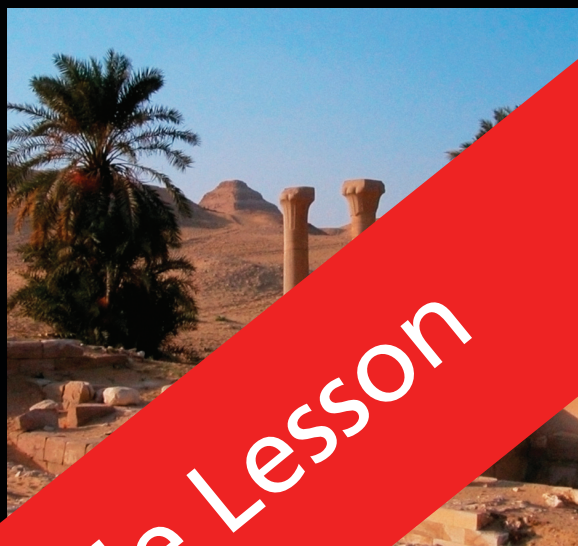
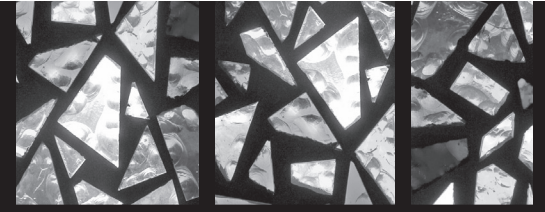




Walking With God and His People



Sample Lesson



Walking With God and His People

Know, Believe, and Live

Within the elements of each lesson we will be using a head/heart/hands key to indicate an area of focus with the students. Look for the icon or combination of icons shown below as a quick identifier of the area of focus.



KNOW



BELIEVE



LIVE



KNOW & BELIEVE



KNOW & LIVE



BELIEVE & LIVE

Introduction

Our Opportunity

Christian teachers have a unique opportunity to introduce students to who God is, what he does, what he is like (his personality), and to share with them his desire for relationship with us. God wants us to know him and enjoy him now and forever! As students study how God interacted with people in biblical times, they begin to understand the character and nature of God as revealed to us in creation, in the Scriptures, and in the person and work of Jesus Christ. They see that the Big Story of God says “I made you” and “I love you,” “I want a relationship with you,” and “I want you to be a part of my work in my kingdom which has already begun but has not yet fully come.”

We invite students to participate in this ongoing story by entering into a personal relationship with this God through faith and repentance and by learning to obey and serve him throughout their lives. We are encouraging students to journey with God: to learn of him and his ways, to be in constant conversation with him, to accept his offer of salvation, and to commit all aspects of their lives to him. How do we best approach the Story of our world and God its author? How can students understand the Story that began in the beginning and unfolds even to the present moment and on into eternity? How can we nurture belief in our students and embolden them to live this Story?

Our Hope

One answer to the “how” question is to provide a sound Bible curriculum as a guide to Christian teachers. What do we hope to accomplish with this Bible curriculum? Our hope is that students will respond with their hearts and minds to God and his world. We want to enable teachers to reach the heads, hearts, and hands of students so that their lives may be changed for today and for eternity to the glory of God.

We want students to be “thoroughly equipped for every good work” and deeply grounded in biblical understanding (2 Timothy 3:16–17). As followers of Jesus Christ, we believe it is only by the study of the Word of God, illuminated by the Holy Spirit, that we understand who we are and grasp our connection to the Story of God reaching out to his people over the centuries. We desire that our students live their lives out of God’s Story and learn to find their place in that Story. We want students to understand the God with whom they are in relationship, to make authentic connections between the stories of God’s people and their own lives, and to understand what

responding to God means. Furthermore, we believe that a deep understanding of the Bible is foundational for understanding all other discovery of God's truth revealed in creation. Our hope for our students is that by the power of the Holy Spirit working through the Word they will better understand what it means "to act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6:8).

Encouraging Student Faith Development

Understanding God through his world, his Word, and his Son should involve the process of developing students' faith in ways that engage the whole person. So what does connecting the head, heart, and hands of a student mean and how is this accomplished? How do we encourage faith in our youth through the study of God's Story and nurture their walk with God and his people in that Story? The faith we seek to encourage in students involves knowledge/wisdom (head), conviction/choosing (heart), and living/serving (hands). Knowledge is based on conviction in order to be effective. Conviction without knowledge is like shallow seed that grows quickly but then dies from lack of grounding. Action without conviction or knowledge is weak and misguided. Students need all three: deep understanding that goes beyond knowledge to wisdom, desire and conviction that lead to deep commitment, and service that reflects the biblical call to bring forward the kingdom of God. We must maintain a delicate balance between an academic focus (knowing) and an application to life focus (believing/living), all the while connecting intellect, imagination, and identity within students. It is our comfort to be able to rest in the fact that the Holy Spirit is at work in our students' hearts and minds; our calling is to be obedient servant-tellers of the Story (2 Timothy 2:2).

Each lesson within this curriculum includes lesson steps specifically identified with head, heart, hands, or some combination of these areas of focus with the students. We indicate this by the use of icons throughout the lessons keyed to the words *Know* (head), *Believe* (heart), and *Live* (hands) as descriptors for those icons. Not every lesson will involve all three areas of head, heart, and hands, but throughout the units students will have ample opportunity for their heads, hearts, and hands to be involved and engaged.

Understanding the Bible as a Connected Whole

The Bible, both Old and New Testaments, is one book telling one Story. In the many individual books and passages written by different people, in different centuries, for various reasons, we hear in one voice the unique story of God's salvation for the human race. In a time when much of life and culture as we know it is fragmenting and many are opposing the truth that the Bible reveals, the following points remind us of the importance of understanding why and how the Bible is a connected whole.

1. The Bible is a metanarrative—a grand, overarching, all-encompassing story that gives meaning and order to past, present, and future life. It tells the story of God’s creation, the fall of creation into sin, and the redemption and restoration of all creation by Christ.
2. God reveals his desire for relationship with people repeatedly throughout the course of the biblical narrative.
3. The history of God’s saving work illustrated in the Old and New Testaments culminates in the death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ.
4. God desires an ongoing relationship with each person and through the work of the Holy Spirit moves people and history to achieve his sovereign and gracious purposes.
5. Our obedient response to God’s love and claim over creation is to seek to help transform and restore God’s created order, which was broken by the sinful disobedience of humankind.
6. When we enter into God’s story we understand who we are, who is the source of all life, our purpose in life, and how we should respond to God’s grace and claim on our lives. We are challenged to shift our focus from ourselves to God and to join in his kingdom work of redeeming creation.
7. It is important to view the Bible as a connected group of divinely inspired writings with purpose and interrelated integrity as a sequence of books, as events within particular books, and as texts within a certain book.
8. We believe that Paul’s words to Timothy are instructive for our work with students: “All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Timothy 3:16–17).

The Task of the Teacher

The teacher, of course, is a key influence in the delivery of this Bible curriculum. If we are to inspire students to know, believe, and live the truth of God, it is critical that teachers demonstrate knowing, believing, and living the truths of the Bible to their students and model a passion for God. In our *Teacher Guide for Bible* (1936) we find these succinct statements about what a teacher should know, do, and be (paraphrased):

1. The teacher must *have* before he or she can *give*. The teacher should know the Bible and related subjects.
2. The teacher must have a purpose, a carefully mapped out plan, and ask for divine guidance.
3. The teacher should be a living example of the kind of life we want every child to live. He or she must be a sincere lover of childhood and of the Master. Where there is no love, there can be no great teaching.

It is critical how you as a Bible teacher view this work—is it just an assignment or a life-changing opportunity? In the introduction to our *Revelation-Response* Bible curriculum (1974), these cautionary yet encouraging words were given:

If you consider Bible teaching only another one of your duties, the chances are that Bible learning will be only another duty for your students. If, on the other hand, you delight in it, you will create much enthusiasm in the classroom. Your faith, your enthusiasm about God, your love for each other, your experiences with God and his Word, and your participation in the Church will have a greater impact than any materials could have.

Be positive, thankful, imaginative, inventive, and open to the Spirit of God. Live and teach in such a way that even if each of your students lived only as effectively as you live, the Church and our society would benefit greatly.

Within their own classrooms, teachers need to create community where Christlike behavior becomes the norm. Students should be encouraged to live out being the body of Christ, which includes acceptance of all people as created in God's image, honoring each other's gifts, and the commitment to work through the brokenness that shows itself in daily life. Teachers need to seek shalom (peace and wholeness) within their classroom and in working together with colleagues. Authentically allowing the Spirit to mold us so that we model Christian community, inside and outside of the classroom, is a true witness to students of the power of Christ.

Walking With God and His People Development Process

The process used to develop this curriculum revision is a significant part of what makes this product unique. At CSI, we believe that classroom teachers are truly the experts in making the curriculum come alive with students and have the best understanding of student needs at a given grade level. We sought to have diverse representation among our writers and advisors, in terms of gender and geographic location, as well as of teaching situation.

1. **Writers.** Through an application process 20 writers were selected for grades P–8 curriculum revision work. CSI staff provided the revised curriculum scope and sequence expectations for the writers and guided the writing efforts.
2. **Grade level advisors.** Each writer was connected with one to three grade level advisors. These advisors are other classroom teachers who offered helpful feedback on their writing, suggested resources and teaching ideas, and led focus groups of teachers who reviewed sample lessons.
3. **Focus group participants.** Grade level advisors selected other teachers at their grade level to review sample lessons selected by CSI staff and writers for review and feedback. These participants met in groups or responded by e-mail. Their feedback was used for this current curriculum and ongoing development needs.

This curriculum demonstrates the biblical concept of community: the beauty of Christian teachers operating together as a body, each member contributing his or

her gifts for the good of all. Throughout this process we have attempted to honor the experience, training, and expertise of our teachers to bring about the best possible product for those we exist to serve: the students of our schools and their parents, who depend on our teachers to give sound biblical instruction to their children.

Curriculum Implementation Suggestions

1. This curriculum is very complete and offers multiple options within lessons. Each school using this curriculum has a unique set of instructional pacing circumstances in terms of time schedules, days in a school year, and academic focus. It is the responsibility and task of each teacher and each school to make professional judgments about the selection of lessons at each grade level and across a school program so that a guaranteed and viable curriculum is presented to students. To this end we recommend that you consider both the student outcomes and the scope and sequence overviews included here as you make these instructional decisions.
2. Bible memorization is a key instructional strategy for students to place God's Word in their heads and hearts. While we make memory work suggestions throughout these lessons, we also recommend that schools consider constructing a Bible memory work program that is both systematic across the grades and reasonable in terms of student expectations. Examples of such programs may be accessed from CSI via our Web site.
3. CSI will continue to add resources to enhance this curriculum year by year. These resources will be provided free through our Web site or for a fee through our online store. We also intend to continue identifying best instructional practices, strategies, and resources and to make them available to teachers using this curriculum.
4. We recommend that each student have access to the New International Version (NIV) of the Bible, which has been used throughout this curriculum. We also recommend that teachers own a copy of both the *Songs for Life* (1994) and *Sing With Me* (2006) songbooks so that they can easily find the words and music referenced in lessons. Likewise, the curriculum was written with reference to the *NIV Textbook Bible* (1984) for students and the *NIV Study Bible* (2002) for teachers, both featuring updated color maps (© 2005). NIV editions with older maps may be used, but some adjustments for differing map numbers may be necessary. These and other NIV Bibles and songbooks are available for purchase through CSI.
5. Teachers may also find the articles and notes in the *Archaeological Study Bible* (2005) helpful in regard to understanding and explaining the Bible's archaeological, historical, and cultural backgrounds to students. It is illustrated with hundreds of color photographs of millennia-old texts and artifacts, ancient weapons of war, ancient children's toys, and so on. Also helpful as a literary guide to the entire Bible is the *Literary Study Bible* (2007), which explores in detail the Bible's story lines, characters, historical settings, literary genres, motifs, theological themes, imagery, and important terms.

Scope and Sequence Overview

1. Grades P & K are arranged chronologically by Bible characters and Bible themes.
2. Grade 1 concentrates on the Old Testament connections between testaments.
3. Grade 2 concentrates on the New Testament connections between testaments.
4. A flexible epistle unit is included at the beginning for grades 1–6 to assist students in responding to and applying God's Word.

	Genesis	Exodus, Deuteronomy	Joshua	Judges	Ruth	1 & 2 Samuel	Psalms	Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes	1 & 2 Kings, 1 & 2 Chronicles	Prophecy	Ezekiel, Daniel, Esther	Ezra, Nehemiah
P												
K												
1												
2	R	R	R	R		R			R	R	R	R
3												
4	R	R	R									
5	R	R	R	R		R						
6												
7	R	R	R	R	R	R			R			
8												

R = Review of core curriculum

- [illegible]

In Grade 6 the Epistles are studied in depth and, as in Grades 1–5, Colossians is the “featured” epistle book at the beginning of the year.

CSI Bible Curriculum Student Outcomes

* Standards 1–6 focus on Bible literacy and Bible study

* Standards 7–10 address worldview/doctrine: God, truth, creation, people

* Standard 11 addresses application

	K–2	3–5	6–8
1.	Students know key biblical passages, characters, and events.		
1.1	Retell and respond to Bible stories	Retell and respond to Bible stories	Retell and respond to Bible stories
1.2	Sequence Bible stories, characters, and events	Sequence Bible stories, characters, events, and eras	Sequence Bible stories, characters, events, and eras
1.3	Recite identified Bible passages	Recite identified Bible passages	Recite identified Bible passages
1.4		Identify relationships between characters and/or events	Explain relationships between characters and/or events
2.	Students know the historical and cultural context of the Bible.		
2.1		Explain Old Testament events	Explain the history of God's people from creation through the Book of Acts
2.2	Tell how God was visibly with his people in Bible times as he is today		
2.3	Identify Israel as God's chosen people	Identify characters and events in history that impacted the history of God's people	Explain characters and events in history that impacted the history of God's people
3.	Students understand various Christian and non-Christian religious views.		
3.1	Differentiate between God's chosen people and pagan nations	Describe the influence of false religions on God's people	Identify fundamental biblical beliefs
3.2		Describe and compare ancient and contemporary religious practices	Describe and compare the beliefs of various Christian churches
4.	Students understand how geography and culture impacted the biblical story.		
4.1	Describe Jewish worship and how worship changed because of Jesus	Describe the Jewish and Middle Eastern cultural practices	Describe ways in which the Jewish religious culture impacted the relationship of the people of Israel to God
4.2	Identify key locations, including Israel	Identify key geographic features of the land of Israel and the Mediterranean world	Describe the impact of geography on Bible stories

	K–2	3–5	6–8
5.	Students know how the Bible is organized, the types of literature the Bible includes, and how to read the Bible.		
5.1	Identify that the Bible is divided into Old and New Testaments and into books	Identify the sections of the Bible, including the Pentateuch, books of prophecy, Gospels, Epistles, etc.	Identify where key events and passages in the Bible are located in terms of books and section
5.2	Recite the books of the Bible		
5.3	Identify poetry and narrative	Identify the characteristics of various genre and apply them to a passage	Use the characteristics of various genre to determine the meaning of a passage
5.4	Read Bible stories with appropriate oral expression	Use understanding of the passage's purpose to read expressively	Use understanding of the passage's purpose to read expressively
6.	Students use a variety of reference materials.		
6.1	Use maps	Use various reference materials appropriately, for example, maps, Bible dictionaries, concordances, online, etc.	Use various reference materials appropriately, for example, maps, Bible dictionaries, concordances, online, etc.
7.	Students understand what the Bible teaches about God.		
7.1	Describe God in terms of his attributes	Identify which of God's attributes a Bible story reveals	Use Bible stories and life experiences to describe attributes of God
7.2	Identify the persons and work of the Trinity	Recognize the persons and work of the Trinity in Bible stories	Give Bible evidence for the Trinity and the work of each person in the Trinity
8.	Students understand what the Bible teaches about truth.		
8.1	Identify the Bible as the infallible Word of God	Explain that the Bible is the infallible Word of God	Defend the Bible as the infallible Word of God
8.2	Identify what the Bible teaches about faith and behavior	Explain how the Bible guides us in matters of faith and behavior	Defend the Bible as the guide for faith and behavior
8.3	Understand biblical values, including shalom, justice, mercy	Explain biblical values, including shalom, justice, mercy	Understand biblical values, including shalom, justice, mercy
8.4		Recognize a variety of valid biblical beliefs with the Christian community	Describe a variety of valid biblical beliefs with the Christian community
8.5	Identify how Bible characters responded to culture	Identify Christian responses to culture (separation, identification, transformation, incarnation)	Explain Christian responses to culture (separation, identification, transformation, incarnation)
8.6	Identify what we learn from God's creation	Explain what we learn from God's creation	Defend general revelation as a way of knowing truth

	K-2	3-5	6-8
9.	Students understand what the Bible teaches about God's creation.		
9.1	Identify God as the Creator	Give examples of God's attributes revealed in creation	Describe what creation teaches us about God
9.2	Identify God's promises about creation	Describe God's covenant with creation	Explain God's covenant with creation
9.3	Retell the stories of creation, fall, and redemption	Explain creation, fall, redemption, and restoration	Explain how Christians should respond to creation, based on creation, fall, redemption, restoration
9.4	Explain how people were created to take care of creation	Explain the biblical concept of stewardship in terms of taking care of God's creation	Defend the biblical concept of stewardship in terms of taking care of God's creation
10.	Students understand what the Bible teaches about people.		
10.1	Retell how people are created in God's image	Describe how people are God's image bearers	Explain that as God's image bearers, people are inherently religious
10.2	Tell how people have sinful hearts	Identify the nature and consequences of sin resulting in separation from God and death	Explain how sin has alienated people from God, creation, others, and themselves
10.3	Tell how people, by God's grace, can have a relationship with him	Identify God's grace and the plan of salvation	Explain God's plan of salvation
10.4	Explain the idea of covenant related to Bible characters	Recognize covenants in Bible stories	Explain the implications of the covenant relationship
10.5	God's plan for man has a start and a finish	Understand time line of biblical events	Defend the idea that creation has a starting point and an ending point

	K-2	3-5	6-8
11.	Students apply biblical teaching to all of life and learning.		
11.1	Identify personal practices conducive to a growing relationship with Jesus	Explain personal practices conducive to a growing relationship with Jesus	Defend personal practices conducive to a growing relationship with Jesus
11.2	Identify the fruit of the Spirit	Explain the fruit of the Spirit	Analyze a case study as an opportunity for application of the fruit of the Spirit to the scenario
11.3	Identify God and the Bible as the key sources for making decisions	Recount a process of Christian decision making	Analyze a process for Christian decision making
11.4	Identify what the Bible teaches about behavior	Explain what the Bible teaches about behavior	Use Bible teaching to defend personal behavior choices
11.5	Respect and love themselves and others as being created in God's image and having certain gifts	Respect and love themselves and others as being created in God's image and having certain gifts	Respect and love themselves and others as being created in God's image and having certain gifts
11.6		Use biblical teaching to constructively examine community/cultural values and practices	Use biblical teaching to constructively examine community/cultural values and practices
11.7	Retell what the Bible teaches about an issue	Explain what the Bible teaches about a issue	Explain a biblical response to a perspective and/or social issue
11.8	Retell how service opportunities are designed to help others	Identify how service opportunities are designed to help others	Explain how service opportunities are designed to help others
11.9	Retell Bible teaching about leaders	Identify ways Christians can demonstrate servant leadership	Explain how Christians demonstrate servant leadership
11.10	Explain how conflicts can be resolved in Christian ways	Explain how conflicts can be resolved in Christian ways	Apply biblical principles of conflict resolution to case studies

Grade Seven Overview

Unit	Focus	Bible Memory	Time
1. Themes of the Old Testament The Story (1–4) The Covenant (5–9) To the Promised Land (10) The Slide to Destruction (11–14) A New Covenant and a True Savior (15) Unit Review (16)	The Bible tells one Great Story from Genesis through Revelation that has three main parts: Creation, Fall, and Redemption. Because of the Fall, human beings need salvation to have a full relationship with God. God keeps his promises and showed the pathway back to him when he gave the Law. God blesses obedience and punishes disobedience. God promised restoration and a new covenant based on forgiveness.	Deuteronomy 6:4–6 Jeremiah 31:33–34	3½–4 weeks
2. The Feasts of the Lord The Jewish Calendar (1) Feasts (2–9) Feast Community Project (10–11) Unit Review (12)	The Jewish calendar and its feasts center on God's faithful provisions and upon the growing season. God's people joyfully celebrated their deliverance and redemption through the feasts. The yearly repetitions of the feasts combined the past, present, and hope for the future, helping God's people to remember they are a part of God's unfolding redemptive plan.	Exodus 34:10–11a Deuteronomy 26:17–18 Deuteronomy 32:45–47	3 weeks
3. Job and Ecclesiastes Job (1–7) Ecclesiastes (8–14) Comparing Job and Ecclesiastes (15) Unit Review (16)	The books of Job and Ecclesiastes are considered books of wisdom literature. Job and Ecclesiastes teach us a valuable lesson about God's character: we are to trust God's goodness and power because he is in control. Job and Ecclesiastes teach us a valuable lesson about our human response: we are to accept our proper place in relationship to our sovereign Lord.	Job 2:3 Ecclesiastes 3:1–14	3½ weeks
4. Proverbs Proverbs (1–14) Proverbs Drama Presentations (15) Unit Review (16)	The Book of Proverbs is a source of divine wisdom that we can learn from and apply directly to life. Proverbs teaches about love and marriage, home and family life, friendships, the use of words and speech, and making decisions.	Proverbs 3:1–12	3½ weeks

Unit	Focus	Bible Memory	Time
5. Prophets The Prophets (1–14) Unit Review (15)	Prophets were called by God to speak in a specific time at a specific place, but their messages speak to us through the ages as well. The Old Testament prophets are often echoed in the New Testament. Prophetic writing in Scripture often follows a pattern: a warning of judgment for sin, a call to repent, and a message of hope.	Isaiah 9:2–7 Isaiah 40:28–31 Isaiah 55:1–7 Ezekiel 18:31–32 Ezekiel 34:11–15 Hosea 14:1–9 Amos 5:18–24 Habakkuk 3:17–18	4 weeks
6. Prayer An Invitation to Pray (1) Persistent Prayer (2) God’s People Pray (3–13) Jesus Teaches Us to Pray (14) A Simple Model for Prayer (15) Unit Review (16)	God intends prayer to be used in building our relationship with him. It is through the discipline, persistence, and submission of prayer that we are drawn closer to God. God wants us to be part of the vine (Christ), which means the things we ask for must fall in line with Christ’s purposes.	2 Chronicles 7:14 Jeremiah 29:11–13	3½ weeks
7. Between the Testaments Introduction (1) King Nebuchadnezzar’s Dream (2) Rebuilding and Reconstruction (3–7) Alexander the Great and the Septuagint (8) Ptolemies, Seleucids, and Maccabees (9) Jewish Responses to Hellenism (10) The Essenes at Qumran and the Dead Sea Scrolls (11) Peace by Force (12) The Rock that Strikes the Statue (13) Unit Review (14)	God showed his faithfulness to his people during their exile in Babylon. God used King Cyrus of Persia to help rebuild the altar and the temple in Jerusalem. Ezra and Nehemiah served as leaders during the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem. The scattering of the Jews after exile helped the growth of the Jewish community. During this time God protected his people and preserved his Word.	Nehemiah 9:29–31 Psalm 106:40–48	3 weeks
8. Literary Genres Literary Genres in the Old Testament (1) Narrative (2) Character Study (3) Poetry (4–5) Prophetic Literature (6–9) Lamentations (10) Proverbs (11) Foundational Stories (12) The Gospels (13) Acts (14) Epistles (15) Unit Review (16)	Each of the different genres in the Bible helps us to better understand God’s story and what our response to him should be.	Psalm 61:1–3 Psalm 103:1–5 Proverbs 2:3–5 Isaiah 40:1–5 Jeremiah 8:18–22 Jeremiah 28:12–17 Jeremiah 31:1–4 Lamentations 5:21–22 Ezekiel 30:1–5 Mark 1:1–8 Luke 1:1–4 James 1:2–4	3½ weeks

Jesus Models the Heart of Prayer

UNIT
6
LESSON
12

Bible References

Matthew 19:13; Luke 4:1–13; 22; John 17;
James 5:13–18

To the Teacher

In this lesson, students will observe Jesus praying for others. He prayed for people who were close to him, such as the disciples, but he also prayed for believers in general—those with whom he didn’t have regular, face-to-face contact. Effective prayer can and should include intercession for people we don’t necessarily know personally. Continue to urge students to pray for their family members and friends. You may wish to take prayer requests from students and then assign another student in the room to petition God for that request. This approach is useful in building the community and body of Christ. In addition, however, encourage students to remember to pray for other believers with whom they may not be personally familiar. We have a powerful tool in prayer, one that can reach to people we’ve never even met.

Preparation/Materials

- * Journal, one per student
- * Activity sheet, one per student
- * Praying hands from unit organizer teacher resource sheet

Lesson Highlights

- * Jesus serves as a model of praying for others.
- * We should pray for those close to us.
- * We should also pray for people we’ve never met.

Background

Jesus Christ modeled for us the heart of prayer. In the garden of Gethsemane, he brought his request to God—to take the bitter cup (we might say pill) of death from him, to somehow find another way to mediate his redemption plan. Still, Jesus was submissive, praying that God’s will, not his own, be done. We are to follow Jesus’ example in submitting to God’s will, even if this will entail something unpleasant—or worse—for us.

Effective prayer is unselfish and others-centered, laying the needs of others before God. Jesus continuously prayed for others, and the Bible tells us the Holy Spirit intercedes with the Father on our behalf, with sighs and groans too deep for words. As we know all too well, prayer can easily slip into a self-focused litany of requests, and we can find ourselves monologuing with God only about things that are going on in our own lives. While laying our needs and problems before God is important and necessary, it takes discipline and compassion to balance our prayer life by setting our own desires aside and focusing also upon the needs of others.

Lesson Steps



Bridge

1. Direct students to journal on this question: What has been the most intense time in your life so far—the time when you faced your most difficult challenge ever?
2. Have students spend time quietly writing and then sharing with a friend, provided they feel comfortable.



Scripture Link

1. Tell students, “Jesus often went off by himself to pray. He needed time to place himself in the arms of his Father for encouragement and replenishment. Jesus’ prayers were most intense when he was facing trials.
2. Read Luke 4:1–13. Explain that the Bible doesn’t specifically state that Jesus was praying. What clues us in to the fact that Jesus was engaged in prayer during this time? (He was also fasting, an activity done in conjunction with intense prayer.)
3. Instruct students, “Think of a time when Jesus was confronted with the most trying situation in his life: his impending death. Where was he as he contemplated this horrific event?” (He was in the garden of Gethsemane.) “How might he have been feeling, or what might he have been thinking about?” (Answers will vary.)
4. Read Luke 22:39–44. Ask the following questions.
 - What was Jesus’ prayer posture? Describe the position and movement of his body. (He knelt; he prayed in anguish; his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground.)
 - What was Jesus’ request? (“If you are willing, take this cup from me.” Jesus was asking, if such were in any way possible, for the burden that was before him to be lifted.)
 - Although Jesus asked for the burden to be lifted, what words show that he was willing to do whatever God required of him? (“Yet not my will, but yours be done.”)
 - How can we articulate in our prayers that we are willing to be submissive to God’s will? Might this ever take the form of asking for something we don’t really want for ourselves but think the Lord might want for us? (Answers will vary.)
5. Tell students, “Jesus showed the true heart of prayer in these verses by being willing to submit to God’s will. Even though this meant torture and death for him, Jesus was willing to put aside his own request, to accept instead what his Father was asking of him. He didn’t shy away from making his request, but he added without reservation, ‘Not my will, but yours be done.’”
6. Read aloud “Jesus’ Model for Prayer” (page 94) in the student text.

JESUS’ MODEL FOR PRAYER

Jesus modeled for us the heart of prayer. In the garden of Gethsemane, he brought his request to God—to take the cup (we might say the bitter pill) of death from him. But Jesus was submissive and prayed without reservation that God’s will, not his own, be done. We are to follow Jesus’ example and submit to God’s will, even if this means something unpleasant—or worse—for us.

Effective prayer is unselfish and others-centered, laying their needs before God. Jesus continuously prayed for others, and the Bible tells us the Holy Spirit intercedes for us, too, with sighs and groans too deep for words. We all know how easy it is to slip into self-focused prayer, laying before God only the issues affecting our own lives. While dialoguing with God about our own needs is important and necessary, it takes discipline and compassion to balance our prayer life by setting aside our own desires and also petitioning God on others’ behalf.

7. Read James 5:13. “What does this verse tell us we should do?” (If we’re in trouble, we should pray.)



Student Activities

1. Tell students, “Jesus not only modeled a submissive attitude toward prayer, but he also showed us who we should pray for. While it is true that we often pray for those with whom we are in some type of relationship, there are many instances in which we may never have met the person or people group for whom we are praying. Even in this situation, we can demonstrate care, concern, and Christian love by interceding for them.
2. Distribute the activity sheet. After students have completed it, go over the answers as a class.

NAME _____

1. Read the following passages to discover whom Jesus prayed for and what his prayers were for each group.

Passage	Whom did Jesus pray for?	What (or how) did he pray for them?
Matthew 19:13	Little children	He placed his hands upon them in blessing and prayed for their well-being.
Luke 22:31–32	Simon Peter	He prayed that his faith would not fail.
John 17:6–19	His disciples	He prayed for their protection and their joy.
John 17:20–25	All believers	He prayed for the unity of believers in God, so that the world might take notice and believe.

2. Look again at the above passages, and think about what type of relationship Jesus must have had with each of the people he prayed for.

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Read the following passages, and then answer the questions.

3. John 17:6–19.
 - How did Jesus feel about these people? What in his prayer gives you a hint about his feelings? He loved them; he had kept them safe and wanted the best for them.
 - For what was Jesus asking on behalf of these people? Protection
4. John 17:20–25.
 - How did Jesus feel about these people? What in his prayer gives you a hint about his feelings? He loved them; he wanted them to be with him.
 - For what was Jesus asking on behalf of these people? That all believers might know him, so that they may one day be with him in glory
5. Luke 22:31–32.
 - How do you think Jesus felt about this man? He loved him; he wanted his faith to be strong when Satan “sifted” him.
6. Matthew 19:13–15.
 - How did Jesus feel about these people? How do you know? He loved them; he placed his hands on them in blessing and prayed for them.



3. Read James 5:13–18. Ask the following questions.
 - What are some of the key claims of this passage? (If we pray in faith, along with the elders of the church, we will be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.)
 - How does group prayer reflect relationship within a community? (It shows unity and trust in those with whom we pray.)
 - How does prayer build up a community? (It makes others aware of needs and gives them an opportunity to help and show concern.)
4. Have students write a prayer for some specific person within the kingdom of God. Brainstorm together some of the kinds of people for whom they could pray (Suggestions may include people who are poor, sick, grieving, lonely, bullied, or uncommitted). Have students reread some of Jesus' words from John 17. Instruct them to include in their written prayer at least three phrases from this chapter. Students should add this prayer to their prayer booklet file.
5. Choose two new students to add the word *Submission* and the phrase *Offered for Others* to the prayer wall.

Enrichment

- * **Art.** Have students make a collage of situations that call for prayer.
- * **Art.** Have students paint pictures of Jesus praying in the garden of Gethsemane, keeping in mind his prayer posture.

Prayer Parables

UNIT
6
LESSON
13

Bible References

Matthew 6:5–6; Luke 11

To the Teacher

In this lesson we will look at three parables Jesus used to teach his disciples about prayer. Students will be asked to draw a cartoon strip to illustrate the message or story of each of the parables. You may choose to use another means to review the story, such as acting it out or retelling the account in your own words. Jesus used stories or word pictures to help his “students” learn, and you can follow suit by incorporating narratives and metaphoric language into your students’ learning as well.

Preparation/Materials

- * An interesting picture
- * Activity sheets 1 and 2, one each per student
- * Praying hands from unit organizer teacher resource sheet

Lesson Highlights

- * Jesus used parables to teach about prayer.
- * God wants to supply our needs.
- * God wants us to ask him for whatever we need.

Background

Parables were one technique Jesus used frequently to convey truth to the people around him. The teachings in this lesson came as a direct response to the request of Jesus’ disciples to “teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples.” Jesus at first responded with the words of the Lord’s Prayer, the subject of the next lesson. But he didn’t leave the disciples with a rote formula for prayer; instead, he showed them something of the heart of prayer. God wants us to make requests of him, and he wants us to be persistent in prayer. He also assures us that he will give us whatever we ask—provided we truly seek him and his will. Jesus concluded with a reminder that God as a loving Father wants to give us good things, not things that could harm us, like snakes or stones. If God wants to supply our needs in good ways, we may conclude that any unmet requests may not have been in our best interest or in the interest of others around us.

The story of the hypocrite’s prayer is found in Matthew 6. The disciples were familiar with certain Pharisees who liked to put on a public show of piety. Jesus tried to demonstrate to his disciples the difference between following the letter of the law, which might have included praying dramatically for all to see, and adhering to the heart of the law—praying sincerely and humbly, recognizing our proper place before God.

Lesson Steps



Bridge

1. Show students an interesting picture.
2. Invite a few volunteers to describe it. Continue probing for more detail.
3. Point out how many words it takes to describe something we can see at a glance.

4. Ask students, “Have you ever heard the phrase, ‘A picture is worth a thousand words’? This can refer not only to an actual painting or photograph but also to a word picture or story that helps us understand something more clearly. Jesus understood the spirit of this phrase very well. He knew that his disciples wouldn’t understand or retain his truth unless he presented it to them in the form of a story—a word picture—to illustrate his meaning and make it memorable.

“Today, we are going to look at three word pictures, or parables, that Jesus used to teach his disciples, and us, something about prayer.”



Scripture Link

1. Distribute activity sheet 1, and divide the class into four groups. Have each group read and respond to one of the stories.

Word Pictures	Describe the word picture. (What is happening in the passage?)	What does it teach us about prayer?
Matthew 6:5–6	Do not pray like the hypocrites, who pray loudly in public.	Prayer is between a person and God and should not be used for showing off.
Luke 11:5–8	A man goes to a friend's house at midnight and asks for some bread.	Be bold.
Luke 11:9–10	Ask, seek, and knock.	Ask and then go looking for what you have asked for.
Luke 11:11–13	If a child asks his father for food, the father will give it to him and not taunt him with possible alternatives.	God wants to give his children the good things they ask for.

“YOU will SEEK me and FIND me when you seek me WITH ALL YOUR HEART”
 (JEREMIAH 29:13).

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2. When the groups are finished, discuss the answers as a class, making certain that the following concepts about prayer are clearly understood by all.
- Effective prayer is persistent.
 - If we want to receive, we need to ask.
 - Our Father in heaven will give us good things if we will only ask him; he won’t, however, give in to our requests if the outcome would be harmful to ourselves or others.

- Prayer should not be a prideful act done for the purpose of bringing glory to ourselves; if we are tempted to pray in order to gain approval from others, we should pray in private.
3. Tell students, “These prayer parables were offered as a response to one of the disciples, who wanted Jesus to teach him and his companions to pray, just as John had taught his disciples (Luke 11:1). This request came either shortly before or shortly after Jesus’ teaching of the Lord’s Prayer, which is recorded for us both in Matthew 6 and in Luke 11. Not only did Jesus give the disciples the words to use, but he wanted them to understand more of the purpose and the heart of prayer.”



Student Activities

1. Distribute activity sheet 2.

NAME _____

Title: _____

Passage: _____

In the cartoon strip below, illustrate the parable you read in your group. You may choose to use all or only some the boxes, and you may add boxes if you need more.

Parable summary: _____

Parable lesson (What is this parable trying to teach us about prayer?): _____

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CARTOON STRIP PARABLES

2. Ask students to create a comic strip to illustrate the word picture they have read in their group. Instruct them to write a sentence or two on the bottom of the picture to explain what they have learned about prayer from the parable.
3. Have students write a prayer that is an acrostic of the words *ask*, *seek*, and *knock*. Direct students in each group to write down any prayer requests any member of the group may have for each of these letters. Have students add these prayers to their prayer booklet file.
4. Choose a new student to add the words *Asking* and *Receiving* to the prayer wall.

Enrichment

- * **Drama.** Have students act out the parables they have studied in this lesson.
- * **Drama.** Have students act out other biblical events or stories that can teach us something about prayer.

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