

Blessed is the Kingdom: An Orthodox Church School Curriculum



Lesson 5 3rd-5th grades

Who is God?

Objective: To understand that God is omnipotent (all powerful), omniscient (knows all things), and omnipresent (fills all things).

Lesson Introduction

5 min

Begin by **saying**:

We have been talking about how God loves us. But who is God?

Take answers, then **say**:

In the Liturgy we hear constantly about who God is. You may hear us say "In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit."

Pull out the lesson printable. **Read** each of the parts, talking about how they all refer to God. Then **say**:

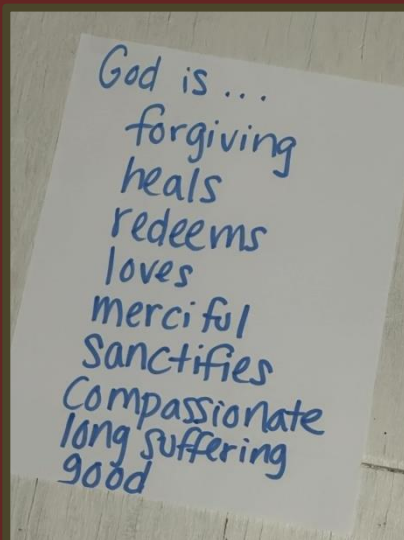
These are some of the names that we call God, but what are some words that we use to describe God? Let's listen to the First Antiphon that we sing during Liturgy. See if you can hear anything that tells us about God.

Play the first Antiphon. Feel free to **pause** it once or twice to point out phrases used to describe God.

Some you may hear include:

forgiving, heals,
redeems, loves,
merciful, sanctifies,
compassionate,
long suffering,
and good.

As they name items, **list** them on a paper or poster board to display.



Opening Prayer

O Heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth who art everywhere and fillest all things. Treasury of Blessings, and Giver of Life: Come and abide in us, and cleanse us from every impurity, and save our souls, O Good one.

Liturgy Link

The First Antiphon

<https://www.oca.org/media/video/20th-aac-thursday-morning-divine-liturgy>

Skip to 21:48-23:10 for this portion

Teacher Resource

OCA Essential Orthodox Christian Beliefs: A Manual for Adult Instruction

<https://www.oca.org/cdn/PDFs/2023-0609-EOCB.pdf>

Chapter 3 God, Jesus, and the Christian Life

Lesson—25 min

Supplies Needed

- Cup
- Bucket or bowl large enough to submerge the cup in—clear is helpful when demonstrating
- Water to fill the bucket



Additional Resource

The Holy Trinity

<https://www.oca.org/orthodoxy/the-orthodox-faith/doctrine-scripture/the-holy-trinity/the-three-divine-persons#:~:text=In%20Orthodox%20terminology%20the%20Father,in%20the%20traditional%20church%20language.>

Begin by **saying**:

Now that we have all these ways to describe God, let's look closer at who God is. Today we are going to look at the three omni's to describe God. He is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent.

Add these to your poster board. Have students practice reading and saying them. Then **say**:

But what do these mean? Let's talk about the first one—omnipotent. What does this word mean? It is a big word for ALL powerful. What is the most powerful or strongest thing you can do?

Give a minute for students to think, and then have them demonstrate something that shows they are strong or powerful. Examples could be a push up, a sit up, jumping high, running fast. After each one ooo and ahh, then **say**:

God is more powerful than all that! He is omnipotent. He can move mountains and part seas. Nothing is out of God's reach. He is ALL powerful or omnipotent! Next tell me the smartest thing you know or can do.

As with the strongest, go around the room and **take** examples. These could include: spell a long word, complete a hard math problem, or list all of the state capitals. Then **say**:

God knows all of that and more! He is omniscient. God knows everything! There is nothing He does not know. He is ALL knowing or omniscient.

Then **ask**:

Can you see God?

Take answers, then **say**:

We cannot. He is invisible. But He is everywhere or omnipresent. Let's try an experiment to help understand how He can be everywhere but invisible.

Pull out the cup, clear water bucket filled with water. Then **ask**:

What is in this cup?

Take answers. Expect them to say nothing or maybe mention air. Next **say**:

We can't see anything in it. It looks empty! But there is something in it. I'm going to put this cup into a bucket of water to show you that there is something in it.

Lesson Continued

5 Minute Bonus

Listen to the Second Antiphon

<https://www.o.ca.org/media/video/20th-aac-thursday-morning-divine-liturgy>

Skip to 24:01-25:55 for this portion

Supplemental Ideas

- Take a church walk and look at icons. See if you can see some of the traits of God in the icons pictured. Examples could be creation, Christ healing or helping others, Christ on His throne, Ascension, Pentecost, the Crucifixion, the Resurrection, and more.
- Have students practice singing the First and Second Antiphons. Encourage them to sing along next Liturgy.



Submerge the cup into the bucket of water, keeping the cup upside down to trap the air in the cup. Once it is fully submerged, turn the cup slightly, so that the air bubbles out of the cup. Then **ask**:

What did you see?

Take answers, and then **explain**:

We saw bubbles. So there was air in the cup. We just couldn't see it. We could see the effects of the air as it escaped the water. We could see the bubbles of it moving the water. We can't see God, but we can see and feel the presence of God.

Give an example of a way you have seen God or felt the presence of God. Then **ask** the students to share any they have felt or seen. Next turn on the fan, and point it at the students. **Ask** them if they can see the air the fan is moving (no), then **ask** if they can feel or experience the air. Then **say**:

This experience of God is called His energies. God's energies are similar to how we can't see the wind, but we can feel and see the effects of the wind, such as tree branches moving, the sting of it on our faces, or a balloon moving along the ground. God's energies are the way we experience God. His essence is who God is, but His energies are how we experience Him through His love, His mercy, and His kindness. When we experience His love or kindness, we are experiencing God's energies.

Refer to the Lesson Printable and show how God's love surrounds all and connects all.

Lesson Activities

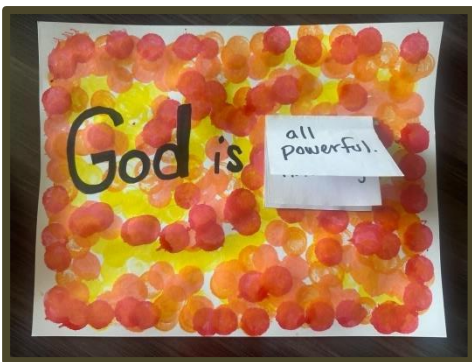
“God is...” Poster—10 min

Supplies needed: cardstock, permanent markers, finger paints or dot markers, index cards

Prior to class, write “God is” on the cardstock as shown in the picture; fold the index cards in half (7-8 per student) and staple them at the half way point like a book

During class, hold up the cardstock and **read** the phrase, “God is”. **Ask** them what they learned about who God is today. **Take** answers, and then show them the index cards, and how they are like a booklet. Have students write omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent on these cards. They can also add other ways to describe God that they heard in the Antiphons.

Have students decorate their cardstock with finger paints or dot markers in an abstract way. Once dry, glue the index cards onto the paper after the God is phrase.



Feats of Strength—10 min

Supplies needed: ball, pool noodle, cones or chalk to mark lines for the start and end point of races, stop watch

Remind students of how you talked about God being all powerful or omnipotent! Discuss how nothing is out of God’s power—He can do anything. Tell them that today you are going to see how strong and powerful each of them is! Complete as many of the following tasks as time allows—if you have extra time, have them complete them more than once and see if they can be stronger or more powerful the second time.

Feats of Strength:

- How many jumps can they do in 20 seconds
- How far can they run in 10 seconds
- How far can they jump
- How far can they throw a ball
- How far can they throw a pool noodle “javelin”
- How long can they stand on one foot
- How long can they stand on the other foot



Closing Thoughts— 5 min

Think of movements with the students that will help them remember each of the three traits of God. Examples could be omniscient—point to their head; omnipotent—make muscles; omnipresent—spin in a circle.

Closing Prayer

It is truly meet to bless you, O Theotokos, ever-blessed and most pure, and the Mother of our God. More honorable than the Cherubim, and more glorious beyond compare than the Seraphim, without defilement you gave birth to God the Word. True Theotokos we magnify you!

Lesson Printable

