

## How to Prepare a Bible Lesson for Children

Know your class – age, language skills, spiritual and other needs

Know your time – how much time will you have to teach the lesson?

Know your text – a Bible lesson **MUST** come from the Bible!

- I. **Pray** for God’s guidance.
- II. **Choose** a Bible passage to teach.
- III. **Read** through the passage four times.
  - A. First reading – write down a list of people (characters) in the text.
  - B. Second reading – write down the places.
  - C. Third reading – write down the time frame. Old or New Testament? Before or after Christ’s death and resurrection?
  - D. Fourth reading – write down a list of what happens in the text – series of events.
- IV. Write down the **aim of the lesson**. What do you want the children to learn? Not just a story.
  - A. Character of God, doctrine, or Biblical principle
  - B. Be specific and concise.
  - C. Should be achievable by the students.
  - D. Should be measurable. How will I know if the students have learned?
  - E. Examples
    1. Poor – The student will discuss the testing of Jesus.  
Better – The student will be able to list the three ways the Devil tested Jesus.
    2. Poor – The child will realize man’s need and God’s solution from the story of Nicodemus.  
Better – The child will be able to quote a verse from the story of Nicodemus which describes man’s need and a verse describing God’s remedy.
- V. Write down how the lesson can be **applied to the children’s lives**.
  - A. Be clear.
  - B. Use real-life examples of what the children should do.
  - C. The application will be given at the close of the lesson.
- VI. Plan an **introduction**. Do not say, “Today I am going to tell you a story about...”
  - A. Be brief.
  - B. Get the children’s attention.
  - C. Types of introductions
    1. Questions
    2. Personal illustration
    3. Object lesson
    4. Other
- VII. **Draft** the lesson.
  - A. Write out your plan for presenting the lesson.
  - B. Include all parts of the lesson.
    1. Bible reference
    2. Aim
    3. Introduction
    4. Main story events
    5. Application

6. Conclusion
  - C. You do not have to read from your draft when teaching, but having it written down helps you know what you plan to do. It is good to have it with you in case you forget while you are teaching.
- IX. Decide how you can **visualize** the lesson.
- A. Why use visuals?
    1. Gets children's attention.
    2. Keeps children's attention.
    3. Helps children understand lesson.
    4. Helps children remember lesson.
  - B. What can I use as visuals?
    1. Pictures – hand drawn, purchased, computer printed
    2. Flannelgraph - purchased or handmade
    3. Objects (see object lesson supplement)
    4. Costume – dress as character from the story while you teach lesson
    5. Sketch – children can act out the story
    6. Gestures/hand motions
    7. Chalkboard or white board
- X. Plan how you will **review/revise** the lesson.
- A. Questions
  - B. Review game (see games supplement)
  - C. Be sure to evaluate the aim of the lesson.
- XI. **Pray** before presenting the lesson.
- XII. After teaching, **evaluate** the lesson.

## Teaching a Memory Verse with the Lesson

- I. Choose a verse that also teaches the aim of your lesson.
  - A. From the text of the Bible lesson.
  - B. From elsewhere in Scripture, but still about the main idea/aim of the lesson.
- II. Read the verse to the class.
- III. Explain the verse.
  - A. Define difficult words.
  - B. Use the context of the Bible passage to explain.
  - C. Explain the verse in light of the lesson, but don't force the verse to say something it doesn't.
- IV. Apply the verse – what does it mean to children today?
- V. Repeat/review the verse.
  - A. Don't just say the verse over again and again.
  - B. See games supplement for different ways to memorize and review verses.
- VI. Occasionally review/revise verses learned in the past.

## Object Lesson Supplement

Using simple objects is an inexpensive and great way to visualize Bible lessons for children (and adults). Below is a list of Bible lessons and common objects that can be used to help illustrate the lesson.

## Old Testament

- Creation of Adam (Genesis 2:7-3:24) *A plate of dust.* Blow a little of the dust off the plate. Ask if the dust is useful or strong. Ask the children if they know of a story in the Bible that talks about dust. Give hints or simply tell them that God created Adam from dust.
- \*Joseph's Coat (Genesis 37:1-24) *A special object (toy, book, etc) that all the children would like to hold.* Allow one child to hold the object while you teach the lesson. Afterward, discuss with the class how they felt about not holding or holding the object. Talk about how they should still love their classmates even if one gets to do something the others do not.
- \*Baby Moses (Exodus 1:21-2:10) *A flat-bottomed basket, a container large enough to hold the basket, water, and Vaseline (petroleum jelly).* Put Vaseline on the outside of the basket to make it watertight. Float the basket and act out the story. Talk about how the children can trust God.
- God is Faithful (Joshua 23:14) *A multi-wrapped box with a figurine or picture of baby Jesus inside.* Wrap the box five separate times being careful that each wrapping can be removed without the layer underneath being affected. Discuss God's promise to Israel that He would send a Saviour. Did they deserve to receive a gift from God? Start unwrapping the present. After the second wrapping is taken off, exclaim that it is just more wrapping paper. After the third wrapping, mention that someone must have forgotten to put a present in the box. After the fourth wrapping, complain that it is taking too long. It is often frustrating to not see a gift right away. Have the children think about waiting hundreds of years before seeing the present God promised. Unwrap the final layer of paper and display the picture or figurine of baby Jesus. Discuss how God is always faithful and keeps all His promises.
- \*David and Goliath (I Samuel 17:31-51) *Five smooth stones and a measuring tape to measure over 2.7 meters tall.* Measure the size of Goliath. Look at the size of the stones and the size of Goliath. Discuss how brave David was and how much he trusted God to help him.
- \*Renewal (Psalm 51:10-15) *A dirty toy to clean, soap and water.* Have the children clean a dirty toy to show the newness of being clean.

Preventing Sin (Psalm 119:11)

*Some insect repellent.* Ask the children who has ever gotten bitten by mosquitoes. What can we do to prevent the mosquitoes from biting us? (Protective clothing, sleep under net, use repellent). Discuss that sin is worse than mosquito bites. Even after we are saved, we still sin. But we should try to not sin. Ps 119:11 says that if we hide God's Word in our heart it will help us to not sin. Just as we have to use the repellent in order to keep the mosquitoes away, we need to read and memorize the Bible (not just own it) in order to keep from sinning. Repellent must be reapplied every day to work. What you put on yesterday will not work today.

Building Each Other Up(Proverbs 18:21)

*A cut rose in full bloom.* Ask a child to help you by coming up and picking all the petals off the rose one at a time. Time how long this takes. Exclaim how quickly this was done. Then ask the child to put the rose back together as you time him. Discuss how we can quickly and easily say something to hurts someone. Those words cannot be taken back once we have spoken them. It is harder to remember to speak words of kindness.

Everlasting Word of God (Isa 40:7-8)

*A faded flower and some dry grass.* Discuss how we spend lots of time and money making our gardens look nice with green grass and pretty flowers. However, the flowers and the grass do not last very long. How much time do we spend reading and studying God's Word? It will never pass away.

Almighty God (Isaiah 40:25-26)

*A mealie-meal sack, several heavy rock, blocks, or other heavy objects to place in sack. (A child should not be able to lift the sack when it is full.)* Have a child hold the sack as you place the heavy objects inside. Have the child try to lift the sack. When it is too heavy, have an adult come and lift the sack. Explain that even adults have limited strength. Only God is almighty and all-powerful to hold the whole universe.

God is Never-Tiring (Isaiah 40:28)

*A small pillow and blanket.* Have a child come to the front of the class and pretend to be sleeping. Discuss how our bodies get tired and need to rest everyday so that we stay healthy. Talk about the many things that God does and that He never gets tired.

\*The Fiery Furnace (Daniel 3:1-30)

*Paper dolls (figured cut out of paper), rubbing alcohol and water (equal parts of both), matches and tongs.* Wet the paper figures in the half alcohol and half water mixture. Carefully hold the figures with tongs and light them with the match. The alcohol will burn off quickly

because it burns at a lower temperature, leaving the paper figures unharmed.

### New Testament

\*Let Your Light Shine (Matt 5:14-16)      *A short candle, matches and a non-flamable bowl that will fit over the lit candle.* Light the candle before teaching the lesson. Put the bowl over the candle while talking about that part of the lesson.

\*Clean the Inside First (Matt 23:1-28)      *Two cups, one dirty on the inside and one dirty on the outside.* Examine and discuss the cups. Ask “Which cup are you most like? Which cup would you rather be like?”

Salvation is Good News (Luke 2:10) *A newspaper and your Bible.* Read several headlines from the newspaper of bad/sad news. Discuss how the newspaper is full of stories about people’s problems. Sometimes there are mistakes in the newspaper. Contrast the newspaper with the Bible. God gave us Good News, the Gospel, in His book and He never makes a mistake.

Spending Time with God (Lk 10:38-42)      *Cell phone with a flat battery.* Discuss the usefulness of a cell phone. Turn the phone on and then show the class that it won’t turn on because the battery is flat and it needs recharged. The cell phone is useless. We are not very useful to God when we do not spend time in His Word, recharging spiritually. Everyday we need to be “plugged-into” God’s Word and take time to pray if we are to be useable in God’s hands.

Value of People (Luke 12:7-8)      *A strand of hair from your own head.* Discuss how God values you and cares so much about you that he knows how many strands of hair you have, even when that changes every day. He created you, loves you and will take care of you.

\*The Lost Sheep (Luke 15:1-7)      *Many small toys or other objects spread on a table.* While children’s eyes are closed, remove one of the objects from the table. See if the children can guess which one is missing. Talk about how the Good Shepherd knew all one hundred sheep.

\*The Lost Son (Luke 15:11-16)      *Save scraps from dinner and dump them all on a plate in an unappetizing manner.* Show the plate of scraps and discuss how desperate the son must have been to be willing to eat what the pigs ate.

- \*Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10) *Chairs.* Have the children stand on chairs and pretend that they are Zacchaeus looking for Jesus.
- \*Life-giving Water (John 4:5-26) *A cup of water for each person in the class, but don't let them drink during the lesson.* After the lesson, have each person take a drink and talk about how God satisfies body and soul.
- Bread of Life (John 6) *Piece of bread (maybe even a piece of bread for each child).* Discuss how bread contains nutrients to help keep our bodies growing. Jesus said He was the bread of life and He gives us what we need for spiritual life – salvation and eternal life. Also, many people eat bread every day. We need to be reading our Bibles and praying to God every day so that we are growing in our spiritual life.
- Security of Salvation (John 10:29) *Your own hand closed in a tight fist.* Ask the smallest child in the class to try to get your hand open. Discuss how if you had something in your hand that child would not be able to remove it from your hand. Tell the class that each person who has trusted Christ as their Savior is held tightly in God's hand. No one can take away your salvation. Explain that you chose the smallest child to try to open your hand to contrast God's almighty power and our smallness and weakness.
- Holy Spirit (John 16:13) *A pair of glasses.* If you do not wear glasses, use a pair from a child or another adult in the room. Discuss how the glasses help you see better and understand what is around you. The glasses were made just for you. The Holy Spirit lives in each Christian and helps each of us understand the Bible.
- Spiritual Death (Romans 6:23) *A single cut flower.* Ask the children if the flower is alive or dead. Discuss how it may look alive, but it does not have life because it has been cut off from the plant. In a few days it will be withered and dried up. Spiritual death is worse than physical death. Because we have sinned, we are spiritually dead – separated from God. Until you are forgiven you are cut off from the life that is found only in Christ.
- Talking to God (Romans 10:9-13) *A cell phone.* Ask the children if any of them have ever used a cell phone. Ask them when, where and why they used it. Discuss that you have to dial the correct number in order to talk to the person you want to call. Tell the class that God wants us to call Him and He even gives us His number! The number to talk to God is J-E-S-U-S. He is the only way we can reach God

(John 14:6). Once we know Jesus, we can talk to God anytime and anywhere (Jeremiah 29:12).

Sowing/Reaping (Galatians 6:7)

*Any kind of seed.* Discuss planting seeds and what grows from them. Can you plant a carrot seed and grow maize? You reap what you sow. If you sow good actions and right thoughts, you will reap good character. If you sow bad actions and evil thoughts, you will reap bad character. Just like we plant a tiny seed and a large plant grows, a small sin will grow into larger sins.

Unsaved as Lost (II Peter 3:9)

*A pen or pencil hidden in the inside coat pocket of a man's coat or in a woman's purse.* Tell the class that you really want to find your pen, because it is very special to you and you want to use it. Ask the class if the pen can find itself? No – you have to find it. Discuss God wants all lost sinners to be saved because He loves them and wants to use them for His glory. “Find” the pen and express happiness. Discuss how all of heaven rejoices when a sinner is found and saved.

Cleansing from Sin (I John 1:9)

*Wrapped bar of bathing soap.* Discuss the importance of washing our bodies to keep them clean. We also need to wash the insides of sins we have done. All we have to do is be sorry for our sin and ask Jesus to forgive us. The bar of soap doesn't clean much when it is still wrapped. You must unwrap it and use it in order to be clean. In order to have your sins forgiven and be clean inside, you can't just listen to what I say – you have to do something. You have to confess your sins to God.

\*From: Bruinsma, Sheryl, Object Lessons for Family Devotions, Baker Books, 1990.

## Games Supplement

Games provide a fun environment for children to learn. These games can be used to review memory verses and/or Bible lessons.

**M**=memory verse review

**B**=Bible lesson review

**M** Boys vs Girls – Have the class take turns reading or reciting the verse. While the boys say the verse, make sure the girls are listening to see if the boys say it correctly. Have the boys listen carefully while the girls say the verse.

- M Pop up** – Call out clothing color, child’s age or other characteristic and have the applicable children stand up and say the verse. Make sure you eventually include all the children.
- M Cross the River** – Cut out rock shapes from paper and write one word or phrase on each paper. Place the papers (in correct order) on the floor as stepping stones. Have the whole class say the verse as one or two children step together on each rock to cross the river. Repeat so that many children get to participate.
- M Mystery Words** – Write the verse on the board. After each time the class says the verse, have all the children close their eyes while one child rubs off a word. Have the class open their eyes and guess what word was rubbed off. Then read/recite the verse again. Repeat until the entire verse is rubbed off and the verse is memorized.
- M Scrambled verse** – Write the verse on strips of papers with several words or a phrase on each strip. Scramble up the verse and have a child or team of two children unscramble the verse, putting it in the correct order in a pocket chart, on a table, or on the floor. While the verse is being unscrambled, have the rest of the class recite the verse several times, then have them be quiet while the child/children finish putting the verse in order. Once completed, have the entire class read the verse to check the order.
- M Song** – Put the verse to music or use a song already written for the verse. Music is a great way to memorize Scripture.
- M Voices** – Ask the children to use specific voices while repeating the verse. For example, use a quiet whisper voice, use a low deep voice, use a high voice. Avoid asking the children to use a loud voice – this can get out of control.
- M Hand motions** - Actions especially help younger children to remember verses. Demonstrate appropriate actions or hand motions for each part of the verse.
- M Choral speaking** – Divide the verse into several parts. Divide the class into the same number of sections. Assign each part of the class a part of the verse to say. After saying the whole verse, change the assignments and repeat the verse.
- M Ping Pong** – Line up the class in two lines facing each other. One line says the first word of the verse and the other line says the second word, etc. Toss a small ball or bean bag back and forth saying a word each time.
- M March a Verse** – Say the verse as the class marches around the room. Say one word for each step.
- M What is Next?** – The teacher starts saying the verse. When he stops, the children say the next word. Stop several times during the verse. Repeat and stop at different words in the verse.

- B Watch Out!** – Prepare a list of questions from the Bible lesson. Prepare 15 small pieces of paper – on 5 draw a worm, on 5 write “100”, on 5 write “200”. Place all the papers in a bag or other suitable container. Divide the class into two teams. Ask a question. If the child answers correctly, he/she is allowed to choose a paper from the bag without looking. If he draws a paper with “100” or “200” those points are awarded to that team. The child may choose to continue drawing out papers as long as he wants or until he draws a worm paper. If he draws a worm paper, he loses all the points from that turn. The child may choose to stop drawing papers at any time and protect the points he has won for his team.
- B Disappearing Picture** – Prepare a list of questions from the Bible lesson. On a chalkboard or whiteboard, draw two identical pictures relating to the lesson or the season of year. Divide the class into two teams. Ask a question. If the child answers correctly, that team’s picture remains the same. If the child answers incorrectly, rub off a portion of the picture. At the end of the game, the team whose picture is more complete wins.
- B Egg Tray Toss** – Prepare a list of questions from the Bible lesson. Write varying point values in the sections of an egg tray. Divide the class into two teams. Ask a question. If the child answers correctly, he may toss a small ball, crumpled paper ball or marble into the egg tray. The point value that is written in the section where the ball lands is awarded to that team.
- B Comparison** – Prepare a list of questions from the Bible lesson. Prepare 15 papers with point values written on one side (make sure the writing does not show through on the other side). Write “100” on 5 papers, “200” on 5 papers and “300” on 5 papers. Mix the papers and place them face down on a table. Divide the class into two teams. Ask a question. If the child answers correctly, he may turn over one paper and see its point value. Then he chooses a second paper, but does not turn it over yet. First, he must guess whether the second paper has a point value that is higher than, lower than, or the same as the first paper. After guessing the comparison, the second paper is turned over. If the comparison guess is correct, both point values are awarded to that team. If the guess is wrong, only the points from the first paper are awarded to the team.
- B True and False** – Prepare True and False statements from the lesson. Have the children stand in the center of the room or class area. Designate one wall of the room as the True wall and another wall as the False wall. Read each statement. The children move to the True wall if they think the statement is True. They move to the False wall if they think the statement is False. After you give the correct answer, the children return to the center for the next statement.
- B Matching** – Prepare a list of questions from the lesson. Draw 15 pairs of identical pictures on cards (total of 30 cards). Mix up the cards and place them facedown on a table, the floor, or sticky-tac them to the wall. After a child answers a question correctly, he may turn over two cards. If they match, he may keep the cards at his seat. If the two cards do not match, they are turned back over. At the end of the game, the child with the most pairs of cards wins.

- B Mystery Word** – Prepare a list of questions from the lesson. Choose a word or phrase relating to the lesson and draw dashes for each letter on a chalkboard, whiteboard, or large paper. After a child answers a question correctly, he chooses a letter that he thinks is in the mystery word. If he chooses a letter that is in the word, fill in the correct spaces for that letter. A child may try to guess the mystery word before or after choosing a letter.
- B Act with Me** – Prepare a list of questions from the lesson. Prepare slips of paper with actions written on them. For example: jump up and down 5 times, clap your neighbors hand, bark like a dog 3 times, touch your toes, sing Jesus Loves Me. Place the papers in a basket or other suitable container. Have one child draw a slip of paper and read the action. Then ask that child a question. If he answers correctly, the entire class performs the action from the slip of paper. If the child answers incorrectly, the child performs the action alone.
- B Race for the Answer** – Prepare a list of questions from the lesson. Place an object (stuffed toy, water bottle, etc.) at one end of the teaching area. Divide the class into two equal teams and instruct them to each form a line at the other side of the room. Ask a question to the first children in the lines. If the child thinks he knows the answer, he must run and grab the object before answering the question. If he answers correctly a point is awarded to his team. The object is placed back and those two children go to the end of the line.

# Bible Lesson Planning Worksheet

Passage: \_\_\_\_\_

Age of Children: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>First Reading :</b> <b>Characters</b>
<b>Second Reading:</b> <b>Places</b>
<b>Third Reading:</b> <b>Time</b>
<b>Fourth Reading:</b> <b>Events</b>
<b>Lesson Aim:</b>
<b>Application:</b>
<b>Memory Verse:</b>

## Bible Lesson Draft

Passage: \_\_\_\_\_

Age of Children: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Aim:</b>
<b>Memory Verse:</b>
<b>Activity for Teaching Verse:</b>
<b>Visuals for Lesson:</b>
<b>Lesson Introduction:</b>
<b>Main Points/Events of Lesson:</b>
<b>Application:</b>
<b>Conclusion:</b>
<b>Activity for Lesson Review/Revision:</b>
<b>Comments after Teaching the Lesson:</b>

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<b>Activity for Lesson Review/Revision:</b>
<b>Comments after Teaching the Lesson:</b>

## Bibliography

DISCLAIMER: CABC and the instructor of this workshop do not necessarily agree with and endorse the complete contents of the following books and websites.

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