

PRIMARY B.I.B.L.E TEACHER

WINTER

For Teachers of Children
Ages 6 through 8

December 2020,
January, February 2021



Union
Gospel
Press

Primary Bible Teacher

WINTER QUARTER

December 2020, January, February 2021

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Edited and published quarterly by
THE INCORPORATED TRUSTEES OF THE
GOSPEL WORKER SOCIETY
UNION GOSPEL PRESS DIVISION

Rev. W. B. Musselman, Founder

Price: \$3.25 per quarter*

\$13.00 per year*

*shipping and handling extra

ISBN 978-1-59843-981-8



EDITORIALS

DEAR PRIMARY TEACHER:

This quarter's lessons are about the beginnings of Jesus' life and ministry. The lessons will answer important questions: Where did Jesus come from? Why did He come to earth? Who is Jesus? How is Jesus real to me today? Why should I follow Him?

The Apostle John thought about Jesus' beginnings when he wrote, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1:1). It is important that the children in your classroom realize that Jesus was and is God and that He became man. It is truly a great privilege to introduce the Person and deity of Jesus to a young child!

At Christmas, we will tell the magnificent story of Jesus' birth. Matthew 1:21 tells us, "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins."

When Jesus entered His early ministry years at the age of thirty, He did not lose sight of His heavenly commission. He knew that He was here, ultimately, to save His people from their sins.

It is still Jesus' passion to save all of us from our sins. As teachers of primary-age children, we have the distinct honor of joining Christ in His Great Commission to present the gospel to children, whom He loves so much.

Part of the gospel is repentance from sin. Both Jesus and His forerunner, John the Baptist, stressed the need to repent from sin and receive God's forgiveness. Jesus had not yet died on the cross, but both John the Baptist and Jesus prepared the people on earth to recognize and accept Jesus

as the Christ, the promised Messiah.

You may wonder how repentance may apply to a young child. One six-year-old recently told me, "Sometimes I do bad things." His face was crestfallen and sad. It was a holy moment because this boy felt the Holy Spirit's conviction about his sin of anger. It was my privilege to explain to him what it means to repent and know that God will forgive us.

Primary students are at the age—or will soon enter the age—when they feel the Holy Spirit's conviction of sin for the first time. Christian children, as well as non-Christian children, need to know how to go to God in prayer and receive God's forgiveness. You may be the very first person who explains to them how to repent and receive forgiveness!

Of course, we will take this a step deeper. John explained the passion of Jesus' ministry in John 1:10-12. John wrote, "He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name."

As teachers of God's precious children, we are blessed to continue in the Great Commission of Christ. It is our delight and privilege to lead a child to know Christ and to believe on His name. Each child who receives Jesus will receive God's power to become *His* child. What a blessed experience!

Excited for your journey ahead,
Hope Flinchbaugh

Enhancing the Five Senses in Teaching

Children ages six to eight normally think in concrete terms, which means they tend to learn more by doing than by listening. In school, your child has learned that most concrete words are nouns. A concrete noun is a person, place, or thing. All concrete nouns are enhanced by experiencing them with the five senses: sight, touch, hearing, smell, and taste. As teachers, we are wise to do our best to tap into all five senses during class time with the primary age group.

If a child expects to sit in a chair and listen to a teacher talk the whole time, he or she may resist coming at all! When our students leave the room, they will recall all that they experienced in class. Of course, we want to maintain our own excitement about each lesson and present a positive learning experience!

Your student will remember that you smiled at her when she walked in the door. Another student will be excited to tell his parents that he acted out a part or knew an answer in class. The hyperactive child may recall the moment you placed your hand gently on his shoulder and whispered his name. The positive interaction in class can be experienced with handcrafts. That sense of touch and the enjoyment of working on a concrete project together with their teacher and friends will stay with them.

Probably the most important concrete “noun” your students will see will be your Bible. Be sure to bring a Bible to class and praise the students who remember to bring theirs too. Before you begin to teach, pick up your Bible and place it in front of you. In time, children will make the connection that the stories you present are taken from the Holy Bible and are both important and true.

We have presented a few ideas that

you can utilize in each lesson that will involve several of the five senses. Because our focus this quarter is on the early life and ministry of Jesus, you will want to consider what Jesus may have experienced when He was born and when He entered His ministry. What did Jesus see, taste, hear, touch, and smell as He walked with His disciples from place to place, taught, and performed miracles? These are concrete experiences that will appeal to your primary learners. You may not have time to explore all five senses in each class, but it can be fun if you latch on to one main thing each week, such as bringing a food to try, a secret smell sack, or an item from home to touch. The following ideas are provided as suggestions to inspire you. Be sure to choose something that you will personally enjoy.

Sense of Sight. Along with your Bible, it is important during this quarter that children see illustrations of Jesus and His followers. Besides the picture provided in the lesson booklet, you may find free Bible story pictures online. Plenty of pictures are available free for educational use. Simply find the picture you want and print it off.

Sense of Smell. A few of the spices that were used in Jesus’ time and easily available to us today are mustard, cinnamon, garlic, and cumin. You may also allow the children to smell a bag of pistachios or walnuts or touch and smell the hay in the manger. When speaking of new life in Christ, a fragrant flower can represent the new life that comes when we trust Jesus for salvation. Always check for allergies ahead of time.

Sense of Taste. If you decide to present a food theme each week, you may want to introduce olives and olive oil,

which were popular when Jesus walked the earth. If cooking in class is impractical or too time-consuming, you may wish to bring substitutes. For example, instead of tasting fish, you can bring rainbow-colored goldfish crackers. Unleavened bread is a lot of fun to introduce to a class of children. You may buy a small portion and break off pieces to share. Figs or raisins may be represented by cookies with figs or raisins in them. Exercise great caution due to food allergies.

Sense of Touch. Some children are kinesthetic learners, and they need to engage with hands-on activities. We have provided craft ideas, but if you want to explore other projects, craft pictures and ideas can be found by searching online. Research using simple search terms (For example, “kids craft Jesus walks on water”). A host of fun ideas will be presented. Children love to act out a Bible story or retell the story using puppets. You may direct children to draw pictures on a chalkboard, whiteboard, or paper wall mural.

Sense of Hearing. Besides teaching the story with pictures, suggestions will be given to use sounds, such as a waterfall, from online video streaming services. You can play these sounds using your cell phone. Sounds like this are optional, of course, and chances are you will have a few children in class who will be happy to improvise a few sounds as needed!

Again, one of the most important things your students need to see is your Bible. You can encourage the students to bring their Bibles too so that children can see the Bible is important to you and that it is the source of that day's story.

Before your students arrive in class this week, look around. What will the children see? Will a smell or a sound trigger a memory of a great Bible class? Do you have a handcraft or a fun food item to touch, smell, or taste?

Remember, primary learners are not abstract thinkers. The more concrete our presentation, the greater the impact!

It is important to remember that children often find it difficult to express experiences or emotions that are outside the realm of the five senses. Because children are such concrete thinkers, they tend to relate everything around them directly to themselves. For example, if circumstances at home are filled with tension and indecision, the child will likely feel that events all around them are directly related to them and even their fault. Worse, a child may display behavior that is out of the norm and even act out in a way that is inappropriate. It is important that this child's teacher does not jump to conclusions immediately and instead steps back and prays for that child.

For example, I recently heard a teacher say, “I think that mother believes her daughter can do no wrong.” The teacher felt the daughter, her student, was being spoiled and given whatever she wanted. In reality, that student's parents had just separated, and the student was suffering terribly. Well-meaning parents may introduce their child to more extracurricular activities or indulge their child in other ways as a means to compensate for the pain of a family crisis or breakup.

If a student's mood in class changes or their participation increases or decreases, first pray and ask God to show you the right questions to ask of the parent or child. If a child's normal routine is disrupted, then his sleep schedule may be altered, his interests may change, and his concentration may decrease.

Children are concrete thinkers, but, of course, they have feelings. Your students will certainly feel the love of God coming from you as you stand before them to teach or help them with a craft. Use your classroom resources, lessons, and activities to express God's love!



John the Baptist preached to Israel that the Messiah, the Saviour, was coming soon.

John Tells People About Jesus

Lesson Text: John 1:15-28

GOLDEN TEXT—“No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him” (John 1:18).

Scripture Lesson Text

JOHN 1:15 John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me.

16 And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.

17 For the law was given by Moses, *but* grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

18 No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

19 And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou?

20 And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ.

21 And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No.

22 Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself?

23 He said, I *am* the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias.

24 And they which were sent were of the Pharisees.

25 And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet?

26 John answered them, saying, I baptize with water: but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not;

27 He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose.

28 These things were done in Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing.

NOTES ON THE LESSON

Today's lesson is about repentance. Repentance is never forced on us; it is only offered. God gave us the Holy Spirit to "reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment" (John 16:8). God knows that sin hurts us and dishonors Him, so He brings conviction of sin, which can make us feel guilty, or just plain sad.

In His love, God extends to us the opportunity to repent of our sin. In today's lesson, you will teach the children that to repent means to be sad that you did a bad thing, so you ask God for forgiveness.

It may help to consider the process of repentance:

1. We sin.
2. The Holy Spirit convicts us of that sin.
3. We feel sad and want to stop committing the sin.
4. We turn away from sin.
5. We turn to God and ask Him to forgive us.
6. God forgives us, and our relationship with Him is restored!

THE OBJECT IN VIEW:

John helped people turn away from sin so that they would be ready to meet and receive Jesus as the promised Christ. If we pray and turn away from sin, we will be ready to meet Jesus Christ as our Saviour.

TRUTHS TO STRESS:

1. God asked John the Baptist to do two big jobs, and John obeyed God.
2. When we sin, we can repent and pray to God.
3. God has the power to help us stop doing bad things and save us from sin.

PLANNING VISUAL AIDS

For Beginning the Lesson, you will need a rectangular blue sheet or tablecloth that children may step on. They will be pretending it is water. If desired, you may play a video that has a running water sound effect for class.

For Telling the Lesson, you will need your Bible. You will also need a picture of John the Baptist in the water, preaching and/or baptizing people, as well as the picture of John the Baptist preaching in the lesson booklet. Lastly, draw a simple, round happy face on a piece of paper. Underneath the happy face, print, "Repent—I tell God I am sorry!" Flip the paper over and draw a round sad face. Under the sad face, print, "Sin—I did a bad thing."

For Helping to Remember, cut out a circle about the size of the palm of your hand. Make one for each child and use various light colors of construction paper. You will also need clear tape, a craft stick, and a dark colored marker or crayon for each child. Before class, use a fine marker to print "Sin" on one side of each stick. On the other side, print "Repent."

BEGINNING THE LESSON

(Place the long blue sheet or tablecloth on the floor in a wrinkled pattern, like waves of water. If available, turn on the video that sounds like running water).

Children, let us pretend that this is water. Raise your hand if you can think of one thing that we can do with water. (Take one answer at a time. Each time a child mentions something that water is useful for, invite him or her to step into the "river." Keep the answers