

Sunday School Year 3 *Teaching Helps* audio files and study sheets

This CD contains the *Teaching Helps* audio files for the 39 lessons in the Christ-Light Year 3 Sunday School curriculum.

For each lesson there is an audio file for the lower grades (approximately grades 1-4) and one for the upper grades (grades 5-6). Choose the one for the grade level you teach.

Each audio file begins with a study presentation of the Bible lesson itself as well as pertinent background information. This presentation will help you prepare to teach the lesson. The second part of the audio file includes an interview with a teacher who provides tips for teaching the lesson and for teaching Sunday school in general.

A PDF file provides two pages of notes for each lesson, which will help you follow along as you listen to the audio file. One page corresponds to the presentation of the lesson, and the other is a checklist of points made by the teachers in the interview section. (A separate PDF file is provided for each of the upper level and lower level audio files.)

The audio files are in MP3 format so you can upload and listen to them on an MP3 player or on a computer.

The files are found in three main folders, one for each set.

01 Yr3 Fall

02 Yr3 Winter

03 Yr3 Spring

Each main folder contains two subfolders, one with the lower-grades files and one with the upper-grades files.

The MP3 file labels indicate the Sunday school year, **3_1_01**; the set, **3_1_01** (Fall, Winter, Spring); and the lesson number, **3_1_01**.

01 Yr3 Fall

Yr3FallLower

3_1_01CreationLower.mp3

3_1_02FirstSinLower.mp3

3_1_03CainAbelLower.mp3

3_1_14TeacherNotesLower.pdf

Yr3FallUpper

3_1_01CreationUpper.mp3

3_1_02FirstSinUpper.mp3

3_1_03CainAbelUpper.mp3

3_1_14TeacherNotesUpper.pdf

02 Yr3 Winter

Yr3WinterLower

3_2_01JonahLower.mp3

3_2_02ThreeMenLower.mp3

Yr3WinterUpper

3_2_01JonahUpper.mp3

3_2_02ThreeMenUpper.mp3

Use of Teaching Helps Audio Files

If a congregation has purchased the Teaching Helps CD, the Sunday school superintendent may use or distribute the files in a variety of ways. The Sunday school superintendent may make a copy of this CD for each teacher. The Sunday school superintendent may e-mail files to the Sunday school teachers. The files can also be posted on a congregation Web site, but **only if it is a secure Web site** (password protected). See the copyright information below. Or, if the pastor wishes, the Sunday school teaching staff may listen to the segments as part of the Sunday school teachers' meetings.

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Sunday School Teaching Helps

Listening Notes

Year 3—Spring
Upper Grades



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*I am the light of the world.
Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness,
but will have the light of life.*

John 8:12
(NIV 1984)



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These lesson titles are taken from Grades 1-2 of the Christ-Light Sunday school religion curriculum.

Introduction

Teaching Helps Audio Files

We have prepared an audio file for each lesson. The file begins with a presentation of the Bible lesson followed by an interview with a teacher who provides tips for teaching Sunday school.

Teaching Helps Printable Notes

Included is a PDF document containing two pages of notes for each lesson. The first page corresponds to the presentation of the lesson. The second sheet lists the topics discussed in the interview.

Tips on sharing these files within your congregation:

The files on this disk are meant to be shared with your entire Sunday school staff. This can be done in a variety of ways.

You may wish to burn a CD for each teacher, including substitute teachers.

Small, inexpensive flash drives also work well. They could be provided by the teachers or the church. The files could be copied from a public computer located in the church.

If only the regular teachers have the files, when they use a substitute, they could attach the appropriate audio file and the PDF notes to an e-mail in time for the substitute to use it in preparation to teach the lesson.

The files can also be stored on your server and be made available through your Web site. However, you are permitted to do this only if the area on your Web site where the files are accessed is password protected.

We hope you will make these files readily available to everyone who will be teaching in your Sunday school. We also ask that you observe the limitations to sharing as described in the copyright statement.

Year 3, Spring, Lesson 1

Our Savior Dies—Matthew 27:39-56; Mark 15:33-39; Luke 23:34-49; John 19:25-30

Review

This account follows quickly on the previous account. Pilate, under pressure from the Jews, condemned Jesus to be crucified. Jesus carried his cross to the place of crucifixion and was crucified.

Introduction

Jesus was now in mortal combat with Satan. The battle between the King of the Jews and the king of darkness had been joined. As peaceful as it was beneath the cross—with only groans of prisoners and scattered shouts of mocking breaking the silence—the kingdom of Satan was in an uproar. All possible means of tempting Jesus were being used to lead him to give up the battle. His disciples had forsaken him; his mother sat helpless and vulnerable at the foot of the cross; he was crucified along with, and hence identified with, criminals; the religious rulers were mocking him; people from all over the world, come to celebrate the Passover in Jerusalem, passed by and saw the sign of mockery over his head; he was in the hands of Romans who cared little for his safety; worst of all, his heavenly Father had forsaken him. All he had to do was denounce his work, come down from the cross, and it would all be over.

God's Plan of Salvation

Here we see the center of God's plan of salvation. Everything that had come before—the promises of God about a coming Savior, God's work with the nation of Israel, the prophecies about Jesus' life and work—now had been completed. All that was to happen—the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the expansion of God's church, the growth of his kingdom, the final judgment day, and the advent of the new heaven and new earth—would now happen because Jesus' victory over Satan had been won.

The Account—Matthew 27:39-56; Mark 15:33-39; Luke 23:34-49; John 19:25-30

Instead of focusing on a single gospel account, we will focus on the seven words Jesus spoke from the cross. These seven words teach us about Jesus' crucifixion.

Luke 23:34 **“Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.”**—Jesus' first act while on the cross was to ask God to forgive the sins of those who were nailing him to the cross. He loved them also and wanted them to be with him in heaven. He wanted God to show them mercy, not to break out in vengeance against them. This is Jesus' attitude toward everyone in the world. He wants all people to come to a knowledge of the truth and be with him in heaven. This set the pace for all that would follow.

John 19:26 **“Dear woman, here is your son”**—Jesus cared for his mother. At a time when most criminals were only thinking about themselves and hurling curses at everyone else, Jesus saw to it that his mother was taken care of.

Luke 23:43 **“I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise.”**—The thief on the cross next to Jesus asked Jesus to remember him when he came into his kingdom. Jesus responded with the promise that that day the man would be with him in paradise. This illustrates what Jesus was doing on the cross. The man had come to faith not long before he died. He had no chance to “undo” his evil life. But Jesus' promise of heaven is not based on what a person or anyone else can

do, but what Jesus did on the cross when he paid the penalty that we deserve for our sins. Heaven is now a free gift that we receive through faith.

Matthew 27:46 **“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”**—We take these words at face value. God forsook God. The Father forsook his Son because all of our detestable sins were on him. God forsook Jesus so he would not have to forsake us.

John 19:28 **“I am thirsty.”**—Jesus had refused the drink earlier. He did not want a painkiller; he wanted to bear the full suffering necessary for our sin. But now it was only moments before the end of his life. He requested something to drink not because he was thirsty but because he wanted to let everyone know that his sufferings were over.

John 19:30 **“It is finished.”**—Immediately after he drank, he announced that his work of winning our salvation was finished.

Luke 23:46 **“Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.”**—Luke tells us that Jesus cried out in a loud voice. He still had air in his lungs and the strength to take a deep breath. This shows that no one took Jesus' life from him but that he gave it up willingly—when and where he pleased. He placed himself into the loving hands of his heavenly Father, whose will he had completed.

Year 3 Spring Lesson 1

3_3_01—Our Savior Dies

Upper

The crucifixion is the culmination of God's plan of salvation.

Discuss the nature of Jesus' suffering, especially the unseen suffering Jesus went through in being separated from God and enduring hell for us. A suggestion for making this concrete.

Discussion about "It is finished."

Make sure you teach the students about the comfort this lesson brings.

The key point of this account is not to horrify the children with Jesus' suffering but to impress on them that Jesus suffered for "me."

Year 3, Spring, Lesson 2

Jesus' Friends Learn That He Is Risen—Matthew 28:1-10; Mark 16:1-8; Luke 24:1-12; John 20:1-9

Review

In last week's lesson, you taught the children about Jesus' death. This week's lesson immediately follows.

Introduction

This lesson is found in all the gospels. Depending on the grade level, the Christ-Light materials focus on various sections of the gospel writers' accounts.

Jesus' burial is quite straightforward. It is not difficult to piece together the events from the time Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea asked for Jesus' body to the point at which Jesus was placed into a tomb. The first steps in preparing his body for burial were hastily carried out. That work was to be finished as early as possible on Sunday morning.

Starting with early Sunday morning, however, it is not as easy to track the events in order. We have various people going to the tomb, various appearances of angels, and various bits of communication happening at various times. If you become confused trying to figure it all out, especially if you read all the sections of Scripture and try to piece them together, don't feel bad. There are special studies available that attempt to piece it all together. It is best to save such a study for your own personal growth in faith and stick with the events in the Christ-Light material offered for your grade level.

The most important event, of course, is Jesus' resurrection. The people who witnessed Jesus' resurrection are important because they told others that Jesus was not dead but alive.

God's Plan of Salvation

These events are at the heart of God's plan of salvation. Jesus' resurrection tells us that the sins of the entire world have been paid for and that those who repent and believe in the Savior will have eternal life. Let these truths dominate your approach to the lesson.

The Account—Matthew 28:1-10; Mark 16:1-8; Luke 24:1-12; John 20:1-9

We will use Matthew 28:1-10 in the notes below.

28:1-4 **“Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb.”**—These two women and Salome were the first to arrive at the tomb. They had come to finish anointing Jesus' body for burial. We are not told how their wishes coincided with Pilate's guard and the seal he put on the tomb. **“a violent earthquake”**—There had been an earthquake at the time of Jesus' death and again early in the morning. God was at work with all his power. He was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself. Evidently this earthquake, the angel's appearance to the soldiers, and the opening of the tomb took place before the women arrived. The guards are not mentioned by the other gospel writers, so they must have awoken and returned to the city by the time anyone arrived. **“rolled back the stone”**—The angel rolled back the stone, not so that Jesus could get out but to show that he was no longer there. He had risen from the dead. This becomes clear in verses 5-7.

Note: The Apostles' Creed gives a sequence of events starting with Jesus' crucifixion. He died, was buried, descended into hell, and rose again on the third day. Your children might have some questions about Jesus' descent into hell, and sometimes they get the sequence

of events confused. If you wish, here would be a good place to discuss this with your children. First, Jesus died. His body and soul separated, and he (his soul) went back to his heavenly Father. His body was in the grave. Early on Sunday, Jesus rose. His body and soul were reunited. Then he descended into hell, not to suffer for sin but to proclaim his victory over sin. (We can piece this together from several Scripture references.) After that he began appearing to his followers.

28:5-10 **“Do not be afraid”**—This is the message of the gospel. Because of Christ we do not have to be afraid—of our sins, of God's anger, of judgment day, of suffering and death, of the turmoil in the world, or of any of the awful signs that will precede Jesus' second coming. **“just as he said”**—The women should have listened to Jesus. If they had, his resurrection would not have been so unexpected. **“going ahead of you into Galilee”**—There the Lord would continue to teach the disciples about the kingdom of God and prepare them for their work. He would also assure them—especially Peter—that he had forgiven their sinful weakness and still wanted them to tell the world about him. **“Jesus met them”**—Jesus wanted the women to see him with their own eyes.

Year 3 Spring Lesson 2

3_3_02—Jesus' Friends Learn That He Is Risen

Upper

Use verbs in telling the story.

Suggest reading the resurrection account from the Bible so that the children see the entire picture.

Be aware of visitors, and enjoy sharing the meaning of Easter with them.

Suggestions for discussing what happens to a person's body and soul when he or she dies. Discuss the sequence of what happened after Jesus died.

Year 3, Spring, Lesson 3

Two Disciples See Jesus—Luke 24:13-35

Review

This account takes place in the late afternoon and early evening on the same day Jesus rose from the dead. Only a few hours had passed since the discovery that Jesus was no longer in the grave.

Introduction

In his next book, the book of Acts, Luke tells us that after Jesus rose from the dead, he taught his disciples about the kingdom of God for a period of 40 days before he ascended into heaven.

The account this week is a fine example of the kinds of things Jesus talked about as he helped his disciples understand what the kingdom of God was all about. Your children may or may not be familiar with the term “kingdom of God.” This might be a good time to help them understand the idea of “kingdom,” since they are members of God’s kingdom. God’s kingdom is not a physical country, like the nations of the world. Nor does God keep order with police or a military. Nor is he concerned only with serving an earthly society.

God’s kingdom is his power and activity of ruling. He makes his kingdom larger by sending out people to preach the gospel. They tell their hearers that Jesus, God’s Son, has died for their sins. When people believe that message, their sins are forgiven and they become members of God’s kingdom. They see God as their loving Lord, who works out all things for their eternal good. They live in peace, knowing that with God as their King, no evil power in this world can harm them. They look forward to an eternal kingdom where God will restore all things to their original perfect condition and where they will live with him in eternal happiness.

God’s Plan of Salvation

This account helps us better understand God’s plan of salvation. In fact, that’s what Jesus was doing for the two men on the road to Emmaus. These two men were sad because Jesus, in whom they had trusted, had been killed. Their hopes of salvation were dashed.

Jesus rebuked them. “How foolish you are,” he said. They didn’t understand how God’s kingdom would start. The entire Old Testament pointed to the fact that if God was to be at peace with us, a sacrifice had to be made. As Jesus told the two men, “Did not the Christ have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?” (v. 26). God’s kingdom and all of its blessings could only come to us if Jesus suffered God’s just anger in our place. Only then would God be at peace with us and pour out his blessings on us. That is why keeping the cross and the resurrection of Jesus as the center of our faith is all-important.

The Account—Luke 24:13-35

24:13-19 **“a visitor to Jerusalem”**—Recall that this was the Passover. There would have been many foreign travelers going to and from the city. **“What things?”**—Jesus pretended to be ignorant of what had happened. He wanted the men themselves to express what was on their minds.

24:20-24 Notice how much the men knew! They had everything they needed to come to the right conclusion about Jesus. He was **“a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God”**—Might not his crucifixion been part of God’s plan? **“who was going to redeem Israel”**—They had put their hope in the right person. But to them the cross was a stumbling block at this point. **“didn’t find his body . . . a vision of angels, who said he was alive”**—Why didn’t they believe these women?

“found it just as the women had said”—If they didn’t want to believe the women, they should have believed two of the disciples.

24:25-27 **“How foolish you are”**—In spite of all the evidence, they refused to believe. **“what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself”**—To solve the men’s doubt and lack of understanding, Jesus turned to the Scriptures and explained them. This is the key to solving all doubt and lack of understanding.

24:28-35 **“Were not our hearts burning . . . ?”**—Learning the Bible and having it opened to us (like you are doing for your students) is the key to hearts that burn with the thrill of seeing the gospel more clearly. Assure the children that this will be true for them also, and encourage them to make this a lifelong goal.

Year 3 Spring Lesson 3
3_3_03—Two Disciples See Jesus
Upper

Notes on the WELS video *Road to Emmaus*.

Consider using the account as a forum within which you can discuss things the children may have been wondering about.

Explain the word *faith*.

Discuss the excitement of the Emmaus disciples over the insights they gained from Jesus.

Tic-tac-toe activity as a review.

Keep the discussion moving by helping the class remain focused on the lesson. Let those who have heard the lesson many times teach it.

Role-play the account. (Note the suggestion from the first point where you stop the video *Road to Emmaus* and have the children try to answer the questions the men asked of Jesus.)

Year 3, Spring, Lesson 4

Jesus Appears to His Disciples—Mark 16:14; Luke 24:36-49; John 20:19-23

Review

Last week's lesson was about Jesus talking to the two men on the road to Emmaus. Jesus joined them for the evening meal, and while he was praying, he revealed himself to the men. After they realized who he was, Jesus disappeared. The two men were filled with joy when they understood the Scriptures and knew that Jesus had fulfilled them. They immediately returned to Jerusalem to tell Jesus' followers that he had risen from the dead. This week's lesson is the account of what happened when they arrived in Jerusalem and reported what had happened to them.

God's Plan of Salvation

Jesus' words to the disciples on Easter evening from the book of Luke chapter 24 give us a complete picture of God's plan of salvation.

- Verse 36. He gives his disciples and us God's peace. Luke began the story of Jesus' life by recording how the angels told the shepherds that now there would be "peace on earth." He ended his book in the same way. Because of Jesus' work, we are at peace with God.
- Verses 37-43. Jesus assured the disciples that it was he. He also told them that he was not just a spirit but that he retained our flesh and blood. He had truly become a human being and would remain one. He is still our brother.
- Verse 44. Jesus pointed the disciples to what the prophets had written. In order to fulfill their words, Jesus had to die. That was God's plan from the beginning.
- Verse 45. Jesus opened their minds. Only then could they understand God's plan. The same is true for us today.
- Verse 46. Jesus explained what the prophets had said about him.
- Verse 47. Jesus gave the disciples their mission. They were to preach repentance and faith to all nations. That's the heart of our mission as Jesus' witnesses. We lead people to realize their sins and believe in Jesus for forgiveness.
- Verse 48. The church was to be built on the eyewitness reports of the first disciples who saw that Jesus had risen from the dead.
- Verse 49. God would empower his disciples, as he empowers us, to do his work.

The Account—Mark 16:14; Luke 24:36-49; John 20:19-23

Luke 24:36-44 "**Touch me and see' . . . and he took it and ate it in their presence**"—Jesus did not give up his human body. In fact, it still bore the nail and spear marks. Now, however, his body had been glorified. He passed through closed doors. He disappeared and appeared again in a different location. Note: Jesus has a human body, yet he is present everywhere. He is present in the Lord's Supper wherever it is celebrated. This is a mystery that Lutherans accept. The Evangelical and Reformed churches do not accept this. They reason that since he has a human body, he can only be present in one place, so he cannot be present in the Lord's Supper. This is one of the reasons they deny that Jesus' body and

blood are in the Lord's Supper with the bread and wine. "**what my Father has promised**"—The Holy Spirit, which he would give the church on Pentecost.

John 20:19-23 "**If you forgive anyone his sins . . .**"—At this time Jesus gave his church the keys of the kingdom, that is, the joy of telling repentant sinners that their sins were forgiven and the sad responsibility to tell unrepentant sinners that their sins were not forgiven. This is the main work of the church. We are to preach that Jesus died for all, and then we are to announce forgiveness or refuse forgiveness on the basis of whether people believe or disbelieve our message.

Year 3 Spring Lesson 4

3_3_04—Jesus Appears to His Disciples

Upper

Discussion about singing in the older grades.

Discussion about reading the account right out of the Bible.

Encourage the children to ask questions.

When doing activities, combine stronger students with weaker ones. Be sensitive to the non-LES children in your class.

Get to know your students.

Help children learn about the Bible and how to use it.

Year 3, Spring, Lesson 5

Thomas Believes—John 20:24-31

Review

On the day of his resurrection, Jesus had appeared to a number of people. In the later afternoon, he had appeared to two men on the road to Emmaus. Later that evening, he had appeared to the disciples, who were gathered in a locked room because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders. One of the disciples, Thomas, had not been present at that time.

Introduction

We are not told why Thomas was not with the disciples on Easter Sunday. Perhaps he was afraid even to be seen with the rest. After all, all of them were frightened that they might suffer the same fate as Jesus suffered.

Thomas serves as an example of a person who wants proof before he will believe. As you teach this lesson though, don't be too hard on Thomas. After all, none of the disciples believed the eyewitness report of the women. Luke said, "But they did not believe the women, because their words seemed to them like nonsense" (24:11). They had to see Jesus before they believed. None of the disciples understood that Jesus had to die and rise again, so they were viewing Jesus' death like a normal human death and were not expecting him to rise again. They were no different than Thomas, although Thomas held out longer in his skeptical attitude and expressed his doubts more strongly than they did.

As you teach this lesson, treat Thomas' doubt as an example of the kind of doubts we all have. Treat Jesus' rebuke of Thomas as a loving rebuke meant for all believers. God wants us to believe the writings of the apostles—which record all the words and works of Jesus—and believe them without visible evidence. That makes us blessed.

God's Plan of Salvation

The resurrection of Jesus is the heart of the gospel. Jesus wants all people to believe his Word, which reports his sufferings and death. All Christians can point to things God has done in their lives that have bolstered their faith. In the end, however, our faith rests in believing something we have not seen with our own eyes but have learned from God's Word.

The fifth and sixth grade level includes verses 30 and 31. These verses underscore the point made in the paragraph above. John recorded Jesus' miracles to show Jesus' power and glory as the Son of God. These works show him to be the one who has authority over all things; who destroyed Satan's kingdom by his suffering, death, and resurrection; and who rules over all things for our eternal good.

The Account—John 20:24-31

20:24,25 **"Unless I see"**—This was Thomas' problem: He had to see things if he was to believe them. In the process, he was pushing the Holy Spirit from his heart, because the Spirit was working through the testimony of the other apostles to lead him to believe. Note how explicit his demands were. Seeing was not enough; he actually had to touch Jesus' wounds.

20:26-29 **"Peace be with you!"**—These are the first words Jesus spoke when he met with his disciples the week before. What beautiful words to the ears of anyone who is afraid. God is at peace with us, and we are safe in his care. **"Stop doubting and believe."**—Jesus gave Thomas the proof he needed. **"blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed"**—We are

blessed because we have not catered to our human reason, which can always raise its ugly head and lead us to doubt. Rather, we have put our belief in the gospel that is recorded in God's Word. This source of certainty is always there. We can go to it any time we want and be strengthened in our faith. We don't have to wait around for some other act of God to prove his love.

20:30,31 **"But these are written that you may believe"**—Jesus wants us to go to his Word and believe it. **"that by believing you may have life in his name"**—These two simple verses describe so well the means by which God gives us light and gives us eternal life, namely, his Word.

Year 3 Spring Lesson 5
3_3_05—Thomas Believes
Upper

The trust versus doubt activity is a good activity to help the children understand law and gospel.

Discussing the Bible story in depth with the older children.

Tips on using worksheets.

Discussion about using the Christ-Light materials that are appropriate for your students.

Year 3, Spring, Lesson 6

Jesus Meets His Disciples in Galilee—John 21:15-19

Review

On Easter Sunday, Jesus had met the women who came to the tomb. Among other things, he had told the women to tell his disciples to go to Galilee, where he would meet with them. These were intended as words of comfort and hope for the disciples, who had just forsaken and denied Jesus. Jesus wanted them to know that he still loved them and had work for them to do.

Introduction

A week had gone by and Jesus' disciples were still in Jerusalem. Some time later (we can't be sure when), they left and went to Galilee. Galilee was the place where Jesus carried on most of his ministry. Jesus did not appear to his disciples in Jerusalem any more. John tells us that Jesus' appearance to them by the Sea of Galilee was the third time he appeared to them.

Our lesson for this week deals with how Jesus showed mercy to Peter and "reinstated" him as a disciple, or at least assured him beyond any doubt that he was still one of Jesus' disciples. How Jesus did that is at the heart of our lesson today.

In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus had said that all the disciples would forsake him. Peter responded that even if the others forsook Jesus, he never would. Jesus told Peter that he, Peter, would deny him three times. This forms the background for today's lesson.

Jesus asked Peter three times if he loved him. It is easy to see why Jesus asked the same question three times; that was how many times Peter had denied Jesus. Jesus also asked Peter if he loved him, Jesus, more than these, referring to the other disciples. Recall that Peter looked down on his fellow disciples and disparaged their allegiance to Jesus even as he, in pride, claimed greater allegiance.

The key to understanding this section lies in the words Jesus and Peter used for "love."

First question: Jesus used the Greek word *agapao*, which refers to a completely unselfish love. (The NIV translates this word "truly love" to emphasize its special nature.) Peter responded by saying that yes, he loved Jesus, but he used a different word for love, *fileo*, which is a lower kind of love. It refers to the love a person might have for a close friend, but not a completely unselfish, one-sided love. In doing this, Peter displayed humility.

Second question: Jesus again used the Greek word *agapao*. Peter responded with the same word he used the first time, *fileo*.

Third question: Jesus now used the word *fileo*. He would not demand that Peter give him that unconditional, self-sacrificing love (*agapao*). He only wanted to know if Peter would love him as a friend. Peter responded that he would love him. Peter was a humbled person, ready to take on the task of leading the church. He would not boast in his ability to love, nor would he *demand* such love from those he was serving.

God's Plan of Salvation

Often the Lord must humble us before he can use us in his kingdom. This happened to all the disciples, and it especially happened to Peter. They all had to learn how sinful they were and appreciate the fact that Jesus went to the cross alone. Only he could provide the perfect sacrifice that God demanded. We love Jesus (*agapao*) and we love one another with that kind of love, but only as a result of Jesus' love for us. Even then it is imperfect, but Jesus has forgiven us our weakness, even as he forgave Peter's.

The Account—John 21:15-19

21:15-19 "and lead you where you do not want to go"—Peter would someday be imprisoned and his hands "stretched out" on a cross. "glorify God"—What Peter	feared would happen to him. He would die for his faith. But by the time that happened, he would realize that by dying for his faith, he was glorifying God.
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Year 3 Spring Lesson 6

3_3_06—Jesus Meets His Disciples in Galilee

Upper

Have the children work in balanced pairs.

Encourage every child to participate.

When the children speak in unison, have them speak slowly and clearly. There shouldn't be any competition.

Year 3, Spring, Lesson 7

Jesus Ascends Into Heaven—Mark 16:19; Luke 24:50-53; Acts 1:1-11

Review

Forty days passed between Jesus' resurrection and his ascension into heaven. Jesus spent time revealing himself to his disciples and teaching them about the kingdom of God. This was an important time for the disciples. Those whom Jesus had designated as apostles (chosen from the larger group of disciples) were going to testify to Jesus' resurrection and needed this time to be confirmed in their knowledge that Jesus had risen from the dead. They needed to grow in their understanding of Jesus' death and resurrection and better understand how their witness to Jesus' resurrection would extend the kingdom of God.

Introduction

Paul encouraged the Philippian Christians to be humble and willing to serve others. He used Jesus as his example. He described Jesus' work:

Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross! *Therefore God exalted him to the highest place* and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” (Philippians 2:6-11)

Jesus had lived in complete humility. He had served us by dying for our sins. In the account for this week, we see God exalting Jesus to the highest place. We see Jesus ascending from the earth in full view of his disciples, returning to the right hand of his heavenly Father.

God's Plan of Salvation

Jesus ascended into heaven for several very important reasons, all related to God's plan of salvation. Be sure to tell the children the reasons why this took place. All of these reasons are important to your children's salvation and are key to God's plan of salvation.

- When Jesus' disciples were troubled about his leaving them and returning to the Father, Jesus said that it was good for him to go. Unless he left them and returned to his Father, he could not send the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit was the key to empowering the disciples for their ministry and for the growth of the church.
- If Jesus had not ascended into heaven, he could not sit at God's right hand and rule over all things for the good of his church.
- If Jesus had not ascended, he could not have prepared a place for us in heaven, nor could he return in power to judge all people.

The Account—Mark 16:19; Luke 24:50-53; Acts 1:1-11

Acts 1:1-11 **“wait for the gift . . . in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit”**—Jesus returned to his heavenly Father so he could pour out the Holy Spirit. **“you will be my witnesses”**—The Holy Spirit would give the disciples power to be witnesses to Jesus' resurrection and to make disciples of all nations. **“and a cloud hid him from their sight”**—Jesus left his disciples by rising into the air, where a cloud hid him from their sight. Don't imagine Jesus continuing to rise higher and higher into the sky. When the cloud hid him,

he was in heaven. The angels spoke of Jesus' entry into heaven in the past tense. He “has been” taken into heaven. **“same Jesus . . . come back in the same way”**—Notice how the angels comforted the disciples. The very same Jesus whom they had known for three years would someday return. And he would return in the same way as he had left them. Someday he would come in the clouds of heaven and reappear, not just to the disciples but to all people.

Year 3 Spring Lesson 7

3_3_07—Jesus Ascends Into Heaven

Upper

Be well rested on Sunday morning.

Have the children imagine that they are at the Bible event.

This is a good story to talk about Jesus being omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent.

Year 3, Spring, Lesson 8

The Coming of the Holy Spirit—Acts 2:1-21

Review

After Jesus rose from the dead, he appeared to his disciples for 40 days. Then he ascended into heaven. He told his disciples to wait in Jerusalem for the gift he had promised, namely, the Holy Spirit. Ten days later, Jesus sent the Holy Spirit on the disciples.

Introduction

The account itself is remarkable. But besides teaching the facts of what happened on Pentecost Sunday, you will want to make sure the children know why Jesus sent the Holy Spirit. That will make this lesson relevant for today, because the Holy Spirit continues to do his work.

John the Baptist spoke of the power that would come on the people through the Holy Spirit. He said, “I baptize you with water. But one more powerful than I will come, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire” (Luke 3:16).

The power John spoke about is explained by Peter in the sermon he preached on Pentecost Sunday. Quoting the prophet Joel, he said, “Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy” (Acts 2:18). To *prophesy* means to speak God’s Word with knowledge and understanding.

Below is a sample of what the Spirit would do for God’s people. If you have a computer Bible study program, a search on “Holy Spirit” will reveal more. The Spirit would

- teach us what to say when we are suffering for our faith (Luke 12:11,12).
- teach the disciples everything they needed to know to teach and lead the church. He would remind them of everything Jesus had said to them while he was here on earth. Their words would be inspired by the Holy Spirit and therefore an absolute source of truth for us (John 14:26).
- give his disciples (us included) power to work to expand his kingdom (Acts 1:8; 4:31).
- encourage us in our lives and outreach (Acts 9:31).
- give us the knowledge of God’s love in Christ (Romans 5:5), give us hope (Romans 15:13), and make us holy by leading us to Christ (Romans 1:16; 1 Corinthians 2:3).
- give spiritual gifts to the church (Hebrews 2:4).

God’s Plan of Salvation

Without the Holy Spirit, God’s people would not have the understanding, courage, or zeal they needed to preach the gospel and cause God’s kingdom to expand into the world.

The Account—Acts 2:1-21

2:1-4 **“Pentecost”**—One of the three main Jewish pilgrimage festivals, when Jews from all over the world would come to Jerusalem. **“sound like the blowing of a violent wind”**—Wind was a symbol of the Holy Spirit, as was the fire that came on the heads of the disciples. Note that it wasn’t a wind but the sound of wind. It was a violent wind, symbolizing the power of the Holy Spirit. **“filled with the Holy Spirit”**—This alone gave them the power to spread the gospel. **“other tongues”**—From the context, these refer to real, known languages.
2:5-21 **“God-fearing Jews from every nation under**

heaven”—They were all there to celebrate the Pentecost festival. God timed it so that these people could hear the gospel and return to their hometowns with the good news that the Messiah had come. **“declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues”**—God chose to give his Holy Spirit to people from every nation. This fact was underlined when God enabled the disciples to speak in other languages. All of them probably understood Greek, which was the universal language of the day. Peter, no doubt, used Greek when he preached his sermon, and the crowd would have understood him.

Year 3 Spring Lesson 8

3_3_08—The Coming of the Holy Spirit

Upper

Older children are bombarded by misconceptions about the work of the Holy Spirit. Discussion on decision theology.

Illustration of us being spiritually dead bodies.

Help the children focus on the amazing nature of the Holy Spirit's work. The power of God continues to work today in the Word and the sacraments.

The same thing that happened at Pentecost is happening in the Sunday school class that you, teachers, are teaching.

Year 3, Spring, Lesson 9

The Man Who Could Not Walk—Acts 3; 4:4

Review

The remaining lessons in this cycle of Christ-Light are taken from the book of Acts. They deal with the growth of the early church. This week's lesson takes place a short time after Pentecost.

Introduction

This is the first account of a miracle performed by the apostles. It records Peter's first sermon since Pentecost, and it launches the beginning of persecution in the early church (although that takes us into Acts chapter 4).

This is one of those accounts that contains a lot of drama. The Holy Spirit chose to include a lot of details and vivid, active language. Picture the men bringing the man to the temple to beg—a man crippled from birth. You can just see the look on the beggar's face as he gazes expectantly at Peter and John, and then perhaps you can notice a little bit of sadness when he hears they have no money. You can see the look on Peter's and John's faces as they approach this man and know that by Jesus' power they will heal him. Peter says, "What I have I give you." What an understatement! They would give him the greatest gift a man who couldn't walk could receive, and even more, they had Christ, whom this man and many others could believe in.

They helped him up. This brings to mind a scene in which the man feels strength in his legs that he never felt before. See him tentatively put some weight on his ankles. But there wasn't much of a transition period from not being able to walk to athlete. It happened instantly. The next thing we see is him jumping, then walking, then leaping around and giving praise to God. You can just see the look of amazement on the faces of those who were used to seeing him lying on his mat. They were filled with wonder and amazement. Enjoy making this come alive for your students.

God's Plan of Salvation

The gospel is found in the miracle and in Peter's explanation of how this miracle took place. The miracle was done by Jesus.

Notice how Peter preached a basic law and gospel sermon. The vivid language continued. Notice the striking contrasts Peter used:

- *God's people* had the Savior nailed to a cross, even though *an unbelieving governor* wanted to let him go.
- They chose a *murderer* over the *Holy and Righteous One*.
- They *killed* the *author of life*. And God raised him to life, so they had taken their stand against God himself.

Then Peter preached the gospel. Notice how kind and personal he became as he preached. Imitate this as you teach your children. Focus on how Peter was preaching to them and to all of us today.

- The miracle was a testimony that *you* can be saved through Jesus.
- You *acted in ignorance*, as did your leader.
- You orchestrated these events, but *God used them to fulfill his promises*.
- Repent, *your sins* will be wiped out and *times of refreshing* will come—from the Lord.
- God had *you* in mind when he sent the Christ.
- God *will restore all things* to the perfection they had at the beginning.
- God has raised up a prophet *for you*.
- *You* are heirs of the prophets and the covenant.
- Through your forefather, *all people* on earth will be blessed.
- God sent his promised Savior first to *you*.

Repent; turn from your wicked ways; don't reject God's final prophet. He came to save you.

Year 3 Spring Lesson 9

3_3_09—The Man Who Could Not Walk

Upper

Note the two aspects of this lesson: Peter’s sermon and the miracle that confirmed the truth of what he preached.

Discussion on the apprehension children might have in telling others about Jesus.

Let the children know that they are not alone when they share the message.

Note the law points and the gospel points Peter made in his sermon. Ideas for helping the children understand the difference.

Discussion on Peter’s statement, “What I have I give you.”

Year 3, Spring, Lesson 10

Peter and John Are Arrested—Acts 4:1-31

Review

This account takes place immediately after the healing of the beggar and Peter's sermon. Because this account is actually part of the story that began last week, take some time to review last week's lesson, especially if you have children who weren't in class last week.

Introduction

This is the first instance of something that would repeat itself throughout the New Testament: The apostles were persecuted. As you think about this account, keep in mind some key points:

- The more the church was persecuted, the more it grew.
- God gives his witnesses the Holy Spirit so they can testify powerfully and clearly.
- The apostles pointed to Jesus as the only source of salvation.
- It is not great learning but confidence in Christ and the wisdom that comes through the Holy Spirit that enable us to witness to our faith.
- Christians must never allow human laws to keep them from testifying to Christ.
- After persecution comes joy, increased confidence in the Lord, and renewed zeal to speak God's Word boldly.

God's Plan of Salvation

The law and the gospel come through many times in this lesson. Note especially verse 12: "Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved."

The Account—Acts 4:1-31

4:1-4 "**priests and the captain of the temple guard and the Sadducees**"—The temple guard was made up of Jews to whom the Romans had given authority to police the temple. They were instrumental in arresting Jesus (Luke 22:54). "**They were greatly disturbed**"—The entire purpose of the temple was being threatened, namely, to be the centerpiece for worship under Moses' laws. If Jesus was the promised Messiah, the temple was no longer needed. "**But many . . . believed**"—Persecution is not a deterrent to faith. Persecution puts on display men and women who have hope beyond what this world can give. That attracts rather than repels.

4:5-12 "**The next day the rulers . . .**" This was a big meeting, equivalent to the one where Jesus was condemned. "**By what power or what name did you do this?**"—The word *name* is more than the simple name by which someone is known. It is equivalent to authority and power. For example, to baptize in the "name" of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is to use God's power to wash away a person's sins and give him or her the robe of Christ's righteousness. "**filled with the Holy Spirit**"—The Spirit gave them what they should say, just as Jesus had promised (Luke 12:11,12). "**act of kindness**"—This was certainly no crime! "**the stone . . . capstone**"—Jesus was like a stone that some of the builders rejected, but eventually became the most important stone in the structure of God's plan of salvation. The "builders" who rejected the stone were

the Jewish religious leaders. "**Salvation is found in no one else**"—In this world, where all religions are thought of as being just different ways to God, this verse is important.

4:13-21 "**and they took note that these men had been with Jesus**"—Here is the key to the apostles' power in preaching. "**Everybody living in Jerusalem knows**"—They addressed the question politically. They did not discuss the option of they themselves believing in Jesus but tried to figure out how they could carry out damage control. "**commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus**"—They were not concerned with the truth. They merely did not want their authority to suffer. "**Judge for yourselves . . .**"—The apostles were concerned with the truth. They threw the matter back on the religious rulers, who, if they were concerned about the truth, would make a correct judgment. After all, they should have been men of conviction. "**obey you rather than God**"—When man's laws contradict God's will, God's will always takes precedence. "**because all the people were praising God**"—They were dictated by political expediency rather than what would serve the truth.

4:23-31 "**Why do the nations rage**"—The disciples had experienced what David spoke about in Psalm 2:1,2. "**with great boldness**"—Rather than fear the leaders, the apostles prayed for boldness. God sent the Holy Spirit, who gave them that ability.

Year 3 Spring Lesson 10

3_3_10—Peter and John Are Arrested

Upper

A disciple: humble, bold, and different for a purpose.

Discussion about sharing our faith: with gentleness and respect.

Suggestion for role playing to help the children talk about their faith.

Suggestion for bringing congregation members into the discussion on role playing.

Discussion on persecution, which the children may experience as they talk about Christ with unbelievers or false believers.

Year 3, Spring, Lesson 11

Stephen—Acts 6:1–8:8

Review

This is another account from the early days of the church. Recall last week’s lesson, Acts chapter 4. The early Christians were being persecuted for their faith. We hear about similar persecution in chapter 5. This continues with the story of Stephen.

Introduction

Although the church was being persecuted, it began to grow. Along with growth came problems. In this case, the problem was this: The Jews who had grown up outside Jerusalem, specifically in Greece and countries dominated by Greek culture—and there seemed to have been a lot of them—complained about favoritism being shown by the apostles to the native Jews. To better administer the food distribution, the apostles chose seven men, among whom was Stephen.

Because of the grace and power God gave Stephen, he stood out and drew fire from the religious leaders. When they realized they couldn’t find any charges to bring against him, they did what they had done to Jesus. They produced false witnesses who twisted Stephen’s words, even using the same false charges they had brought against Jesus, namely, that he would destroy the temple. The early Christians never said Moses’ laws were done away with but that they were fulfilled through Jesus’ work. They never said Jesus would destroy the Jewish temple but that his body was a greater temple where God truly lived among human beings.

God’s Plan of Salvation

In general, Stephen’s sermon made one point: It was not Stephen or the other Christians who were rejecting God’s plan of salvation but the Jewish leaders. When asked if the charges against him were true, he said to them, “You are the ones who are in error, not I. In fact, you are simply following in the footsteps of your forefathers.” To demonstrate his point, Stephen had to remind them of their own history.

- Abraham, a man of faith who obeyed the Lord and looked forward to the Savior, was their forefather. He should have been their pattern for faith and life.
- Out of jealousy, their forefathers sold Joseph into slavery, but God was with Joseph and used Joseph to deliver them from a famine.
- Their forefathers rejected Moses as their leader, but God called him to be their leader and used him to deliver his people, the Israelites, from slavery.
- Moses delivered his people from slavery with powerful wonders and miracles, but the people continued to rebel against him and against God by serving idols.
- Regarding the temple: true, God did use a tabernacle and later a temple as the place where the people were to find him. But God does not live in temples. People find God when they worship him in spirit and in truth.
- Moses predicted that God would send another prophet like him. But the Israelites killed the prophets who spoke of this prophet’s coming. And they killed the Savior, whom God chose to deliver them from the famine of living without the Bread of Life and from the slavery of work-righteousness and sin.

The Account—Acts 6:1–8:8

7:54-60 **“gnashed their teeth”**—This was symbolic of intense anger. **“full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven”**—Stephen was given a special revelation by Jesus. **“a young man named Saul”**—This set the stage

for chapter 9 and the last Christ-Light lesson for this year. **“stoning”**—This was the penalty for blasphemy. **“do not hold this sin against them”**—This is the same thing Jesus said when he was being nailed to the cross.

Year 3 Spring Lesson 11

3_3_11—Stephen

Upper

Encourage the children to participate in their learning.

Suggestions for getting everyone to participate.

Use as many visual aids as possible.

Discussion about persecution and helping the children become aware of it.

Ask the pastor to help you discover the kinds of trials our missionaries may be enduring.

Make the topic of persecution personal to the students.

Year 3, Spring, Lesson 12

Philip and the Man From Ethiopia—Acts 8:4-8,12,26-40

Review

In our last lesson, we first heard the name Saul/Paul. Stephen’s testimony and his martyrdom opened the floodgates of unbelieving hatred against the Christians. A great persecution broke out with Saul being one of the leaders. Christians from Jerusalem were scattered out into the world.

Introduction

Philip was one of the seven deacons chosen by the early church to administer the food distribution. (In Acts 8:1 we are told that the apostles stayed in Jerusalem, so this was not Philip the apostle. Also, later on the apostles sent Peter and John to verify and strengthen Philip’s work in Samaria, which would not have been necessary if Philip was the apostle Philip.) After preaching to the north in Samaria, God, through an angel, told Philip to travel south on a certain desert road.

This account gives one example of how the gospel spread. No doubt, whether through miraculous instructions or through ordinary contacts, the Lord was linking his people to others with whom they could spread the gospel. This account shows us how the gospel was spread into northern Africa, specifically to Ethiopia. Christianity in Ethiopia goes back to very early times.

God’s Plan of Salvation

If you had to choose which part of Scripture (referring to the Old Testament, of course) you would have the eunuch reading when Philip met him, what would it be? The Lord chose Isaiah 53:7,8, which shows us what he considered to be the heart of the message he wanted Philip to share with the eunuch. This section of the Old Testament summarizes the Christian faith perfectly and describes the foundation on which the church was to be built.

Be sure to spend time with this passage of Scripture so the children understand it. These two verses speak of Jesus’ willingness to win our salvation. They speak about the injustice Jesus was shown at the hands of the religious and secular rulers. They also speak about Jesus’ death. These truths gave Philip the springboard he needed to explain God’s plan of salvation to the eunuch. You may want to take your class into this chapter from Isaiah and read all of it. If you spend time with this passage, they will truly see that the Lord foretold Jesus’ suffering and death in the Old Testament.

The Account—Acts 8:4-8,12,26-40

<p>8:4-8,12 “Those who had been scattered”—Persecution in the church often results in more opportunities to spread the gospel. “went down to a city in Samaria”—Samaria is north of Jerusalem. The Jews in Jerusalem said that Samaria was “down” because it was lower in elevation. “saw the miraculous signs he did”—These signs always testified to the power of Jesus, whom the apostles and others were preaching. “the kingdom of God”—Help the children understand what the “kingdom of God” means. It is God’s rule over the world as he rules through the message of the gospel in the hearts of those who believe and as he brings judgment on those who take their stand against him and his church.</p> <p>8:26-35 “to Gaza”—The desert area to the southwest of Jerusalem. This is the road a person would use if he traveled from Jerusalem to Egypt and then south to Ethiopia. “an Ethiopian”—This is a country in northern</p>	<p>Africa, just below Egypt. “eunuch”—A eunuch was a person who had been castrated so he might serve in a king’s harem or serve a queen, as was the case here. This was to make sure the bloodline of the king or queen was not jeopardized. For the younger children, you might just want to say that he was a man who could not have children. “gone to Jerusalem to worship”—The eunuch was a non-Jew who had come to faith in the God of the Jews and periodically worshiped in Jerusalem. “Do you understand . . . ?”—The man was not ignorant. Many Jews did not understand the gospel found in the Old Testament. “himself or someone else”—The Lord opened the door to Philip to spread the gospel to this eunuch and, through him, to an entire country.</p> <p>8:36-40 “Why shouldn’t I be baptized?”—Philip obviously had taught him about Baptism. “went on his way rejoicing”—This is the effect the gospel message has on our hearts!</p>
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Year 3 Spring Lesson 12

3_3_12—Philip and the Man From Ethiopia

Upper

Discipline tip: Tell the children they can sit by a friend as long as they pay attention.

The idea of an exponential tree.

Practice friendship evangelism.

Suggestion to write a class prayer for or a class letter to a missionary.

Suggestion to get information from your church's evangelism committee to see about upcoming projects the children can help with.

Year 3, Spring, Lesson 13

Saul Becomes a Believer—Acts 9:1-31

Review

In the lesson on Stephen, which you taught two weeks ago, we were introduced to Saul. He watched the cloaks of those who were stoning Stephen. He also took the lead in persecuting Christians. Because of this persecution, the church was scattered. Yet through this the Lord blessed the growth of the Word.

Introduction

This lesson is a turning point in the history of the church. Up to this time the main focus was on the church in Jerusalem under the leadership of Peter. Now the focus would be on the spread of the gospel to the west, into Asia Minor (Turkey) and Greece.

Luke, the author of this study, was not an apostle, nor was he brought up in Jerusalem. He was a physician who became one of Paul's traveling companions on Paul's third missionary journey. He investigated everything that happened during Jesus' life, which he recorded in the book of Luke, and then continued with an account of the growth of the early church, which he recorded in the book of Acts.

As you tell this lesson, remember that this is the beginning of mission work to the west. There are many stories in the book of Acts that tell of Paul's missionary work. You might want to quickly page through the rest of the book of Acts to help your students see this present account in the larger context.

God's Plan of Salvation

The Lord had told the apostles in Acts 1:8 that they were to preach the gospel to all the nations of the world. To help them accomplish this, the Lord turned around the greatest persecutor of the church and made him into the greatest missionary. This shows us how the Lord is in control of the growth of his church and provides missionaries to go out and preach the Word. From the beginning to the end, the Lord sees to it that his plan of salvation is carried out.

In this section we have a great example of the law and the gospel at work. Jesus rebuked Saul for taking a stand against him. God then sent a man to baptize a repentant Saul and assure him of God's love.

The Account—Acts 9:1-31

9:1-9 **"Saul"**—Sometimes people had two names, a national name and a Greek name (Simon/Peter is one example). Saul was the Hebrew name that Paul would have used during his life among Jews. But when he began speaking the gospel to Gentiles, he began using his gentile name, Paul. **"letters to the synagogues in Damascus"**—Saul was not content to persecute people in Judea. He traveled hundreds of miles to the Syrian capital of Damascus to find Christians who might be living there. **"I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting"**—What terror must have filled Saul's heart when he saw the glory of the Lord (Acts 26:13) and heard the risen Savior speaking to him. For three days Saul was blind and did not eat or drink anything. What thoughts must have gone through his mind during those days!

9:10-19 **"Go!"**—You can imagine Ananias' fear. He was being told to visit the greatest persecutor of the Christian church. **"This man is my chosen instrument"**—God would send Paul to the Gentiles. You might want to note for your class that many of the Bible books we find after Acts are letters Paul wrote to

churches or people associated with his missionary work. **"filled with the Holy Spirit"**—This was the key to Paul's zeal and success.

9:19-31 **"At once he began to preach"**—Paul immediately began to spread the gospel. However, it would be about 14 years before he would begin his formal missionary work westward. **"After many days had gone by"**—Paul tells us that he went to Arabia for some time. That probably happened during the "many days." Paul returned to Damascus and then had to flee under threat of persecution. **"When he came to Jerusalem"**—He only stayed there a short time. The disciples were afraid to associate with him, but Barnabas ("son of encouragement") convinced them that Saul was now a Christian. Under the threat of persecution, the Christians helped Saul return to his hometown of Tarsus far to the north. **"strengthened . . . encouraged . . . grew"**—Persecution had scattered the Christians so they could preach to more people. But a time of peace allowed the church to become established and grow in faith and numbers. The Lord knows exactly what to send his church.

Year 3 Spring Lesson 13

3_3_13—Saul Becomes a Believer

Upper

Idea for using a long strip of paper to make a cartoon story of Paul's conversion.

Idea for using an activity on the law and gospel.

Encourage the children to sing.

Pair readers with nonreaders or members with nonmembers when reading the lesson.