

TnT Ministries is an independent UK charity that was founded in 1993 out of a deep concern for the level of Biblical ignorance that exists not only in this country but also in the Church.

For over twenty-five years, we have been resourcing and equipping adults to teach the Bible to children more faithfully, more creatively and more effectively.

In recent years the work has expanded substantially to include several international training programmes and a range of downloadable materials called **Mustard Seeds**.

We firmly believe that the Bible is God's word to mankind and that it contains everything we need to know to be reconciled with God through faith in Jesus Christ and live in a way that is pleasing to him. Therefore, we believe it is vital to teach the Bible accurately to children, being careful to explain each passage's true meaning in an age-appropriate manner, rather than selecting a 'children's message' from a Biblical passage.

Teaching Resources

Our online range includes:

- **Bible Tots** – a rolling 55-lesson programme aimed at helping churches to run a deliberate Bible-teaching programme for 18-month to 3-year olds. Syllabus outline and sample lesson attached.
- **Mustard Seeds for 3-11s** – a 216-lesson, 4-year programme designed to take children through the majority of the Bible text and provide a solid foundation for the teenage years. Syllabus outline and sample lesson attached.
- **Mustard Seeds for 11-18s** – a range of adaptable Bible-teaching resources which can be used in various contexts including after-school clubs, evening weekday or Sunday youth programmes. Syllabus outline to follow. Sample lesson attached.

www.mustard-seeds.net

Training Days

Our training days provide a fantastic opportunity for churches to come together to be enthused and equipped for ministry amongst children and teens.

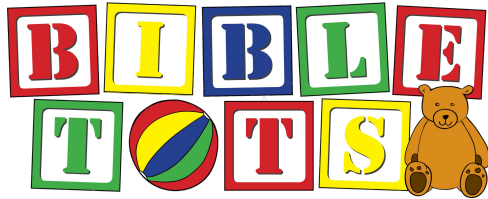
We have a well-established training network throughout the UK, but also provide regular training in Europe, Asia and Africa.

Each training day includes sound biblical principles of ministry balanced with practical ministry skills and a wealth of local church ministry experience in a range of cultural settings.

See where we are training by visiting our dedicated booking portal at the website below. You can also contact us via the website to enquire about hosting a training event at your church.

We are committed to helping churches anywhere in the world that are serious about teaching the Bible to young people.

www.tntministries.org.uk



This series is designed to engage 18-month to 3-year old children with a Bible teaching programme that will lay the foundation for a distinctively Christian worldview.

A suggested session outline is provided and each lesson includes craft, game and reinforcement ideas for parents (see the attached sample lesson).

Complete Programme Outline

Series 1: God Made – introduces God as the universal Creator of all things. Lessons include:

1. God Made the Sky and Birds
2. God Made the Sea and Fish
3. God Made the Earth and Flowers
4. God Made the Earth and Trees
5. God Made the Animals and Insects
6. God Made the Wild Animals
7. God Made Domestic Animals
8. God Made Me
9. God Made: Summary

Series 2: Thank You God – teaches the appropriate response of gratitude for all that God has made including who we are as human beings. Lessons include:

1. Thank You, God, for My Hands
2. Thank You, God, for My Feet
3. Thank You, God, for My Eyes
4. Thank You, God, for My Ears
5. Thank You, God, for My Nose
6. Thank You, God, for My Mouth
7. Thank You, God, for Making Me
8. Thank You, God, for My Mum
9. Thank You, God, for My Dad
10. Thank You, God, for My Family
11. Thank You, God, for Spring
12. Thank You, God, for Summer
13. Thank You, God, for Autumn
14. Thank You, God, for Winter

Series 3: God Cares – teaches that the Creator God knows everything about us. He is intimately involved in the details of our lives. Lessons include:

1. God Knows My Name and What I Look Like
2. God Knows That I Am Growing
3. God Knows Where I Live
4. God Knows When I Am Naughty
5. God Looks After Me While I Play
6. God Looks After Me While I Sleep
7. God Looks After Me While I Travel
8. God Gives Me Food and Drink
9. God Looks After Me: Summary

Series 4: Friends with God – teaches how we can be friends with God because of Jesus' death on the cross and what that friendship involves.

Lessons include:

1. How Does God Speak to Me?
2. How Do I Speak to God?
3. How Does God Want Me to Live? Trusting
4. How Does God Want Me to Live? Obeying
5. How Does God Want Me to Live? Helping
6. How Does God Want Me to Live? Thanking
7. How Does God Want Me to Live? Being Kind
8. How Does God Want Me to Live? Saying Sorry
9. How Does God Want Me to Live? Praising
10. Friends with God: Summary

Series 5: The Life of Jesus – introduces Jesus as the Son of God who came to rescue us from sin and death. Lessons include:

1. Christmas Story: the Angel's Announcement
2. Christmas Story: the Birth of Jesus
3. Christmas Story: the Shepherds
4. Christmas Story: the Wise Men
5. Jesus Loves the Little Children
6. Jesus Walks on Water
7. Jesus Made a Sick Man Well
8. Jesus Made a Lame Man Walk
9. Jesus Made a Blind Man See
10. Jesus Made a Deaf Man Hear
11. Easter Story: The Triumphal Entry
12. Easter Story: The Crucifixion
13. Easter Story: The Resurrection

Please read the Series Introduction before teaching this lesson

God Made the Sky and Birds

Text: Psalms 8 and 19:1-6

Aim: To teach that God made the sky and birds.

Lesson Language

English

Download Lesson PDF

God Made: Summary
 Nehemiah 9:6; Job 38:1-39:30; Jeremiah 10:10-13; and Hebrews 1:1-3.
 To teach that God made everything.

- Series Outline**
- God Made the Sky and Birds**
 Psalms 8 and 19:1-6
 To teach that God made the sky and birds.
 - God Made the Sea and Fish**
 Genesis 1:1-2:4 and Proverbs 8:27-29
 To teach that God made the sea and fish.
 - God Made the Earth and Flowers**
 Genesis 1:1 - 2:4 and Matthew 6:28-30
 To teach that God made the earth and flowers.
 - God Made the Earth and Trees**
 Genesis 1:1-2:4
 To teach that God made the earth and trees.
 - God Made the Animals and Insects**
 Genesis 1:1-2:4 and Proverbs 6:6-8
 To teach that God made the animals and insects.
 - God Made the Wild Animals**
 Genesis 1:1-2:4; Job 38:39-41; and Psalm 104:21, 27-28
 To teach that God made all the wild animals.
 - God Made the Domestic Animals**
 Genesis 1:1-2:4 and Psalm 50:9-12
 To teach that God made all the domestic animals.
 - God Made Me**
 Genesis 1:1-2:4
 To teach that God made and loves me.

Preparation

Read Psalms 8 and 19:1-6.

Answer the following questions:

- What do you learn from Psalm 8 about God? (Psalm 8:1-9)
- What does Psalm 8 teach about man? (Psalm 8:4-8)
- How does the sky reveal God's glory? (Psalm 19:1-6)

Think about the wonderful world God has made and the importance of teaching this to the children.

Pray for each child you teach, that God will open their eyes to the glory of his creation.

Visual Aids

Before your lesson, gather the following visual aids:

- A large sheet of pale blue paper for the sky.
- Cut out pictures of clouds, sun, rainbow, stars, moon, rain, aeroplanes, lightning, wind, snow, hailstones and birds.
- Feathers (you could stick these onto a picture of a bird for the children to touch).

Keep this entire picture for the next lesson.



Lesson

Show the children the big sky background.

Talk to the children about the sky.

- What colour is the sky?
- Is it always blue?
- Why is it different colours?

Ask the children to name some things that you see in the sky. Use Blu-Tack to stick pictures of each item mentioned on the sky background as you talk about them.

Show the children the feathers. Where do these come from?

Get the children to come up and point to the different things. Talk about each thing that God made. Is there anything in your picture that God didn't make?



Activity

Choose either Activity A or Activity B from the Media section of this webpage.

Activity A – Make a tube owl. Before the lesson, paint cardboard toilet tubes in bright colours, one for each child.

Cut a pair of wings from cloth or coloured paper and a small triangle of yellow paper to be the beak for each tube.

Help the children fold the top of one end of the tube into itself to form the ears. The children glue on wings, beak and googly eyes.

Alternatively if you don't have toilet rolls, print Activity A onto coloured card and cut along the bold lines. The children decorate the owls. Then help them glue the ends to form a tube.



Activity B – Print Activity B-1 onto paper for each child and Activity B-2 also onto paper (one copy for every six children).

Before cutting out the shapes on Activity B-2 colour the suns yellow, but leave the moons white. Fold along the line before cutting to cut two of each item out at a time.

Also supply the children with cotton wool balls and sticky stars or sequins to be used as stars. Place a set of all these items together in an envelope for each child (it's always good to have a spare set).

Help the children to decide which side of their page will be night and which day. The children paste the various items on the page. For each item ask, "Can you see this at night or in the day?"

You could also help the children to add a rainbow using paints and thick brushes.

Tip

Write the children's names on every craft activity. This saves time (and tears), at the end of each lesson!



Game Idea

Where do I belong? Have the children sit in a circle and place two sheets of paper in the middle – one pale blue (sky) and one brown (ground)

Have pictures of various items that you would find in the sky, e.g. clouds, birds, rainbow, helicopter, and some items you would not find there, e.g. bus, car, house, flower, etc.

Round 1: give a picture to each child and ask them to place it in the right place. Continue until all the pictures are in their correct place.

Round 2: ask the children to close their eyes. While they are not looking, swap a few of the pictures around. The children must open their eyes, look for the mistakes and correct them.



Prayer

*Thank you, God, for making the sky and the birds.
Amen.*

You could also encourage the children to pray. They must think of one thing in the sky and simply say, "Thank you God for..."

Reinforcement

Print the Reinforcement Slip page from the Media section of this webpage and give one slip to each child to take home. This will encourage parents to reinforce today's lesson. Alternatively, you could copy the text below and edit as appropriate for your context. This can then be printed or emailed to parents.

Today your child learned that God made the sky and birds.

To reinforce this lesson this week:

1. Go for a walk with your child and look at the sky. What can you see? Do the same at night, looking out of a window. Ask your child "Who made the sky? Who made all of the things in it?"
2. Make a collage of the sky using cut-outs from a magazine. What belongs in the sky? Who made it?

Media

Media Language

English

[Activity A](#)

[Download](#)

[Activity B-1](#)

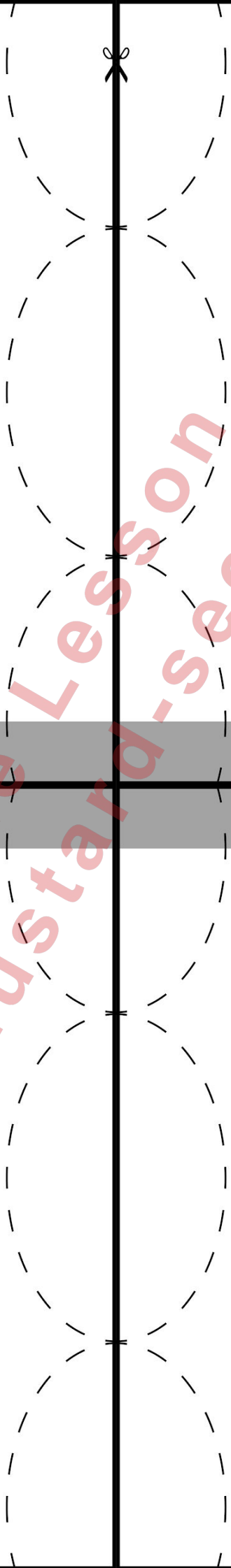
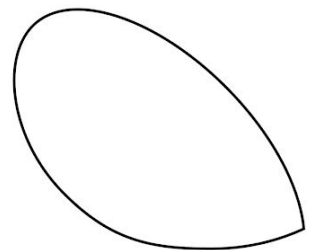
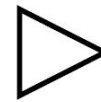
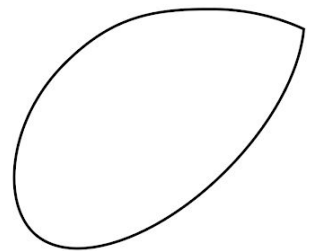
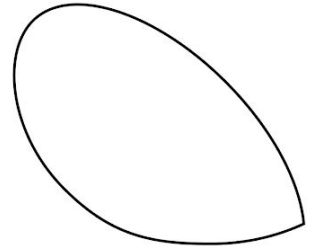
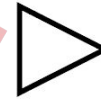
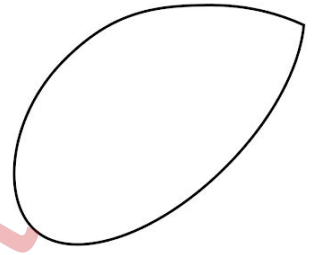
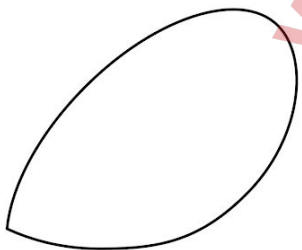
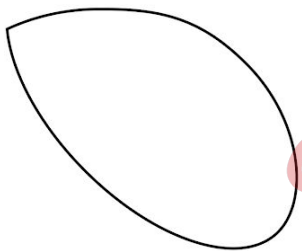
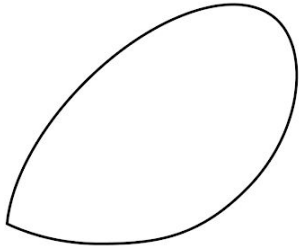
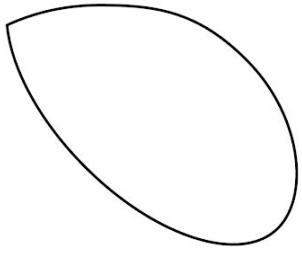
[Download](#)

[Activity B-2](#)

[Download](#)

[Reinforcement Slip](#)

[Download](#)



Sample Lesson
www.mustard-seeds.net

Four-year syllabus outline for 3-11s.

The plan below assumes that children are taught every Sunday, **Good Friday** and **Christmas Day** (when it does not fall on a Sunday). It also assumes a September start to the academic year. Cycling through this syllabus twice will mean that every child receives every lesson twice; once as a story and once as a basic Bible study. Dates are illustrative - not prescriptive!

Year 1

08/09/2019 Beginnings - 1 (Genesis 1:1 - 2:3)
15/09/2019 Beginnings - 2 (Genesis 2:15 - 3:24)
22/09/2019 Beginnings - 3 (Genesis 4:1-16)
29/09/2019 Beginnings - 4 (Genesis 6:5-8:22; 9:8-17)
06/10/2019 Beginnings - 5 (Genesis 11:1-9)
13/10/2019 Abraham - 1 (Genesis 11:27 - 12:9)
20/10/2019 Abraham - 2 (Genesis 13:1-18)
27/10/2019 Abraham - 3 (Genesis 15:1-21)
03/11/2019 Abraham - 4 (Genesis 16:1-15)
10/11/2019 Abraham - 5 (Genesis 17:1-8; 18:1-16; 21:1-7)
17/11/2019 Abraham - 6 (Genesis 22:1-19)
24/11/2019 Abraham - 7 (Genesis 24:1-67)
01/12/2019 Job - 1 (Job 1:1 - 2:10)
08/12/2019 Job - 2 (Job 38:1-11, 39-41; 41:1-11; 42:1-6, 10-17)
15/12/2019 Luke's First Christmas - 1 (Luke 1:5-25, 57-66)
22/12/2019 Luke's First Christmas - 2 (Luke 1:26-45)
25/12/2019 Luke's First Christmas - 3 (Luke 2:1-20)
29/12/2019 Luke's First Christmas - 4 (Luke 2:21-35)
05/01/2020 The King of God's Kingdom 1 - 1 (Mark 1:1-8)
12/01/2020 The King of God's Kingdom 1 - 2 (Mark 1:9-13)
19/01/2020 The King of God's Kingdom 1 - 3 (Mark 1:14-20)
26/01/2020 The King of God's Kingdom 1 - 4 (Mark 1:29-39)
02/02/2020 The King of God's Kingdom 1 - 5 (Mark 2:1-12)
09/02/2020 The King of God's Kingdom 1 - 6 (Mark 2:13-17)
16/02/2020 The King of God's Kingdom 1 - 7 (Mark 3:1-6)
23/02/2020 Parables of the Kingdom - 1 (Matt. 13:1-23)
01/03/2020 Parables of the Kingdom - 2 (Matt. 13:24-30, 36-43)
08/03/2020 Parables of the Kingdom - 3 (Matt. 13:33-35)
15/03/2020 Parables of the Kingdom - 4 (Matt. 13:44-46)
22/03/2020 Parables of the Kingdom - 5 (Matt. 22:1-14)
29/03/2020 Luke's First Easter - 1 (Luke 19:28-40)
05/04/2020 Luke's First Easter - 2 (Luke 22:7-23)
10/04/2020 Luke's First Easter - 3 (Luke 23:14-29)
12/04/2020 Luke's First Easter - 4 (Luke 24:1-12)
19/04/2020 Mission Unstoppable - 1 (Acts 1:1-11)
26/04/2020 Mission Unstoppable - 2 (Acts 2:1-41)
03/05/2020 Mission Unstoppable - 3 (Acts 5:12-42)
10/05/2020 Mission Unstoppable - 4 (Acts 6:7 - 8:3)
17/05/2020 Mission Unstoppable - 5 (Acts 8:1-8, 26-40)
24/05/2020 Mission Unstoppable - 6 (Acts 9:1-22)
31/05/2020 Mission Unstoppable - 7 (Acts 10:1-48)
07/06/2020 Mission Unstoppable - 8 (Acts 14:8-22)
14/06/2020 Jacob - 1 (Genesis 25:19-34; 26:34 - 27:41)
21/06/2020 Jacob - 2 (Genesis 27:41 - 28:22)
28/06/2020 Jacob - 3 (Genesis 29:1 - 30:43)
05/07/2020 Jacob - 4 (Genesis 31:1-3; 32:1 - 33:20)
12/07/2020 Joseph - 1 (Genesis 37:1-36)
19/07/2020 Joseph - 2 (Genesis 39:1-23)
26/07/2020 Joseph - 3 (Genesis 40:1 - 41:57)
02/08/2020 Joseph - 4 (Genesis 42:1 - 44:34)
09/08/2020 Joseph - 5 (Genesis 45:1 - 47:12)
16/08/2020 Exodus - 1 (Exodus 1:1 - 2:10)
23/08/2020 Exodus - 2 (Exodus 3:1 - 4:17)
30/08/2020 Exodus - 3 (Exodus 5:1 - 10:29)

Year 2

06/09/2020 Exodus - 4 (Exodus 11:1 - 12:42)
13/09/2020 Exodus - 5 (Exodus 13:17 - 14:31)
20/09/2020 Exodus - 6 (Exodus 16:1-36)
27/09/2020 Exodus - 7 (Exodus 17:1-16)
04/10/2020 Exodus - 8 (Exodus 19:1 - 20:21)
11/10/2020 Journey to the Promised Land - 1 (Ex. 25:1-22; 29:44-46)
18/10/2020 Journey to the Promised Land - 2 (Ex. 32:1-35)
25/10/2020 Journey to the Promised Land - 3 (Ex. 33:1 - 34:35)
01/11/2020 Journey to the Promised Land - 4 (Num. 13:1 - 14:45)
08/11/2020 Journey to the Promised Land - 5 (Num. 16:1 - 17:13)
15/11/2020 Journey to the Promised Land - 6 (Num. 20:1-33)
22/11/2020 Journey to the Promised Land - 7 (Num. 21:4-9)
29/11/2020 Journey to the Promised Land - 8 (Num. 22:1 - 23:12)
06/12/2020 Journey to the Promised Land - 9 (Deut 8:1 - 9:3)
13/12/2020 The King of Christmas - 1 (Matthew 1:1-17)
20/12/2020 The King of Christmas - 2 (Matthew 1:18-25)
25/12/2020 The King of Christmas - 3 (Matthew 2:1-12)
27/12/2020 The King of Christmas - 4 (Matthew 2:13-23)
03/01/2021 The King of God's Kingdom 2 -1 (Mark 4:1-20)
10/01/2021 The King of God's Kingdom 2 -2 (Mark 4:26-34)
17/01/2021 The King of God's Kingdom 2 -3 (Mark 4:35-41)
24/01/2021 The King of God's Kingdom 2 -4 (Mark 5:1-20)
31/01/2021 The King of God's Kingdom 2 -5 (Mark 5:21-43)
07/02/2021 The King of God's Kingdom 2 -6 (Mark 6:30-44)
14/02/2021 The King of God's Kingdom 2 -7 (Mark 6:45-52)
21/02/2021 The King of God's Kingdom 2 -8 (Mark 7:1-23)
28/02/2021 The King of God's Kingdom 2 -9 (Mark 8:22-30)
07/03/2021 The Amazing King - 1 (Matthew 14:22-33)
14/03/2021 The Amazing King - 2 (Matthew 16:13-28)
21/03/2021 The Amazing King - 3 (John 13:1-38)
28/03/2021 The Amazing King - 4 (Matthew 26:31-58, 69-75)
02/04/2021 The Amazing King - 5 (John 18:28 - 19:42)
04/04/2021 The Amazing King - 6 (John 20:1-29)
11/04/2021 The Amazing King - 7 (John 21:1-19)
18/04/2021 The Reigning King - 1 (Acts 2:1-41)
25/04/2021 The Reigning King - 2 (Acts 3:1-26)
02/05/2021 The Reigning King - 3 (Acts 4:1-31)
09/05/2021 The Reigning King - 4 (Acts 4:32 - 5:14)
16/05/2021 The Reigning King - 5 (Acts 9:31-43)
23/05/2021 The Reigning King - 6 (Acts 10:1-48)
30/05/2021 The Reigning King - 7 (Acts 12:1-17)
06/06/2021 Joshua - 1 (Joshua 1:1 - 2:24)
13/06/2021 Joshua - 2 (Joshua 5:13 - 6:27)
20/06/2021 Joshua - 3 (Joshua 7:1 - 8:35)
27/06/2021 Joshua - 4 (Joshua 14:6-15)
04/07/2021 Joshua - 5 (Joshua 24:1-28)
11/07/2021 Judges - 1 (Judges 2:6 - 3:6; 3:12-30)
18/07/2021 Judges - 2 (Judges 6:1 - 7:25)
25/07/2021 Judges - 3 (Judges 8:1-35)
01/08/2021 Judges - 4 (Judges 13:1-7; 14:1-9; 15:20 - 16:30)
08/08/2021 God on Mission - 1 (Genesis 12:1-7, Galatians 3:6-14)
15/08/2021 God on Mission - 2 (Psalm 67)
22/08/2021 God on Mission - 3 (Acts 13:13-52)
29/08/2021 God on Mission - 4 (Revelation 7:9-17)

Year 3

05/09/2021 Ruth - 1 (Ruth 1:1 - 2:23)
12/09/2021 Ruth - 2 (Ruth 3:1 - 4:22)
19/09/2021 Samuel - 1 (1 Samuel 1:1-28)
26/09/2021 Samuel - 2 (1 Samuel 2:12-18, 22-26, 3:1-4:1a)
03/10/2021 Samuel - 3 (1 Samuel 7:2-17)
10/10/2021 Saul - 1 (Deuteronomy 17:14-20, 1 Samuel 8:1-22)
17/10/2021 Saul - 2 (1 Samuel 9:1-10:27)
24/10/2021 Saul - 3 (1 Samuel 13:1 - 14:45)
31/10/2021 Saul - 4 (1 Samuel 15:1-35)
07/11/2021 David - 1 (1 Samuel 16)
14/11/2021 David - 2 (1 Samuel 17)
21/11/2021 David - 3 (1 Samuel 18-19)
28/11/2021 David - 4 (1 Samuel 23-24)
05/12/2021 David - 5 (2 Samuel 7)
12/12/2021 David - 6 (2 Samuel 11-12)
19/12/2021 A Prophetic Christmas - 1 (Isaiah 7:1-17)
25/12/2021 A Prophetic Christmas - 2 (Isaiah 9:1-7)
26/12/2021 A Prophetic Christmas - 3 (Isaiah 11:1-9)
02/01/2022 The King of God's Kingdom 3 -1 (Mark 8:31-9:1)
09/01/2022 The King of God's Kingdom 3 -2 (Mark 9:2-13)
16/01/2022 The King of God's Kingdom 3 -3 (Mark 10:13-31)
23/01/2022 The King of God's Kingdom 3 -4 (Mark 10:35-52)
30/01/2022 The King of God's Kingdom 3 -5 (Mark 11:1-25)
06/02/2022 The King of God's Kingdom 3 -6 (Mark 12:1-12)
13/02/2022 The King of God's Kingdom 3 -7 (Mark 14:1-11)
20/02/2022 Kingdom Living - 1 (Matthew 5:1-3; 8:1-4)
27/02/2022 Kingdom Living - 2 (Matthew 5:13-16)
06/03/2022 Kingdom Living - 3 (Matthew 5:43-48)
13/03/2022 Kingdom Living - 4 (Matthew 6:9-24)
20/03/2022 Kingdom Living - 5 (Matthew 6:25-34)
27/03/2022 Kingdom Living - 6 (Matthew 7:7-12)
03/04/2022 Kingdom Living - 7 (Matthew 7:15-23)
10/04/2022 The King on the Cross - 1 (Mark 14:32-50)
15/04/2022 The King on the Cross - 2 (Mark 14:55-65; 15:1-47)
17/04/2022 The King on the Cross - 3 (Mark 16:1-18)
24/04/2022 Paul on Mission - 1 (Acts 16:11-15)
01/05/2022 Paul on Mission - 2 (Acts 16:16-40)
08/05/2022 Paul on Mission - 3 (Acts 17:1-15)
15/05/2022 Paul on Mission - 4 (Acts 17:16-34)
22/05/2022 Psalm 23 (part of a 4-part series called 'Psalms')
29/05/2022 Psalm 51 (part of a 4-part series called 'Psalms')
05/06/2022 Solomon - 1 (1 Kings 3:1-28)
12/06/2022 Solomon - 2 (1 Kings 8:1-21)
19/06/2022 Solomon - 3 (Deut. 17:14-20, 1 Kings 10:14-11:13)
26/06/2022 Elijah - 1 (1 Kings 16:29 - 17:24)
03/07/2022 Elijah - 2 (1 Kings 18:1-46)
10/07/2022 Elijah - 3 (1 Kings 19:1-18)
17/07/2022 Elijah - 4 (1 Kings 19:19-21, 2 Kings 2:1-18)
24/07/2022 Elisha - 1 (2 Kings 2:19-25; 4:38-44; 6:1-7)
31/07/2022 Elisha - 2 (2 Kings 4:1-7)
07/08/2022 Elisha - 3 (2 Kings 4:8-37)
14/08/2022 Elisha - 4 (2 Kings 5:1-27)
21/08/2022 Elisha - 5 (2 Kings 6:8-23)
28/08/2022 Elisha - 6 (2 Kings 6:24 - 7:20)

Year 4

04/09/2022 Jonah - 1 (Jonah 1:1-2:10)
11/09/2022 Jonah - 2 (Jonah 3:1-4:11)
18/09/2022 Babylonia and Beyond - 1 (Isaiah 5:1-7)
25/09/2022 Babylonia and Beyond - 2 (Isaiah 52:13-53:12)
02/10/2022 Babylonia and Beyond - 3 (Jeremiah 19:1-15)
09/10/2022 Babylonia and Beyond - 4 (Jeremiah 33:14-26)
16/10/2022 Babylonia and Beyond - 5 (Ezekiel 34:1-31)
23/10/2022 Babylonia and Beyond - 6 (Ezekiel 37:1-14)
30/10/2022 Daniel - 1 (Daniel 1:1-21)
06/11/2022 Daniel - 2 (Daniel 2:1-49)
13/11/2022 Daniel - 3 (Daniel 3:1-30)
20/11/2022 Daniel - 4 (Daniel 5:1-31)
27/11/2022 Daniel - 5 (Daniel 6:1-28)
04/12/2022 Beyond the Manger - 1 (John 1:1-18)
11/12/2022 Beyond the Manger - 2 (Colossians 1:15-23)
18/12/2022 Beyond the Manger - 3 (Philippians 2:1-8)
25/12/2022 Beyond the Manger - 4 (Hebrews 4:14 - 5:4)
01/01/2023 John - 1 (John 2:1-11)
08/01/2023 John - 2 (John 4:43-54)
15/01/2023 John - 3 (John 5:1-18)
22/01/2023 John - 4 (John 6:1-15, 25-29)
29/01/2023 John - 5 (John 6:16-24)
05/02/2023 John - 6 (John 9:1-41)
12/02/2023 John - 7 (John 11:1-53)
19/02/2023 Lost - 1 (Luke 15:1-7)
26/02/2023 Lost - 2 (Luke 15:1-3, 8-10)
05/03/2023 Lost - 3 (Luke 15:1-3, 11-32)
12/03/2023 Jesus on Mission - 1 (Matthew 5:10-16)
19/03/2023 Jesus on Mission - 2 (Matthew 9:35-38)
26/03/2023 Jesus on Mission - 3 (Matthew 10:1-31)
02/04/2023 Jesus on Mission - 4 (Matthew 28:16-20)
07/04/2023 Dead or Alive - 1 (Matthew 27:15-61)
10/04/2023 Dead or Alive - 2 (Matthew 27:62 - 28:20)
17/04/2023 Church on Mission - 1 (Romans 1:14-17, 3:9-20)
24/04/2023 Church on Mission - 2 (Romans 3:21-28)
01/05/2023 Church on Mission - 3 (Romans 10:9-15)
08/05/2023 Church on Mission - 4 (Romans 15:23-33)
15/05/2023 Close Encounters - 1 (Acts 18:1-17)
22/05/2023 Close Encounters - 2 (Acts 19:1-20)
29/05/2023 Close Encounters - 3 (Acts 24:1-27)
05/06/2023 Close Encounters - 4 (Acts 25-26)
12/06/2023 Close Encounters - 5 (Acts 27:1-28:1)
19/06/2023 Close Encounters - 6 (Acts 28:11-31)
26/06/2023 Psalm 1 (part of a 4-part series called 'Psalms')
03/07/2023 Esther - 1 (Esther 1:1-4:17)
10/07/2023 Esther - 2 (Esther 5:1-7:10)
17/07/2023 Esther - 3 (Esther 8:1-10:3)
24/07/2023 Ezra-Nehemiah - 1 (Ezra 1:1-11, 3:1 - 4:5, 5:1 - 6:22)
31/07/2023 Ezra-Nehemiah - 2 (Ezra 7:1-28, 9:1-15, 10:1-17)
07/08/2023 Ezra-Nehemiah - 3 (Neh. 1:1 - 2:10, 4:1-23, 6:15 - 7:3)
14/08/2023 Ezra-Nehemiah - 4 (Nehemiah 8:1-12, 9:1-38, 10:28-39)
21/08/2023 Ezra-Nehemiah - 5 (Nehemiah 13:4-30)
28/08/2023 Ezra-Nehemiah - 6 (NT Texts TBC)
04/09/2023 Psalm 19 (part of a 4-part series called 'Psalms')

Lessons in green are being written and due for publication soon.

 Please read the Series Introduction before teaching this lesson

Wine at the Wedding

Text: John 2:1-11

Big Idea: Jesus revealed his glory at a wedding by turning water into wine and his disciples put their trust in him.

Aim: To teach that Jesus will provide abundantly at the wedding feast in heaven for those who have trusted in him.

Lesson Language

English

 Download Lesson PDF

Series Outline

Wine at the Wedding

John 2:1-11

To teach that Jesus will provide abundantly at the wedding feast in heaven for those who have trusted in him.

Healing away from Home

John 4:43-54

To teach that true followers of Jesus will believe because of his words and not just what they see.

The Paralytic at the Pool

John 5:1-18

To teach that those who have true faith in Jesus will have a personal relationship with him and repent of their sin.

Feeding the Five-thousand

John 6:1-15, 25-59

To teach that Jesus is God and is therefore able to perfectly meet our physical and spiritual needs forever.

Walking on Water

John 6:16-24

To teach that knowing Jesus as our God and king should lead us to trust him and not be afraid.

Blind Belief

John 9:1-41

To teach that only Jesus can help people to see him as their Lord and God; when they do they will worship him.

Life for Lazarus

John 11:1-53

To teach that Jesus is the one who gives life to all those who trust in his death and resurrection.

Leader's Study Notes

Read John 2:1-11 noting what Jesus' action revealed about him and how people responded to this truth.

Use the following notes to help you think about the passage in more detail.

John states in verse 11 that this is the first of the signs which Jesus performed. Before this, John records that Jesus had been baptised by John the Baptist and then called the first disciples to himself. The wedding at Cana is therefore not only the first sign in John but also one of the earliest events in Jesus' earthly ministry.

2:1-4 — Running out of wine at a wedding was not just inconvenient; it would have been considered a social disaster and a shameful thing to allow to happen.

Mary was concerned about the reputation of the host, the bridegroom. Jesus, however, was concerned about his primary mission. He had a different wedding feast in mind (cf. Amos 9:13-15; Matthew 22:2) and wanted to make it clear that this

was why he had come (cf. John 12:23).

2:5-10 — It is possible that Mary knew Jesus would do something rather than simply ignoring his comment.

The servants carried out Jesus' instructions and brought him six huge jars of water used for ceremonial washing.

Jesus' provision was both extensive and lavish – he produced far more than was needed and far better than anyone could have expected.

In the same way, Jesus' provision for his people at the Messianic feast will be just as extravagant.

2:11 — John's comment acts as a signpost both for the structure and the purpose of his whole book – to reveal Jesus' identity and glory so that we might put our faith in him, just as the disciples did.

Reflect

- How do you celebrate special occasions in your culture? What are some signs of generosity and abundance?
- How does this miracle not only reveal who Jesus is but also his generosity in this life and for eternity? What are you most looking forward to celebrating in heaven?
- Give thanks to God for his abundant generosity, not least for sending Jesus to die for us, removing our shame and giving us the hope of heaven.

Series Intro Idea

I can prove it! Find one of the leaders or member of your congregation who has achieved something like running a marathon or completing a course or degree.

Interview them as part of the introduction to the session and ask them to bring anything with them that supports their claim. This might include a medal, a certificate, a photograph, a letter or even an eye-witness.

Start by asking them about their achievement, but then say that you'll need some evidence. They then produce the evidence, one piece at a time. Each time examine it and then dismiss it as insufficient proof. How do the children respond?

Eventually, concede that the evidence is sufficient. Explain that in this new series of lessons you are going to be examining seven pieces of evidence, seven signs, which prove that Jesus' claim to be God's promised king is true, but not everyone accepted the evidence.

Introductory Idea - Option 1

Not Enough! You will need two varieties of biscuits: one plain and one more decadent. You will require as many plain biscuits as there are children and double the number of decadent ones. Start with only half the number of plain biscuits in a container and keep the rest of them hidden. Hand them out, one per child, and make a fuss when you realise that you will not have enough for everyone. Express your embarrassment and allow for a moment of awkwardness before another leader produces the decadent biscuits for you to hand out to each child. Thank the leader and make the point that there is now more than enough for everyone. You might need to give plain biscuits to those who did not receive one at first, but there is no need to share out the remaining decadent ones! Be aware of food allergies.

In today's true story from the Bible, Jesus went to a wedding where there was not enough of something. [Use the Bridge Questions below to create a link with the lesson.]

Introductory Idea - Option 2

Best Party Ever! Get the children to think about some of the birthday parties they've been to. Choose a few children to share about the one they enjoyed best and why they thought it was so good. Would they have enjoyed it as much if the host had run out of e.g. food, drinks, cake, toys, games?

Talk about how there needs to be enough of each of these things for everyone to have fun. In today's true story from the Bible, Jesus went to a party at a wedding where the host had run out of something – they were worried that the guests wouldn't enjoy the party. [Use the Bridge Questions below to create a link with the lesson.]

Bridge Questions

- What was there not enough of? [*Wine* (2:3)]
- What did Jesus do? [*Told the servants to fill six jars with water and turned the water into wine* (2:7-9)]
- How was it different? [*There was much more and it was much better!* (2:6-7, 10)]



Teaching Plan

Help the children to understand that what Jesus did at the wedding in Cana is a small picture of how wonderful heaven will be. You could start by gathering a few brochures of holiday destinations. Show these to the children, highlighting some of the attractions and showing them some of the pictures. Ask them to choose which of the destinations they would most like to visit and why.

What is the purpose of the brochure? Would the children even have known about the places described if not for the brochure? Explain that each brochure is a small picture of what the holiday will be like. It shows us wonderful things, things we might never have known about, but the actual holiday will be even better.

Tell the simple story of the wedding at Cana using the Visual Aids provided in the Media section of this webpage and include some of the points below. The story itself has four scenes:

1. **The Problem (2:1-3):** There was no more wine. The host would have been embarrassed, and the guests may not have enjoyed the party (if you used Intro Idea Option 2, you could remind them of this).
2. **The Request (2:4-5):** Jesus' mother didn't want the host to be embarrassed, so she asked Jesus to help. Jesus told his mother that he had an even more important job to do, but he helped anyway.

3. **The Solution (2:6-8):** Jesus told the servants to fill six huge jars with water. They took some to the man in charge of the party so that he could taste the water, but it had been turned into wine!

4. **The Result (2:9-11):** The wine that Jesus miraculously made was much better than what was provided by the host, and there was a lot of it! The disciples saw what had happened and believed in Jesus as God's glorious Son. This was the first sign.

For older children – the story is short enough to be read in the group. You could also ask the children to prepare a short drama using the passage as the script (this needs to be short so as not to take up too much time). Use the above scenes to provide the structure for the study and get the children to think about the passage with some of the following questions:

- Why was Mary so eager to help solve the problem? What was she trying to prevent?
- What is strange about Jesus' response to her request?
- What is the 'hour' that Jesus is speaking about? What does this tell you about why he came?
- What did the master of the banquet/feast say about the wine? What can we know about what heaven will be like from this miracle?
- Why did the disciples respond the way they did? What was it about Jesus that caused them to do this? Do you think they understood what this would mean for Jesus and for them?



Game Idea - Option 1

For younger children – Water into Wine. Before the lesson print a number of copies the Game Idea from the Media section of this webpage onto paper. Cut the page as marked and then fold and glue the pictures of the wine and water back to back. Do not glue one of the pairs, instead, cut it to separate the wine from the water. Hide the rest of the pictures around the room, all with the water facing up.

Show the children the picture of the wine. Tell them that the wine has run out and that they need to go and find all the wine around the room. Show them the picture of the water and tell them that they are not to collect water, only the wine. Let them search for a time before showing them that they can turn

the water pictures over to discover the wine. Some children may discover this on their own. Count how many each child has collected. Remind the children that in today's true story from the Bible, Jesus was at a wedding feast that had run out of wine. Jesus turned six huge jars of water into wine to teach people about who he is and what heaven will be like.



Game Idea - Option 2

Before the lesson print the Game Idea from the Media section of this webpage onto paper and cut out the pictures – ignore the fold lines. Place two hula hoops at one end of the room, one in front of the other. Mark out a line using masking tape/rope on the floor at the other end of the room a short distance away. Place one picture of the wine inside the far hula hoop and one picture of the water in the nearest one.

The children stand in a line behind the line on the floor. Write each child's name on a board or piece of paper to help you keep track of points. Give the first child a beanbag to throw into the circle without stepping over the line. A beanbag that lands in the circle with water is worth one point, but a beanbag in the circle with wine is worth five points. If the children struggle to throw the beanbag into the hula hoops simply move them closer to the line. The winning child is the one with the most points at the end of the game.

Talk about why that child won and why the wine was worth so much more. Remind the children that in today's true story from the Bible, Jesus was at a wedding feast that had run out of wine. Jesus turned six huge jars of water into wine so that the host would not be embarrassed and the guests could enjoy the party. He made much more and much better wine than anyone could have imagined as a picture of the even greater feast that will be in heaven.

With a larger group, you could divide the class into two teams. Have them line up behind the line and give the first child in each team a different coloured beanbag to throw at the same time. Simply keep track of the points that are scored for each team instead of for each child.

With older children, you could get them to race against each other in teams as above. They will need

to run and retrieve their own beanbag after throwing it then pass it on to the next member of their team. The first team to get a set number of points wins.



Game Idea - Option 3

For older children – Follow the Sign. Before the lesson print the Game Idea from the Media section of this webpage onto paper and cut out the pictures – ignore the fold lines. Divide the group into two or more teams and have the children sit in lines in their teams at one end of the room. At the other end of the room place a number of different boxes each with a different colour on the front e.g. blue, orange and green. You will also need a list of questions where the answers are one of these three colours (see the sample questions below).

At the beginning of the round place the picture of the wine in the box that matches the answer to the first question and the water in the other two. You will need to do this for each successive round/question without the children seeing. Tell the children that you have ten signs or clues to help them choose the right box. Read out the first question to the whole group. The children at the front of each team must listen carefully and decide which colour box represents the answer to the question then race to touch the correct coloured box at the other end of the room. Reveal whether or not they have chosen the correct box – does it contain wine or water? Wine is worth three points, but water is not worth anything. Keep track of the scores on a board or wall.

The game continues in this way until everyone has had a turn to run or until all the questions have been asked. Remember to replace the pictures in the correct boxes to match your questions. The winning team is the one with the highest score at the end of the game.

If you have a smaller number of children and no space to move around simply place different coloured sheets of paper on the table or floor and have the children sit around them. Place the wine/water pictures under each sheet of coloured paper at the beginning of each round. Instead of running the children simply slap their hands on a colour. You can still have teams, but alternate team members around the sheets of paper to make it fair.

Talk about how the children knew which box contained the winning picture. Did they follow the clues you gave them? Did they understand the sign? Remind the children that in today's true story from the Bible Jesus turned water into wine at a wedding feast. He did this to show them who he is and what heaven will be like. When the disciples saw the sign they understood what it meant and trusted in him.

Sample questions (you'll need to use simpler ones with younger children).

1. What is the largest animal in the world? [*Blue whale*]
2. What is the most popular kind of citrus juice in the world? [*Orange juice*]
3. The name of a kind of small bird. [*Blue-bird or blue-tit*]
4. What colour is associated with saving the environment? [*Green*]
5. What kind of ape (monkey) doesn't have black fur? [*Orang-utan*]
6. The name a type of fly that is also a type of jellyfish. [*Blue-bottle*]
7. Which of these three is not a type of eye-colour? [*Orange*]
8. Which colour would your mum tell you to eat with your dinner? [*Green-s (vegetables)*]
9. Which colour describes someone who is feeling sad? [*Blue*]
10. What colour is Dory, the fish from 'Finding Nemo'? [*Blue*]



Discuss and Apply

There are two key teaching points in this passage: that Jesus is the Son of God in whom we should trust and that he has prepared an even better wedding feast for those who believe. The purpose of this series (and the purpose of John's Gospel) is to help the children come to an understanding of who Jesus is based on what he did using these eye-witness accounts. But the application needs to go beyond the basic facts because the truth about Jesus requires a response – this is what John is pushing his readers to do. The only logical response when we understand who Jesus is is to trust in him for our salvation and eternity.

For younger children – help them to understand that we can know who Jesus is by the things that he did. We know what he did because people saw him

doing them and they wrote these down. In this true story, Jesus made the water become wine; no-one except God can do that. Jesus didn't just make a small amount of wine; he made a massive amount of wine without even touching the water. That's amazing! And Jesus didn't just make any old wine; he made the best wine that the man in charge of the feast had ever tasted.

The Bible teaches that one day Jesus will return to bring all those who have trusted in him together in heaven. Then there will be another big party, even better than this one, but only those who have trusted Jesus as God's glorious king will be able to attend. Ask the children if they believe that Jesus is the king. Have they trusted in him? Are they looking forward to that big party in heaven?

For older children – discuss as above for younger children and then help them to explore the implications of this truth using some of the following questions:

- Why did the disciples put their faith in Jesus? What had they learned about Jesus that caused them to do this?
- Was Jesus just showing off? Why did he do these things? What was he trying to teach people?
- What would it take to convince you that Jesus is God? Why can we trust that what John writes in his Gospel is true?
- When do people usually drink wine? What is it a symbol of? How is Jesus' generous provision here a picture of heaven?
- Can you see that following Jesus is not only a good thing to do but the best thing to do?



Prayer Idea

Ask the children to think about one thing that we know will be true about heaven that they are most looking forward to. Encourage them to thank God for making that experience possible for those who trust in Jesus.



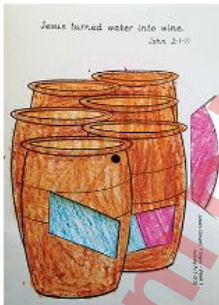
Activity A

For younger children choose either this activity or Activity B.

From the Media section of this webpage print Activity A-1 onto card (one copy for each child) and Activity A-2 onto paper (one copy for every two children). You will also require one split pin paper fastener per child.

Before the lesson save time by folding Activity A-2 as shown and then cutting out both circles at once. Use a craft blade to cut away the shaded areas from Activity A-1.

The children colour in the stone water jars and colour in the circle half blue (water) and half red (wine). Help them to fold the page as marked to form a booklet with the water jars as the front cover. Place the circle inside the booklet with the coloured side facing up. Secure by pushing a split pin paper fastener through all three layers, being careful to align the crosses.



Can the children remember how many water jars Jesus asked the servants to fill with water? Show the children how to turn the dial to change the contents of the jars from blue water to red wine.



Activity B

For younger children choose either this activity or Activity A.

Make stone water jars out of salt dough.

Before the lesson, make some salt dough using the recipe below. Each child will also require a paper plate on which to place their model and write their name.

The children use their salt dough to model a water jar. Encourage them to place a water drop shape on one side of their jars and a bunch of grapes made from tiny balls of dough on the other side of the jar.



Remind them that Jesus told the servants to fill the jars with water which he then turned into wine. The children take their jars home to bake. You can write/paste the baking instructions described below on the paper plates.



Worksheets

For older children choose either Worksheet C or Worksheet D from the Media section of this webpage. Print whichever is appropriate onto paper for each child and use it to reinforce the lesson or as a discussion starter.

Salt Dough Recipe

Ingredients

- 1 cup plain flour
- 1 cup salt
- 1 cup warm water
- Food colouring (optional)

Method

- Add a few drops of your chosen colouring to the warm water.
- Place the flour and salt in a bowl then pour in the coloured water in small amounts, mixing as you go. It should turn into a slightly sticky dough, but not so sticky that it comes off on your fingers. If this happens you need to add some more flour to balance it out.

Send the following instructions home:

To Bake

- Preheat the oven to 140 °C / 284 °F / gas mark 1.
- Take the item off the paper plate, lay it on a baking sheet and place it in the oven for around 3 hours.
- Once cool it can be painted.



Memory Verse

Use one of the memory verse ideas in the Series Introduction to help the children memorise the following verse:

*Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name. **John 20:30-31 [NIV]***

Media

Media Language

Activity A-1

Download

Activity A-2

Download

Game Idea

Download

PowerPoint (whole series)

Download

Series Map - Colour

Download

Series Map - Monochrome

Download

Visual Aids - Colour

Download

Visual Aids - Monochrome

Download

Worksheet C

Download

Worksheet D

Download

Resources for 11-18s

We are in the process of producing resources for 11-18s. The full scope and sequence will follow in due course. Below is an outline of what is already online.

Ephesians

Week 1 – One Plan

Text: Ephesians 1:1-23

Aim: To teach that Christians have been given every spiritual blessing from God and can be confident about their eternal future in Jesus.

Week 2 – One Faith

Text: Ephesians 2:1-10

Aim: To teach that God powerfully and graciously saves those who don't deserve it so that they might live out their new faith in Jesus.

Week 3 – One People

Text: Ephesians 2:11-3:21

Aim: To teach that all who trust in Jesus share in God's promise and are united as members of one body, regardless of background, culture or nationality.

Week 4 – One Body

Text: Ephesians 4:1-16

Aim: To teach that Christians must do all they can to maintain the Church's global unity and to use their diverse gifts to build up the body of Christ.

Week 5 – One Lifestyle

Text: Ephesians 4:17-6:9

Aim: To teach that Jesus' sacrifice and our faith in him should lead to a comprehensive and practical transformation in every area of our lives, no matter who we are.

Week 6 – One Lifestyle

Text: Ephesians 6:10-24

Aim: To teach that we are engaged in a daily spiritual battle and must equip ourselves with the armour of God and prayer in order to stand firm till Jesus returns.

Mustard  **Seeds**
.....
faithful • creative • effective

Colossians

Week 1 – Firm Faith

Text: Colossians 1:1-23

Aim: To teach that those God has rescued must continue in their faith, living with Jesus as their supreme Lord and all-sufficient saviour.

Week 2 – Faith and Love

Text: Colossians 1:24-2:5

Aim: To teach that our goal as Christians is to become mature in faith, wisdom and love for Jesus and to help others to do the same.

Week 3 – Full Faith

Text: Colossians 2:6-23

Aim: To teach that when we live differently as Christians by serving others we imitate Jesus, glorify God and witness to unbelievers.

Week 4 – Faith in Action

Text: Colossians 3:1-4:1

Aim: To teach that Christians must live in a way that radically reflects their spiritual transformation from death to life by dying to sin and imitating Jesus, their Lord.

Week 5 – Faithful Workers

Text: Colossians 4:2-18

Aim: To teach that Christians are called to share in gospel work by praying for the ministry of others, witnessing personally to unbelievers and being united with other Christians.

1 Peter

Week 1 - Living with Hope

Text: 1 Peter 1:1-12

Aim: To teach that because our hope of salvation is certain we can rejoice now even when we suffer.

Week 2 - Living in Holiness

Text: 1 Peter 1:13-2:10

Aim: To teach that Christians have been given new life and are therefore called to a radical new lifestyle.

Week 3 - Living as Servants

Text: 1 Peter 2:11-3:12

Aim: To teach that when we live differently as Christians by serving others we imitate Jesus, glorify God and witness to unbelievers.

Week 4 - Living as Christians

Text: 1 Peter 3:13-4:6

Aim: To teach that those who live with Jesus as their Lord can expect to suffer like him, but do not need to fear.

Week 5 - Living for Eternity

Text: 1 Peter 4:7-5:14

Aim: To teach that because Jesus' return is imminent we must stand firm in our faith and glorify God by loving and serving one another humbly.

10 Doctrines

Week 1 - What is the Bible?

Texts: Psalm 19:7-11; 2 Timothy 3:14-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21, 3:15-16; Revelation 22:18-1

Aim: To teach that because the Bible is God's perfect and sufficient word we should love, trust and obey it as our highest authority.

Week 2 - What is God Like?

Texts: Gen. 1:26-27; Exodus 34:6-9; John 1:18, 14:6-11; Rom 1:18-20

Aim: To teach that God's character is revealed in his word and in his Son; we can reflect this too as Christians.

Week 3 - What is the Trinity?

Texts: Gen. 1:1-3, 26; Deuteronomy 6:4-5; John 20:28-31; Acts 5:3-4; 1 Peter 1:2

Aim: To teach that there is only one God whom we worship, but that he exists as three diverse yet united persons.

Week 4 - What is Man?

Texts: Gen. 1:26-31; Psalm 16:1-2, 11; Isaiah 43:5-7; Colossians 3:9-10

Aim: To teach that, as human beings created in God's image, the purpose of our lives is to enjoy relationship with God and to glorify him.

Week 5 - What is Sin?

Texts: Gen. 3:1-24; Psalm 51:5; John 8:34-36; Rom 1:28-32, 3:9-26, 6:23

Aim: To teach that we are all sinners who deserve God's punishment and that the only way for us to be saved is by faith in Jesus.

Week 6 - Who is Jesus?

Texts: Matt. 1:18; Mark 13:32; John 1:1-4, 8:57-59; Colossians 2:9; Hebrews 2:17-18

Aim: To teach that because Jesus is both fully God and fully man he understands our weakness and always intercedes for us.

Week 7 - What Did Jesus Achieve?

Texts: Acts 13:39; Romans 3:23-30, 8:31-33; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 9:12-15

Aim: To teach that if we have been justified by faith in Jesus' death we do not need to fear any punishment or condemnation.

Week 8 - What is a Christian?

Texts: Mark 1:15; Romans 10:9-13; Ephesians 1:4-6, 13-14, 2:1-10; 2 Peter 1:10-11

Aim: To teach that those who trust in Jesus have been adopted, are being sanctified and will be saved.

Week 9 - What is the Church?

Texts: Matt. 28:19-20; 1 Corinthians 12:12-28; Ephesians 4:15-16, 5:22-32; Colossians 3:16; 1 Timothy 5:1-2; 1 Peter 2:4-6

Aim: To teach that the Church is not a building, but a group of people who have trusted in Jesus and seek to live for him.

Week 10 - What about the Future?

Texts: Matt. 25:31-34, 41; Mark 13:5-13, 23-35; John 5:24-30; 1 Corinthians 15:20-26, 42-58; Revelation 21:1-8, 22-27

Aim: To teach that we must patiently trust in Jesus while we wait for his return and work to build his kingdom.

We plan to publish more in this range.

 Please read the Series Introduction before teaching this lesson

Firm Faith

Text: Colossians 1:1-23

Big Idea: Paul encouraged the Colossians to continue in their faith, living as those who had been rescued from darkness and brought into the kingdom of God's Son.

Aim: To teach that those God has rescued must continue in their faith, living with Jesus as their supreme Lord and all-sufficient saviour.

Lesson Language

English

 Download Lesson PDF

Series Outline

Firm Faith

Colossians 1:1-23

To teach that those God has rescued must continue in their faith, living with Jesus as their supreme Lord and all-sufficient saviour.

Faith in Action

Faith and Love

Colossians 3:1-4:1

Colossians 1:24-2:5

To teach that our goal as Christians is to become mature in faith, wisdom and love for Jesus and to help others to do the same.

Full Faith

Colossians 2:6-23

To teach that Christians must continue to live with Jesus as their Lord, being careful not to follow empty religious practices because they have been made fully alive in him.

Faith in Action

Colossians 3:1-4:1

To teach that Christians must live in a way that radically reflects their spiritual transformation from death to life by dying to sin and imitating Jesus, their Lord.

Faithful Workers

Colossians 4:2-18

To teach that Christians are called to share in gospel work by praying for the ministry of others, witnessing personally to unbelievers and being united with other Christians.

Leader's Study Notes

Read Colossians 1:1-23 noting how Paul describes Jesus and what Jesus has done for his people.

Use the following notes to help you think about the passages in more detail.

Colossae was one of several towns situated in the Lycus valley, just east of Ephesus, and was part of the Roman province of Asia. The church there had been planted under the ministry of Epaphras, one of Paul's co-workers, and largely consisted of Gentiles. Paul was encouraged to hear of their faith in Jesus, but he was also concerned that a dangerous new heresy might be creeping in. For this reason Paul wrote from prison to the Colossian Christians, encouraging them to stand firm and mature in their faith, trusting in Jesus alone for their full salvation.

1:1-2 — Paul briefly introduced himself and his qualifications in writing this letter. He was appointed by God as an apostle, having been directly called and sent by Jesus after his resurrection (cf. Acts 9:1-19). He had authority to represent Jesus and his message, to set up churches and to deal pastorally with them. Timothy was Paul's companion and fellow worker for the gospel, rather than a co-writer of this letter.

1:3-8 – Although Paul had not met the Colossian Christians personally (2:1) he regularly gave thanks to God for them and was impressed by the reports he had heard of their faith and love. The reason for their faith and love was the secure hope they had in the gospel, protected by God in heaven where nothing could reach it (cf. Matthew 6:19-20; 1 Peter 1:4-5). It was Epaphras who had first preached this message of God's grace to them; their faith was just one example of the fruit that the gospel was bearing throughout the world.

1:9-14 – Paul did not stop at thanking God for what he had already done, he also asked God to grow the Colossians' faith to maturity. His prayer was that they would know God's will for them as Christians and be empowered to carry it out. In this way they would produce fruit in keeping with their faith, walking obediently and joyfully as members of God's kingdom. Since God had already forgiven, rescued and redeemed them he would see to it that their transformation was complete by equipping and strengthening them to live appropriately.

1:15-20 – This hymn of praise for all that Jesus is and has done was intended to remind Paul's readers of the sufficiency of the gospel of grace alone by faith alone in Jesus alone and stood in contrast to the heresy of the false teachers. Jesus is the perfect and full revelation of the Father, being himself perfectly and fully God (cf. John 1:1-2; Hebrews 1:3). He is the one through whom all things – even those that seem powerful or impressive to us – were made and he continues to sustain all things by the power of his word (cf. John 1:3; Hebrews 1:1-3).

Jesus is therefore the supreme Lord over all creation, but he is also especially Lord over his people, the Church. Since he is the first to have been raised to new, glorious and eternal life he is the guarantee that all those who trust in him will also be raised. As such it is only through Jesus that full reconciliation can be achieved; this peace is for the whole created order which has been subject to the effects of sin, death and decay since the Fall (cf. Romans 8:19-22).

1:21-23 – Paul underlines what this means for Christians: though they used to be God's enemies they are now his children (cf. Romans 5:10; 8:16-17). Their minds and behaviour were evil, but now they have been justified and made holy. They have been transferred from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light (1:12-13). All of this is only possible because of Jesus' sacrificial death. It was therefore essential that the Colossians remained firm in their faith, never moving on from the gospel which they had first heard from Epaphras and which Paul preached.

Reflect

- Do you think the gospel is as relevant today as it was when Paul was writing? Why/why not? Do you know of anyone who thinks the gospel is irrelevant or needs to change? What reasons do they give?
- Why is it so important that we never add to, take away from or alter the gospel?
- Give thanks that the gospel of Jesus tells us exactly how we can be saved and that nothing more is needed. Ask that God would help you to continue in your faith, never moving on from the hope it brings.



Introductory Idea - Option 1

Moving On. Divide a board/large sheet of paper into three or four sections. At the top of each section write a different school year group/stage as appropriate for the youth in your group e.g. preschool, years 1-3, years 4-6 and years 7-9; preschool, lower school, middle school and high school; infant school, junior school, secondary school and college.

Get the youth to discuss in small groups or pairs who they most looked up to/admired at each stage of their life. This could be a family member, celebrity, hero or other character (you may need to prompt them with some ideas to start with). The youth can then feed back to the whole group as you write up their answers, working through each section one at a time.

Were the people they looked up to the same at each stage of their life? Were there times when they 'moved on' in their admiration of certain people? Did the way they thought about those they first looked up to change as they grew up? Why/why not? Today's session is about why Jesus is the one whom all Christians look to and love and why this should never change.



Introductory Idea - Option 2

Starter Questions. Divide the group into smaller discussion groups to think about one or two of the following questions before feeding back:

1. What is the gospel (good news) that Christians believe?
2. Why is Jesus so central to Christianity and the gospel?
3. What would the gospel/Christianity be like without Jesus?

Today's session is about why Jesus is at the heart of the Christian faith and why this can never change.



Teaching Plan

There are four key ideas that you will need to cover in this lesson:

1. The gospel is a message of hope about God's gracious plan to rescue us through Jesus' death
2. Christians have trusted in Jesus and been redeemed, forgiven, reconciled and brought into his kingdom
3. Jesus is Lord over all creation, but especially Lord of his people, the Church
4. Christians must continue to trust in and live with Jesus as their Lord and saviour

The gospel that the Colossian Christians heard and which is still preached today is good news for all who believe. It reveals God's wonderful salvation plan and offers the certain and eternal hope of heaven for everyone who comes through Jesus.

Although once enemies of God and deserving of wrath (Ephesians 2:1-3), those who have trusted by faith in Jesus and accepted his sacrifice on their behalf have been transferred from death to life. They have been declared righteous; brought into new relationship with God, their Father; made holy; and given an inheritance in the kingdom of God's Son.

For this reason Jesus – the perfect revelation of God himself and the one through whom all things were created – is not only the supreme Lord of the universe, but also the personal Lord of those he has saved. It is right, therefore, that Christians live in a way that reflects their new allegiance. As Jesus' people they must walk worthily, representing him to the world and continuing to trust in him alone for their salvation (cf. Acts 4:12; 2 Corinthians 5:20).

You could divide the passage into three main sections to help you teach these points:

1. Paul and the Colossians (1:1-8)
2. Jesus and the Colossians (1:15-23)
3. Paul's prayer and instructions for the Colossians (1:9-14)

Since this is the first lesson in the series you will need to briefly cover the background to this letter. However, the main teaching comes in 1:9-23 so you should aim to spend the majority of your time there.

You could start by getting the youth to read the introductory section of the letter and Paul's comments on the Colossian church in 1:1-8. They can write down everything they know from this passage about the Colossian Christians – what their faith was like, who told them the gospel, whether Paul was impressed – either in small groups or together on a board. You can then fill in some of the details about who Paul was, why he was writing and his relationship with Epaphras (see the leader's notes above).

Once you have explained the context of Paul's letter, spend some time talking about the gospel message which the Colossians had heard and believed. Read through 1:9-23 and help the youth to pick out what God has done for Christians through Jesus. You could do this by dividing the group into pairs or small groups and giving each of them a printed copy of the passage and two different coloured highlighters. They can then highlight what their condition was like before they trusted in Jesus in one colour and what their condition is now in

another. Remind the youth that all of these benefits come by faith in Jesus alone – there is nothing else we need to do and no-one else who can do this for us!

Help them to understand from 1:15-20 why Jesus is the only one who could make this sacrifice for us and why we can trust that it was enough. How is he described in 1:15-20? What do we know about him? What has he done already? Is there anyone greater or more qualified to save and rule his people? This is why Paul warns the Colossians that they must continue to trust firmly in Jesus, never moving on from the original gospel message (1:23). Anything or anyone else – even the things that might seem powerful to us – is completely unable to save.

Finish by talking about the way we should respond to this message. Paul's prayer is that those who have trusted in Jesus would continue to grow in their faith in and obedience to the one who has saved them (1:9-14). Christians have become citizens (members) of God's kingdom and must therefore live appropriately making Jesus both their Lord and their saviour.

You could also use some of the following questions to help the youth understand the meaning of this passage in more detail:

- Who is the author of this letter? What authority did he have? Who had given him this authority? Who was he writing to? What was their faith like? Who had first taught them the gospel? (1:1-8)
- What had Jesus done for the Colossians? What was their condition before they believed? What was their condition after? How did they receive all these benefits? How else is Jesus described? Why is he supreme over all creation and especially his people? Why is it important that the Colossians continue firmly in their faith? (1:15-23)
- What does Paul pray for the Colossians? How should they respond to the gospel message? Who are they to live for? Why is this appropriate? Who will strengthen and equip them to live this way? (1:9-14)



Discuss and Apply

The gospel brings complete transformation for all who hear and believe: sinners become sons, enemies become friends, children of darkness become children of light. Our status before God, relationship with him and eternal destination are all flipped from the first moment of faith. The key to this change is what our faith is in. If we trust in anything less than Jesus we settle for something second rate; if we trust in anything more than Jesus we forget that he is supreme over all creation. In both cases our faith will prove futile for no-one else is so qualified to save as God's Son. This is just as true for us today as it was for the Colossians – we must not move on from our faith in Jesus.

With those who are not Christians this is a good lesson in which to challenge them about what they believe. You will need to summarise the gospel clearly – we have all turned away from God and become his enemies, deserving only punishment, but we can be forgiven, reconciled and rescued when we trust in Jesus' death in our place. Help them to see that there is no other way this could happen. Because we have sinned against God only God himself can forgive us and because Jesus is God he is the one through whom this offer of forgiveness is made. You could reiterate the differences between those who have and those who have not trusted in Jesus again to make this choice plain.

Spend some time talking about Paul's prayer for and instructions to those who have heard and believed the gospel. Since Christians have had their status before God, relationship with him and eternal destination transformed it is only fitting that the way they live be transformed too. They are to think, speak and behave appropriately as members of God's kingdom, obedient to his will. We cannot ask Jesus to be our saviour without also making him our Lord (cf. John 14:15, 23-24)! You could illustrate this by talking about the way that teachers/leaders/parents might encourage the youth to behave on a school/youth trip or other outing – the way the youth act reflects on the school/church/family and gives a particular impression to people around them. In the same way, how Christians live will reflect on Jesus – we must live in a manner that is worthy of our Lord.

Help the youth to think practically about how they can do this. Paul is clear that the only way we can live in a way which pleases God is if we know what that looks like! His prayer is that Christians would grow in wisdom, knowledge and understanding of God's will and that they would be enabled to live this way by the Spirit. How has God revealed his will to us? Where can we discover what 'living worthily' looks like? What role should the Bible and prayer have in this?

It is worth spending some time discussing Paul's last instruction to the Colossians in more detail: never to move on from their hope in the gospel. **With younger youth it will be enough to simply talk about what 'moving on' might look like and how they can make sure that they continue firmly in their faith. You could encourage them to come up with a short summary of the gospel message either individually or in pairs and then to write it down on a small piece of paper/card to help them remember. With older youth you could also talk about how or when they might be tempted to move on from the gospel. When does Jesus not seem sufficient? What is it that they doubt about him? Are there things that they sometimes add to the gospel? What else might they put their trust in? Why is it so important never to move on from the good news about Jesus?**

Finish by reminding the youth of the confidence that they can have in the gospel. The reason for our confidence is always the one on whom the good news is based – Jesus himself. Nothing has changed since the time of Paul's writing; Jesus is still supreme over all of creation, all-sufficient in salvation and the personal Lord of his people.

You could also use some of the questions below to help the youth think further about the implications of this passage:

- What is the good news of the gospel? Who does the gospel depend upon? What has Jesus done for his people? How do we receive these benefits?
- What instructions does Paul give to Christians? How should they live differently now that they are saved? To which kingdom do they belong? Why does this matter? Who are they living for?
- Have you believed the good news and trusted in Jesus? Are you living with him as your Lord as well as your saviour? What might you need to change?

- How can we live in a way that pleases God? Why is it important to grow in our knowledge and understanding? What does this mean? How can we know his will? What role should the Bible and prayer play in our lives?
- Why is it so important to continue in our faith? What does it mean to 'move on' from the gospel? What might this look like? When are you tempted to 'move on' from the gospel? Are there times when you doubt whether trusting in Jesus is enough? What do you doubt about him? Are there things that you sometimes add to the gospel? What else might you put your trust in?
- What could you do to make sure that you remain firm in your faith? How could you encourage others to continue in their faith, never moving on from the gospel?
- Why can we be confident as Christians that our faith in Jesus is enough? What is it about him that encourages you to continue in your faith?



Prayer Idea

Encourage the youth to think about one aspect of their salvation or one quality of Jesus for which they can praise God.

They can then take it in turns to pray, giving thanks for each of those things and asking God to help them continue trusting in Jesus as their Lord and saviour.



Memory Verse

*Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. **Colossians 3:1-3** [NIV]*