



With topics  
for Adults  
and Children

# Sunday School Superintendent

**SPRING QUARTER**

**March, April, May 2019**



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## Editorials

BY DERRICK M. HAMMOND

# Servants of the Lord and New Teaching

God, in His infinite wisdom, chose to dwell among people and complete His perfect work through them. This quarter, we will carefully examine two principal ways God’s people responded to His work in their lives. The first way, which adults will study, involved the commitment of new believers to the wide range of instruction they were expected to follow. The second, which young people will examine, involved various acts of service. Given that both longtime servants and newly committed converts express submis-

sion to God, both children and adults are learning about submission.

Readers will find it interesting that the Scriptures for the adult lessons are drawn primarily from the books of Thesalonians and Galatians, both of which speak to believers who are young in the faith. Texts for the children’s lessons, on the other hand, come from books throughout the Bible and, with the exception of the young Samuel, involve people who had been walking with the Lord a long time. Thus, we get a refreshing reminder that you are never too old

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to review the basics of the Christian faith or too young to comprehend the depths of walking with the Lord for many years.

In our first unit for youth, we will learn that fearlessness does not mean to be without fear as much as it describes a willingness to face fear. Children will look at how two prophets (Moses and Jeremiah), two kings (David and Hezekiah), and a queen named Esther were all willing to face their fears. While their fears ranged from concern about enemy attacks to distress over standing up for others, the response of each servant was the same—fearless faith in their service to God.

Adults will spend the first quarter examining Paul's labor of love; the apostle emphatically urges the young Thessalonian church on to spiritual maturity. Given today's climate of low moral standards, these lessons provide students with unique challenges and should prompt interesting discussion. The Bible sets a high standard for the loyalties, affections, and conduct of new believers who are serious about their walk with the Lord.

The second unit, which for the youth includes Easter Sunday, begins to converge on the Person and work of Jesus Christ. Jesus is the Beloved Servant, who was chosen, honored, raised from the dead, and given all power. Most of the texts for the children's lessons in the second unit are taken from the book of Matthew; this disciple wrote his Gospel to prove that Jesus was the Messiah sent to serve as prophesied in the Old Testament.

Adults will have a short, three-week second unit that focuses on the inevitable growth that takes place for those who put their faith in Jesus. Confidence, awareness, and resolve are just three of the many areas of growth that become apparent when believers remain in Him.

The final unit of the quarter brings both the youth and adult studies to corresponding climaxes. The hallmark of a servant is faithfulness (cf. Matt. 25:21). Therefore, the children close the quarter by looking at six faithful servants: Samuel, the three Hebrew boys from Daniel 3, Philip, and Paul. Each of these servants was ready to serve, give his life, share the gospel, and do the Lord's work.

Adults will close the quarter by unpacking various aspects of the true gospel that are the hallmarks of a new believer. Except the first lesson of the unit, which is on Easter Sunday, the passages for the remaining lessons are all taken from the book of Galatians.

The Galatians began their journey by faith but soon began to adopt a works-based salvation. In response, Paul launched a forceful attack against a works-based gospel in support of the true gospel. By the end of the unit, students will know that salvation is by grace alone through faith. We pray the Lord's blessings on your ministry as you engage in a fascinating quarter of study.

*(Editorials continued on page 31)*

# A New Loyalty

## I Thessalonians 1:1-10

**GOLDEN TEXT**—“They themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God” (I Thessalonians 1:9).

### OPENING MOMENTS

#### Suggested Song

“A Charge to Keep I Have” (Wesley)

#### Icebreaker

List five things that a person can be loyal to. When these loyalties conflict with one another, how do you determine which one to honor?

### LESSON OUTLINE

1. **Gratitude for their new loyalty**  
(I **Thess. 1:1-4**)
2. **The basis of their new loyalty**  
(I **Thess. 1:5-7**)
3. **The fruits of their new loyalty**  
(I **Thess. 1:8-10**)

### KEY ISSUES

The church at Thessalonica demonstrated exemplary faith even though it was made up of new converts. Paul wrote I Thessalonians to encourage the young church to remain true to their Christian allegiance despite competing loyalties. His swift response to their concerns highlights his understanding of how important encouragement is to ensuring that believers remain loyal to the Christian faith. Teachers should note Paul’s model for encouragement and, if possible, lead the class discussion in a similar pattern.

Paul expressed gratitude for the loyalty of the Thessalonians, reiterated the basis of their loyalty, and

reminded them of the fruits that had resulted from it. First, he detailed numerous aspects of their loyalty that he appreciated. After discussing the overall importance of encouraging one another, teachers should touch on the significance of providing detail when expressing gratitude. Far too often, we skimp on the details of gratitude but let them abound when we complain.

Second, teachers should discuss how the basis of the church’s loyalty is not simply the words we proclaim, but truth substantiated by the Holy Spirit’s power in our lives and the character of our preachers. Unfortunately, these latter two realities are often overlooked today. Finally, teachers should explore the value of sharing the fruits of people’s labor with them. People do not always know the extent to which their effort glorifies God, so third-party testimonies can be especially encouraging.

### BRINGING IT HOME

We often assume believers should easily and naturally adhere to Christian loyalties, but this is far from the truth. Adherence is not easy given the competing loyalties we face in the world (Rom. 12:2), and it is not natural because our flesh is at enmity with God (8:7). Students should be challenged to encourage one another using Paul’s model. Teachers must remember to encourage each other as well!

# God's Servant Moses

Numbers 16:23-34

**GOLDEN TEXT**—"If these men die the common death of all men, . . . then the Lord hath not sent me" (Numbers 16:29).

## OPENING MOMENTS

### Suggested Song

"Holy, Holy, Holy" (Heber)

### Icebreaker

Can God ever be too hard on sin?

## LESSON OUTLINE

1. **Israel's separation**  
(Num. 16:23-27)
2. **Moses' confirmation**  
(Num. 16:28-30)
3. **Korah's destruction**  
(Num. 16:31-34)

## KEY ISSUES

Given today's culture of tolerance, kids will likely have a difficult time understanding many aspects of this text. To them, Korah and his allies could simply have had a difference of opinion that they were fully entitled to have. So what kept Moses from just agreeing to disagree or at least asking God for a less severe sign?

Even youth whose faith allows them to conceptualize the miraculous swallowing of the men by the earth will almost certainly struggle with the fact that Moses did not love his enemy here, which is a fundamental principle for New Testament believers.

Any approach to presenting this lesson must be rooted in understanding the significance of God's holiness. These men were not just presenting Moses with a differing opinion; they

were standing against the will of God, which is sin. The Bible says that the wages of sin is death (Rom. 6:23), and there are many instances where God seems to be too hard on a person when, in His holiness, He was responding judiciously to their sin (cf. Josh. 7:24-25; II Sam. 6:7; Acts 5:5, 10).

Today's youth must learn to recognize the importance of separating themselves from sin. For where there is sin, there will always be death. While death for these rebellious men was literal, death for modern Christians often means broken fellowship with God (Isa. 59:2).

Moses was fearless in facing sin head-on for God's glorification.

## BRINGING IT HOME

Many times, youth do not want to separate themselves from friends who are living in sin because they do not always see how the sin impacts them. They should leave the classroom with a renewed commitment to address sin in their lives head-on.

### FINAL THOUGHTS

It may be helpful to have the kids associate sin with things they strongly dislike, like certain foods, bad smells, or pain.