

PRIMARY B·I·B·L·E TEACHER

For Teachers of Children
Ages 6 Through 8



Union
Gospel
Press



SUMMER

June, July, August 2022

Primary Bible Teacher

SUMMER QUARTER

June, July, August 2022

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EDITORIALS

DEAR PRIMARY TEACHER:

Overestimating one's importance is a common mistake made among those who are eventually humbled by failure in a big way. Good servants of the Lord, however, are quick to recognize their own insufficiency and inability apart from the Lord's guidance and sustainment. This quarter's lessons have no shortage of people who obeyed the Lord and relied on Him.

The prophets Samuel and Isaiah are among the servants of the Lord who appear in the first unit, lessons 1 through 4. Your students might take particular interest in and be encouraged by the fact that Samuel served the Lord from his youth. Faithfulness to the Lord can present challenges, but God remains faithful to His Word and people throughout those challenges. Asaph eventually recognized this truth in the quarter's third lesson and praised the Lord accordingly. The first unit concludes by showing how good leadership played an integral role in the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem.

As the events of the Old Testament unfolded, God would from time to time give messages to His people via His prophets. The second unit, lessons 5 through 8, starts off with Haggai and then Micah being given messages that were not necessarily popular but were truthful and convicting for the Israelites. Still, these men bravely proclaimed God's Word. The unit closes out with lessons that focus on Habakkuk praising God for His faithfulness and Ezekiel delivering a message of hope.

The quarter's final unit, lessons 9 through 13, picks up in the New Testament. The unit's first lesson presents a clear demonstration of Jesus' power

to heal, even from long range, as He healed the servant of a centurion without even physically being present with the servant. In the following week's lesson, Jesus displayed His power and authority over the forces of nature and demons. The signs done by Jesus show that He is the Son of God and the anticipated Saviour.

The final three lessons of the quarter focus on God working through chosen people to bring healing while also validating the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ through them. The apostle Peter is prominently used by God in lesson 11 when a crippled man received the ability to walk. In the following lesson, Ananias was used by the Lord in restoring sight to a man named Saul, who later became better known as the apostle Paul. In the quarter's final lesson, Paul was delivered from suffering subsequent harm from a venomous snakebite and was then used by God to bring healing to natives of an island called Melita.

Throughout this quarter's lessons, faithful and committed service to the Lord is paired with faithful and committed sustainment from the Lord. While the quarter's material highlights the manner in which numerous people were used by God in the advancement of His plan, the ultimate Servant of God is His Son, Jesus. And the ultimate healing and deliverance from sin come through faith in Him.

May the Lord use you in an awesome way as you strive to impart His truth to the young lives in your class.

God bless,

Reginald Coats

A Few Things to Keep in View

Our own childhood is something that can feel so far behind us that it is no longer even detected in our rear-view mirror. As teachers, however, there are some important aspects of being a child that we must remember and take into consideration in order to teach primary students effectively. Let us take a look at a few of the factors that are important to remember.

Your students are likely to take what they hear in the most literal way. Figures of speech frequently taken for granted by adults can cause an immense amount of confusion for primaries. An added concern is the fact that they might not verbally express their confusion to you.

Take accepting or inviting Jesus into one's heart for example. Students can be told that this is something they need to do. But in a literal sense, inviting Jesus into one's heart does not save anyone. A person must actually believe that Jesus died for his or her sins and was raised from the dead (Rom. 10:9; 1 Thess. 4:14-17). The person must trust Jesus as Saviour, which may or may not be a reality for someone who claims to have "invited Jesus" into his heart. Take time to carefully articulate biblical truth, and encourage students to ask questions when they do not have a good understanding of topics covered in a lesson.

The attention span of children also plays a critical role in the learning process. Perhaps you would love nothing more than for your students to value the words coming from your mouth more than the greatest treasure ever discovered. That would definitely be a dream come true for any teacher. The truth of the matter, however, is that all kinds of thoughts can be popping in and out of your students' minds as

you read from the lesson or recite material that you have so wonderfully and carefully prepared for them. Students might unwittingly disconnect from the lesson to mentally reconnect at some later point to do things as seemingly insignificant as pondering whether they should try leaving pickles on their hamburger the next time they are given a chance to do so.

As a teacher, you should not necessarily perceive this as a personal indictment. There are limitations to your students' minds due to the current developmental stage and maturity level of their brains. For this reason, the task of keeping your students engaged will always be a challenging one. Preparing and making use of visual aids can be a powerful and helpful tool in this regard. Asking questions that give children an opportunity to use their imaginations and express their interests can also assist in an integral way. By doing this and incorporating student feedback into the lesson in some way, you will render your primary students more inclined to stay interested as the lesson is being presented.

Expecting your students to remain seated with their hands nicely folded on their laps throughout the entire duration of class is also unreasonable. As you are probably already well aware, vibrant primary students are full of energy and will find sitting still for prolonged periods of time nearly impossible. Look for opportunities to convert their energy and enthusiasm into productive and fun interaction throughout your time in class.

A teacher should also think critically about the way he presents the lesson. A lesson might not seem complete apart from having a "moral to the story." However, not every biblical passage has a moral to the story. A

passage might simply and accurately give an account of events that took place. Of course, all God's people can learn and benefit from the entirety of His Word (II Tim. 3:16-17), but be on guard and avoid giving in to the urge of imposing a moralistic teaching on every lesson.

When all the seemingly smaller narratives and other passages in Scripture are put together, what can always be seen is the fact that God is at work and is faithfully working in and through His people to accomplish the ultimate plan and goal of glorifying Himself. Bringing the gift of salvation through His Son, Jesus, is paramount in that endeavor. As you prepare to teach each week, try challenging yourself to identify in the lesson text how God worked through people and situations to glorify Himself.

Instead of always giving a moral to the story, bolster your students' faith by helping them recognize how God has faithfully been with His people and how He has worked through them to glorify Himself over the course of human history. Help your students to understand that even the smaller biblical accounts in a given lesson are part of God's much bigger plan.

The events of the Bible can seem like ancient history, and actually they are. It is important that your students understand that the people in the Bible were real. The Bible is not fictional literature, and the heroes and villains of works of fiction should not be viewed on par with the people whose lives are recorded in the Bible.

Through Scripture, we learn that those who would faithfully serve the Lord have always faced problems and persecution of various forms. They have had to overcome challenges and deal with adversity in real life. Attempts to make connections between the lives and situations of people in the Bible with the lives of students can go a long way in helping students de-

velop beliefs and convictions that are rooted in the truth of God's Word.

There is another component that must be kept in view and put into practice when teaching. In fact, *love* is to be an integral component in all that a Christian does (cf. I Cor. 13:3), and teaching is, of course, no exception. Children will no doubt take notice when your actions and conversation show genuine concern for them. By remembering names and details that have been shared with you, you can demonstrate love and concern for students.

When asking a student about how he or she is doing, you should be prepared to listen and respond appropriately to whatever information is then shared with you. More often than not, you will receive a quick response affirming that all is well after asking a student how he or she is doing. However, there may also be times when a student is dealing with some serious issues. If that is the case, you will need to be ready and prepared to listen and respond accordingly. Failing to do so in order to quickly move on to other matters will likely result in the student developing serious doubts about your actual level of care and concern. Remember, love must be demonstrated through actions. Taking time to pray with students and remembering to ask follow-up questions over the course of subsequent weeks will convey to the students in your class that you really care.

Teaching primary students is not easy, and your time and effort might be taken for granted from time to time. But one very important truth that you must never lose sight of or take for granted is the fact that the Lord is with you and using you to make a tremendous impact on the lives of young students. Your efforts are not in vain, and the investment that you are making now has the potential to be used by God for His glory for years to come.



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Eli helped Samuel realize that he had heard from God.

God Has a Job for Samuel

Lesson Text: I Samuel 3:1-9, 19-20; 7:3-5, 10, 12

GOLDEN TEXT—“And the Lord ... called as at other times, Samuel, Samuel. Then Samuel answered, Speak; for thy servant heareth” (I Samuel 3:10).

Scripture Lesson Text

1 SAMUEL 3:1 And the child Samuel ministered unto the LORD before Eli. And the word of the LORD was precious in those days; *there was no open vision.*

2 And it came to pass at that time, when Eli was laid down in his place, and his eyes began to wax dim, *that he could not see;*

3 And ere the lamp of God went out in the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God was, and Samuel was laid down *to sleep;*

4 That the LORD called Samuel: and he answered, *Here am I.*

5 And he ran unto Eli, and said, *Here am I; for thou calledst me.* And he said, *I called not; lie down again.* And he went and lay down.

6 And the LORD called yet again, Samuel. And Samuel arose and went to Eli, and said, *Here am I; for thou didst call me.* And he answered, *I called not, my son; lie down again.*

7 Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, neither was the word of the LORD yet revealed unto him.

8 And the LORD called Samuel again the third time. And he arose and went to Eli, and said, *Here am I; for thou didst call me.* And Eli perceived that the LORD had called the child.

9 Therefore Eli said unto Samuel, *Go, lie down: and it shall be, if he call thee, that thou shalt say, Speak, LORD; for thy servant heareth.* So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

19 And Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground.

20 And all Israel from Dan even to Beer-sheba knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the LORD.

7:3 And Samuel spake unto all the house of Israel, saying, *If ye do return unto the LORD with all your hearts, then put away the strange gods and Ashtaroth from among you, and prepare your hearts unto the LORD, and serve him only: and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines.*

4 Then the children of Israel did put away Baalim and Ashtaroth, and served the LORD only.

5 And Samuel said, *Gather all Israel to Mizpeh, and I will pray for you unto the LORD.*

10 And as Samuel was offering up the burnt offering, the Philistines drew near to battle against Israel: but the LORD thundered with a great thunder on that day upon the Philistines, and discomfited them; and they were smitten before Israel.

12 Then Samuel took a stone, and set it between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it Eben-ezer, saying, *Hitherto hath the LORD helped us.*

NOTES ON THE LESSON

Samuel's birth was God's answer to the prayer of childless Hannah (cf. I Sam. 1:11). She had promised to give her son to God, and Samuel had lived at the tabernacle since Hannah had stopped nursing him (vss. 24-28).

"The word of the Lord was precious in those days; there was no open vision" (3:1). "Precious" can be translated "rare." Because of the Israelites' sin, God had not spoken.

Although the child Samuel served faithfully in the tabernacle, he did not recognize God's voice. Eli the priest, older and more experienced, realized God was calling Samuel.

Christians should always listen for God's call. He does not speak audibly today but reveals Himself through His written Word, the Bible.

As Samuel grew older, his relationship with the Lord grew stronger. His reputation as a prophet of God was established throughout Israel. This should be true of your Christian life also. Because you serve the heavenly Father, other people should recognize that you are God's child.

Samuel told the Israelites to put away the false gods they were worshipping. "Ashtaroth" is the plural of "Ashtoreth" and is associated with Venus. (Ashtoreth was a goddess of fertility.) "Baalim" is the plural of "Baal," who was a grain god and therefore also worshipped as a fertility god.

Like Samuel, believers sometimes have to tell people about their sin and urge others to turn to the Lord. When you are faced with such a task, pray that your listeners will turn in repentance to the Lord as the Israelites did when Samuel urged them to give up their idolatry.

The Israelites gathered at Mizpah to repent and pray, but the Philistines either feared the Israelites were massing

for battle or decided it was strategically wise to strike while so many of the enemy were gathered in one place.

The Lord fought for His people with loud thunder that disturbed and confused the Philistines.

"Ebenezer" means stone of help. The scene of the Israelites' victory over the Philistines had been the scene of their defeat by the Philistines years earlier. At that time, the Philistines had captured the ark of the covenant (cf. 4:1-2, 11).

THE OBJECT IN VIEW:

Emphasize the importance of hearing and obeying God's Word.

TRUTHS TO STRESS:

1. God spoke to Samuel.
2. Samuel told the Israelites to turn from their false gods and to worship only the Lord.
3. Boys and girls should listen to God's Word and obey it.

PLANNING VISUAL AIDS

For Beginning the Lesson, bring a photograph of a plaque, statue, or historic marker in your community.

For Telling How to Live, you will need a Bible.

For Helping to Remember, you will need a sheet of white paper and a sheet of construction paper for each child. You also will need pencils and a stapler.

BEGINNING THE LESSON

(Show picture of local historical marker.) This plaque (or statue or marker) marks the spot in our city