



God Is My Rock

Goal: To trust God's presence in times of trouble.

RECOGNIZING GOD'S GRACE . . .

. . . In Psalm 62:1–2, 5–7

A rock is often used in the Bible as an image for God. In the Psalms, rocks are mentioned to remind God's people of the trust they can place in God, of God's might and majesty, and of God's enduring presence throughout all generations. Verse 5 sets the tone for Psalm 62, a psalm of David. God is my hope, my rock, my salvation, my mighty rock, and my refuge.

Stories and images of rocks occur frequently in Scripture. Moses was hidden in the cleft of a rock and sheltered by God's hand as the splendor of God passed over (Exodus 33:22), and God provided water from a rock for the thirsty exiles in the wilderness (Exodus 17:6). Rocks were set up as memorials to significant events in the lives of God's people (Joshua 4). Imagine David as a shepherd boy tending his flocks, choosing stones for his slingshot, and remembering the trustworthiness of God (1 Samuel 17). Or David the fugitive, escaping the pursuit of Saul by hiding in caves (1 Samuel 24).

The word translated “rest” means to be quiet, to settle in peacefully, to rest silently. When David was accosted by his enemies, he was silent, not because he was a coward, but because he trusted God, his rock, his salvation, his refuge. David's ability to rest in God alone showed what Calvin called “the grace of silence.”

. . . In Your Children's Experiences

There are many things in children's lives that can make them feel insecure or afraid. They may have experienced the disruption of parental separation, moving, or changes in their households and families. They may be fearful of things real and imagined—war, the dark, environmental destruction, and so on. The rock is an important symbol of God's absolute and steadfast trustworthiness. This is an important message for children and adults alike.

. . . In Your Relationships with the Children

Children are often fascinated by rocks. They are intrigued by the color, texture, and strength of stones and pebbles. Although children may be interested in rocks, they may not understand or grasp the scriptural metaphor of God being our rock. Young children are concrete thinkers. They will understand that God is like a rock because God is strong and reliable. However, they may also interpret the comparison of God to a rock as indicating that God is a rock. Clarify the difference between equating God with a rock and comparing God to a rock.

*When I am overwhelmed, O Lord, lead me to the rock
that is higher than I am, for you are my refuge. Amen.*



Supplies

Music & Melodies

bit.ly/GGGMusicMelodies

Stories, Colors & More (SCM) i–iv, 10, 15, 20

basic supplies
(see p. vii)

internet-connected
device

blanket or mats

snack

Guided Play

choice 1: hard and soft
items

choice 3: blankets and
sheets

Exploring

choice 3: smooth
rocks, white acrylic
paint, paint pens or
permanent markers

choice 4: copies of
Grace Notes (GN) 1

GATHERING IN GOD’S GRACE

Before the Children Arrive

Designate a story corner and lay out a blanket or individual mats for the children so their backs will be to the door.

Use **SCM i–ii**, “Your Visual Schedule,” to provide clear expectations and a visual cue for the group.

See **SCM iii–iv** for the key to icons (for example, **LG** **T**) and ways to adapt for children who have special needs or disabilities.

Select the activities that will work best for you and for your children. You do not need to do everything suggested!

Before the session, for “Guided Play” choice 1, gather hard and soft items for the children to touch and hold such as rocks, wood, marbles, tile, bricks, metal pots, and books for hard items and sweater, cotton balls, plush toy, fake fur, house slipper, flowers (artificial or real), pillows, and fabric squares (velvet or velveteen, flannel, fleece) for soft items.

“Exploring God’s Grace” choice 3 requires more prep.

Welcoming and Guided Play

A **B** **TD** **SD**

Greet children as they arrive and say, “Grace and peace be with you.” Prompt them to respond, “And also with you.” Be sensitive to any children who might be coming for the first time. Introduce yourself to parents/caregivers you do not know personally. Tell them that today’s story is about a psalm David wrote about looking to God in times of trouble.

Invite the children to choose a guided-play activity to start:

- 1. Hard and Soft**—Assemble a variety of objects that are hard or soft. Invite the children to touch and hold the items and to sort them into hard and soft items.
- 2. Sheep and Shepherd**—Create a “sheepfold” by laying chairs down on the floor in a square “pen” with an opening large enough for children to crawl through. Let children pretend to be sheep and let them take turns being the shepherd, rounding up the sheep to go into the “pen.”
- 3. Making a Fort**—Invite the children to make a fort with tables, chairs, blankets, and sheets. They can use books to hold the blankets or sheets in place. Ask them what a fort is for. Wonder together how God is like a fort.

TD *For some children who have tactile sensitivities, stimulations such as sand, cotton balls, and felt may be a trigger. Extreme reactions that may be interpreted as bad behaviors may result. If the activity seems to be overwhelming or difficult for a child, allow the child to walk away from the activity.*

Transitioning to Story Time

When you sense the children are ready to move into group time, play and sing “God Is So Good”—**SCM 15**. Repeat words and phrases as seems appropriate.

Shake It

L

Invite the children to repeat your words and do the actions indicated.

Shake, shake, shake your hands. /
Shake your hands above you. /
Shake your hands behind you. /
Shake your hands below you. /

Shake, shake, shake your leg. /
Shake your right leg. /
Shake your left leg. /
Shake both your legs. /

Shake, shake, shake your body. /
Shake your head. /
Shake your shoulders. /
Shake your belly. /

Child of God

MS L

Invite the children to stand with you and follow your actions as you lead them in a motion poem adapted from the rhyme “Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear, Turn Around.” Laugh out loud and rejoice in the grace of God!

Child of God, child of grace, turn around. (*turn around in place*)
Child of God, child of grace, touch the ground. (*touch the floor in front of you*)
Child of God, child of grace, reach up high. (*reach arms high above your head*)
Child of God, child of grace, wink one eye. (*wink one eye*)
Child of God, child of grace, climb the stairs. (*use arms and legs to pretend to climb*)
Child of God, child of grace, say your prayers. (*fold hands in front of you*)
Child of God, child of grace, touch your nose. (*touch your nose*)



Child of God, child of grace, touch your toes. (*reach down and touch your toes*)

Child of God, child of grace, knock on wood. (*pretend to knock on a door*)

Child of God, child of grace, we are all good! (*hug yourself*)

Child of God, child of grace, turn around. (*turn around in place*)

Child of God, child of grace, sit right down. (*sit down on floor*)



Hearing the Story



Open the Bible to Psalm 62 so the children know the story comes from the Bible. Tell the children that they are going to hear a story about a psalm David wrote about looking to God in times of trouble to remind him that God was always with him.

Read **SCM 10**, omitting the actions in parentheses on this reading. Express the emotions of the story in your voice, gestures, and facial expressions. Conclude the story by prompting the children to say, “Amen.”

Read the story again and invite the children to follow your actions found in the parentheses in the story.

EXPLORING GOD’S GRACE

1. Where Is God?



Tell the children that they are going to hear about some ways that God is with us. Explain that David said, “God is my rock.” That means that God is strong and solid like a rock, but God is not an actual rock. Saying God is a rock is saying that God is very, very strong. Suggest that there are other ways that we can understand that God is with us.

Tell the children that, when you do a motion, they should repeat the motion and then say, “God is with us!”

Like a warm coat when we are cold . . . (*hug self and rub shoulders*)

God is with us!

Like the bright sun peeking out from behind a cloud . . . (*cover face with hands then peek out from behind fingers*)

God is with us!

Like refreshing rain that makes the garden grow . . . (*raise arms and then drop them slowly, wiggling fingers, then bring hands in front of face and out to your side*)

God is with us!

Like a big mountain we can climb to see far away in every direction . . . (*make climbing motions, then shield eyes with one hand as if looking far away*)



God is with us!

Like an ocean, deep and wide and beautiful . . . *(make wave motions with hands)*

God is with us!

Like the twinkling stars far away in the night sky, shining on us . . . *(wave hands and wiggle fingers)*

God is with us!

L *Following a story with many directions can be a challenge for children who struggle with attention and get easily distracted. Be attentive to their actions and break down motions as needed so they have an easier time participating. Maintain eye contact to ensure their focus is on you and the motions you are leading.*

2. Singing Together

L

Play Follow the Leader while singing a song. Let the children take turns being the leader. As you go around the room, sing this song to the tune of “Are You Sleeping?”:

God is with us, God is with us,
everywhere! Everywhere!
God is like a mighty rock!
We shall not be shaken!
God’s our rock! God’s our rock!



3. Rock Painting

TD

Before the session, gather some smooth, flat stones for painting. Paint the rocks white with acrylic paint.

Give a white rock to each child and let them add color and designs with paint pens or permanent markers. When they have finished, write “GOD” on the top of each rock with a permanent marker. Suggest that the children take home the rocks and remember that God is strong like a rock.

4. Coloring Page

C FM

Hand out copies of **GN 1** and crayons. Invite the children to color the picture of King David remembering when he was a boy. Engage the children in conversation as they color, using the following wondering questions:

- ✦ I wonder, “What is King David thinking about?”
- ✦ I wonder, “What is the young David singing?”
- ✦ I wonder, “How does David feel?”

Use “wonder” questions that do not force a child to remember facts. Wondering questions help a child think aloud. Answers are neither right nor wrong. They help teach children to speak from their hearts.



Ask parents and caregivers for their email addresses so that you can provide them with the link to www.pcusastore.com/GGGdownloads, where they can download coloring pages, *Grace Sightings*, audio stories, and songs (see p. vii).

LOVING AND SERVING GOD

L

Call the children together, singing “Kum Ba Yah (Come by Here)” — **SCM 20**. Repeat words and phrases as seems appropriate. Ask the children what they like to think that God is like.

Call the children to snack time. Invite the children to repeat your words and actions as you pray:

For food to eat, (*raise hands to mouth*) /
and friends to share, (*hold hands out*) /
for those we love everywhere, (*place hands over heart*) /
we thank you, God. (*put hands together in prayer*) /
Amen. /

As the children leave, bless them: “(Name), God is with you always!”

God Is My Rock



King David remembers that God is always with him.

