the same activity...we get to work, too. It becomes a joy to work, as we realize we are working alongside GOD, whose works show that He is... (read words that the preteens had you write on the poster board earlier).

I'm going to play that video again, but this time, as I do, I want you guys to do something. Around the room, we have placed paper and markers (or crayons). We want you to take the next 6 minutes to draw a picture of something God has worked to create that you find AWESOME. After the song ends, you'll take your pictures to your small group, and you'll have a chance to share what you drew.

(Play "Creation Calls" and then dismiss students to Small Group Time.)

## SMALL GROUP

### Supplies:

- 1 Poster Board with “GOD’S WORK” written at the top
- Glue or glue stick
- Bibles for each student

### Directions:

- Allow students to share what they drew during the Large Group. It should be a picture of one of God’s works.
- Take each drawing as it’s shared, and glue it to your poster board.
- After everybody has shared, ask the preteens to think of some words that describe God’s way of working. (This activity was modeled during Large Group Time.)
- As the preteens share, write their responses on the poster board using a marker or large sharpie.
- Tell the preteens that you are going to read Psalm 145:3-17, and invite them to read along in their Bibles.
- Explain that the book of Psalms is easy to find in the Bible. Usually, if you open a Bible to the middle, you’ll open to Psalms or Proverbs, which is right after Psalms.
- Explain that Psalms is book of spiritual songs. It’s like a song book.
- Explain that Psalm 145 is a song that extols God. “Extol” means “to lift up with high praise.” Extolling is like giving the highest compliment you could ever give. Psalm 145 lifts up God with high praise because of His amazing works.
- Invite the students to listen or read along, but as they do, have them pay attention to think of what words or phrases stick out to them.
- Read Psalm 145:3-17 out loud.
- Ask the preteens to share what part of Psalm 145 stood out to them and why.

### Ask these questions:

1. Reread verse 4. Why do you think each generation will tell the next generation about God’s works?
2. In verse 4, David, who wrote this psalm, says that God’s work is mighty – “...your mighty acts.” What other ways does David describe God’s works, acts, and deeds in:
  - a. Verse 5 (wondrous)
  - b. Verse 6 (awesome)
  - c. Verse 9 (merciful)
  - d. Verse 10 (thanksgiving)
  - e. Verse 12 (mighty)
  - f. Verse 13 (loving)
  - g. Verse 16 (satisfying)
  - h. Verse 17 (gracious)



3. Looking over this psalm, how many different works of God can we find?
4. When you wake up in the morning, God is doing **wondrous, awesome, merciful, mighty, loving, satisfying work**. When you go to school, God is doing **wondrous, awesome, merciful, mighty, loving, satisfying work**. When you go home after school, God is doing **wondrous, awesome, merciful, mighty, loving, satisfying work**. When you go to bed at night, God is doing **wondrous, awesome, merciful, mighty, loving, satisfying work**. How might it change our School Days if we actually think about God working in us and all around us all day long?
5. What do you think would make David want to write a psalm extolling God's work? What might you do this week to extol God's work?

Pray for your students, using the phrase "SEE GOD'S WORK" as you do. Then dismiss.