

Leaving Home with God

by Beth Beall



Are you leaving home this summer? Maybe you are going on a vacation with your family. Perhaps you're going to a sleep-away camp, or even to a day camp. In this activity we'll read a prayer from the Bible and remember that God travels with us everywhere. We'll also create some materials we might take with us the next time we leave home.

For

Just for Kids

Season

Summer

Needed

The Bible passage at the end of this activity.

Optional: crayons, markers, a piece of ribbon or string, drawing paper, tape, strips of paper (the kind you would use to create Christmas tree chains)

Activity Plan

1. Begin with a prayer. You might like to place your hands over your heart as you pray silently or aloud. If you'd like to use words, you could try these: *"Loving God, you always go before me. You always go with me. You will never leave me, and I thank you. Amen."*
2. On your own or with an adult, read the Psalm on the last page. (Note: Psalm is pronounced "Sahlm." The Psalms are a collection of prayers in the Bible.)
3. After reading the Psalm, select one or more of these questions to think about or to discuss with someone else:
 - If you could go anywhere in the world, I wonder where you'd like to go? Along with God, I wonder who else you would want to go with you?
 - I wonder how God can be everywhere, with everyone, all at once?

- Look at where you are right now. I wonder how it feels to know that God is with you in that place? Maybe you want to take a moment and ponder that. The God who created the vast solar systems is with YOU, right now!
- Think about one of the places you will be going to this summer. Maybe you are excited about going. Maybe you feel uncertain or even a little scared. Close your eyes for a few minutes, and picture God's hands holding you with great love as you go to that place and again as you come home.

Optional Activities

No matter where you go this summer, God holds you and loves you. Create a reminder that God is with you everywhere. Here are some ideas for a reminder you might make:

- Print off the Psalm in this activity. Decorate the sheet however you'd like, using markers or crayons. Roll up the decorated sheet and put a ribbon around it. Take it with you when you go away, and open it up to read whenever you'd like.
- Draw a picture of yourself in the wildest or most amazing place you can imagine. Is it a castle in the sky? Is it an underwater city? Is it a treehouse on planet Jupiter? Is it a great big picnic on a cloud with all of your favorite people? Have fun creating that picture, and somewhere on the picture write these words: "No matter where I go, God is with me!"
- If you are traveling with some other people, you might make a special wristband for each person. Take a strip of paper, and on it write, "God goes with us." Fit each strip around a person's wrist, taping the two ends together.



Psalm 139 (selected verses)

Loving God, you know when I sit down and when I stand up.

You know when I leave and when I get back.

I'm never out of your loving sight!

If I look behind me, you're there.

If I look up ahead, you're there, too.

You hold me in your hand, no matter where I go.

This is all so wonderful! It's hard for me to understand it.

Is there anyplace I can go that you won't be with me?

If I fly up into the air, you're there.

If I go into the deepest underground part of the world,
you are there, too.

If I cross the widest ocean, you will be with me, holding me.

If I find myself in the darkest place imaginable,
you will be with me, making the dark place bright.

I am with you, and you are with me, forever.

