



LESSON PLAN

Scripture Texts:

Matthew 28:16-20

2 Corinthians 5:14-6:2

Session Theme:

Evangelism

a. Welcome to Class

Teachers should arrive in the classroom well in advance of class. Welcome students as they enter, and inquire about their week. Pass out name tags and record attendance on a classroom chart.

b. Icebreaker: Our Mission Field

Bring a world map or a globe to class with you. Invite kids to point out a place they would like to visit and why. Ask kids if there is any place they would *not* want to go, and why. Explain that Christian missionaries have often gone to those most challenging places to share the good news of Jesus. Some have even given their lives while doing this work.

What about our own country? Our own community? Is this a mission field, too? Why or why not?

In today's story, Jesus sends his followers out into the world to make disciples of all nations. How can we, as Christians, do that today? Let's begin our lesson and learn more!

c. Opening Prayer

Lord God, you told your followers to make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Help us to share the good news of your love with those whom we meet, even right in our own town. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

d. SEED Video or Song (Optional)

The teacher may introduce the lesson by playing the video clip from the SEED website. This time may also include an opening song or two, using a commercial Sunday School music CD.

Song suggestions for this lesson:

- "Send Me, Jesus" (hymn)
- "Children, Go Where I Send Thee" (children's song)

e. Brief Bible Background

Read together the introduction to the lessons for the day, and briefly summarize the context and setting:

- Today's Lesson is from the New Testament
- Scripture Section: Commission

After his resurrection, Jesus sent his followers to make disciples of all nations, baptizing in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and teaching all that Jesus had commanded. Then he ascended into heaven to be seated at the right hand of the Father.

f. Communicate the Bible Story

Always keep in mind that the main purpose of Sunday School is to put people in contact with Bible stories. Use a version that is appropriate to the age level:

Children: Read aloud the Bible Story and Rhyme

Youth/Adults: Read aloud Scripture from the Bible

g. Complete the Worksheet(s)

Continue with the handout sheets appropriate to the age level of the students in class:

Pre-Readers: Coloring Page and Activity

Elementary: Children's Pages (Worksheet and Drama)

Youth: Bible Study (Maps, Timelines, and Questions)

Adults: Bible Study (Large or Small Group Discussion)

h. Craft and Activity Time

If there is time after covering the Bible story, the class may move to craft and activity time, described on the following page. (Do not let the activity time supersede the actual time spent on the Scripture lesson.)

i. Summarize and Review

Before ending class, briefly summarize the day's lesson one last time. Use the Bible Rhyme as a short review, or simply ask questions to help the students recall the events of the story.

Youth/Adult: Discuss "Reflection for the Week Ahead"

j. Closing Prayer

Close the session in prayer before dismissal:

Pre-Readers: Teacher leads a simple prayer

Children: Practice a prayer from memory (e.g., the Lord's Prayer, Luther's Morning Prayer, etc.)

Youth/Adult: Use the ADTRC Prayer format



Bible Study Leader's Guide

The following is a discussion and answer guide for the Youth and Adult Bible Study sheets. For all leaders, it can serve to provide some background on the Bible lesson.

Discuss: Matthew 28:16-20

- Go back a few verses and read Matthew 28:7 and 28:10. On the first Easter morning, what did the angel and Jesus himself tell the disciples to do?

Both the angel and Jesus told the disciples to go to Galilee, where most of them were originally from. The disciples did as they were commanded (The exact location of the mountain is not mentioned here.)

- Verse 17 says that “they worshiped him, but some doubted.” How do you think you would have felt to see Jesus alive again after he had died? Is it possible to have faith and worship Jesus, yet still have some doubts?

What emotions and thoughts would you have had when meeting Jesus, raised from the dead? We can expect to have doubts even when we have trusted Jesus and worshiped him for a long time. The Greek word translated here as “worship” means “to fall on the ground before one being worshiped.” And the word we see as “doubt” implies hesitation.

Having faith does not mean we never have doubts; it means that we trust in Jesus even when we are afraid or do not have all the answers. While all the disciples believed in Jesus and trusted him, some reacted to his appearance with immediate prostration and worship, while others hesitated, perhaps because of surprise, or wanting to make sure that it was really him.

- Jesus began his Great Commission by saying, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me” (v. 18). What does that mean? What is “authority”?

God the Father has given his Son the right and the power to rule over all creation. Authority involves both the ability to rule and the right to rule. As true God, Jesus has always had all authority. As true man, he demonstrated his worthiness of this authority by his perfect life and sacrifice.

As the risen Son of God, Jesus is Lord over all of heaven and earth. Authority refers to power and rulership and to the certainty of his Word.

- In what way is Jesus’ command here based on his authority?

This command is for all of the Church for all time. When Jesus says “Go therefore,” the

“therefore” points back to his authority as the one who is sending them. They do not go of their own decision; they are sent by his authority and with his authority.

- The literal wording in verse 19 is not so much “Go...” but more like “As you are going ...”. How is telling others about Jesus not a separate task we are called to, but something he wants us to do as part of our everyday life?

The imperative, or command, is to “make disciples.” It is to be an essential part of the Christian life. When Jesus says “as you are going,” he is letting us know that sharing the good news of salvation should be on our lips daily, no matter where we go.

It is not just world missionaries or professional evangelists that Jesus is speaking to here (though it includes them as well); it is *all* believers. God calls each of us to bear witness to our faith — verbally, yes, but also in and through the things we do every day.

- What does Jesus tell the disciples to go do? What does God do to us through baptizing and teaching?

Jesus tells them to make disciples by baptizing and teaching. Through baptism and teaching of the Word, God creates and strengthens saving faith in his people. God gives us the promise in Word and Sacrament so we can trust and believe in him.

- What is Jesus’ final promise in the Book of Matthew? Why is this important for us to remember in our everyday lives of faith?

“I am with you always, to the end of the age.” This promise reminds us that not only are we sent out with Jesus’ authority, but he is with us, so we need not fear. In facing each day by faith, we know we are never alone. His guidance and power will see us through. He has promised to give us the words with which to proclaim his gospel and is with us as we do.

- Read 2 Corinthians 5:14 - 6:2. How do Paul’s words here match what Jesus said? What is the reason God is sending us out into the world? What does God want to accomplish through us?

Paul is describing his commission to preach the gospel. The reason that God is sending us out into the world is to make him known to the world. He calls us to be the agents of his reconciliation. We bring the salvation which he has bought to those who need to hear of it and receive it. We, too, are ambassadors for Christ!

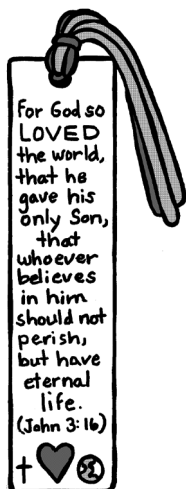
Classroom Craft and Activity Page

Listed below are in-class activities and craft projects related to the theme for the day. Choose one of the following based on the age and capabilities of the students. (Never let the activity or craft time take precedence over the biblical story.)

Activity 1: John 3:16 Bookmarks

For all children

- Card stock cut in half the long way (1/2 piece per kid)
- Pencils
- Rulers
- Markers
- Hole Punch
- Yarn
- Scissors



Instructions:

The Bible verse John 3:16 has sometimes been described as “the Gospel in a nutshell.”

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.”

(John 3:16)

Today, kids will make bookmarks to give to friends or family members, and in so doing, will share this good news with them! We can be missionaries right where we are.

To make the bookmarks, have kids follow these directions:

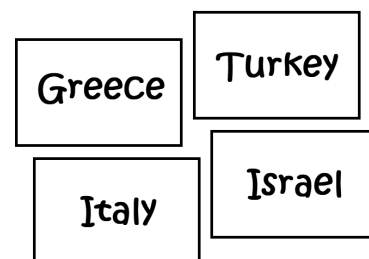
- Using a ruler and pencil, draw a line down the center of the card stock. Cut to make two bookmarks.
- Using a hole punch, make a hole at the top of each bookmark.
- Write the words of John 3:16 on the bookmark in pencil, and go over this in marker. Decorate the bookmark with markers on both sides. (An older kid can help younger ones with this, or they can just write “God loves you.”)
- Cut three to five long pieces of yarn per bookmark. Thread these through the hole and center the yarn. Bring all the yarn ends together and tie a knot to create a tassel. (See illustration.)
- Think about two people who may need to hear the message on this bookmark. Say a prayer for each person. Then, plan to give them a bookmark the next time you see them.

Activity 2: “Go to All the World!” Journey

For all children

Materials Needed:

- Index cards
- Black marker
- Copy paper
- Pens



Instructions:

Before class: Using the marker, write several country names on index cards, with one country on each card. On a separate sheet of paper, make a list of these same countries. Print a few copies of this list. Then, place the index cards in different areas of the church. You’ll need to decide a reasonable number of cards to make based on the ages of the children you are working with, the size of your building, and the amount of time you anticipate spending on the activity.

When it’s time to play the game: Divide the class into two or more groups (depending on class size) and do the following:

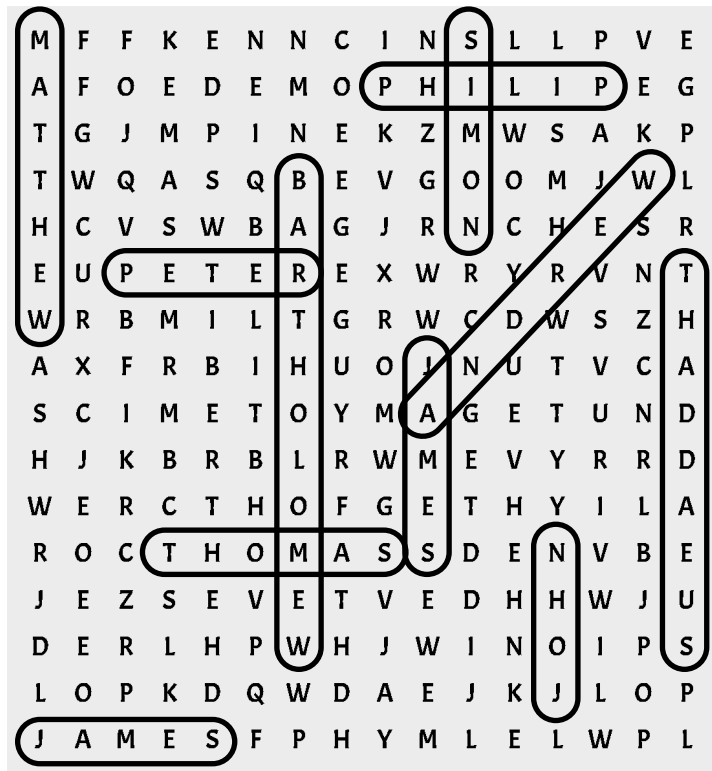
- Give each group a list of the countries and a pen. (If a group has young children in it, plan for an adult to travel around the church with them.)
- When the activity begins, kids will walk around the church in their group, trying to find the index card with the name that matches the one on their list.
- Once they have found a matching index card, they will make a short note about where they found it and begin searching for the next index card.
- Whichever team finds all of the cards/countries and returns to you first is the winner.

When everyone has returned to the classroom, ask each group to choose a few countries on the list and to lead the class in prayer for those places.

Christian missionaries have traveled to all of the places on our list, as well as many others. Did you know that the Apostle Paul, himself, went on missionary trips to Turkey, Greece, Syria, and Italy? Some areas have been open to the good news of Jesus, others less so. Yet God loves them all, and missionaries share that message of hope.

Worksheet Answer Key

Shown below are the answers and solution to the children's worksheet for this week's lesson:



The names of the twelve apostles are these: first, Simon, who is called **Peter**, and **Andrew** his brother; **James** the son of Zebedee, and **John** his brother; **Philip** and **Bartholomew**; **Thomas** and **Matthew** the tax collector; **James** the son of Alphaeus, and **Thaddaeus**; **Simon** the Zealot, and **Judas Iscariot**, who betrayed him (Matthew 10:2-4).

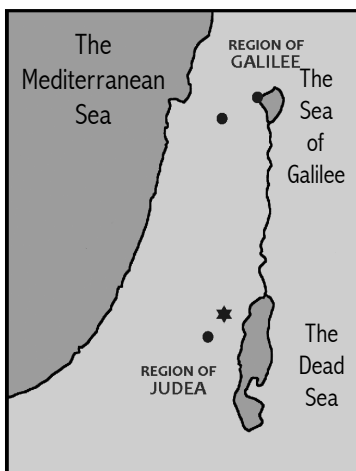
Note: Judas killed himself in guilt for what he had done; he was not with the others on the day Jesus gave his Great Commission.

Timeline Answer

After his resurrection, Jesus appeared to his disciples over the course of 40 days.

Map Answer Key

- Which two towns are in the region of Galilee?
Nazareth and Capernaum
- Which two towns are in the region of Judea?
Jerusalem and Bethlehem



Reflection for the Week Ahead

When you hear or read the word evangelism, what comes to mind? Perhaps street preachers, or people handing out religious pamphlets, or missionaries traveling to dangerous places? Those are all certainly ways to share the good news of Jesus, but what about talking with a friend over lunch, or even sending an encouraging text?

Evangelism (sharing the good news of Jesus) is *relational*. It's about getting to know and understand someone. It's about telling our own stories and how God has walked with us during hard times. It's about sharing what it means that Jesus forgives our sins. We don't need to have all the right words in advance, or to follow a specific program. The Holy Spirit will help us know what is needed at the right time.

Talk to one another about these questions:

What are some things that hold you back from sharing your faith with people you know?

How might the Holy Spirit help you reach out to someone who is struggling right now and could use to hear the good news of Jesus? What are some specific things you could do?

The Practice of Prayer

On the lines below, ask God to help you find the words to speak his truth. Pray that the Holy Spirit would guide you as you share Jesus with others.

Practice using the ADTRC Prayer Form: Address, Description, Thanks, Request, Conclusion.

A: _____

D: _____

T: _____

R: _____

C: _____