

AMO[®]
TEACHER GUIDE
AND RESOURCES

THE BOOK OF ACTS:
History of the Early Church

Elizabeth L. Youmans, Ed.D., Writer

Edward Soto, J.D., Writer

Mary Britt, Illustrator

Lorraine Bruno, Arts and Crafts

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Resources

Power Points * Vocabulary Cards * Graphic Organizers
 Bookmark * Coloring Pages * Memory Verse Cards
 Feast Placecards

Book of Acts Overview

“ You shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.” – Acts 1:8

Texts: Book of Acts and Readings

Two 45-minute history lessons and one craft per week

Reading	Principle	Vocabulary	Record	Music	Craft
1 Acts Reading 1	God placed eternity in the heart of man that we can know Him. (Eccl 3:11)	eternity	Color the Book of Acts title page	Go Tell It on the Mountain, 1 st verse	Roman Empire Salt Dough Map: Make the map.
2 Acts Reading 2 and Power Point 1	God prepares individuals and times ALL events to fulfill His purposes. (Eccl 3:1, 11a)	culture	Greek Contributions to the Spread of the Gospel	Go Tell It on the Mountain	
3 Acts Reading 3 and Power Point 2	The Hand of God commissions unbelievers and pagan nations for His purposes. (Jer 3:15, 17)	pagan	Color Roman Empire map	Go Tell It on the Mountain, 2 nd verse	Roman Empire Salt Dough Map: Paint the map.
4 Acts Reading 4 and Power Point 3	There are consequences for disobedience. (Col 3:25)	Messiah	Roman and Jewish Contributions to the Spread of the Gospel	Go Tell It on the Mountain	
5 Acts Reading 5 Acts 1:1-14	Believers in Jesus Christ are called by God to be His witnesses (Acts 1:8)	witness	Coloring page 1 Portrait of the Holy Spirit	Go Tell It on the Mountain	Roman Empire Salt Dough Map: Make the compass rose and labels.
6 Acts 2:1-41	It is the presence of the Holy Spirit within the believer that empowers him to testify of Christ. (Acts 1:8)	testify	Coloring page 2 Portrait of the Holy Spirit	Spirit of the Living God	
7 Acts 2:42-47 Acts Reading 7	The greatest witness for Jesus is agape love for one another. (John 13:34, 35)	agape	Coloring page 3 One Another	Spirit of the Living God	Clay Oil Lamp
8 Acts 3:1-4:31	There is no other name but Jesus, by which we can be saved and made whole. (Acts 4:12)	salvation	Coloring page 4 Ways to Be a Witness for Jesus	They'll Know We Are Christians by Our Love, 1 st verse	

	Reading	Principle	Vocabulary	Record	Music	Craft
9	Acts 5:12-6:7	When asked to do something that violates God's Word, one must obey God rather than men. (Acts 5:29)	obey	Ways to Be a Witness for Jesus	<i>They'll Know We Are Christians by Our Love</i>	Maranatha Banner: Design and make faces for the banner
10	Acts 6:8-8:3	When Christians are persecuted, the Gospel spreads to other regions. (Acts 11:19-21)	martyr	Coloring page 5 One Another's	<i>They'll Know We Are Christians by Our Love</i> , 2 nd verse	
11	Acts 8:4-40	Baptism is a Christian sacrament signifying spiritual cleansing. (Acts 22:16)	baptism	Coloring page 6 One Another's	<i>They'll Know We Are Christians by Our Love</i>	Maranatha Banner: Cut out letters, figures, and objects and glue onto banner
12	Acts 9:1-42	When a person receives Jesus Christ as his Savior and Lord, all things become new! (2 Cor 5:17)	new creature	Coloring page 7 One Another's	<i>They'll Know We Are Christians by Our Love</i> , 3 rd verse	
13	Acts 9:43-11:18	Prejudice and partiality have no place in the Body of Christ. (Acts 10:34b)	prejudice	Coloring page 8 Portrait of the Apostle Peter	<i>They'll Know We Are Christians by Our Love</i> , All 3 verses	Shield Mobiles
14	Acts 11:18-25	The success of the Gospel message is in part dependent upon Christians encouraging one another. (1 Thes 5:11)	encouragement	Coloring page 9 One Another's	Medley of Songs	
15	Acts chapters 13 and 14	A missionary of the Gospel is one called by God and sent by a body of believers. (Acts 13:2, 3)	missionary	Portrait of the Apostle Paul	<i>He is Lord</i>	New Testament Scroll
16	Acts 15	In Jesus Christ we are saved by grace not by serving the law. (Eph 2:8, 9)	grace	Portrait of the Apostle Paul Memorize <i>The Apostles' Creed</i>	<i>He is Lord</i>	
17	Acts 16:1-18:22	Comparing what is taught against the truth of Scripture is noble-minded. (Acts 17:11)	noble-minded	Coloring page 10 Ways to be a Witness for Jesus Memorize <i>The Apostles' Creed</i>	Medley of Songs	Unity Necklace: Design make and Paint beads
18	Acts Reading 18	The Gospel has the power to turn the world upside down. (Acts 17:6, 7b)	proclamation	My Royal Proclamation Memorize <i>The Apostles' Creed</i>	<i>His Banner over Me Is Love</i> , 1 st verse	

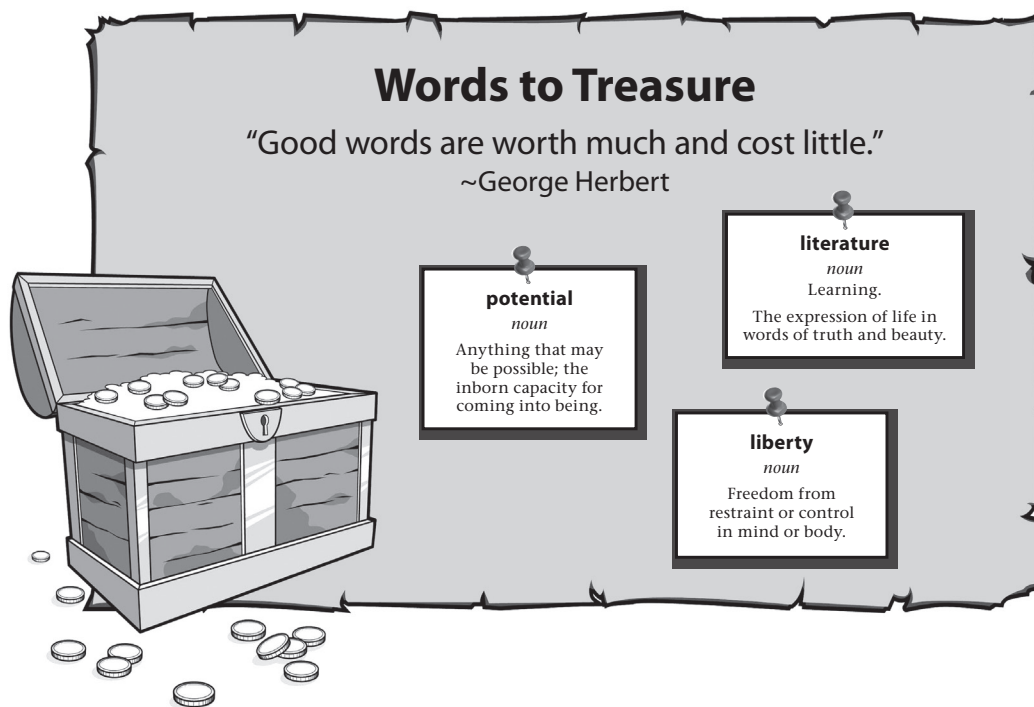
Reading	Principle	Vocabulary	Record	Music	Craft
19 Acts 19:21-21:19	Effective missionaries are those who testify of the Gospel with all humility. (Acts 20:18b-19)	humility	Coloring page 11 One Another's Memorize <i>The Apostles' Creed</i>	<i>His Banner over Me Is Love</i>	Unity Necklace: Share beads with classmates and string necklaces
20 Acts 21:15-24:27	Keeping our conscience clear before God and man enables us to be strong witnesses for Jesus. (Acts 21:1)	conscience	Ways to Be a Witness for Jesus Memorize <i>The Apostles' Creed</i>	<i>His Banner over Me Is Love</i> , 2 nd verse	
21 Acts 25:1-26:32	When brought before governors and kings on account of Jesus' name, God will give us words and wisdom that no adversary of the Gospel will be able to contradict. (Mark 13:11b)	persuade	Coloring page 12 Ways to be a Witness for Jesus Memorize <i>The Apostles' Creed</i>	<i>His Banner over Me Is Love</i> , 3 rd verse	Mosaic Placemat
22 Acts 27:1-28:31	Even when difficulties and dangers multiply, God's eternal plan goes forward by His overruling Hand! (Rom 8:38, 39)	His hand	My Creed Practice reciting <i>The Apostles' Creed</i> in unison	<i>His Banner over Me Is Love</i>	
23 Acts Reading 23	The fiery trials and persecution that God's people must often endure do not compare with knowing Jesus and walking in fellowship with other believers. (Phil 3:10)	fellowship	Coloring page 13 Complete My Creed	Complete Medley of Songs	
24 Agape Meal Celebration					
<p>Costumes: Children dress in first century Roman garb</p> <p>Events:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Opening Exercises: Review the themes of this providential history study ▪ Crown of life craft ▪ Entry with banner while singing, "<i>His Banner over Me Is Love</i>" ▪ What it means to be a witness for Jesus Christ in the 21st century ▪ Invitation to participate in the Agape Meal; Prayer ▪ Singing and Recitation: <i>The Apostles' Creed</i>, royal proclamations and creeds ▪ The Lord's Supper (if appropriate) ▪ Pledge to uphold the New Testament "One Another's" with each other ▪ Concluding Prayer, Blessings and Song: <i>They'll Know We Are Christians by Our Love</i> <p>Songs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>His Banner over Me Is Love</i> ▪ <i>Spirit of the Living God</i> ▪ <i>He Is Lord</i> ▪ <i>Go Tell It on the Mountain</i> ▪ <i>They'll Know We Are Christians by Our Love</i> <p>Recitation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>The Apostles' Creed</i> ▪ Royal Proclamations ▪ Creeds <p>Craft: Crown of Life</p>					

Book of Acts Treasure Chest

**Words are the keys
that unlock the treasure chest of ideas!**

Words are the building blocks of ideas. Man cannot think without words. As Christians, we need a noble and Biblical vocabulary that will guide our reasoning and decision making, as well as our ability to communicate in the marketplace and persuade others with our words of faith just as Jesus and the apostle Paul did in the first century. Jesus said, words are spirit. (John 6:63) Words have the power to create or destroy. (Proverbs 18:21) Through the study of the Word of God, a child's vocabulary is greatly enhanced as you, the teacher or parent, mediate the language and begin using the words to create new realities. (Numbers 14:28).

Following are the Key Student Vocabulary Words from the providential history lessons of the book of Acts. Definitions are taken from many dictionaries. They are to be used in the curriculum by pinning the Key Word Vocabulary Card, that you have printed each lesson, onto the Treasure Chest Bulletin Board. Leave all the words on the bulletin board until the next lesson – the Bible reading word, the classic literature word, and the providential history word. We have printed ours on card stock, but plain paper works just as well. Use these words throughout the weeks as you speak to the children. Help build the children's thinking and reasoning skills by asking them to include these words in their conversation and as they answer questions.



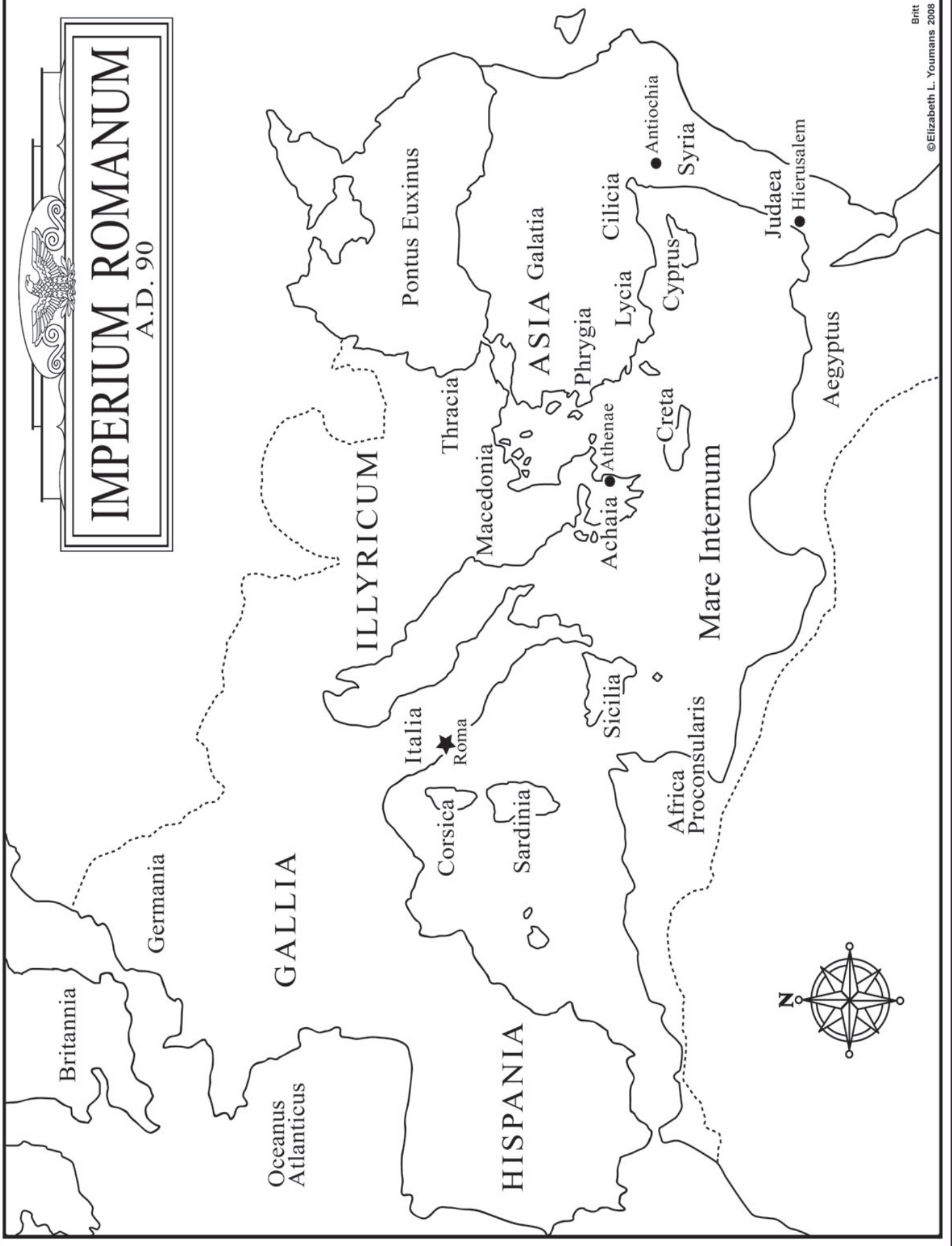
Words to Treasure

1. **eternity** (n.) The place where God dwells outside of time.
2. **culture** (n.) The customs, beliefs, arts, and habits that characterize a particular society or nation.
3. **pagan** (n.) A person who does not acknowledge the living God.
4. **Messiah** (n.) The promised and expected Deliverer and King of the Jews.
5. **witness** (n.) One who speaks from personal experience about an event or individual.
6. **testify** (v.) To make a solemn declaration; to provide evidence.
7. **agape** (n.) Divine or selfless love.
8. **salvation** (n.) Eternal life, deliverance, safety, health, and wholeness both physically and spiritually.
9. **obey** (v.) To do that which is required by those in authority over us.
10. **martyr** (n.) One who suffers death for his principles and beliefs.
11. **baptism** (n.) The Christian sacrament through the use of water that signifies one's cleansing from sin and union with God.
12. **new creature**, The spirit within the person is alive in Christ and all his affections are changed.
13. **prejudice** (n.) An unfair bias of mind for or against any person or thing.
14. **encouragement** (n.) The act of giving courage, hope of success, or support to someone.
15. **missionary** (n.) One called by God and sent to spread the Gospel.
16. **grace** (n.) The free unmerited love and favor of God; the wellspring of all benefits we receive from Him.
17. **noble-minded** (adj.) Having a high moral or intellectual standard.
18. **proclamation** (n.) An official announcement.
19. **humility** (n.) The virtue of not thinking too highly of one's self.
20. **conscience** (n.) That little spark of heavenly fire that tells me right from wrong.
21. **persuade** (v.) To win over by words or deeds; to convince another of the truth.
22. **His hand**, God's eternal and overruling power in the affairs of individuals and nations for His Story.
23. **fellowship** (n.) 1) Partnership; a state of being together. 2) Intimate communion with others.
24. **communion** (n.) 1) Fellowship in worship and doctrine with two or more people. 2) The act of celebrating the Lord's Supper.



IMPERIUM ROMANUM

A.D. 90



Geographic Sites from Paul's Journeys

Achaia: The Roman province corresponding to Greece

Antioch on the Orontes River: One of many Antiochs; was the capital of Syria in Asia Minor; many Hellenistic Jews lived there; became the cradle of Gentile Christianity

Areopagus: A rocky hill in Athens west of the Acropolis, where citizens met for commerce and debate; also known as Mars Hill

Athens: A city in Greece renowned for its learning and sophistication, especially during the golden age of Greece.

Attalia: A seaport on the Mediterranean Sea, now located in southern Turkey.

Berea: A city in Macedonia whose believers were considered "noble-minded" because they searched Scripture to confirm the words of the apostles.

Bithynia: A province in northwest Asia Minor just east of Mysia

Caesarea: Mediterranean seaport in Judea built by Herod the Great and dedicated to Augustus Caesar; capital of Roman Judea

Cilicia: A province in Asia Minor; home of the apostle Paul

Corinth: An ancient and famous city of Greece west of Athens

Crete: A large, fertile island south of Athens in the Aegean Sea

Cyprus: An island in the eastern Mediterranean Sea located off the western coast of Phoenicia and Syria

Derbe: A city in Lycaonia

Ephesus: A major port city in Asia Minor due east and across the Aegean Sea from Athens

Galatia: Literally, "the land of the Gauls"; in general, the region in the center of Asia Minor

Iconium: A famous city and the capital of Lycaonia, a province in Asia Minor

Italy: The peninsula south of the Alps Mountains in Europe that juts out into the Mediterranean Sea; the primary province of the Roman Empire

Jerusalem: The Jewish capital of Judea (Judah was the Roman name)

Lasea: The ancient town of Crete, south of Candia, near the harbor called Fair Havens

Lycaonia: A province in Asia Minor

Lystra: A city in Lycaonia located on a great, fertile plain

Macedonia: A province on the Aegean peninsula across the Dardanelles from Mysia; birthplace of Alexander the Great

Malta: A small, rocky island south of Sicily and north of Africa

Mysia: A province in northwest Asia Minor across the Dardanelles from Thrace and Macedonia

Neapolis: A port city in Macedonia

Pamphylia: A province in Asia Minor bound by Cilicia in the east, Lycia and Phrygia in the west, Galatia in the north, and the Mediterranean Sea to the south

Perga: The capital of Pamphylia on the coast of Asia Minor

Philippi: The leading city in Macedonia; located on the continent of Europe and known as the “second Rome”

Phoenicia: The province immediately north of Galilee and west of Syria; corresponds roughly to modern day Lebanon

Phrygia: A region of Asia Minor west of Galatia

Pisidian Antioch: Another city named Antioch located in Phrygia near the border of Pisidia

Rome: Capital of the Roman Empire located in Italy

Salamis: A city on the southeast coast of Cyprus

Samothrace: A small island in the Aegean Sea between Troas in Mysia and the province of Thrace

Sidon: Coastal city of renown in Syria north of Tyre

Syracuse: A large port on the coast of Sicily (an island just off the southwest tip of the Italian peninsula); founded as a Greek colony centuries before Paul’s arrival

Syria: A Roman province north of Galilee; Paul was converted in Syria on the road to Damascus; Antioch, Syria was the center of Gentile Christianity in the first century.

Tarsus: A city located in the Roman province of Cilicia; birthplace of the apostle Paul; was a cultural city with a university; best known as a center of learning and commerce

Thessalonica: A large and famous capital in Macedonia where the Roman governor resided

Thyratira: A city in Macedonia famous for its purple dye

Troas: A city on the northwestern coast of Asia Minor in the province of Mysia

Tyre: Ancient coastal city in Syria known for its splendor, might, and wealth

“God’s One Anothers” from the New Testament

“If you love Me, you will obey what I command” (John 14:15).

The following is a list of thirty commands from the New Testament that teach us about Christ-like character and how to relate Christianly to others. When practiced, “God’s one others”* inspire successful interpersonal relationships.

“One Another”

New Testament Reference

1. Love one another. *A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another (John 13:34-35).*
2. Depend on one another. *So we, numerous as we are, are one body in Christ, the Messiah, and individually we are parts of one another—actually dependent on one another (Romans 12:5, Amplified).*
3. Be devoted to one another. *Be devoted to one another in brotherly love (Romans 12:10).*
4. Rejoice with one another. *Rejoice with those who rejoice (Romans 12:15).*
5. Weep with one another. *Weep with those who weep (Romans 12:15).*
6. Be of the same mind toward one another. *Be of the same mind toward one another; do not be haughty in mind, but associate with the lowly. Do not be wise in your own estimation (Romans 12:16).*
7. Give preference to one another. *Give preference to one another in honor (Romans 12:10).*
8. Don’t judge one another. *Therefore, let us not judge one another anymore, but rather determine this—not to put an obstacle or a stumbling block in a brother’s way (Romans 14:13).*
9. Accept one another. *Therefore, accept one another, just as Christ also accepted us to the glory of God (Romans 15:7).*
10. Admonish one another. *And concerning you, my brethren, I myself also am convinced that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and able also to admonish one another (Romans 15:14).*
11. Greet one another. *Greet one another with a holy kiss (Romans 16:16).*
12. Wait for one another. *So then, my brethren, when you come together to eat, wait for one another (1 Corinthians 11:33).*
13. Have the same care for one another. *God has so composed the body, giving more abundant honor to that member which lacked, so that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another (1 Corinthians 12:24-25).*
14. Be kind to one another. *Be kind to one another . . . (Ephesians 4:32a).*
15. Be tenderhearted to one another. *Be . . . tenderhearted, forgiving one other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you (Ephesians 4:32b).*
16. Serve one another. *For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another (Galatians 5:13).*

- | | |
|--|--|
| 17. Forgive one another. | <i>Put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you (Colossians 3:12-13).</i> |
| 18. Encourage one another. | <i>Therefore encourage one another and build up one another, just as you also are doing (1 Thessalonians 5:11).</i> |
| 19. Submit to one another. | <i>Be subject to one another in the fear of Christ (Ephesians 5:21).</i> |
| 20. Uphold (forbear) one another. | <i>. . . [L]ead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all lowliness and meekness, with patience, forbearing one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Ephesians 4:1-3).</i> |
| 21. Stimulate one another. | <i>Let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds (Hebrews 10:24).</i> |
| 22. Be hospitable to one another. | <i>Be hospitable to one another without complaint (1 Peter 4:9).</i> |
| 23. Minister gifts one to another. | <i>As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God (1 Peter 4:10).</i> |
| 24. Be clothed in humility toward one another. | <i>Clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, for God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble (1 Peter 5:5).</i> |
| 25. Bear one another's burdens. | <i>Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ (Galatians 6:2).</i> |
| 26. Do not speak against one another. | <i>Do not speak against one another, brethren. He who speaks against a brother or judges his brother, speaks against the law and judges the law; but if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge of it (James 4:11).</i> |
| 27. Do not complain against one another. | <i>Do not complain, brethren, against one another, so that you yourselves may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing right at the door (James 5:9).</i> |
| 28. Confess your sins to one another. | <i>Confess your sins to one another (James 5:16a).</i> |
| 29. Pray for one another | <i>. . . Pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much (James 5:16b).</i> |
| 30. Fellowship with one another. | <i>If we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin (1 John 1:7).</i> |

* The list was identified as 'God's One Anothers' by the Linwood Methodist Church of Kansas City, MO.

Agape Meal Celebration



*Day by day continuing with one mind and breaking bread from house to house,
they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart,
praising God and having favor with all the people.
And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved.*

— Acts 2:46, 47

This AMO® celebration is inspired by the unity and fellowship that the first century Christians enjoyed, as the Gospel was preached and the Lord continued to add to their numbers daily. They enjoyed communion around a simple table of food, much like our 21st century church potluck dinners, and they celebrated the Lord's Supper together in one accord ending with praises and joyful singing. We desire to celebrate in the same spirit.

The celebration of learning is designed to 1) memorialize the completion of our AMO providential history unit, *Book of Acts*—a study of the birth of Christianity and the spread of the Gospel of the kingdom of God; and to 2) encourage the children to follow Christ as the first century Christians did, being willing to be His witnesses wherever He leads them in life.

Goals:

1. Memorialize the study of *Book of Acts* in a spirit of Christian fellowship, worship, and unity
2. Commune and fellowship like the first century Christians through an agape meal
3. Give each child opportunities to sing, recite, and testify to the faithfulness of God

Events:

Opening Exercises; Share the themes of this providential history unit

Crown of Life Craft

What It Means to be a Witness for Jesus Christ in the 21st Century

Invitation to Dine and Prayer

The Agape Meal

Singing and Recitation: *The Apostles' Creed*; Royal Proclamation; and Creeds

The Lord's Supper (if appropriate)

Pledge to Uphold the New Testament "One Anothers" with Each Other

Concluding Prayer

Length of Time Needed for the Celebration:

2 hours

Preparation:

1. Decide on a location for your agape meal based on the number that will attend. If your ministry building has a large multi-purpose room, plan how you can utilize this space to accommodate your meal.
2. Invite your pastor/minister/priest to attend and ask him if he would offer the sacrament of the Lord's Supper with a small teaching for the children.
3. Create tables "first-century-style" by placing panels of particleboard on cinder blocks or sturdy boxes for the base. People reclined at tables low to the ground for meals and fellowship. Arrange in large U-shaped patterns so all can sit on both sides of the tables. Cover with paper tablecloths.
4. The children have made mosaic placemats, which can be placed around the tables.
5. Print the place cards with the "One Anothers" on them. (Located with the Resources.) Cut and fold in half. Write the names of the children and coordinate with their individual placemat.
6. Decorate the center of the tables with the children's oil lamps and some of their scrolls. Set platters of fresh fruit and pitchers of grape juice on the tables. If you have a large clay chalice, place it in the center of the table with the bread.
7. Hang the children's mobiles of Christian symbols from the ceiling over the tables.
8. Practice songs, reciting *The Apostles' Creed*, and presentations.
9. Ask the children to dress in a simple first-century costume. Clothing for the Jews and the Gentiles was highly influenced by the Roman culture:

Girls	Boys
1. long tunic of a solid color, belted at the waist, with a rectangle of cloth over the head and shoulders	1. long tunic with a rectangle of cloth over the shoulders
2. sandals	2. sandals
3. wear shorts and T-shirt underneath	3. wear shorts and T-shirt underneath
4. crown of life	4. crown of life

A tunic is easily made from an old, solid-colored sheet: Fold in half with the fold at the top. Cut a hole in the center of the folded fabric for the head and sew or glue the sides together leaving an opening for both arms to go through. Cut the length as needed.

10. Assign one mother or grandmother to organize the preparation of the food, its service, and cleanup with other mothers. Plan a simple Mediterranean meal:

Broiled Fish

Cooked Fresh Vegetables

Seasoned Sliced Tomatoes in Olive Oil

Assorted Cheeses and Olives

Fresh Baked Bread and Olive Oil for Dipping

Fresh Fruit, especially Grapes and Dates

Pitchers of Grape Juice

11. Set the table with utensils, plates, and glasses and put out salt in small bowls.
12. Serve the food "family style."
13. Assign someone to take photos of the celebration.

Opening Exercises:

Open with prayer.

Summarize the themes of *Book of Acts*.

Introduce the children to the key vocabulary word for the celebration

communion (n.) 1) Fellowship in worship and doctrine with two or more people. 2) The act of celebrating the Lord's Supper.

Crown of Life Craft:

Instruct the children on how to make their crowns of life.

Help them dress in their costumes and crowns and prepare their hearts and minds for the Agape Meal celebration.

Invitation to Dine:

*He brought me to the banqueting house,
and his banner over me is love. — Song of Solomon 2:4*

Have the children enter the fellowship hall. Select two children to carry their "Maranatha Banner," while singing "His Banner over Me Is Love."

Hang the banner on the wall.

Have either the AMO Program director or one of the teachers review what it means to be a witness for Jesus Christ.

Introduce all the foods that are on the table and share their importance in the first century diet of the Mediterranean culture, which is one of the healthiest in the world.

Pray for the meal, the fellowship, and the time of praise and worship.

The Agape Meal:

Enjoy your first-century, Mediterranean meal.

Recitation, Singing and Sharing:

Recite *The Apostles' Creed*.

Select individual children to read their Royal Proclamations and Creeds.

Offer each child the opportunity to testify or give thanks for what this providential history unit has meant to him spiritually.

Sing "Go Tell It on the Mountain"; "Spirit of the Living God"; and "He Is Lord"

The Lord's Supper/Communion/Eucharist (optional):

Introduce the pastor/minister/priest you have invited to instruct and serve The Lord's Supper. Invite those who have received Christ as their Savior to partake of it.

“One Anothers” Pledge:

Write a simple pledge for the children to read to uphold with one another. Have them form a circle and hold hands as they make the pledge and sing the following song.

Sing:

“They’ll Know We Are Christians by Our Love”

Conclude with Blessings and Prayer:

With the laying on of hands, have the pastor and teachers invoke a blessing for each child.

Pray that each child will follow Christ all his days and be a witness for Christ throughout his life.

AMO® Program

Using the Binder

Overview

The notebook approach,¹ developed by Rosalie Slater co-founder of the Foundation for American Christian Education, employs the four natural or biblical steps of learning: *research, reason, relate* and *record*. This is an old method of reflective study, one used by many of the world's greatest thinkers and writers throughout history. It is as old as God instructing Moses to "write in a book what He was saying to him and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua." (Exodus 17:14) God has always placed great value on the written word and written records, of which there are hundreds of references in the Bible.

The notebook approach is both a biblical tool for teaching and learning, as well as a method for guiding reflection and reasoning with truth. It introduces the teacher and student to the study of the subject through the nature and character of God as the author of that subject, and it lays the foundation for thinking and reasoning with the life and truth of God's Word. It opens the subject through its vocabulary and biblical principles and enlightens the pathway of thinking and reasoning to guide the student toward mastery of the subject. The notebook approach cultivates strong writers, Christian scholarship and character, and a permanent record of learning for teachers, students and parents to evaluate and reference over and over again. The student produces his own "book of remembrance." (Malachi 3:16) Over time, this method liberates the student to become an independent learner who is able to take responsibility for his own education and give an account.

In the AMO Program, both teacher and students need a ringed binder with four dividers marked:

1. Literature
2. History
3. Reading
4. The Arts

A title page is made and filed in the front of the binder, and a title page is made for each component.

Instructions for how to use the Lesson Plan Format follow. They will enable both teacher and student to derive the greatest benefit of the notebook method.

Objectives

1. Introduce the notebook approach and the four steps of natural learning for a permanent record of study in the AMO Program.
2. Develop the lifelong habits of personal study, reflection, recording principles and reasoning in both teacher and children.
3. Build Christian imaginations and consecrated minds for fresh vision, renewed thinking, and biblical reasoning.





AMO's Lesson Plan Components

The top portion of the Lesson Plan contains the following:

1. **Time:** This component indicates the length of time for the lesson. It is based on AMO's weekly schedule. You can alter this to suit your program.

2. **Reading:** This component relates the reading assignment. In the history and literature components, the teacher reads aloud. In literature, the whole classic is read aloud to the children. Do not let them read it. The teacher should read with animation and know the vocabulary before reading the classic. In the Bible Reading lessons, the children read aloud.
3. **Review:** All good lessons begin by reviewing the principle and the main idea or theme of the last lesson. Ask the children if they can remember the principle from the last lesson. If no one can remember, ask them to turn in their binders to the record of the last lesson or point to the Key Vocabulary Word for that lesson located on the bulletin board to help them recall.
4. **Goal of the Lesson:** This is the primary target of the lesson and what the children should understand at its conclusion. The student vocabulary word, the principle and Scripture, as well as the reasoning questions are all directed toward the goal of the lesson.
5. **Principle:** Each lesson is governed and guided by a biblical principle, which lays truth as the foundation and provides structure for teaching the whole lesson. This is antithetical to most teaching methods, which either require children to memorize information and parrot back the “right” answer or “entertain” them.
6. **Scripture:** Each principle is undergirded with a biblical reference. The Word of God is alive. (Hebrews 4:12) It not only produces life in the teacher’s spirit and in the lesson plan, but it illumines and guides the children’s thinking, reasoning, and application of the principle to their own lives.

The remainder of the Lesson Plan is divided into two columns. The left column is for edifying the teacher and the right column is for engaging the students.

1.  **Teacher Vocabulary:** Difficult words and key words are defined biblically for the teacher’s enlightenment and for use with older students and adult literacy programs.
2.  **Preparation to Teach:** These are the instructions for preparation as well as the tools and supplies teachers must gather before entering the classroom to teach.
3.  **Teaching Plan:** This is the subject content of the lesson to build the teacher’s confidence. Generally, everything he or she needs for teaching the lesson is provided and should be reviewed before teaching the lesson. It contains all the elements that he or she will need to teach the lesson to the children. **NOTE: Background information and often a great deal of content for the TEACHER’S EDIFICATION are provided.** The teacher is NOT to read all of this material to the children. It is there to provide information and enrichment to the teacher, as he or she works with the principle and the reasoning with the children.
4.  **Key Vocabulary Word:** Every lesson has a student vocabulary word that relates to the principle and the goal of the lesson. This word, which is printed on card stock and pinned to the “Treasury of Words” bulletin board each day, should be emphasized in each lesson. Use this word in your teaching and encourage the children to learn its meaning and use it in their conversation. Remove the vocabulary card from the board in the next class period and store in the Treasure Chest and pin up the new word from the lesson. Many teachers print out a copy of each word and have the children file in their binders. If you are using this in an academic setting, you can have the students put a divider in their binders marked “Vocab” and they can copy the word and the definition into their binders. They can be tested on the vocabulary definitions and are certainly encouraged to use these words in their writing and in their verbal communication.

5. **? Reason Questions:** Reason questions are provided to guide biblical reasoning and oral discussions and to help children relate the principle or theme of the lesson to their own lives. In an academic setting, this can be assigned as written class work or as homework.
6. **📖 Notebook Record:** Everything the children copy onto their graphic organizers is found in the lesson plan. The teacher writes these phrases on the chalkboard, and the children copy them onto their graphic organizers. In literature the graphic organizers are based on the settings, characterizations and themes in the classic. The phrases are the author's words, which is why they have quotation marks around them. In other subjects, the notebook record contains the essence of the lesson so the children have a permanent record of what they are learning. For the academic setting, older children can find additional phrases to write on these graphic organizers. These phrases are helpful when assigning composition work. Have the children open their binders to the appropriate graphic organizer so they can use the phrases and vocabulary words to inspire and guide their descriptive or expository writing.
7. **🗣️ Oral Work:** This is a summary of the lesson that was taught to the children, that the teacher says and the students repeat out loud before the close of the lesson. It reinforces the principle that undergirds the lesson.

Other components that accompany the Lesson Plan:

1. **Graphic Organizers:** These are designed to organize and limit the amount of writing children must do in an after school, Sunday school or literacy program. Some children are illiterate and unable to write. These children will still have a record of learning with the coloring pages provided. All the children will build their language skills. If you are using this program in an academic setting, you can assign more note taking by writing the content being taught on the chalkboard and having your students copy into their binders.

Graphic organizers for the literature units are designed to record these literary elements:

- a. **Characterizations:** Four or five of the main characters in the classic are chosen to study in depth. They soon learn that God looks at the internal man (1 Samuel 16:7) and that the internal is causal, it gives rise to the external. *As a man thinks within himself, so he is (Proverbs 23:7).* This helps children examine their own character.
 - **Internal:** Record the internal qualities of the heart, mind, soul, attitudes, will, and spirit **using the words of the author.**
 - **External:** Record the physical features of the literary character **using the words of the author.**
 - b. **Setting:** The main setting(s) of each classic has been chosen, and if actual geographic settings are in the classic, such as the Swiss Alps and Frankfurt, Germany settings found in *Heidi*, the children complete map work and study the culture of the settings.
 - c. **Theme:** This is the message the author conveys. Each classic is different. *Heidi* has many themes.
2. **Vocabulary Card:** The Key Vocabulary Word, which is defined Biblically, is printed on this card and pinned onto the "Treasury of Words" bulletin board where it remains until the next lesson. All cards are stored in the Treasure Chest of Words, so the children will soon learn that words provide a treasury of wisdom and understanding.
 3. **Coloring Pages:** Beautiful coloring pages have been created by talented illustrators for the delight and enrichment of the children. Have the children use colored pencils to color them. Pencils produce

beautiful pages for the children to cherish. Many children are visual learners, so they will glean many details of the story from the coloring pages. These become part of their permanent record and are filed in their binders.

4. **Memory Verse Cards:** This card holds the weekly Bible verse from the Bible Reading lesson to be memorized by the children. It is printed and pinned onto the “Treasury of Words” bulletin board.
5. **Parent Prayer and Blessing Cards:** These cards are part of the Bible Reading lesson plans. One set is printed weekly for each child to take home to his parents so they can pray and bless their children every day.

¹ Slater, R. (1965). *Teaching and learning America's Christian history: The principle approach*. San Francisco, CA: Foundation for American Christian Education.

Suggested Assignments for the Academic Setting

1. Write introductory facts and inspiring information from the lesson plans on the chalkboard and have the students copy into their binders on a sheet of paper labeled “Introduction” for each component studied. (i.e.: historic and literary background of the book being studied; author of the book; literary background, genre, and elements of the classic being studied; timeline of key events, key individuals, and key documents in the providential history units; etc.)
2. Have students create a divider labeled “Vocabulary” and insert in their AMO® binders for each component studied. On a sheet of notebook paper, have them copy the daily “Key Vocabulary Word” and its definition. After they have copied the word, have them write a sentence using the new vocabulary word.
Hold students responsible for the correct spelling of the word, its definition, and the ability to use the word accurately in a sentence on quizzes and on the final examination.
3. Have students create a divider labeled “Principles” and insert in their AMO® binders for each component studied. Have them write out the daily principle and then write a paraphrase as classroom work or as homework. Ask them to apply the principle to their own lives, as well. Be certain to read each one and make comments.
4. Have students create a divider labeled “Memory Verses” in the AMO® Bible reading component and insert in their AMO® binders. On a sheet of notebook paper, have them copy the weekly memory verse. Ask them to paraphrase it and apply its truth to their own lives.
5. Have students create a divider labeled “Reason and Relate” and insert in their AMO® binders for each component studied. Write the “Reason Questions” found on the lesson plan (and any you would like to add) on the chalkboard. Have students copy the questions onto a sheet of notebook paper and write out their answers in complete sentences either during class or for homework. Correct, grade, and return them to the students to be filed in their binders. Discuss some of the inspired answers.
6. Create writing assignments from the literary phrases and information the students record on their graphic organizers, such as:
 - Write two paragraphs that describe the Swiss Alps. Use as many of Johanna Spyri’s beautiful phrases as possible. You may use your notes from class.
 - Contrast life in the Swiss mountains with life in the German city, Frankfurt.
 - Describe the individuality of Switzerland.
 - Compare and contrast the internal and external characters of Heidi and Peter.
7. Prepare students for all final examinations by seeing that their binders are complete and in order and by reviewing the principles, historic events and individuals, and literary elements of the classic. Take class time to do this collectively.
8. After the final examination, collect and grade each student’s binder, and average his binder grade with his other academic assignments. The binder grade reflects the student’s character, not his academic achievement.
9. Sample Heidi Final Exam (3rd grade and above/age 8+): Be certain to write in complete sentences.
 - Why is the Bible the highest model of language and literature?
 - Who was the author of Heidi? Write two sentences that describe her individuality.

Write the definition for each of these vocabulary words:

literature	friendship
conscience	providence
individuality	virtue
prudence	principle
repentant	reason (v.)

Label the map of Switzerland using the names found on the legend.

Write a descriptive paragraph about life in the Swiss Alps in the late 1800s. Tell why you would or would not want to live there.

Compare and contrast the internal and external characters of Heidi and Peter.

What were Heidi's most distinctive character qualities? Why did everyone like her? How did Heidi overcome life as an orphan?

Why did the author describe Uncle Alm as the "Prodigal Son?" Tell what happened to him in the story.

Paraphrase this principle from chapter 10: "Being able to read brings great liberty to one's life."

Extra credit: Sketch your favorite scene from the classic Heidi in the space provided.

10. Sample Proverbs Final Exam (3rd grade and above/age 8+):

Using complete sentences, describe four attributes of God's Word, the Bible.

Write the definition for each of these vocabulary words:

gospel	integrity
proverb	honor
discern	character
wisdom	diligent
folly	leader

Who wrote the Book of Proverbs? Tell why this book is so important for a young person to meditate upon.

Contrast the wise child and the foolish child in the following areas of daily life:

- Listening
- The words of one's mouth
- Making friends
- Making decisions
- Work habits

List three qualities of a godly leader.

List three qualities of a godly woman.

Paraphrase the following principle, "The conduct of a young child builds the man or woman."

Extra credit: Write out two of your favorite memory verses from the Book of Proverbs.

As teachers work with our AMO® lesson plans, they will be inspired to create their own reflective writing assignments. **Remember, handling the noble vocabulary of the subject and daily writing assignments produce mastery of the subject.** The sooner children are taught the rudiments of composition (which should begin in kindergarten/first grade), they should be writing in every subject every day by the third grade.

Teachers must remember, they cannot ask children to write a descriptive paragraph if they haven't taught their students the rudiments of writing a descriptive paragraph. The same principle goes with comparing and contrasting two items or characters. The teacher has to teach the rudiments of all the

various forms of composition and then have their students practice, practice, practice. Writing is not a gift from God that some are blessed to have and others don't. Writing is a skill best learned as a young child in order to form lifelong manners and habits of excellence in Christian scholarship. This produces Christian thinkers and leaders in every field of endeavor.

By employing the Notebook Method, teachers will eventually become confident to develop and write their own curriculum. This method produces writers and Christian thinkers among teachers, as well as students.

Providential History

Lesson Plans

*The study of history leads us to a better acquaintance with God.
History teaches us that God extends His protecting hand over all His children,
and that all are called into being to fulfill some wise purpose.*

~ G. G. Hebbe, 1848 ~

What we will learn as we continue to study providential history is that nothing happens by accident. God is sovereign over history. He governs what happens and times all events for His eternal plan and purpose. He raises up kings and leaders and He brings them down.⁶ The apostle Paul wrote, “When the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son.”⁷ The “fullness of time” means that everything is in place for God’s plan to be successful. God never launches an event until He has providentially prepared an individual or a people group to carry it out. God waited until everything was prepared on Earth to receive His Son, and then He sent Him forth for His earthly mission. In this AMO providential history unit, we’re going to focus on the unique events and individuals in the first century after the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Timeline of God’s Hand in His Story:

We have already learned that a timeline is a tool for organizing events and historic figures into chronological order. Today, let us walk through our providential history timeline to the first century after the birth of Christ, the time period in which our study takes place.

God’s Divine Plan for You and Me

History is God’s Story, so we will begin in eternity, the place where God dwells. Eternity has no beginning or end. There is no time in eternity. This is difficult for us to understand, because when God created us, He placed us in time. As we live out our lives here on earth, we are limited to the time period in which we are born. (Give some examples.) However, we have the capacity for eternity because God created man in His own image, and He placed eternity in our spirit.⁸ We are spirit, just as God is a spirit⁹ and we will live eternally. God also placed a desire to know Him within our hearts. God has not revealed all of His mysteries to us, so there is much we do not know or comprehend about Him and eternity.

God Himself is not limited by time or space! He exists outside these limitations.¹⁰ God is omnipresent, which means He is everywhere at all times. God is one God and yet three persons—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.”¹¹ God is all in all! In eternity, the three

⁶ “It is He who changes the times and the epochs; He removes kings and establishes kings . . .” Daniel 2:21

⁷ Galatians 4:4

⁸ Ecclesiastes 3:11; Titus 1:2

⁹ John 4:24

¹⁰ 2 Peter 3:8

¹¹ Matthew 28:19; Philippians 2:6-11; 2 Corinthians 4:4

persons of the Godhead enjoy great fellowship and complete unity with one another.¹² The Godhead reveals to us the perfect way to love and serve others.

Eternity Past



In eternity past, Almighty God conceives an eternal plan, the details of which are hidden in God the Son until “the fullness of the time.”¹³ How do we know this? Because God’s written Word and Jesus Christ the Son have told us. The writers of the Bible call God’s Plan “*the purpose of the ages*,” “*the mystery of His will*,” and “*the hidden wisdom, which God predestined*”¹⁴ before the ages.”¹⁵

The final purpose of God’s plan is to glorify Himself by bringing all things together (reconciling) in Christ.¹⁶ God’s master plan includes a community of people on Earth, who will reflect His divine nature by loving and serving others as Christ showed His disciples.

In the mystery and wonder of Almighty God, His timeless plan is carried out BEFORE He creates the world.¹⁷ In our last history study, we learned there is a Lamb in the Godhead, a slain Lamb, whose name is Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the living Word, the Great I AM.

Creation



God creates the heavens and the Earth as man’s dwelling place and creates man in His own image.¹⁸ “He weaves into His creation pictures and symbols of His Son and of this future community that will express His nature.”¹⁹ We saw many of these symbols and shadows in our Wellspring of Wonder® unit.

Fall of Man



God enjoys His personal relationship with Adam and Eve, walking and talking with them in the garden of Eden, until they disobeyed His command to not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.²⁰ Their sin separates them from God, and He removes them from the garden immediately.²¹ God promises that redemption and reconciliation will come one day to set man free from sin and spiritual death.²²

¹² John 17:5, 9, 21, 24

¹³ Galatians 4:4; 2 Timothy 1:9; Romans 16:25; 1 Corinthians 2:7; Colossians 3:2-4; Ephesians 3:9; Revelation 13:8

¹⁴ “Predestined” is defined as chosen and appointed beforehand.

¹⁵ The apostle Paul calls God’s Plan “*the purpose of the ages*,” “*the mystery of His will*,” “*the hidden wisdom, which God predestined before the ages*.” Ephesians 1:9-11; 3:9-11; Romans 16:25; Colossians 1:26; Titus 1:2; John 17:21-23

¹⁶ Ephesians 2:14-19; Colossians 1:15-22

¹⁷ Hebrews 4:3: “. . . His works were finished from the foundation of the world.”; 1 Peter 1:19-20; Revelation 13:8

¹⁸ Genesis 1:26; Genesis 2:7, 8

¹⁹ Viola, F. (2004). *The untold story of the New Testament Church*. Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image Publishers, Inc. p. 28. Colossians 2:17; Hebrews 8:5; 10:1

²⁰ Genesis 2:16, 17

²¹ Genesis 3:22-24

²² Genesis 3:15

Abraham, 2166 B.C.



God chooses a man named Abraham and makes a promise or covenant with him, that through his family, God will bless all nations. We call this promise the “Covenant of Grace.”²³ The eternal promise of God’s blessing is then transmitted by God’s grace through Abraham’s son, Isaac,²⁴ his grandson, Jacob,²⁵ and the generations of Israel that follow all the way to the birth of Jesus Christ nearly two thousand years later!

Through the promise and providence of God, the twelve tribes of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob become the nation Israel. God’s purpose for Israel is to reveal God’s glory and faithfulness to the pagan nations.²⁶ God also made a promise with Israel on Mt. Sinai and gave them His Law and the Promised Land. Israel’s life and history foreshadow the spiritual community that will one day display God’s eternal nature on the Earth through Jesus Christ. Jesus is the fulfillment of the promise God made with Abraham.²⁷

The Fullness of Time: Jesus, the Focal Point of All History

4 B.C.



“In the fullness of time,”²⁸ God the Father “sends His Son into the world.”²⁹ God the Son humbles Himself, is clothed with human flesh,³⁰ and is born of the Virgin Mary in Bethlehem. The Son is fully God and at the same time fully man. He has come to Earth to fulfill all that the nation of Israel foreshadowed. Jesus spends 30 years preparing for His earthly mission. While on Earth, He continues to fellowship with His Heavenly Father through the Holy Spirit.

A.D. 26



Jesus’ three-year ministry on Earth enables Him to disciple twelve men, whom He calls His “apostles.”³¹ He teaches them many things and especially how to fellowship with Him, just as He, the Son, fellowships with His Heavenly Father. This foreshadows the nature of the Church (the community of believers), which will be established after He returns to heaven.

A.D. 29



Behold your King!

As was their annual custom, Jews begin to arrive in Jerusalem for the celebration of Passover. Four days before the holiday, each Jewish family secured a spotless lamb. This is the same day Jesus victoriously enters Jerusalem on a donkey. The multitude of Jews, which came from many nations all over the Roman Empire, proclaim, “Blessed is the King, who comes in the

²³ Genesis 12:1-3; Galatians 3:6-19; 29

²⁴ Genesis 22:17, 18

²⁵ Genesis 26:3-5

²⁶ Isaiah 42:6; 49:6

²⁷ Galatians 3:14-18

²⁸ Galatians 4:4

²⁹ John 17:18; Matthew 1:21-23

³⁰ John 1:1, 14; Colossians 2:9; Philippians 2:6-8

³¹ Matthew 10:1-7

name of the Lord.”³² They believe He is the long awaited and promised Messiah-King,³³ who would deliver them from the oppression of the Roman Empire and restore Israel to her former glory.

The Cross

At the same time as the Jews were sacrificing their lambs for the Passover meal, Jesus, the true and perfect Lamb of God, is crucified on a cross.³⁴ Jesus’ shed blood atones for the sins of the world. As He utters the words “It is finished,” an earthquake shakes the land and the veil in the temple is torn in half. Jesus is removed from the cross and is buried in a borrowed tomb.

Three days later, as the Jews are celebrating the feast of first fruits,³⁵ Jesus is resurrected from the dead. He becomes the First Fruit of all who will rise from the dead!³⁶

The Resurrection

On the third day, miraculously, Jesus appears alive to His disciples. He has triumphed over sin and death! He calls His apostles to Himself and breathes on them saying, “Receive the Holy Spirit.”³⁷ He remains on Earth for the next forty days, appearing to His apostles and five hundred of His followers. He speaks of the things to come concerning the kingdom of God.

The Great Commission and the Ascension

After forty days, Jesus speaks to His followers on the Mount of Olives and commissions them to be His witnesses. He tells them to go into all the world and make disciples of all nations. He instructs them to wait in Jerusalem for what the Father had promised saying, “You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you; and you shall be My witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the world.”³⁸

Jesus is immediately lifted up and received by a cloud into heaven. His death, resurrection, and ascension to the right hand of His Father in glory assure eternal life for all those who believe on Him, both Jew and Gentile. This is the fulfillment of the promise God made to Abraham.

The Day of Pentecost

Ten days later (a total of fifty days after Jesus’ resurrection) thousands of Jews are gathered in Jerusalem to celebrate the feast of Pentecost. Approximately 120 of Jesus’ apostles and disciples are in an upper room praying and worshipping the Lord. Suddenly, the sound of a mighty wind fills the house, as the Holy Spirit appears as tongues of fire on top of their heads. Jesus baptizes each disciple with God’s power.

The power of the Holy Spirit dwelling within Jesus’ disciples provides them with new courage and boldness of speech to be His witnesses in word and deed. This community of Jewish believers is used of God to carry the Gospel message from Jerusalem to Judea and Samaria

³² Luke 19:35-40; Matthew 21:1-11

³³ Zechariah 9:9; Matthew 21:5

³⁴ Acts 2:23, 4:27, 28

³⁵ Exodus 23:16; Leviticus 23:15-21

³⁶ I Corinthians 15:20

³⁷ John 20:22

³⁸ Acts 1:8

and even to the Gentiles in the remotest part of the world. Churches are planted, communities of believers spring up in places near and far from Jerusalem, and the Gospel is carried forth throughout the vast Roman Empire and ultimately the whole world.

This is the backdrop of this providential history study. It is the amazing story of the birth of Christianity and how God used individuals and nations to spread the “Good News” of Jesus Christ throughout the Roman Empire. The story is one of high adventure and drama; a story about individuals who were blinded by their own religious beliefs; a story of the power of the Holy Spirit that softens hearts, changes thinking, and empowers God’s people for service; a story of God’s supernatural care and intervention in the lives of believers; as well as the story of individuals like you and me, who are transformed by the Gospel and courageously walk by faith in times of adversity and persecution. Truly, it is the most exciting and inspiring story in the history of mankind, and one that will certainly change your life. It is the greatest story ever told.

Book of Acts I

Time: 45 minutes

Reading: Acts Reading I

Principle: God placed eternity in the heart of

man that we can know Him.

Scripture: God has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the hearts of men; yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end (Ecclesiastes 3:11).

TEACHER

Vocabulary:

eternity (n.) The timeless, unending existence of God.

providence (n.) The continual care and guidance God provides His creatures for His plan and promises.

sovereign (adj.) Supreme in power; possessing supreme dominion.

time (n.) A continuum that is measured in terms of events which succeed one another from past through present to future.
2) A historical period.

witness (n.) A person who sees an event and tells another what happened.

witness (v.) 1) To see or know by personal experience. 2) To testify or give evidence about an individual or event.



Unit Background:

1. This providential history unit is about the birth of Christianity and how God used the apostles of Jesus to spread the Gospel message beginning in Jerusalem, then Judea and Samaria (the ancient land of Israel), and then throughout the Roman Empire. It is a powerful story of God's eternal plan and purpose for mankind, both Jew and Gentile.
2. In order to prepare to teach this unit, a knowledge of Jewish and Christian life in the Roman Empire is needed. Please download and study the first two chapters (or more) from the following public domain book online: *The Early Church* by George Hodges:
http://www.mainlesson.com/display.php?author=hodges&book=church&story=_contents
3. Read the New Testament book of *The Acts of the Apostles* before teaching this unit. Make a record of the individuals God used to spread the Gospel. List the cities and countries where they travel and locate them on your map of the Roman Empire. Also, record the specific scriptural references to the word "witness" in The Acts.
4. For this lesson, study the Book of Acts I Reading, "In the Fullness of Time."

STUDENT

Key Word:

eternity (n.) The place where God dwells outside of time.

Reason Questions:

1. Define the word "history."
2. Who is the central figure in history? Explain why.
3. Do you have a place in history?
4. Define "eternity."
5. Do you have a place in eternity?
6. As we reviewed God's Story today, what is the theme of His Story?



Notebook Record:

1. Make a divider for your binder and label "Book of Acts."
2. Write your name on the Book of Acts title page and color the illustration with your coloring pencils.
3. File your title page in your binder behind your Book of Acts divider.



Singing:

"Go Tell It on the Mountain"
(Words on the next page.)



Preparation:

1. Read and reflect upon Reading I. Study the teacher vocabulary words, principle and the background materials.
2. Locate resources: Wall map of the world that shows the Roman Empire, Timeline of Promise wall cards (found with the Resources) displayed on the wall, Acts Reading I, Bible, student vocabulary card, and copies of the Book of Acts title page.



Teaching Plan:

1. Pray: *Dear Lord Jesus, pour out your Holy Spirit and illumine our minds that we may see your Hand of Providence in the early history of Christianity. Thank you for the faith of those who have gone before us. Grant us courage and zeal to be your witnesses in our generation, just as the apostles were in their generation. Use us to spread your Gospel Story for your glory. Amen.*
2. Distribute binders to the children.
3. Pin the student vocabulary card on the Treasure Chest bulletin board and define the word for the children.
Connect the vocabulary word to the new principle. Teach the principle and remind the children to listen for this principle during the reading.
4. Distribute the Acts title pages to the children. Have them write their name on the page and color the illustration with their colored pencils while you're reading.
5. Read the Acts I Reading, "In the Fullness of Time."
6. Ask the Reason Questions and have children respond orally.
7. Teach the song, "Go Tell It on the Mountain." This is an African-American spiritual dating back to 1865. Teach the first verse. You can find the melody on this web site:
http://www.links2love.com/christmas_songs_tell_mountain.htm
8. Conclude with a short prayer and blessing for the children.

Go Tell It on the Mountain

Verse One:

O, when I was a seeker
I sought both night and day,
I asked the Lord to help me,
And He showed me the way.

Chorus:

Go tell it on the mountain,
Over the hills and everywhere,
Go tell it on the mountain,
That Jesus Christ is Lord.

Verse Two:

He called me as His witness
Through head and heart and hand.
So now I share the Gospel
With all throughout the land.

Chorus:

Go tell it on the mountain,
Over the hills and everywhere,
Go tell it on the mountain,
That Jesus Christ is King.

In the Fullness of Time

The Reading for Book of Acts Lesson 1

For God has allowed us to know the secret of His plan and it is this: He purposed long ago in His sovereign will that all human history should be consummated in Christ.

— *Ephesians 1:9,10 (Phillips)*

Two thousand years ago Jesus of Nazareth was crucified on a cross in a tiny region of the great Roman Empire. Only a small number of people took notice, and then He was buried in a borrowed tomb. Today, believers in the resurrected Christ number in the millions on every continent. How is it that faith in Jesus Christ turned the “world upside down”?¹

“Book of Acts,” the third AMO providential history study, will answer this question. The theme of the study centers on Jesus’ Great Commission to His disciples to “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation” and “be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.”

Let’s begin by reviewing the definition of the word “history.” How many of you remember our definition of history? History is Christ, His Story. It is the record of God’s relationship to man from creation onward. It tells us the reasons we are here and our purpose as individuals and nations. God is the author of His Story and it is the greatest Story ever told!

All history is God’s history.

History is first and foremost about God and His divine plan for man, which He wrote and completed before the foundation of the world.² As the creator of the universe and all there is in it, God is the Author of His Story. His Story is a love story because it tells of God’s eternal gift of His Son, Jesus Christ, for all who believe. Through God’s sacrifice of His Son, we learn how much God loves us.³ Therefore, we exalt Jesus Christ as the focal point of all history!⁴ In this study, we will see how Jesus interacts with His apostles, even though He is no longer with them physically.

God chose to reveal Himself through individuals and events on earth.

Eternal God chose to reveal Himself through His Word and His actions with individuals and nations throughout time. God’s great promises and His providence coupled with the response of

¹ Acts 17:6

² Hebrews 4:3b: “. . . His works were finished from the foundation of the world.”

³ John 3:16: “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son . . .”

⁴ Ephesians 1:9: “God made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him” [Christ].

individuals and nations are the substance of the events of history. In this unit we will follow God's promises and providence in the lives of Jesus' apostles, the eyewitnesses and the participants in the birth and growth of Christianity.

We also learned that each one of us has a place in history, because God has a calling and a plan for each of our lives in Christ Jesus. This means we are accountable to God for our response to the "good news." In this study we will reflect upon how each of us can be a witness for Christ in our families, schools, and communities.

History is a witness.

What is a witness? A "witness" is one who sees an event and reports what happened. It's someone who was personally present at an event as an eyewitness and is willing to testify to others what he saw and heard.

In order for history to be a witness, individuals have to record the dates, the geographic setting, the names of the individuals, and the details of the event. The Bible is a history book full of many accounts of God's relationship with Israel, His chosen people. It also contains many letters of the New Testament apostles. These all witness to God's purpose. Through the eye of history, we are able to learn many lessons that make us wiser and more discerning. As we study providential history, may we see with the eyes of the past. Let us look for God's hand in the events and lives of individuals. And may we give permission to these ancient lessons to speak to us today here in _____ (Insert the name of your community and nation).

The study of history deals with time.

What is time? Time has a beginning and an ending. It is linear—it has a past, a present, and a future. (Point to the timeline on your classroom wall.) In the Bible, we have learned that Genesis is a book about beginnings. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth"—this is the past. The Bible also records that Jesus told His disciples "I will come again"⁵—this is the future. As the Author of history, God knew the end of history from the beginning because He lives in eternity. As human beings, we must live within the boundaries of time and can only know the past and the present.

Events in history must be studied in relation to other events that occur both before and after. We can only know about events in the past if someone has taken time to write them down and preserve the record.

⁵ John 14:3

The Book of Acts



*Jesus said, "You shall receive power
when the Holy Spirit has come upon you;
and you shall be My witnesses . . ." – Acts 1:8*

Book of Acts 2

Time: 45 minutes **Reading:** Acts Readings and PowerPoint **Review:** God placed eternity in the heart of man that we can know Him. **Principle:** God prepares individuals and times ALL events to fulfill His purposes. **Scripture:** There is an appointed time for everything. God has made everything appropriate in its time. (Ecclesiastes 3:1 & 11a).

TEACHER

Vocabulary:

- aesthetic** (n.) A philosophical theory as to what is beautiful.
- amphitheater** (n.) A circular or oval arena where sports contests and spectacles take place.
- city-state** (n.) A sovereign state that consists of an independent city and its surrounding territory.
- civilization** (n.) A society in an advanced state of development that has legal, political and religious organization.
- commerce** (n.) The buying and selling of goods between cities or nations.
- empire** (n.) A group of countries under one authority.
- ethics** (n.) The study of moral values and rules.
- government** (n.) The fundamental rules and principles by which a nation or state is ruled.
- Hellenistic** (adj.) Relating to or characteristic of the classical Greek civilization.
- influence** (v.) 1) To shape or give direction to. 2) Having the power to effect change.
- pagan** (n.) A person who does not acknowledge the living God.
- pantheon** (n.) All the gods or deities of a religion.
- philomath** (n.) A person who loves learning.
- philosophy** (n.) 1) The love of wisdom. 2) A discipline that seeks the explanation of the reasons of things.



Preparation:

1. Read and reflect upon the Acts Reading 2, “The World Awaiting Christ” part 1, and Power Point 2.
2. Study the teacher vocabulary words and the principle.
3. Gather resources: Acts Reading 2, Power Point 2, computer, Bible, Student Vocabulary Card, and copies of “Contributions to the Spread of the Gospel” graphic organizer.

STUDENT

Key Word:

culture (n.) The customs, beliefs, arts, and habits that characterize a particular society or nation.

? Reason Questions:

1. What is a city-state? Name several of the Greek city-states.
2. Whom did the Greeks worship?
3. Describe the Golden Age of Greece and the culture it produced.
4. What does the term “Hellenized” mean?
5. What were the Greeks’ greatest contributions to the Gospel?
6. What has Greece contributed to your culture?



Notebook Record:

1. Record the following phrases on your “Contributions to the Spread of the Gospel” graphic organizer.

Greek Contributions:

- 1) Greek was the common language throughout the Roman empire
 - 2) Septuagint, Greek Old Testament
2. File your graphic organizer in your binder.

Singing:

“Go Tell It on the Mountain,” the first verse



Teaching Plan:

1. Pray: *Dear Lord Jesus, pour out your Holy Spirit and illumine our minds that we may see your hand of Providence in the early history of Christianity. Thank you for the faith of those who have gone before us. Grant us courage and zeal to be your witnesses in our generation, just as the apostles were in their generation. Use us to spread your Gospel Story for your glory. Amen.*
2. Distribute binders to the children.
3. Review the following from the last lesson:
 - God placed eternity in the heart of man so that we can know Him.
 - Highlights of God's eternal plan and the Timeline
4. Pin the Student Vocabulary Card on the Treasure Chest bulletin board and define the word for the children. Connect the vocabulary word to the new principle. Teach the principle and remind the children to listen for this principle during the reading.
5. Read Acts Reading 2, "The World Awaiting Christ" part 1, while showing PowerPoint 2.
6. Ask the Reason Questions and have children respond orally.
7. Distribute the graphic organizers to the children and write the phrases on the chalkboard for them to record.
8. Continue learning and singing the first verse of "Go Tell It on the Mountain."
9. Conclude with a short prayer and blessing for the children.

The World Awaiting Christ

Part I

The Reading for Book of Acts Lesson 2 with PowerPoint I

The God who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands; nor is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all people life and breath and all things; and He made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation.

— Acts 17:24-26

Introduction

The same God was working in human history, before as well as after the birth of Christ, **(S-2)** revealing Himself and providing for His divine plan and purpose on earth.¹ God is eternal and His character remains constant and unchangeable.² Therefore, His eternal plan does not change. The ancient world was prepared by God's hand for the Gospel. And in His timing, He sent forth His Son from heaven to earth. Indeed, God makes no mistakes in history.³ God never launches an event on earth until He has providentially prepared the setting and the individuals whom He has chosen. God is extremely patient.⁴ He waits until everything is ready that is needed for His plan to be successful, so that what He planned in eternity comes to pass on earth.⁵ This providential history study will begin with the greatest example of God's providence in the history of mankind: the Advent of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. The apostle Paul wrote it this way in his letter to the Galatians, "When the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law."⁶

What was the world like when Jesus came to earth? To whom did God first offer the Good News? The world awaiting Christ was a mixture of many cultures in the vast Roman Empire **(S-3)** including Israel, which was located on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea. (*Locate Israel on the map.*) Those cultures of greatest influence during the time Jesus walked the earth were Greek, Roman, and Jewish. God could have chosen any time period in the history of man to send His Son to earth, but He chose this time period and this unique mixture of cultures, so that His full purposes would be served.

¹ Ephesians 1:11; Hebrews 6:17,18

² Malachi 3:6; Jeremiah 4:28; Hebrews 6:17; James 1:17

³ Job 12: 23; Psalm 22:28; Daniel 2:21; Acts 17:24-27

⁴ Exodus 34:6; Numbers 14:18; 2 Peter 3:9

⁵ Acts 2:23; 4:28; 1 Corinthians 2:7; Ephesians 1:5; Hebrews 6:17, 18

⁶ Galatians 4:4

Therefore, knowing something of these unique cultures will help us better understand the birth of Christianity and the challenges that the early Christians faced as they courageously carried the Good News throughout the Roman Empire. Today, we will look at the Greek culture and its influence. In our next two lessons, we will look at the Roman and the Jewish cultures and their influence.

The History of Ancient Greece

Greece **(S-4)** and the many islands located around it have a very rich history going back thousands of years in time. The earliest civilizations were the Minoans (2600-1500 B.C.) and the Mycenaeans (1500-1150 B.C.) who lived on the islands in the center of the Aegean Sea. (*Locate on the map.*) These early cultures were advanced in many ways. One Minoan king lived in a very beautiful palace **(S-5)** that had 1,500 rooms. Even the people he ruled lived in four-room houses **(S-6)** with running water for drinking and bathing and toilets that flushed. They had a written language and left beautiful paintings **(S-7)** on the palace walls for historians to study. Because the Minoans lived on the island called Crete, they had a strong navy that protected them and kept invaders away. There are many earthquakes and tidal waves in this area of the world, which eventually destroyed their civilization.

Ancient Greece was not a country, but a collection of city-states that were frequently at war with one another. The ancient Greeks were great sailors, which took them to many other lands. **(S-8)** They sailed around the Mediterranean Sea in search of food, trade, and new places to build Greek villages. As Greece began to grow, villages began to band together to form a strong trading center, called a *polis* or city-state. Soon, hundreds of city-states formed in ancient Greece from 750 to 480 B.C. They all spoke the same language and worshipped the same pagan gods, but each city-state had its own customs, laws, and unique identity. Ancient Greeks were very loyal to their city-state, but if another city-state was attacked by a foreign power, they joined forces to fight them off. The Apostle Paul traveled to many former Greek city-states in the first century after the birth of Jesus Christ. He planted Christian churches there and often wrote them letters.

Like most other ancient civilizations, the Greeks developed a system of writing based on the Phoenician alphabet. **(S-9)** The Phoenicians were a people who lived in the land of Canaan on the Mediterranean Sea and excelled at navigation and commerce. Their system of writing was much simpler than other systems, such as Chinese, which used characters to represent people, places, and ideas. Learning these languages meant memorizing hundreds of characters. The Phoenicians created a system of writing that used symbols to represent sounds and introduced it to the Greeks. The Greeks

added symbols to represent vowels, which birthed the Greek alphabet, one of the first true alphabets in the world. The English word *alphabet* is a combination of the first two Greek letters, *alpha* and *beta*.

The Greek alphabet was in common use by 700 B.C. and is still a living language today! It laid the foundation for the Latin alphabet. Many of our modern English letters and words have roots in the early Greek writing system. With the creation of this new system, communication throughout the Greek city-states improved dramatically. More and more Greeks were able to learn this new written language, **(S-10)** which eventually produced a society that loved learning. Today, many of our English words relating to ideas and learning come from the Greek language, such as *philosophy*, *philomath*, *mathematics*, *history*, *geography*, *music*, *theater*, and *drama*.

The Greeks also loved games of all sorts, especially sporting competitions. **(S-11)** They built large amphitheaters that seated thousands of spectators, and they created the Olympic games in 776 B.C., which were part of a religious festival that honored Zeus, **(S-12)** the father of their pagan gods. The athletes came from every Greek city-state to participate in the games, which were held on Mt. Olympus. **(S-13)**

The most famous period of Greek history is the Golden Age (510-323 B.C.). It was during this time that Greek culture grew to its highest expression. The city-state of Athens had become a great trading center. It produced a very wealthy class of people who spent their money to develop the arts and learning. **(S-14)** The Golden Age birthed an aesthetic ideal that inspired many Greek philosophers, such as Socrates, **(S-15)** Plato and Aristotle, **(S-16)** mathematicians such as Pythagoras and Euclid, **(S-17)** historians, scientists, sculptors, and poets, such as Homer, **(S-18)** who wrote the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, and Sophocles and Aristophanes, who wrote dramas. They invented the theater, where plays were presented by actors who wore masks to portray the characters. **(S-19)** They used their plays as a way to worship their pagan gods during religious festivals. The Greeks did not know the living God. They worshiped a pantheon of gods and goddesses, which they believed controlled their lives and all areas of creation. They held elaborate festivals and built enormous temples. The Parthenon, **(S-20)** one of these temples dedicated to Athena, the patron goddess of the city-state of Athens, still stands today on the Acropolis, the hill overlooking Athens. **(S-21 & S-22)**

Because Greece was not yet one country, there was no central government in ancient Greece. Each city-state had its own form of government. Some city-states, like Corinth, were ruled by kings (monarchy). Some, like Sparta, were ruled by a small group of men (oligarchy). Others, like Athens,

experimented with a new form of government in the year 508 B.C., which they named a democracy. In a democracy, the citizens govern themselves.

The Hellenistic Age

To the north of the city-state of Athens was a country called Macedonia. **(S-23)** The Macedonians admired the Greeks. In fact, Macedonia's king Phillip hired the famous Greek philosopher, Aristotle, to tutor his young son, Alexander. **(S-24)** Aristotle, the most famous and experienced teacher of his time, spent three years teaching Alexander Greek literature, ethics, and government. Alexander was a very quick learner, but his first love was riding into battle with his father on his magnificent horse, Bucephalus. He dreamed that one day he, too, would be a famous conqueror!

In the fourth century B.C. (338), king Phillip took advantage of the weakened Greek city-states and conquered them. He unified all the Greek city-states and annexed them into his Empire. He was killed shortly after that as he prepared for war with Persia. His young twenty-year-old son, Alexander, became the new king of Macedonia and went on to conquer the Persian Empire along with many lands in Europe and the Middle East including Judea. Alexander brought Greek ideas and the Greek way of doing things to all the countries he conquered. He created an Empire the likes of which the world had never before seen.

By the time of his death, he was known as Alexander the Great, and this period in history became known as the Hellenistic Age, **(S-25)** because the influence of the Greek culture and ideas spread throughout the known world. When the young warrior-king died, his large Empire was divided up and ruled by three Greek generals. One of them named Ptolemy took control of Egypt and Judea for many years. There he built Hellenistic cities, so that anyone who was doing business in this region had to learn the Greek language and were highly influenced by the Greek culture. Alexander's large Empire and the Roman Republic existed separately for several hundred years before the birth of Jesus Christ. But it would not be long before the Romans would engage them in war and conquer all their lands.

Greece fell to the Romans in 146 B.C. Although the Greek city-states had no military or political power under Rome's government, they flourished under Roman rule. In turn, the Romans borrowed the highly developed Greek culture and ideas and spread them throughout the vast Roman Empire. In many ways Greece is the birthplace of western civilization.

Ancient Greece's Contributions to the Spread of Christianity

Ancient Greece made many contributions to the spread of Christianity in the first century after the birth of Christ. Their simple alphabet and language are two of the greatest contributions. At the time Jesus was born, Greek was the common language in the Roman Empire. When the apostles went out from Judea to preach the Gospel in other regions of the Roman Empire, they did not need a translator to communicate with the people. During the Hellenistic period, the Jews in Egypt had their Scriptures translated into Greek so they could read the Old Testament. This translation of the Hebrew Scriptures is called the Septuagint. **(S-26)** Then, in the first century after the death of Jesus, the New Testament was written in the common-day Greek language (Koine).

Another contribution of Greece was their democratic form of government developed by the city-state of Athens. When the Romans conquered the Greek city-states, they embraced democracy as their form of government. **(S-27)** It gave the Roman citizens a degree of liberty not known in other nations around the world. It was to this system of government that the apostle Paul appealed his case to the Roman emperor. This took him to Rome where he had the opportunity to evangelize many Romans in the emperor's praetorian guard while imprisoned there.⁷ **(S-28)**

Greece and her great influence in other lands was part of the Gentile or pagan world awaiting Jesus Christ and the Gospel of the kingdom of God. In our next lesson, we will learn about the ancient Roman Empire and its culture and contributions to the spread of Christianity. Both the Greeks and the Romans will serve God's timing and sovereign purposes.

⁷ Philippians 1:13; 4:22

Contributions to the Spread of the Gospel

Greek

Roman

Jewish

Jesus said, "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come." – Matthew 24:14

Book of Acts 3

Time: 45 minutes **Reading:** Acts Reading 3 and PowerPoint **Review:** The World Awaiting Christ
Principle: The hand of God commissions unbelievers and pagan nations for His purposes.

Scripture: “Behold, I am bringing a nation against you from afar, O house of Israel,” declares the LORD. “It is an enduring nation, it is an ancient nation, a nation whose language you do not know. . . . They will demolish with the sword your fortified cities in which you trust (Jeremiah 5:15, 17).

TEACHER



Vocabulary:

deity (n.) The supposed divine qualities of a pagan god, who presides over a particular department of nature, such as Jupiter, Juno, Apollo, Diana etc.

Greco-Roman (adj.) Describes the culture that formed when Rome conquered the Hellenized world.

judiciary (n.) The system of courts of justice in a government.

mythology (n.) A system of fables [fictitious stories] about the deities which pagan nations have imagined to preside over the world or to influence their affairs of life.

republic (n.) A nation in which the exercise of power is placed in the representatives elected by the people.

superstition (n.) Belief in false religious practices arising from ignorance or fear.



Preparation:

1. Read and reflect upon Reading 3, “The World Awaiting Christ” part 2, and PowerPoint 3.
2. Study the teacher vocabulary words and the principle.
3. Study the map of the Roman Empire. On a Roman Empire map, practice outlining the waterways and land, so you can show the children how to do it on the chalkboard. Color blue on the water side of the line and red on the land side of the line.
4. Gather resources: Acts Reading 3, PowerPoint 3, computer, Bible, Student Vocabulary Card, copies of the Roman Empire Map, and colored pencils for the children.



Teaching Plan:

1. Pray: *Dear Lord Jesus, pour out your Holy Spirit and illumine our minds that we may see your hand of providence in the early history of Christianity. Thank you for the faith of those who have gone before us. Grant us courage and zeal to be your witnesses in our generation, just as the apostles were in their generation. Use us to spread your Gospel Story for your glory. Amen.*

STUDENT



Key Word:

pagan (n.) A person who does not acknowledge the living God.



Reason Questions:

1. Name the three cultures that greatly influenced the culture and thinking of Jesus’ apostles and disciples.
2. What does the term “Greco-Roman” mean?
3. What were ancient Rome’s greatest contributions to the Gospel?
4. What has ancient Rome contributed to your culture?



Notebook Record:

1. With a blue colored pencil, outline all the seas, oceans, and gulfs on your Roman Empire Map.
2. With a red colored pencil, outline all the territory of the Roman Empire on your Roman Empire map. Color your compass rose and eagle.
3. File your Roman Empire Map in your binder.



Singing:

“Go Tell It on the Mountain,” first and second verses

2. Distribute binders to the children.
3. Review “The World Awaiting Christ and the principle that God prepares individuals and times ALL events to fulfill His purposes.
4. Pin the Student Vocabulary Card on the Treasure Chest bulletin board and define the word for the children. Connect the vocabulary word to the new principle. Teach the principle and remind the children to listen for this principle during the reading.
5. Read Acts Reading 3, “The World Awaiting Christ” part 2, while showing PowerPoint 3.
6. Ask the Reason Questions and have children respond orally.
7. Distribute the Roman Empire Maps to the children. Demonstrate how they should color their maps on the chalkboard or whiteboard.
8. Teach the second verse of “*Go Tell It on the Mountain.*”
9. Conclude with a short prayer and blessing for the children.

The World Awaiting Christ

Part 2

The Reading for Book of Acts Lesson 3

*Now in those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus,
that a census be taken of all the inhabited earth.
This was the first census taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria.
– Luke 2:1, 2*

The Greco-Roman World

In our last lesson, we learned about the ancient Greeks and the unique characteristics of their culture and way of life. Today we're going to learn about another ancient people, the Romans, and the culture that formed when the Romans conquered the Greeks in 146 B.C., a time that was just 140 years before the birth of Christ. It was at this time when these two great cultures began to influence each other. Sometimes there was a blending of ideas, and other times there was a clash of ideas. By the time Jesus was born, the mighty Romans ruled both the eastern and western lands of the great Mediterranean Sea, including the wealthy Greek city-states. **(S-2)** (*Locate on the map.*)

The mixture of both the Greek and Roman cultures affected every area of life for those who lived in this vast Empire. **(S-3)** It affected the way people thought, the laws that they made, and how they governed themselves. It influenced their style of art and the way they designed their buildings for many centuries. And it promoted a common language that was spoken by all the people. For example, the learned men of Rome spoke and wrote in Greek, the language of Greece, even though they were Roman citizens living under the laws of the great Roman Empire. The same thing was true in Egypt and Judea. In fact, it developed into what is called the Greco-Roman culture and, incredibly, it continues to influence our lives today in many ways. This Greco-Roman world was in a wonderful state of preparation for the coming of God's Son. **(S-4)** The world awaiting Jesus Christ was a pagan, Greco-Roman world. Jesus was born during the reign of Caesar Augustus, the first of many Roman emperors. **(S-5)** This was "the fullness of time" when God chose to send His Son to the earth.

A Brief History of Rome

The history of Rome began in Italy in 753 B.C. with the founding of the city of Rome. **(S-6)** (*Locate on map.*) Kings ruled early Rome, **(S-7)** but after only seven of them had ruled, the people took over their own city and ruled themselves as a republic. Early Rome was like a Greek city-state. It had a central meeting place, called the capitol, **(S-8)** for people to meet to govern themselves. The Roman Republic was a very successful government and lasted nearly five hundred years! (510 to 23 B.C.)

In the fourth century before the birth of Christ, the Romans began to expand their territory and to build a large army of soldiers. **(S-9)** After many years of war, the Roman army conquered the prosperous Greek city-states. Eventually, they took possession of all the lands that Alexander the Great, the young Macedonian warrior-king, had conquered. *(Show this area on a world map)*. The Romans annexed all these lands into their growing republic. They gave the conquered people Roman citizenship and freedom from slavery. Up to this time in history, whenever a nation conquered another nation, they took their lands and material wealth and forced the captured people to serve them as slaves. Most often, slaves were treated very cruelly. **(S-10)**

This was the glory of the Roman Republic. Whenever the Romans conquered other nations, they brought them into their republic, made them Roman citizens, and protected them under their Roman laws. This granted them privileges and a share in the benefits of living in the Roman Empire. For the first time in history, liberty and union were joined together under one government.

Ancient Rome's Contributions to the Spread of Christianity

The vast territory of ancient Rome surrounded the great Mediterranean Sea. **(S-11)** On some ancient maps, the Roman mapmakers labeled the Mediterranean Sea "Mare Nostrum" ("Our Sea" in Latin). The Roman world was divided in half by the Adriatic Sea. *(Show on the map.)* Each half was different in customs and language. The East was comprised of Greece, Syria, Judea, and Egypt, countries with ancient and splendid traditions, and whose peoples were better educated and more civilized than their conquerors, the Romans. The West was comprised of Italy, Spain, Gaul, and Great Britain, peoples who had little history and who adopted the traditions of the Romans, their conquerors.

Every city had a gated wall **(S-12)** that surrounded it for protection. **(S-13)** Colonnaded streets led to the forum, **(S-14)** the public place that formed the center of judicial and public business. There were public baths **(S-15)** and libraries, clubhouses for the wealthy men, **(S-16)** and temples to worship their many Roman deities. They built large theaters **(S-17)** for drama and music and huge amphitheaters for sports and entertainment. **(S-18)** Some of these amphitheaters seated as many as 200,000 people. The sports **(S-19)** involved gladiator fights, mock naval battles, and chariot races. Many of the participants were severely injured or killed during the games. Today, we would not call this entertainment.

Cities in the Roman Empire were connected by well-built roads that were used for travel and trade during times of peace and war. **(S-20)** Some of these cities, which you will learn more about, were:

- Rome, Milan, and Ravenna in Italy
- Nicomedia and Ephesus in Asia Minor
- Philippi, Thessalonica, Athens, and Corinth in Greece
- Antioch and Caesarea in Syria
- Carthage and Alexandria in Northern Africa

Rome, the capital city of the Empire, became known as the Eternal City. At the time when Jesus and His disciples walked the earth, there was an expression that said, “All roads lead to Rome!” This was true because whenever the Romans conquered a nation or a city-state, they built roads to connect it to the rest of their Empire. Straight the roads ran, across the valleys and over the hills. Many walked, others rode mules or in plush carriages. On each road were placed mile markers that told travelers how many miles they were from the golden mile marker in the forum of Rome. These mile markers extended from Rome to Great Britain, to the oasis in Syria, and the Nile River in Egypt. (*Locate on the map.*)

The Romans were great engineers. The roads they built throughout the Empire were very well constructed. **(S-21)** They used them for commerce, to carry news to and from Rome, and also to deploy their soldiers. Because of their strict discipline, the roads were very safe for travel. Portions of these two thousand-year-old roads still exist today. Imagine, these are the very roads on which Jesus’ apostles traveled, as they carried the Gospel “from Jerusalem to Judea and Samaria and the uttermost parts of the world.” This huge network of safe roads throughout the Empire is one of Rome’s greatest contributions to the spread of Christianity.

The Romans also built large aqueducts that carried water long distances from the mountains into the cities for personal and public use. **(S-22)** The aqueducts were often linked to the bathhouses, fountains, and other public facilities. Like the Roman roads, some of these aqueducts are still used today in Europe, northern Africa, and the Middle East!

The Roman Empire had a large army and a navy with a fleet of ships **(S-23)** that protected their merchant ships carrying goods for trade from pirates. Many of Jesus’ apostles traveled westward with the Gospel onboard these ships. The Roman commerce routes both by land and by sea took them to places as far away as India and China. (*Locate on the map.*)

Rome began to grow in size and importance, especially after she conquered the wealthy Greek city-states in 146 B.C. Within the next one hundred years, the republic grew so big that it became one of the largest Empires of the ancient world. During this time, the famous Roman general, Julius Caesar, **(S-24)** was named the dictator of the republic. Many men became jealous of his power, and he was killed. This left the republic under the control of Mark Antony and Octavian, the nephew of Julius

Caesar. There was great civil unrest in the republic at this time. Soon, in a great battle between these two Roman leaders, Octavian defeated Mark Antony and was declared supreme ruler.

It was at this time that the Roman Republic became a mighty Empire, and Octavian was awarded the title “Augustus Caesar,” meaning “revered king.” **(S-25)** The Romans declared their emperor a god and worshiped him. The reign of Augustus Caesar ushered in a time of peace throughout the whole Roman Empire. This time period is called “Pax Romana” (meaning “Roman peace” in Latin). It was during this peaceful time in history that God sent forth His Son to live in the midst of this Roman Empire in a little known region called Galilee. In less than 40 years of Augustus Caesar’s rulership, Rome went from being a broken republic to a worldwide power.

Another of Rome’s great contributions was their system of law, which began with the Twelve Tables of Roman Law in 450 B.C. **(S-26)** As Rome’s first code of laws, it protected the rights of all the people, not just the wealthy and powerful. Having public laws that were written in stone meant that those in leadership could not change the system of justice to suit their momentary whim or fancy. It also placed the responsibility to know and obey the law upon every Roman citizen. This system of basing justice upon a written code of laws would influence the legal system of many nations throughout history.

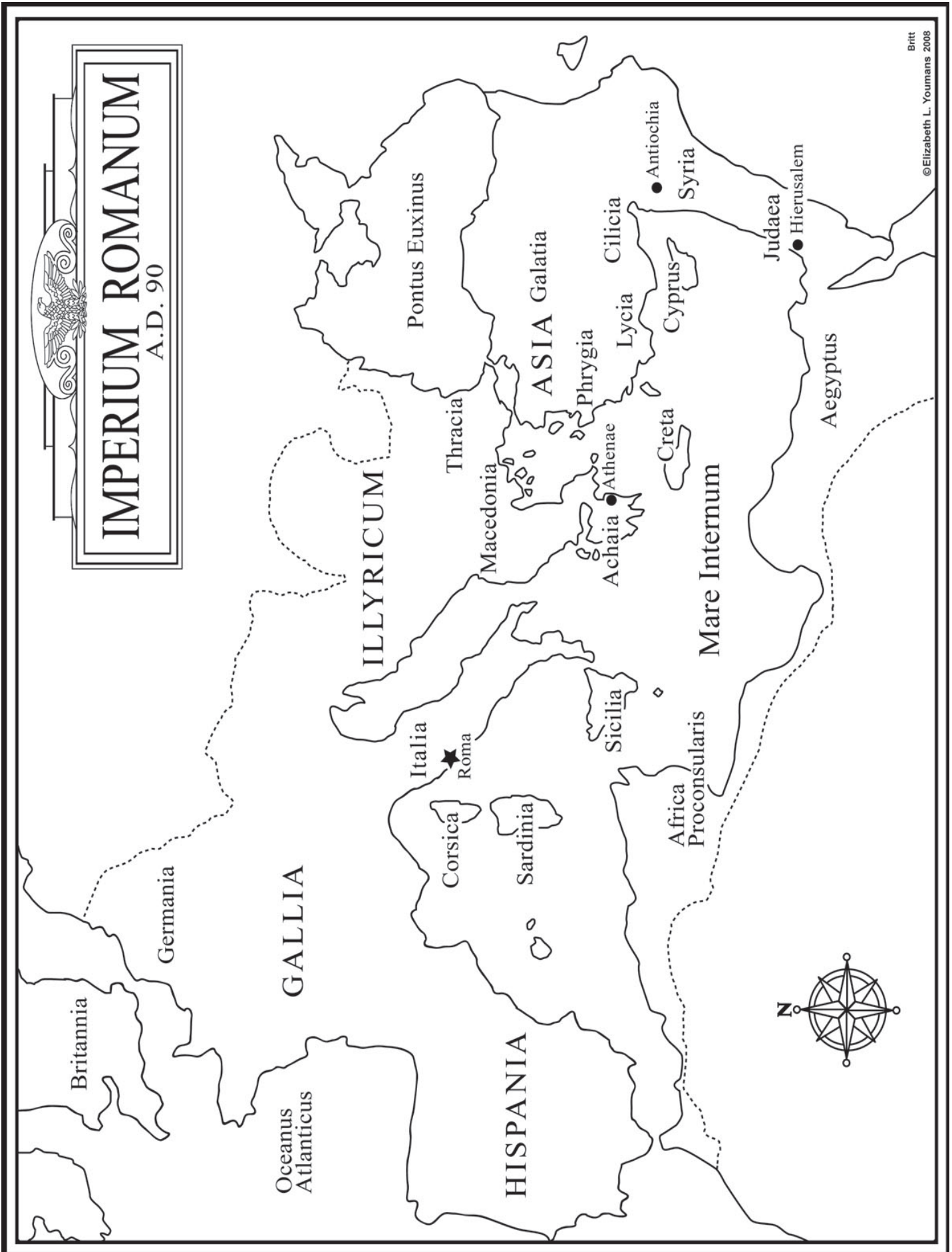
The Greeks and the Romans did not know the living God. They worshiped many pagan gods and goddesses, **(S-27)** for which they held elaborate festivals and built enormous temples. They believed that these many gods controlled their lives and different parts of the world such as their health, marriage, storms, and the seas. The Roman religion grew to include hundreds of other religions and developed into a complex mythology of imagined stories.

The Jews called the Romans and the Greeks “Gentiles.” In fact, the Jews considered all non-Jewish peoples on the earth at that time Gentiles. With the rise of Augustus Caesar as emperor, the Romans began to worship their emperors as gods. It was into this world of superstitions, rituals, and pagan religious traditions that the Living God sent forth His only Son. We will learn in this history unit, that the Christians of the first century **(S-28)** got into great trouble with the Roman authorities over this very issue, when they refused to call Caesar “lord” and worship him. They only worshiped Jesus Christ, the King of kings and Lord of lords and would not bow their knee to the pagan emperor.

This was the Gentile or pagan world awaiting Jesus Christ and the Gospel of the kingdom of God. **(S-29)** In our next lesson, we will learn more about the Jewish world awaiting their Messiah.

IMPERIUM ROMANUM

A.D. 90



Book of Acts 4

Time: 45 minutes

Reading: Acts Reading 4 and PowerPoint 4

Review: The world awaiting

Jesus Christ

Principle: There are consequences for disobedience.

Scripture: For he who

does wrong will receive the consequences of the wrong which he has done, and that without partiality (Colossians 3:25).

TEACHER



Vocabulary:

captivity (n.) The state of being a slave or imprisoned.

diaspora (n.) The scattering of a people from their homeland.

exile (n.) A person who has been expelled from their native land.

gymnasium (n.) A training center for competitors in public games; also a place for socializing and intellectual pursuits.

Hellenistic (adj.) Relating to or characteristic of the classical Greek civilization.

hippodrome (n.) A large stadium for horse races.

idol (n.) the likeness of an object of worship.

prefect (n.) A chief magistrate who governed a city or province in the absence of the king or emperor.

puppet kingdom, A kingdom whose government and affairs are directed by an outside authority that often imposes hardships on those governed.

sanctification (n.) The act of consecrating or of setting apart for a sacred purpose.

synagogue (n.) The place of worship and study for a Jewish congregation.



Preparation:

1. Read and reflect upon Acts Reading 4, "The World Awaiting the Messiah" and PowerPoint 4.
2. Study the teacher vocabulary words and the principle.
3. Gather resources: Acts Reading 4, PowerPoint 4, computer, Bible, and Student Vocabulary Card.



Teaching Plan:

1. Pray: *Dear Lord Jesus, pour out your Holy Spirit and illumine our minds that we may see your hand of providence in the early history of Christianity. Thank you for the faith of those who have gone before us. Grant us courage and zeal to be your witnesses in our generation, just as the apostles were in their generation. Use us to spread your Gospel Story for your glory. Amen.*

STUDENT



Key Word:

Messiah (n.) The promised and expected Deliverer and King of the Jews.



Reason Questions:

1. Describe what happened to both the Northern and Southern Kingdoms. What caused these events?
2. Where did the Jewish people go?
3. How did the Jews worship God when they no longer had a temple?
4. What influence did the Greek culture have on the Jews?
5. Who ruled Judea during the time of Jesus Christ in the Roman Empire?
6. Why didn't the Jewish religious leaders recognize and receive Jesus as their Messiah-King?



Notebook Record:

1. Record the following phrases on your "Contributions to the Spread of the Gospel" graphic organizer:

Roman Contributions:

- 1) Huge system of safe roads
- 2) Form of government based on written laws

Jewish Contributions:

- 1) Foundation of Christianity
 - 2) Old Testament Scriptures
 - 3) Synagogues located all over the empire
2. File your graphic organizer in your binder.

2. Distribute binders to the children.
3. Review how God prepares individuals and times ALL events to fulfill His purposes and the world awaiting Jesus Christ.
4. Pin the Student Vocabulary Card on the Treasure Chest bulletin board and define the word for the children.
Connect the vocabulary word to the new principle. Teach the principle and remind the children to listen for this principle during the reading.
5. Read the Reading, "The World Awaiting the Messiah," and show the Power Point 4.
6. Ask the Reason Questions and have children respond orally.
7. Write the notes on the chalkboard for the children to copy onto their graphic organizer.
8. Sing "Go Tell It on the Mountain."
9. Conclude with a short prayer and blessing for the children.

 **Singing:**

"Go Tell It on the Mountain"

The World Awaiting the Messiah

The Reading for Book of Acts Lesson 4

*The record of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham . . .
So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations;
from David to the deportation to Babylon, fourteen generations;
and from the deportation to Babylon to the Messiah, fourteen generations.*

— Matthew 1:1 & 17

We learned in our last two lessons that God uses individuals and nations for His Gospel purpose. We also learned that He times all events for His eternal plan so that “in the fullness of the time, God sent forth His Son’ from heaven to earth with a mission. **(S-2)** This great event occurred during the time when Rome ruled a vast, world empire comprised of many nations, cultures, and religions. **(S-3)** A very small portion of this empire was the land called Judea, the Roman name for Judah, the region where Jesus Christ was born. (*Locate Judea on the Roman Empire map.*) The people who lived in this area were called Jews.

We have been introduced to an overview of the history of the Jews and the land of Israel in our AMO study, *The Timeline of Promise*. God called a man named Abraham, **(S-4)** and promised him that if he followed after God and obeyed His commandments, that He would make him a great nation. God also said He would bless Abraham and bless all the nations of the earth through him.¹ Abraham was a man of strong faith. He obeyed the commands of the living God and followed after Him. After many centuries God fulfilled His promise to Abraham and birthed the nation Israel through Abraham’s descendants. God gave them His moral Law, the Ten Commandments, **(S-5)** and instructed their leader, Moses, in the way of sacrifice and sanctification. He provided the Promised Land for them to live in. He established a priesthood and gave Moses His design for building a place of worship. **(S-6)** God walked with the Israelites miraculously protecting and providing for all their needs and called them “the apple of His eye.”² They were to be a witness of God’s power and faithfulness and a light to the pagan nations.³

Often in their relationship with Almighty God, the Israelites sinned and turned from Him to worship pagan gods and idols. The Israelites asked for a king to govern them like other nations, which God permitted. **(S-7)** Eventually after the death of king Solomon, Israel split into two kingdoms—the

¹ Genesis 12:1-4; 17:1-8

² Zechariah 2:8

³ Isaiah 42:6, 49:6

Northern Kingdom, Israel, and the Southern Kingdom, Judah, where the capital city of Jerusalem was located.

The First Diaspora

After warning the Israelites about their sins over a long period of time and not seeing them repent, God removed His hand of protection from the Northern Kingdom in 722 B.C., **(S-8)** and His judgment came through the Assyrian army. The Northern Kingdom, comprised of ten tribes, was conquered, carried into captivity, and scattered among the nations. God continued to speak to the Southern Kingdom, Judah, about her sins, but she did not heed God's warnings either. In 586 B.C. God's judgment fell on Judah as the mighty Babylonian army burned Jerusalem, **(S-9)** destroyed their temple, and forced many of the Jews to march to Babylon as prisoners. This was the first of many diasporas in the long history of the Jewish people. **(S-10)** *Diaspora* is a Greek word that means the dispersion or scattering of a people from their homeland. God brought harsh consequences upon His people, who had failed to heed His warnings sent over many hundreds of years. Time after time they failed to turn their hearts back to worship Him in spirit and in truth and obey His commands.

The Synagogue Form of Worship

Many historians believe that it was during this Babylonian deportation, that the Jewish synagogue form of worship began. The word *synagogue* is a Greek word that means *gathering*. Because they were unable to worship in the Jerusalem temple, the exiled Jews gathered in small groups for public worship and fellowship. The longer their exile continued among the pagans, the greater became their need for prayer and a new form of worship. When the mighty Persian army conquered Babylon in 539 B.C., God moved on the heart of Cyrus, the new pagan king, to encourage all the exiles to return home and rebuild Jerusalem.⁴ **(S-11)** Many Jews returned home and brought the new system of synagogue worship with them, which had a strong element of teaching and remembering. We know from the writings of the New Testament that there were many synagogues built in Judea and the Roman Empire.⁵

Because of the forced diaspora, over the next 300 years the majority of the Jews, who lived at this time in history, lived outside their homeland, Judea. Many remained in Babylonia and other parts of the Tigris-Euphrates valley⁶. **(S-12)** Other Jews scattered throughout the whole Mediterranean basin

⁴ Ezra 1:1-8

⁵ Luke 4:14-16; Acts 15:21

⁶ Also known as the fertile crescent; the crossroads of three continents (Africa, Asia and Europe)

including the Nile River valley in Egypt, the Greek city-states, Syria, and other provinces in Asia Minor. (*Locate these areas on your map.*) During the growth of the Roman Empire, Jews moved into Europe to southern France, Spain, Italy, and the great capital of the Empire, the city of Rome. (*Locate these areas on the map.*) Here large Jewish communities began to grow, and the Jews met together not only for worship and study, but also to keep their Jewish traditions and culture alive. These gatherings were called *synagogues*. By the time of Jesus Christ, the city of Rome had ten synagogue congregations comprised of over 100,000 Jews. **(S-13)** The buildings in which they met had kitchens and dining halls for social fellowship and for the breaking of bread. Often a small building was attached to the synagogue called “the House of the Book,” where children were instructed in God’s Law. Strabo, a famous Greek geographer at the time, wrote, “You can’t travel anywhere in the civilized world without encountering a Jew.” In their own land, Jews continued to have synagogue meetings even when foreign kings tried to force them to worship their pagan gods. One of these kings, who ruled Judea before the birth of Christ, claimed that he himself was a god, just as Alexander the Great and the Roman emperors did.

The Septuagint

It was during the Hellenistic period (250 B.C.) that the Egyptian Jews in Alexandria had the Hebrew Scriptures translated into Greek. **(S-14)** This translation is called the Septuagint. Widely used among Hellenistic Jews, this Greek translation was produced because many Jews, who were scattered throughout the Empire, were losing their ability to read and write in the Hebrew language. The Septuagint was also a source of the Old Testament for early Christians, who spoke and read Greek, the common language of the Roman Empire. They relied on the Septuagint translation for most of their understanding of the Old Testament. The New Testament writers also quoted from the Septuagint. The Septuagint and the Greek language certainly had a great influence on the Jewish culture in the first century after the birth of Christ.

Tiny Judea endured great difficulties during the reign of the Greek Hellenists. Jewish priests from the family known as the Maccabees led a revolt against the Greek leader in Judea. They gained their freedom in 140 B.C and ruled their land once again. They met in homes and public rooms to study the Scriptures and seek the real meaning of their lives as God’s chosen people.

Judea Becomes Part of the Roman Empire

Meanwhile, the Roman Empire was growing larger and larger, as regions and nations were conquered by the powerful Roman army. **(S-15)** In 63 B.C. the Roman general, Pompey, invaded Judea, and

annexed her as a province in the Roman Empire. For Rome, this small territory was only important because it lay between Syria and Egypt, two of Rome's most valuable possessions. Soon Judea became a puppet kingdom. King Herod the Great (the king who decreed that all baby boys be killed after the birth of Jesus) was a puppet Jewish king, abiding by the wishes of the Roman leaders. Herod became known as a builder of cities. He built a city on the Mediterranean Sea and named it Caesarea after the Roman Emperor, Augustus Caesar. **(S-16)** He built himself a beautiful palace in Jerusalem and expanded Solomon's temple. He Hellenized the Jewish capital by building a gymnasium, a theater, a hippodrome, and an amphitheater, where he held chariot races and brutal gladiator contests. Herod also built fortresses, the most famous of which was Masada. Under Herod's rule, Judea became a police state in which the people lived in great fear. Against this background of power, most of the Jewish people were suppressed. This was the environment in which Jesus was raised as a boy and knew intimately.

The Romans used the office of the Jewish priesthood as a means of keeping control of the people. The Roman leaders also helped choose the high priest. In A.D. 6, after the death of king Herod the Great, the Roman emperor transformed Judea from a puppet kingdom into an imperial province. He sent a prefect and a small Roman army of 3,000 soldiers to govern this province. During Jesus' public ministry, the Roman prefect was Pontius Pilate. **(S-17)** Although Pilate was in charge, he did not govern the area directly, but relied on local religious leaders. Pilate lived in Caesarea, a two-day march from Jerusalem. **(S-18)** He and his soldiers came to Jerusalem only to ensure peace during the Jewish festivals when large crowds could spark unrest or uprisings. On a day-to-day basis, the high priest governed Jerusalem. Assisted by a council of 70 religious leaders called the Sanhedrin, he had the difficult task of mediating between the distant Roman prefect and the local Jews, who were hostile toward pagans and wanted to be free of Gentile domination. **(S-19)** The high priest's political responsibilities were to maintain order and see that taxes and tribute were paid to Rome. Caiaphas, the high priest during Jesus' ministry, held the office longer than anyone else during the Roman period, indicating that the Romans found him a reliable leader. Caiaphas and Pontius Pilate were in power together for ten years and ruled successfully on behalf of the Roman Empire.

For many centuries, the Jews had been looking for their promised Messiah-King, about whom their prophets⁷ had foretold. Having been conquered and suppressed by a number of pagan kings, generals, and now an emperor, they desired a Jewish, political king who would set them free from all foreign

⁷ Isaiah 9:6-9; Isaiah chapter 53; Daniel 9:25,26; Matthew 2:4; John 1:41

domination and rule and return them to their former glory. This was the Jewish world awaiting their Messiah when God sent forth His only Son to be the King of the Jews.⁸ **(S-20)**

Jesus Christ was born a Jew in Bethlehem of Judea. His name “Jesus” is a Greek word translated from the Hebrew word “Jeshua” (Joshua) meaning “the Lord is salvation.” “Christ” is a Greek word translated from the Hebrew word “Meshiah” (Messiah) meaning “anointed one.” Matthew, the Jewish Gospel writer, called Him “the Son of David,” a popular Messianic title at the time, and “the Son of Abraham.”⁹ Jesus was the Promised One,¹⁰ through whom God would bless Abraham’s seed and all the nations of the earth. His mission on earth was to pay the price of the sin of all mankind by shedding His blood on the cross, the perfect sacrifice for the remission of sin. It is very difficult for us to comprehend His mission, but it was God’s divine plan from eternity past to restore sinful man into right relationship with Himself through His only Son. It was even more difficult for the Jewish religious leaders to accept that Jesus was their promised Messiah. The New Testament says that “Jesus became a stumbling block to the Jews”¹¹ because they believed their righteousness came from serving the Law by works. They could not understand receiving God’s righteousness by faith in Jesus.

We have learned through our AMO Gospel of Luke study of the life and ministry of Jesus Christ, that Jesus was rejected as the Messiah-King by the Jewish religious leaders of His day. The high priest, Caiaphas, along with his chief priests and Pharisees were spiritually blind to the truth that Jesus is the Son of God, the promised Savior and Redeemer of the Jewish Scriptures. Because of the miracles they saw Him perform, the claims He made about being the Son of God, and the many Jews who followed Him, they became afraid and sought to kill Him on many occasions.¹² **(S-21)** The Gospels tell us that Jesus died a barbaric, painful death on a cross, was buried, and the third day arose from the dead. This is where we will begin our next lesson, as we find out what it means to be a witness for Jesus Christ. **(S-22)**

In these first three lessons, we have seen the hand of God moving through time for His eternal, Gospel plan. We have learned that God commissions believers as well as unbelievers and pagan nations for His purposes. We have heard how He orchestrates events and times them precisely to fulfill His plan. And we’re going to learn, as we continue our providential history lessons, how God

⁸ Luke 23:3

⁹ Matthew 1:1

¹⁰ Acts 13:34; Galatians 3:16

¹¹ Romans 9:32; 1 Corinthians 1:21-27: *For indeed Jews ask for signs, and Greeks search for wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block, and to Gentiles foolishness.*

¹² Luke 22:2

will birth Christianity through His Son, Jesus Christ, and employ the unique character and culture of the Greeks, Romans and Jews to help Jesus' apostles and followers be His witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria, and the uttermost part of the world.

Book of Acts 5

Time: 45 minutes **Reading:** Acts Reading 5 and Acts 1:1-14 **Review:** The world awaiting the Messiah **Principle:** Believers in Jesus Christ are called by God to be His witnesses. **Scripture:** You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you; and you shall be My witnesses . . . (Acts 1:8).

TEACHER

Vocabulary:

apostle (n.) [Gr. *apostolos*, to send away.] 1) One sent on a mission. 2) A disciple chosen and commissioned by Christ to preach the Gospel.

authority (n.) The legal power or right to command or to act.

baptize (v.) To dip, pour, immerse, or totally submerge a person or an object into a liquid.

kingdom of God, The rule or reign of God. (The kingdom of God is not a territory, but a spiritual dominion. It is entered by spiritual rebirth (John 3:5) and the defeat of Satan and the kingdom of darkness. The kingdom of God is both present, “The kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed; nor will they say, ‘Look, here it is!’ or ‘There it is!’ For behold, the kingdom of God is in your midst” (Luke 17:20-21) and also future as we pray, “Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven” (Mt 6:10).

power (n.) 1) Miraculous force, strength or energy. 2) The faculty of moving or producing a change in something.

witness (n.) The Greek words used in the New Testament are *martus*, from which the word martyr originates, and *marturia*, which means evidence given, testimony, report, and witness. By association, the first century Christian’s testimony or witness often brought persecution and even death.

Preparation:

1. Read and reflect upon Acts Reading 5, the Lesson Background notes, and the assigned reading from the book of Acts. Study the teacher vocabulary words and the principle.
2. Gather resources: Bible, Acts Reading 5, Student Vocabulary Card, “Portrait of the Holy Spirit” graphic organizer, coloring page 1, “You shall be My witnesses,” and bookmarks.

Lesson Background:

Remember, the Lesson Background is written for the edification of the teacher and not meant to be read to the children. It is provided to help the teacher with biblical concepts and doctrine, so that (s)he may answer questions about the doctrine and be more confident to reason with the children.

STUDENT

Key Word:

witness (n.) One who speaks from personal experience about an event or individual.

? Reason Questions:

1. Describe the setting of this history lesson.
2. What is the Great Commission?
3. What were Jesus’ last words to His apostles?
4. How did Dr. Luke spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ?
5. What is a witness?
6. In what way are you a witness? How can you share the Gospel of Christ with others?

Notebook Record:

1. Color your coloring page with your colored pencils.
2. Record these phrases on your “Portrait of the Holy Spirit” graphic organizer:
 - Convicts us of sin
 - Reveals Jesus Christ to us
 - Regenerates and indwells us
3. File in your binder.

Singing:

“Go Tell It on the Mountain”

1. Our primary “history book” is the book of Acts in the New Testament. Acts was written by Dr. Luke in A.D. 61. Luke was the friend and traveling companion of the apostle Paul. A biographic sketch is included with Acts Reading 5. Many scholars think he wrote it as a defense for the apostle Paul while Paul was under house arrest by the Romans and awaiting his trial. Acts ends abruptly before Paul’s trial, and there is no account in this writing of Paul’s martyrdom or the burning of Rome in A.D. 64.
2. In the first chapter of Acts, the apostles asked Jesus if He was planning to restore the kingdom to Israel. (1:6) The kingdom to which they referred is the Messianic, Davidic kingdom of which Christ had spoken in Matthew 24:36. There are many prophecies in the Old Testament about this kingdom that say the Messiah will rule and reign forever. Christ replied, “It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth” (1:7, 8). This is the key verse of the whole book of Acts. It contains:
 - What: God’s divine plan for the spread of the Gospel
 - Who: The Holy Spirit (the agent by which His plan would be carried out) working through believers
 - Where: All the earth
 - Why: To exalt Jesus as God and lead others to a saving knowledge of Him
3. “Two men in white clothing” (1:10) are angelic beings or messengers from God.
4. “Will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven” (1:11) tells us the way Jesus will return again to earth. He will descend from Heaven to the Mount of Olives for all to see!
5. NOTE: The history of Judas’s suicide at the end of this chapter (1:16-20) has been omitted from the reading for children. If this unit is being used for older youth and adults, then we suggest that you read the whole chapter.
The apostles’ attempt to replace Judas with another man was done by lottery. God would soon appoint and anoint Paul for this role.

Teaching Plan:

1. Pray: *Dear Lord Jesus, pour out your Holy Spirit and illumine our minds that we may see your hand of providence in the early history of Christianity. Thank you for the faith of those who have gone before us. Give us courage and zeal to be your witnesses in our generation, just as the apostles were in theirs. Use us to spread your Gospel Story for your glory. Amen.*

2. Distribute binders to the children.
3. Review “The World Awaiting the Messiah” and the principle that there are consequences for God’s people to pay when they are disobedient.
4. Pin the Student Vocabulary Card on the Treasure Chest bulletin board and define the word for the children.
5. Connect the vocabulary word to the new principle. Teach the principle and remind the children to listen for this principle during the reading.

Distribute bookmarks to the children.

The word “witness” in the New Testament is the Greek word “*marturia*,” which means “witness, testimony, report or evidence given.” It is where the English word *martyr* originates, as well. A martyr is a true and faithful witness or testimony to Christ, one who is totally committed to Him, even if he must give his life as Jesus did. We will learn more about martyrs when we meet young Stephen in chapter 7 of Acts.

Jesus Christ is the faithful and true witness who presented truth to the world:

Jesus said to them, “Even if I bear witness of Myself, My witness is true; for I know where I came from, and where I am going; but you do not know where I come from, or where I am going” (John 8:14).

Pilate, therefore, said to Him, “So You are a king?” Jesus answered, “You say correctly that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to bear witness to the truth.

Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice” (John 18:37).

. . . and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the first-born of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. . . (Rev 1:5).

Jesus is the faithful and true witness to truth, because He is truth! When He was teaching His disciples He said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.” (John 14:6)

In the first chapter of Acts, Jesus (the true witness of God) proclaims to His disciples that the Holy Spirit will soon come upon them and empower them to be His witnesses in Jerusalem, in Judea and Samaria, and even in the remotest places on the earth.

6. Distribute coloring page 1 to the children to color while you’re reading. Point out the city of Jerusalem.
7. Read Acts Reading 5 and Acts 1:1-14.
8. Ask the Reason Questions and have children respond orally.
9. Write the notes on the chalkboard and have the children copy onto their “Portrait of the Holy Spirit” graphic organizer.
10. Sing “Go Tell It on the Mountain.”
11. Conclude with a short prayer and blessing for the children.

The Great Commission

The Reading for the book of Acts Lesson 5

*You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you;
and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem,
and in all Judea and Samaria,
and even to the remotest part of the earth.*

- Acts 1:8

Our first four lessons have painted the diverse background setting for our study about the birth of Christianity and its spread throughout the ancient Roman Empire. Our last lesson gave us a taste of Jewish culture and life in first century Judea. We learned what life was like as a Jew in the province of Judea, a puppet kingdom in the Roman Empire, and the hope of those awaiting their Messiah.

Today we're going to enter the city of Jerusalem with the resurrected Christ as He instructs His apostles for the last time. As we look back 2,000 years in history, we now understand that this was the most incredible time in all human history. Jesus, whom the Romans had brutally crucified on a cross, was miraculously raised from the dead by the power of the Holy Spirit, and returned to visit hundreds of His disciples. Nothing like this had ever taken place in history before God sent His Son to earth or since Jesus returned to Heaven. Some of you may be thinking, "How do we know these things really happened?" We know they occurred because those who knew Jesus witnessed the events and wrote down what they saw and heard. These writings are now part of the New Testament, God's Holy Word. God's Word is truth inspired by the Holy Spirit.

Our Textbook, the Acts of the Apostles, and Its Author

We are going to use the book of Acts, one of the New Testament books, as our history text for this providential history study. The writer of Acts is Dr. Luke, the beloved evangelist and friend of the apostle Paul. Luke was the first Christian historian and the only Gentile writer in the whole Bible. His history begins in his Gospel, which relates the life and ministry of Jesus Christ, the Son of Man. His account continues in The Acts of the Apostles. Acts begins with the events in Jerusalem immediately following the resurrection of Jesus and tells the story of the ministry of the apostles, who were empowered and guided by the Holy Spirit to preach the Gospel throughout the Roman Empire. The Gospel of Luke and the book of Acts are companion history books. In fact, Luke wrote more pages in the New Testament than any other writer. Based on the high literary standard of his writings, Bible scholars agree that Luke was a well-educated man. Besides being a scientist and a doctor, tradition tells us that he was also an artist and a poet.

Like Paul, Luke was not an eyewitness of the life of Jesus Christ. He wrote in his Gospel that he “investigated everything about the life of Jesus from the beginning” and recorded it so future generations would know “the exact truth.”¹ He interviewed eyewitnesses and took careful notes during his long journeys with Paul, as well. While detained in Caesarea for two years, Luke put his history of Christianity together. Then, during Paul's first imprisonment at Rome, which extended over several years, Luke completed writing his two-volume history.

Luke may have been a native of Antioch, Syria, but little is known about his life. Some scholars think he studied medicine at the University of Tarsus, where he could easily have met and become friends of Paul, who was born and raised in Tarsus. Luke was highly influenced by the apostle Paul, who was his close friend and fellow traveler. Luke answered the Macedonian call² with Paul and was in charge of the work in Philippi for six years. He went with Paul to Rome, when Paul was imprisoned and martyred.³ Luke may have died in Boeotia, [Greece] at the age of eighty-four, full of the Holy Spirit.⁴

Luke addressed both his Gospel and the book of Acts to *Theophilus*, whose name literally means “one who loves God.” It can be said that the Gospel of Luke and the book of Acts are addressed to all of us, as well, for we also are those who love God.

The Background of Our Reading

It is the year A.D. 30 and the setting is the Jewish capital city of Jerusalem. The Romans called this region “Palestine.” Palestine was an insignificant province in the eastern Roman Empire. It included the former regions of Israel called Galilee, Judea, and Samaria. The culture was highly influenced by Greek ideas, customs, and language, but was dominated by Roman law, the military, and the Roman’s love of sports and games.

At this incredible time in history, Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, had just been crucified on a cross outside Jerusalem at a place called Golgotha. This cruel and painful way of killing criminals was first practiced by the Roman army. Even though Jesus was not found guilty as a criminal by Jewish king Herod or the Roman prefect, Pontius Pilate, the religious Jewish leaders insisted upon his death. We know from the Gospel accounts that after Jesus died, His body was buried in a borrowed tomb that evening. If you remember the amazing details, His tomb was empty because He arose from the dead on the third day by the power of the Holy Spirit.

¹ Luke 1:3, 4

² Acts 16:9, 10

³ 2 Timothy 4:11

⁴ From the writings of historian Papias, bishop of Hierapolis in Phrygia, a century after the time of Jesus

For forty days after His resurrection,⁵ Jesus appeared alive in His resurrection body to hundreds of His disciples. They walked with Him, dined with Him, and listened to His teachings! On a mountain in Galilee overlooking the peaceful Sea of Galilee, Jesus appeared to them and said, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Today, we call this commandment “the Great Commission.” From eternity past, God had all nations in His heart and a plan to take the “Good News” of Jesus Christ to all peoples. Each one of us who knows and believes that Jesus is the Son of God has a calling to tell the Good News to others, as well.

Read Acts 1:1-14

The Mount of Olives Mandate

On another mountain called Olivet, 120 miles south of Galilee, Jesus gathered His eleven apostles together for the last time. “You shall be My witnesses,” He said, and then commanded them not to leave the city, but to wait for the gift of the Holy Spirit that the Father had promised them. These men were all eyewitnesses of His ministry and miracles, His crucifixion and resurrection. They were witnesses that He had returned to them alive. As they sat on top of the Mount of Olives looking down over the city of Jerusalem with Herod’s temple and his mighty fortresses glistening in the sun, they must have wondered how they would find the courage to testify of these miraculous events. Jesus, knowing their fears, told them they would receive divine power when the Holy Spirit came upon them so they could be His witnesses. Little did they know that Jesus was soon to send them to their Jewish brothers and sisters who were dispersed all over the Roman Empire, but also to the Gentile nations.⁶ They would soon be sharing His Good News to all who would listen!

When Jesus was finished speaking, a cloud received Him in the air. It must have seemed like a dream to the apostles, because He disappeared from their sight and ascended into Heaven to take His place of authority at the right hand of His Heavenly Father.

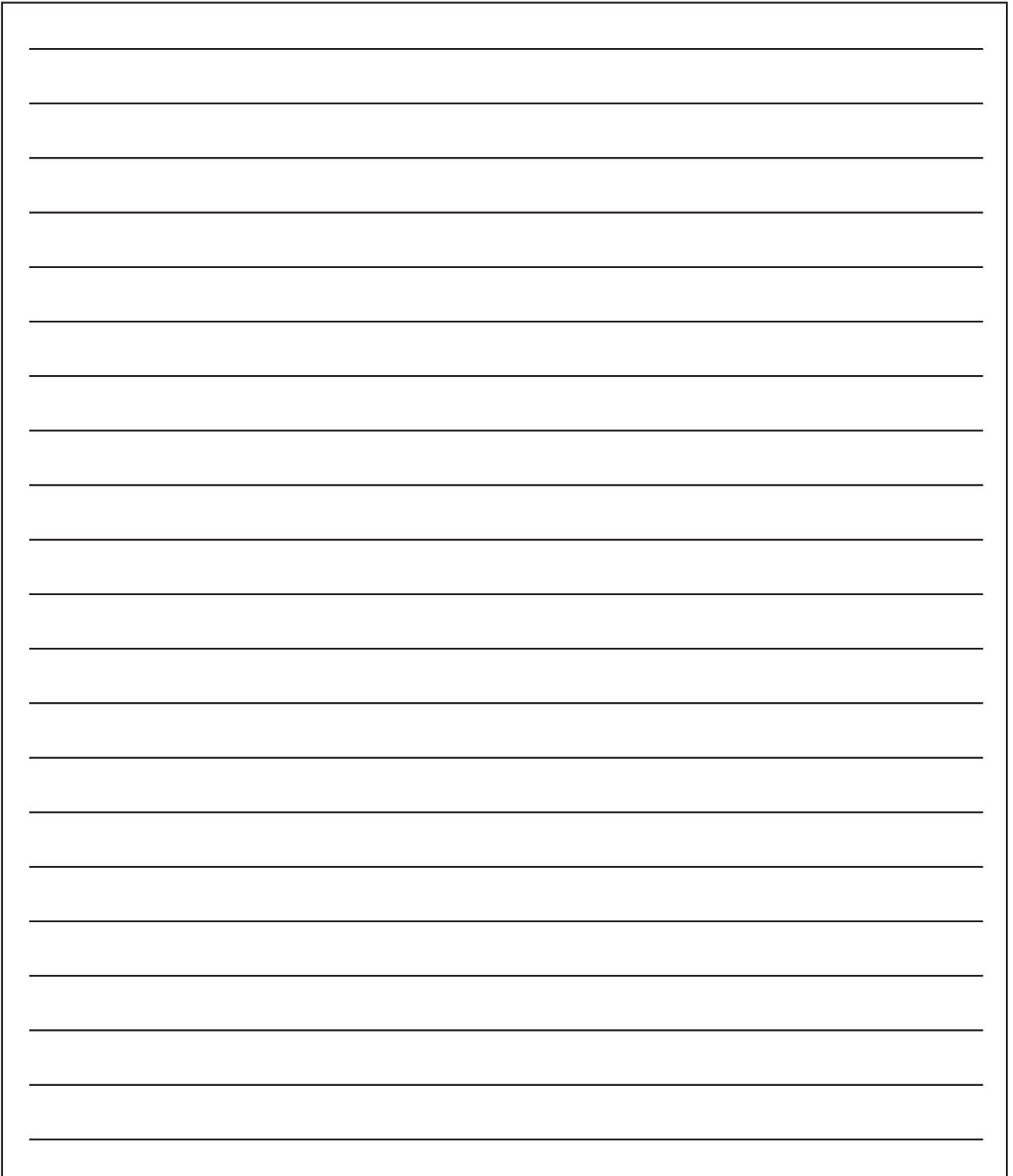
In our next lesson, we will read about the outpouring of God’s Spirit upon the apostles and disciples. Jesus had promised them He would never leave them and that they would receive power to be His witnesses. God would soon fulfill that promise because, as we have come to know, God is a Promise Keeper.

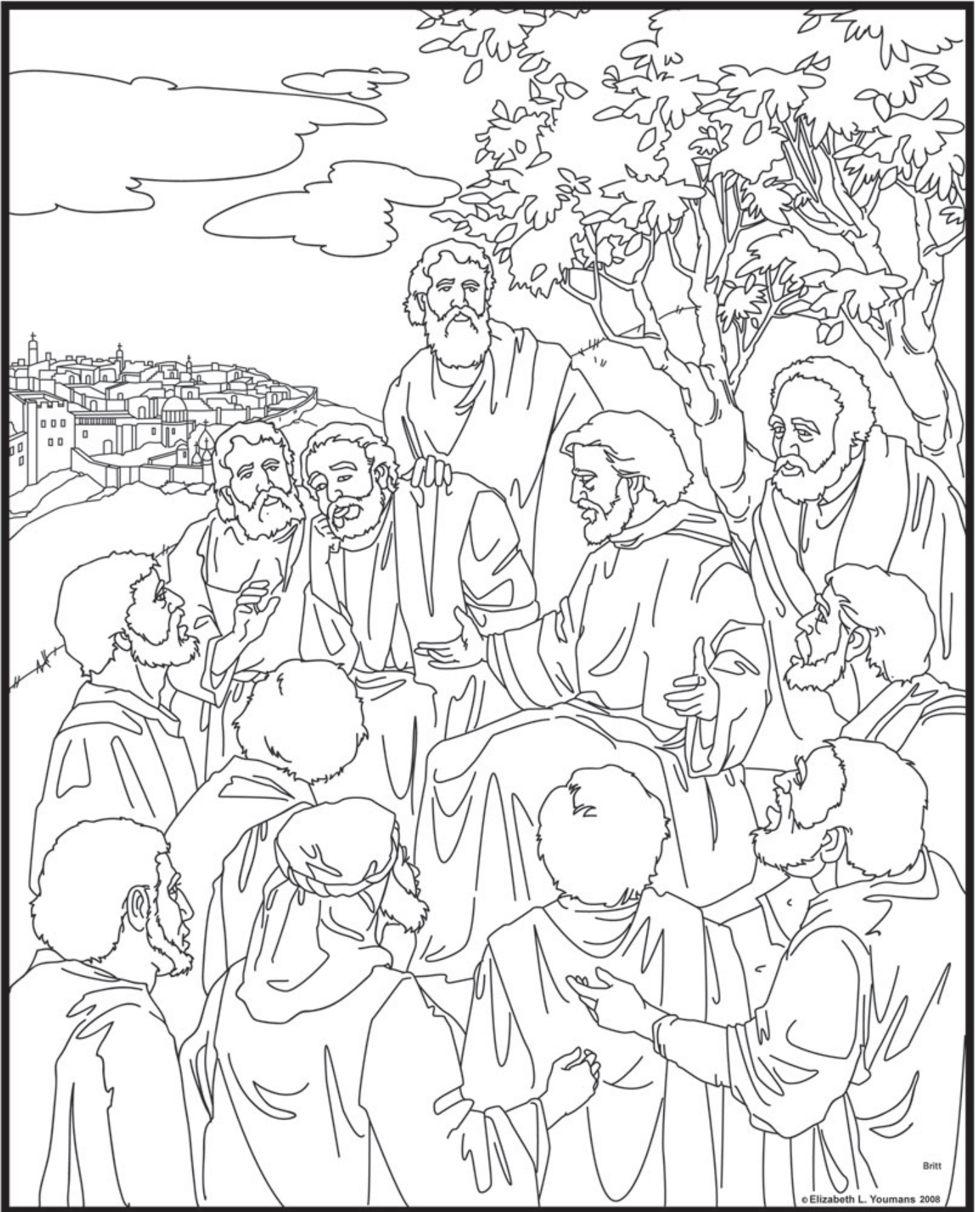
⁵ Acts 1:3

⁶ Acts 1:4, 8

Portrait of the Holy Spirit

I will pour out My Spirit on all mankind.” — Joel 2:28

A large rectangular box with a thin black border, containing 20 horizontal lines for writing. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the box, leaving a small margin from the right edge.



“You shall receive power and you shall be My witnesses.”

Book of Acts 6

Time: 45 minutes **Reading:** Acts 2:1-41 **Review:** Believers in Jesus Christ are called by God to be His witnesses. **Principle:** It is the presence of the Holy Spirit within the believer that empowers him to testify of Christ. **Scripture:** You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses (Acts 1:8).

TEACHER

Vocabulary:

- bewilder** (v.) To be a mystery or cause to be confused.
- exhort** (v.) To encourage another by words of advice.
- foreknowledge** (n.) Knowledge of something before it happens.
- Hades** (n.) The world of the dead.
- other tongues**, Actual languages spoken, but unknown to the speaker.
- prophecy** (v.) To speak under divine inspiration.
- repent** (v.) To think differently; to change one's mind, especially in response to the truth.
- third hour of the day**, Nine o'clock in the morning.
- vision** (n.) A divinely inspired appearance; the formation of a mental image of something that is not perceived as real and is not present to the senses.
- wonder** (v.) To have a feeling of awe or admiration; to marvel; to be filled with curiosity.
- wonder** (n.) 1) A revelation. 2) An emotion excited by the sight or thought of something new, unusual, extraordinary, or not well understood.

Preparation:

1. Read and reflect upon the assigned reading. Study the teacher vocabulary words, principle and the background materials.
2. Gather resources: Bible, Student Vocabulary Card, and coloring page 2, "Peter Preaching on the day of Pentecost."

Lesson Background:

Remember, the Lesson Background is written for the edification of the teacher and not meant to be read to the children. It is provided to help the teacher with biblical concepts and doctrine, so that (s)he may answer questions about the doctrine and be more confident to reason with the children.

1. Our reading from Acts takes place in the upper room of someone's home, where 120 of Jesus' disciples, including His

STUDENT

Key Word:

testify (v.) To make a solemn declaration; to provide evidence.

Reason Questions:

1. Who sent the gift of the Holy Spirit to the apostles and disciples?
2. Describe the effect of the baptism of the Holy Spirit on Jesus' apostles.
3. How did the visitors in Jerusalem respond? How did Peter respond?
4. What was the historic consequence of Peter's sermon?
5. Is Jesus still pouring out His Spirit on believers today?

Notebook Record:

1. Color your coloring page with your colored pencils.
2. Record these phrases on your "Portrait of the Holy Spirit" graphic organizer:
 - Anoints and empowers us
 - Inspires and teaches us
 - Comforts and directs us
3. Draw a large flame in the center of your graphic organizer and color it red and yellow.
4. File your papers in your binder.

Singing:

"Spirit of the Living God"

mother, were praying and seeking God for the promised gift of the Holy Spirit. Luke recorded the glorious arrival of the Holy Spirit. Throughout history, the Holy Spirit has had a witness to the presence of the living Christ in every generation, but the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon Jesus' apostles and disciples was a historic event unlike any other in history, one that would "turn the world upside down!" (Acts 17:6)

2. Luke described the invisible presence of the Holy Spirit as "the blowing of a violent wind." Jesus had taught them that, "the wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit." (John 3:8) Ezekiel wrote that the dry bones of Israel are made alive by the wind or breath of the Spirit. (Ezek 37)

Likewise, a visible sign of the gift of the Holy Spirit was present in the tongues of fire, which confirmed the disciples' faith and convinced others. John the Baptist had already prophesied that "one coming after me will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire." (Mt 3:11) The Holy Spirit, like fire, melts the cold heart, separates and burns up impurities, and kindles godly affection and praise in the soul.

The audible sign was that of unknown tongues, as the apostles and disciples found themselves speaking in divers tongues which the thousands of foreigners, who were in Jerusalem for the Feast of Pentecost, could understand.

3. The baptism of the Holy Spirit, about which Jesus had just told His apostles on the Mt of Olives, anointed them with a fiery zeal. It empowered and emboldened each one of them. Where there had been fear, there was now courage. Where there had been unbelief, there was now strong conviction. Where there had been indecisiveness, there was now a fiery passion. Fearful Peter, who had denied Jesus three times before His crucifixion, boldly preached the Gospel to thousands of Jews on the day of Pentecost, as the Holy Spirit convicted thousands to repent of their sin and believe.

Just as with Peter, it is the role of the believer to witness and testify of the works of Jesus Christ. But only the Holy Spirit is able to convict of sin and regenerate the spirit.

They were also endowed with the supernatural gifts of the Holy Spirit. (1 Cor 12:4-11) The apostles will now embrace the earthly ministry of Jesus, who said of Himself: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, because He anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are downtrodden, to proclaim the favorable year of the Lord" (Luke 4:18-21).

We will learn that miracles and supernatural signs followed the apostles just as they did Jesus. Jesus had told them that "he who believes in Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do, because I go to the

The Jewish Feast of Pentecost

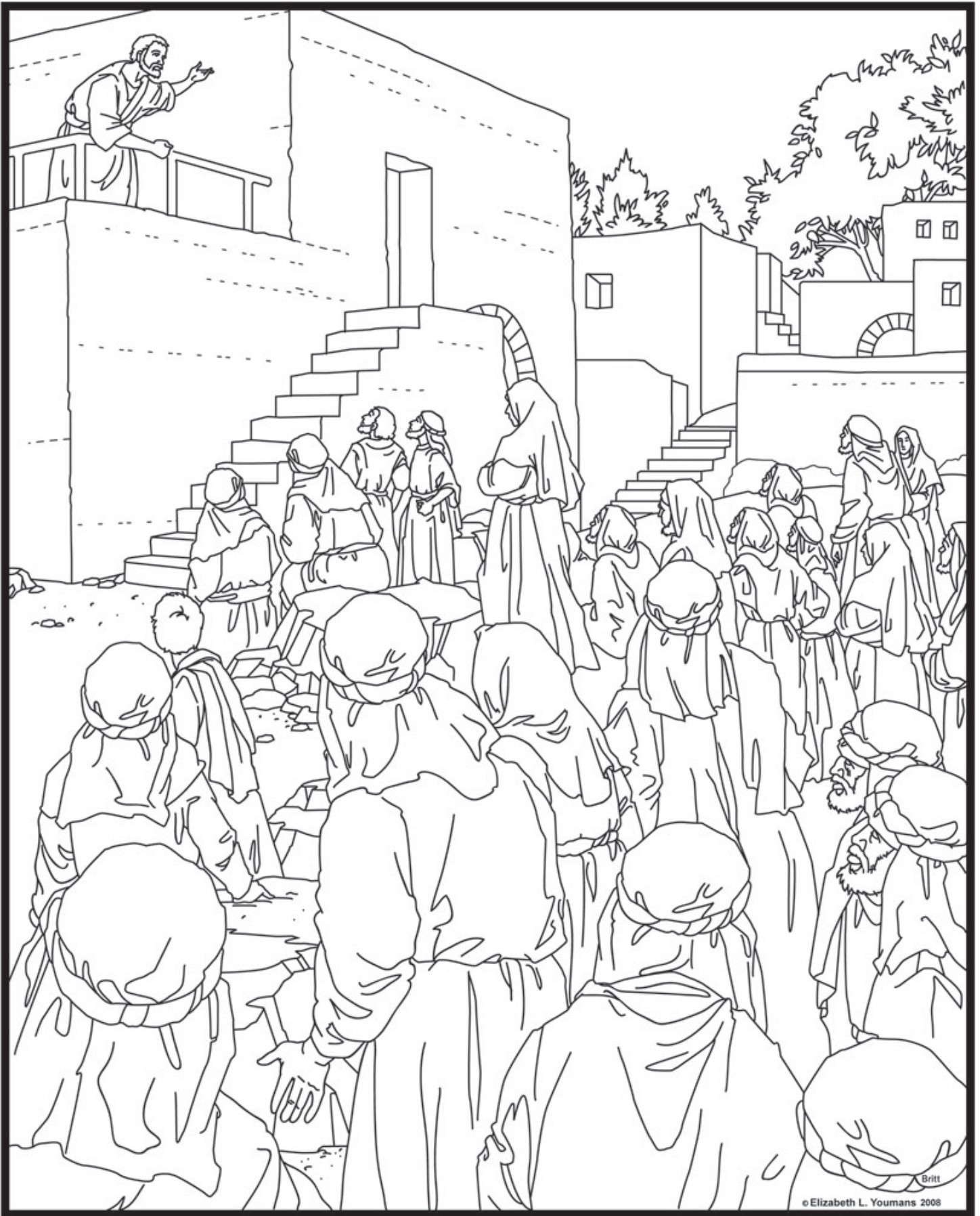
Pentecost is the fourth of the annual feasts that Jews have celebrated since the days of Moses. It follows the feasts of Passover, Unleavened Bread, and Firstfruits. Pentecost celebrates the wheat harvest and comes 50 days after Firstfruits. It is also associated with the giving of the Law on Mt. Sinai. All four of these festivals foreshadowed New Testament events that were fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

- Passover: Jesus became the final Passover Lamb (John 1:29; 1 Cor 5:7-8; Rev 13:8), whose shed blood atones for the sin of the world. It is also symbolic of the cup in the Lord's Supper, which Jesus celebrated as a memorial with His apostles the night before He was crucified. He took the cup of wine saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood . . ." (1 Cor 11:23-26; John 6:53-54)
- Feast of Unleavened Bread: Unleavened bread was eaten at the first Passover meal because the Israelites did not have time to let dough with yeast in it rise. Yeast or leaven in the Bible is symbolic of sin. Unleavened bread is symbolic of that without sin, Jesus Christ. At the Lord's Supper, Jesus took the bread and broke it saying, "This is My body which is for you . . ." (1 Cor 11:23-26)
- Feast of Firstfruits: This feast took place three days after Passover, when the priest waved the young barley plant leaf signifying there would soon be a harvest. It is the same day that Christ was raised from the dead, the First Fruit of all who will rise from the dead. (1 Cor 15:20-23)
- Pentecost: This feast celebrated the wheat harvest. It foreshadowed the great harvest that occurred on the day of Pentecost when over 3,000 came to Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit. The number of believers increased to a large community when the Holy Spirit was poured out on Jesus' apostles. (Acts 2:37-41)

Father.” (John 14:12) These “greater works” are not possible without the indwelling and anointing of the Holy Spirit.

Teaching Plan:

1. Pray: *Dear Lord Jesus, pour out your Holy Spirit and illumine our minds that we may see your hand of providence in the early history of Christianity. Thank you for the faith of those who have gone before us. Give us courage and zeal to be your witnesses in our generation, just as the apostles were in theirs. Use us to spread your Gospel Story for your glory. Amen.*
2. Distribute binders to the children.
3. Review the precept that Jesus calls His disciples to be His witnesses in the world.
4. Pin the Student Vocabulary Card on the Treasure Chest bulletin board and define the word for the children.
Connect the vocabulary word to the new principle. Teach the principle and remind the children to listen for this principle during the reading.
5. Distribute coloring page 2 to the children to color while you’re reading the story.
6. Read Acts, chapter 2:1-41 for this lesson.
7. Teach the children about the Jewish Feast of Pentecost and how it foreshadowed the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and the great harvest of people into the kingdom of God.
8. Ask the Reason Questions and have children respond orally.
9. Write notes on the chalkboard and have the children copy onto their graphic organizer “Portrait of the Holy Spirit.” Demonstrate how to draw and color a large flame on the graphic organizer.
10. Teach this simple devotional song to the children.
“Spirit of the Living God”
Words and music can be found here:
<http://www.fellowshipinhislove.com/spiritofthelivinggod.html>
11. Conclude with a short prayer and blessing for the children.



The apostle Peter preaching on the day of Pentecost.

Book of Acts 7

Time: 45 minutes **Reading:** Acts 2:42-47; Acts Reading 7 **Review:** Outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Day of Pentecost

Principle: The greatest witness for Jesus is agape love for one another.

Scripture: A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you . . .

By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another (John 13:34, 35).

TEACHER

Vocabulary:

agape meal, [*agape*, Greek, *divine love*] Sometimes called the love feast; A common meal shared by believers that ended with partaking the Lord's Supper (Communion, Eucharist). It was celebrated using the bread and cup already on the table to remember the Body of the Risen One.

atrium (n.) The central room in a Roman house, which was a rectangular, open-air space around which the house is built.

awe (n.) Fear mingled with admiration or reverence.

breaking bread, The celebration of the Lord's Supper; other names are Communion and Eucharist.

colonnade (n.) A structure composed of a series of arches supported by columns.

devote (v.) To give entirely to a specific person or purpose.

fellowship (n.) Companionship of people who share common experiences and beliefs.

Judaism (n.) The religious doctrines and rites of the Jews having its spiritual and ethical principles embodied chiefly in the Torah and in the Talmud.

liturgy (n.) A prescribed format for public worship which believers do to praise and worship God.

proselyte (n.) A new convert, especially a Gentile converted to Judaism.

Preparation:

1. Read and reflect upon the assigned readings. Study the teacher vocabulary words, principle and the background materials.
2. Gather resources: Bible, Acts Reading 7, Student Vocabulary Card, "One Another's" graphic organizers, and coloring page 3, "The Agape Meal."

Lesson Background:

1. In our Bible reading, Luke describes the effect the Holy Spirit had on Jesus' disciples and new converts. They were eager to learn more about Christ from the apostles' teachings. They

STUDENT

Key Word:

agape (n.) Divine or selfless love.

Reason Questions:

1. Describe agape love. What did the agape meal celebrate?
2. Where and how did the early Christians worship?
3. In what ways is worship in your church the same as the early Christians? In what ways is it different?
4. Why is love for others a great witness for Jesus Christ?
5. Tell how you can demonstrate love for others, especially the unlovable?

Notebook Record:

1. Color your coloring page with your colored pencils.
2. Record the following phrases on your "One Another's" graphic organizer:
 - 1) Love one another (John 13:34, 35)
 - 2) Fellowship with one another (1 John 1:7)
 - 3) Be hospitable to one another (1 Peter 4:9)

Singing:

"Spirit of the Living God"

"Go Tell It on the Mountain"

wanted to spend as much time as they could praising and worshiping Jesus and in fellowship with each other. They broke bread together, shared what they had with one another so that no one had need, and they prayed for one another's burdens.

In short, they loved one another proving true the words of Christ in John 13:34-35, "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." Because they reflected the agape or divine love of God, others were attracted by this love and many were saved.

2. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit not only transformed the personal lives of individual apostles and disciples, it created a new community of shared life and work and new fellowship in the great commission of proclaiming the Gospel. This new community was of great importance in the plan of God. For, called into being by the Spirit, Christian fellowship was also to be His witness and His agent for spreading the Gospel in the world. Life in the Christian church consisted of the Spirit, community, and witness working together.



Teaching Plan:

1. Pray: *Dear Lord Jesus, pour out your Holy Spirit and illumine our minds that we may see your hand of providence in the early history of Christianity. Thank you for the faith of those who have gone before us. Give us courage and zeal to be your witnesses in our generation, just as the apostles were in theirs. Use us to spread your Gospel Story for your glory. Amen.*
2. Distribute binders to the children.
3. Review the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost.
4. Pin the Student Vocabulary Card on the Treasure Chest bulletin board and define the word for the children.
Connect the vocabulary word to the new principle. Teach the principle and remind the children to listen for this principle during the reading.
5. Distribute coloring page 3 to the children to color while you're reading the story.
6. Read Acts 2:42-47 and then Acts Reading 7 for this lesson.
7. Ask the Reason Questions and have children respond orally.
8. Distribute graphic organizers and write the "One Anothers" on the chalkboard for the children to copy.
Discuss where in the story each "one another" is manifested.
9. Sing your medley of songs.
10. Conclude with a short prayer and blessing for the children.

NOTE TO THE TEACHER:

Remember, the Lesson Background is written for the edification of the teacher and not meant to be read to the children. It is provided to help the teacher with biblical concepts and doctrine, so that (s)he may answer questions about the doctrine and be more confident to reason with the children.

First Century Christian Fellowship and Worship

The Reading for the book of Acts Lesson 7



Love Feast, Early Christian Catacomb Painting

*And they were continually devoting themselves
to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship,
to the breaking of bread and to prayer.*

— Acts 2:42

Our short reading in the book of Acts today is a summary of early Christian worship and fellowship. Luke described the activities of Jesus' apostles and disciples after the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and the conversion of many thousands of Jews, who responded to Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost. The communion with Christ that began with twelve apostles, spread to 120 of His disciples. These men and women, who were closest to Jesus, were baptized in the Holy Spirit in the upper room, and that same day 3,000 Jews and Gentile proselytes repented and were saved. This first community of believers was filled with a vitality and joy of the Lord, and it was very contagious. As they testified of their experiences with Jesus and reached out to many in love, more believers were added to their numbers every day!

House Meetings

These new converts gathered for fellowship and worship on a regular basis, both in the temple for teachings and in each other's homes for the breaking of bread. Those pilgrims who had traveled long distances into Jerusalem for the celebration of the Jewish feasts remained in the city for a long period of time after the feasts were over. They wanted to learn everything the apostles knew about Jesus the Messiah and grow in faith and understanding. Those who lived in Jerusalem offered their hospitality to the pilgrims and joyfully shared what they had in common with them. Luke tells us that many sold their property and possessions so there would be provision for all.

With the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, God's love flowed freely among the believers. During His time on earth, Jesus had taught His disciples saying, "A new commandment I give you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you." And then He told them, "that by this love, all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another." The power and love of God were manifested throughout Jerusalem as signs and wonders followed the teachings of the apostles. The daily routine found them teaching and ministering in the colonnades of the temple and believers breaking bread in their homes. Preaching at this time traced the history of salvation from the Old Testament to their present events. The apostles desired to prove how Jesus had fulfilled many of their Scriptures' prophecies of the coming Messiah, and that He truly is the Son of God.

The Agape Meal

Small groups of new converts met in homes to fellowship, share meals together, worship, and pray.¹ Because of their Jewish traditions, families were already accustomed to sharing a special meal that consecrated the Sabbath day each week. It wasn't long before they adopted a Christ-centered format that could be observed any time. They no longer emphasized the Jewish Sabbath but what they called "the Lord's Day." This became for them a celebration of Christ's resurrection.

This special meal was called the "agape meal" or "love feast." "Agape" is a Greek word which means "divine or self-giving love." It is the kind of love that comes from God. We learn from Paul's writings in the New Testament that believers shared the Lord's Supper as part of an entire meal when they gathered in their homes.² The meal has its roots, not in Jesus' Last Supper with His apostles, but as a remembrance of His many appearances after His resurrection during mealtime³. The agape meal was a common meal that everyone enjoyed and then ended with the Lord's Supper. It was celebrated using the bread and cup already on the table to remember the Body of the Risen One. Those present were very aware that there was special significance in the "breaking of bread." As part of the meal, those who had broken relationships or disagreements with others made peace once again.

Early Prayers

The oldest Christian community prayer is found in the Aramaic word "Maranatha," which means "Come Lord Jesus." Aramaic was the common language of the Jews in Palestine dating back to their

¹ Acts 2:46; 5:42; 1 Corinthians 16:19; Romans 16:5; Philemon 2; Colossians 4:15

² Jude 12

³ Luke 24:30, 36; John 21:12

captivity in the Babylonian and Persian Empires. This simple prayer is found twice in the New Testament,⁴ It connects to the day of Christ's resurrection⁵ when He appeared at a meal with His disciples.⁶ Therefore, they believed He was with them in the celebration of the agape meal, as well, since He had taught them, "Where two or three of you are gathered, there I am in the midst of you."⁷ Maranatha also looks forward to Christ's appearance at the end of time, when all believers will join Him at the wedding feast of the Lamb.⁸ In summary, for the new Christians the Maranatha prayer looked back to Christ's resurrection, to the present in their agape meal, and forward to the end of time. At all three occasions, a meal is involved.

Other community prayers of the new Christians were modeled after the pattern of the Jewish Sabbath meal. Before the meal, thanksgiving prayers were said over the first cup of wine and broken bread. After the meal, another thanksgiving prayer was said over a final cup of water mixed with wine, which they called the "cup of blessing."⁹ It wasn't long before they began using the prayer that Jesus had taught them that we call *The Lord's Prayer*.¹⁰ In addition, as they grew to know each through their fellowship, they prayed for one another.

Worship Service

Early worship was a Christ-centered service that preserved the Jewish traditions of synagogue worship. Judaism already had a 1500-year history of worshiping the living God, who had called them to be His people and had instructed them in the way of worship. Therefore, the early community of believers was seen by others at the time as a Jewish sect that worshiped Jesus the Messiah. The basic structure of worship included a liturgy of formal praise and worship, prayers, water baptism, the Eucharist,¹¹ which was the Lord's Supper, and the celebration of several feast days. By the time the apostles began their missionary journeys into the Gentile world in 38 A.D., this was the established form of worship wherever they gathered. As time passed, the apostle Paul's letters were circulated and read aloud along with readings from the Jewish Scriptures.

⁴ 2 Corinthians 16:22; Rev 22:20 (*literally, Maran Antha: our Lord, come*)

⁵ Cullmann O. (1953). *Early Christian Worship*. Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, p. 13.

⁶ Luke 24:13-35

⁷ Matthew 18:20

⁸ Revelation 19:7-9

⁹ Paul refers to the "cup of blessings" in 1 Corinthians 10:16, 17.

¹⁰ Matthew 6:9-13

¹¹ Greek word that means "thanksgiving"

All worship was to reflect worship in Heaven. God had early revealed to His people how they should worship Him,¹² and the Old Testament provided them glimpses of heavenly worship, as well.¹³ But with the Advent of Jesus Christ and His death and resurrection, the inspired Scriptures filled believers with newfound joy. The Old Testament worship practices were now fulfilled and the Scriptures were given new meaning in Christ. They sang psalms from their Old Testament psalm book, hymns, and spiritual songs. From one of the apostle Paul's church letters we read:

Be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.¹⁴

The first part of the early worship time was open to all who wished to participate including strangers, in hopes that those who did not believe in Jesus Christ as the Son of God might be converted by the preaching. The second part of the worship revolved around the Eucharist or Lord's Supper, whose participation was restricted to those who were baptized in water. This was the beginning of the Christian church and the house-church pattern of worship, which continued for many centuries.

As the Gospel spread to the eastern Mediterranean cities in the Roman Empire, early believers commonly met in the homes of their community's wealthy members. Though there were many styles of houses, the atrium in a Roman villa or a large dining room in a Greek house provided adequate space for the small Christian communities. Today, in many nations around the world, there is a return to the house-church format of worship, which lends itself to intimate fellowship and ministry to others. As we continue our study, we will learn how Christianity spread into the Roman Empire and also how many believers were persecuted for their faith, which forced them to worship together in secret places.

We can see that worshipping the Lord is a natural response to personal repentance and God's free gifts of salvation and the Holy Spirit. Everything within the believer desires to love and praise the Lord and to share this Good News with others. As the apostles and disciples testified through their lives, the greatest witness for Jesus came through the agape love of God that flowed from them to others.

¹² Exodus chapters 25-27

¹³ Isaiah 6; Daniel 7; Revelation, chapters 4 and 5

¹⁴ Ephesians 5:18-20

The outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost not only transformed the personal lives of individual apostles and disciples, it created a whole new community of shared life and work and new fellowship in the Great Commission! This new community was of great importance in the plan of God. For, called into being by the Spirit, Christian fellowship was also to be His witness and His agent for spreading the Gospel in the world. Life in the newly birthed Christian Church consisted of the Holy Spirit, the community of believers, and their witness all working together. As Jesus taught them, “By your love for one another, they will know you are My disciples.” God’s love never fails!

“God’s One Anothers” from the New Testament

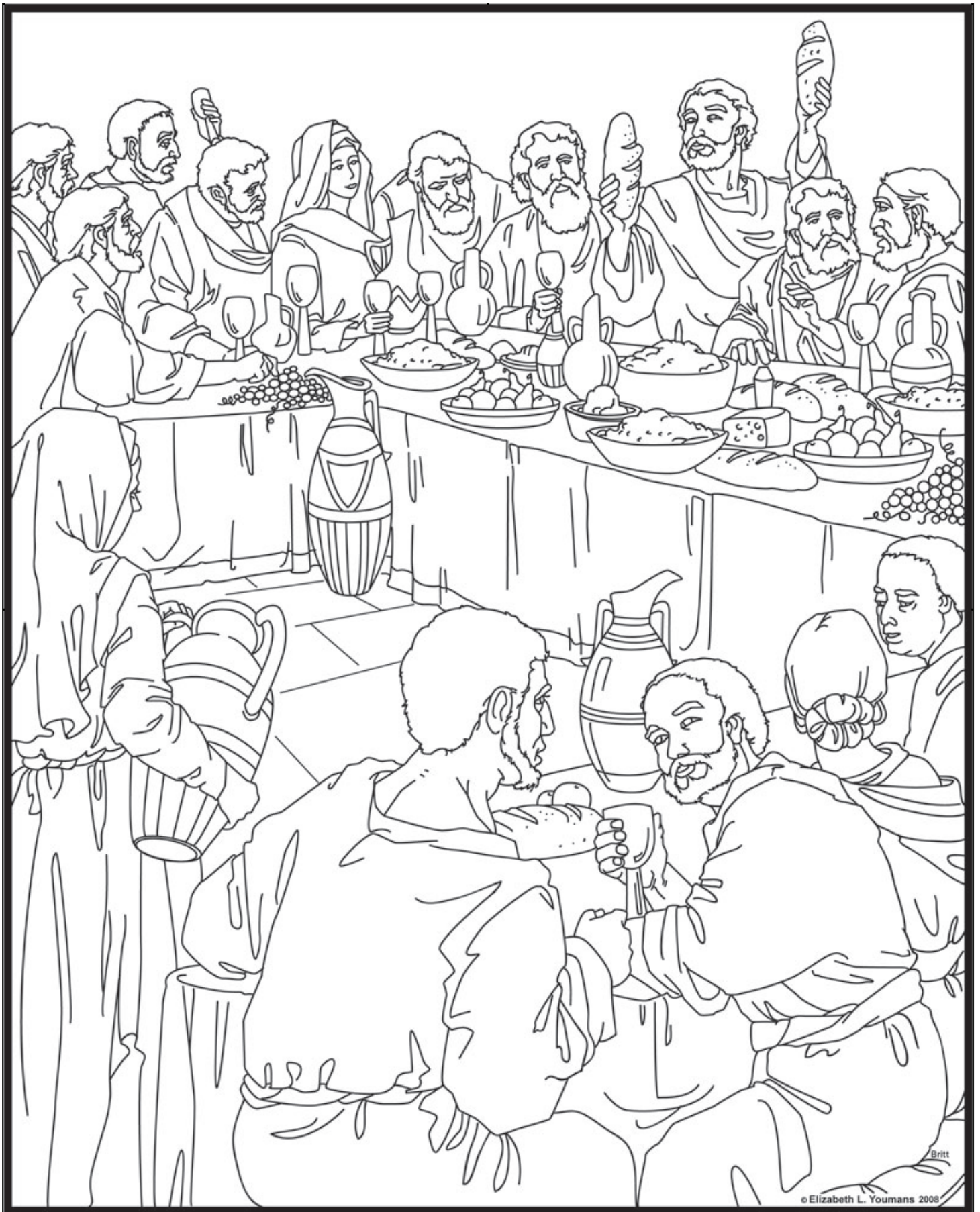
“If you love Me, you will obey what I command” (John 14:15).

The following is a list of thirty commands from the New Testament that teach us about Christ-like character and how to relate Christianly to others. When practiced, “God’s one others”^{*} help us have successful interpersonal relationships.

“One Another”	New Testament Reference
1. Love one another.	A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another (John 13:34-35).
2. Depend on one another.	So we, numerous as we are, are one body in Christ, the Messiah, and individually we are parts of one another—actually dependent on one another (Romans 12:5, Amplified).
3. Be devoted to one another.	Be devoted to one another in brotherly love (Romans 12:10).
4. Rejoice with one another.	Rejoice with those who rejoice (Romans 12:15).
5. Weep with one another.	Weep with those who weep (Romans 12:15).
6. Be of the same mind toward one another.	Be of the same mind toward one another; do not be haughty in mind, but associate with the lowly. Do not be wise in your own estimation (Romans 12:16).
7. Give preference to one another.	Give preference to one another in honor (Romans 12:10).
8. Don’t judge one another.	Therefore, let us not judge one another anymore, but rather determine this—not to put an obstacle or a stumbling block in a brother's way (Romans 14:13).
9. Accept one another.	Therefore, accept one another, just as Christ also accepted us to the glory of God (Romans 15:7).
10. Admonish one another.	And concerning you, my brethren, I myself also am convinced that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and able also to admonish one another (Romans 15:14).
11. Greet one another.	Greet one another with a holy kiss (Romans 16:16).
12. Wait for one another.	So then, my brethren, when you come together to eat, wait for one another (1 Corinthians 11:33).
13. Have the same care for one another.	God has so composed the body, giving more abundant honor to that member which lacked, so that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another (1 Corinthians 12:24-25).
14. Be kind to one another.	Be kind to one another . . . (Ephesians 4:32a).
15. Be tenderhearted to one another.	Be . . . tenderhearted, forgiving one other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you (Ephesians 4:32b).
16. Serve one another.	For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another (Galatians 5:13).

- | | |
|--|---|
| 17. Forgive one another. | Put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you (Colossians 3:12-13). |
| 18. Encourage one another. | Therefore encourage one another and build up one another, just as you also are doing (1 Thessalonians 5:11). |
| 19. Submit to one another. | Be subject to one another in the fear of Christ (Ephesians 5:21). |
| 20. Uphold (forbear) one another. | . . . [L]ead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all lowliness and meekness, with patience, forbearing one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Ephesians 4:1-3). |
| 21. Stimulate one another. | Let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds (Hebrews 10:24). |
| 22. Be hospitable to one another. | Be hospitable to one another without complaint (1 Peter 4:9). |
| 23. Minister gifts one to another. | As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God (1 Peter 4:10). |
| 24. Be clothed in humility one toward another. | Clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, for God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble (1 Peter 5:5). |
| 25. Bear one another's burdens. | Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ (Galatians 6:2). |
| 26. Do not speak against one another. | Do not speak against one another, brethren. He who speaks against a brother or judges his brother, speaks against the law and judges the law; but if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge of it (James 4:11). |
| 27. Do not complain against one another. | Do not complain, brethren, against one another, so that you yourselves may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing right at the door (James 5:9). |
| 28. Confess your sins to one another. | Confess your sins to one another (James 5:16a). |
| 29. Pray for one another | . . . Pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much (James 5:16b). |
| 30. Fellowship with one another. | If we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin (1 John 1:7). |

* *The list was identified as 'God's One Anothers' by the Linwood Methodist Church of Kansas City, MO.*



Believers having fellowship at their agape meal.

Book of Acts 8

Time: 45 minutes **Reading:** Acts 3:1-4:31 **Review:** The greatest witness for Jesus is agape love for one another. **Principle:** There is no other name but Jesus, by which we can be saved and made whole. **Scripture:** There is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved (Acts 4:12).

TEACHER

Vocabulary:

alms (n.) Anything given gratuitously to relieve the poor, such as money, food, or clothing.

capstone (n.) The top stone in a building or wall. Throughout the Bible Christ is referred to as the cornerstone, which is the first to be laid, and the capstone, which is the last. This symbolizes that “Christ is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and end.” (Revelation 1:8)

Gate Beautiful, An eastern gate to the Jewish temple.

heir (n.) Beneficiaries because of kinship.

Herod (n.) Herod Antipas, the Jewish puppet king, appointed by the Romans to rule over Galilee.

high priest, The chief priest who, during the time of Christ, was appointed by king Herod from among the various priestly families.

Pilate (n.) Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor of Judea and Samaria.

Sadducees (n.) A Jewish religious group that believed there was “no resurrection, angels or spirits.” (Acts 23:8) Throughout the Gospels and Acts, they oppose John the Baptist, Jesus Christ, and the early Christians.

Sanhedrin (n.) The highest religious and judicial council of 70 men in the Jewish nation.

Solomon’s Colonnade, A covered porch with columns that ran the length of the eastern side of the outer court of the temple.

unschooled (adj.) Lacking formal education or training, but not unwise or stupid.

Preparation:

1. Read and reflect upon the assigned reading. Study the teacher vocabulary words, principle and the background materials.
2. Gather resources: Bible, Student Vocabulary Card, “Ways to Be a Witness for Jesus” graphic organizers, and coloring page 4, “The Lame Man Walks.”

STUDENT

Key Word:

salvation (n.) Eternal life, deliverance, safety, health, and wholeness both physically and spiritually.

? Reason Questions:

1. Peter and John had no money to give the beggar. What did they give him?
2. What does it mean “to be made whole”? How did the beggar act after he received his healing?
3. To whom did the apostles give credit for the miracle?
4. Why did the religious rulers imprison Peter and John?
5. What did Peter and John say when they commanded them to not to speak in the name of Jesus any more?
6. Describe the ways you plan to apply this principle to your own life.

Notebook Record:

1. Color your coloring page with your colored pencils.
2. Record these phrases on your “Ways to Be a Witness for Jesus” graphic organizer:
 - 1) Boldly preach the Gospel. (2:14-36)
 - 2) Devote yourself to the things of God. (2:42)
 - 3) Share your possessions with those in need. (2:45)



Lesson Background:

1. In Luke's history of the birth of Christianity, he begins with Jesus' commission to His apostles to be His witnesses. He then tells of the supernatural outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon Jesus' apostles and disciples on the day of Pentecost. The Spirit empowered them and gave them boldness of speech and acts.

One of the first acts of the apostles that Luke describes is that of the healing of a man born lame, who was placed at the temple gate every day to beg. Jesus' apostles, Peter and John, were asked for money. Peter replied, "I do not have silver or gold, but I will give you what I do have. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk!" In speaking this way, Peter was saying that the name Jesus Christ carries the authority of Jesus Christ (Mat 28:18), and that in His name is the power and possibility to be healed.

2. In speaking to the man, Peter revealed the essential meaning of Christianity. He was not able to minister to the man with material help, but he was able to communicate to him the spiritual truth and be a witness for Jesus that would change his life forever!

There are eight references in this story of the healing of the lame man to the name of Jesus: Acts 3:6 and 16 and Acts 4:10, 12, 17, 18, 20 and 40!

3. Peter took this opportunity at the entrance of the temple to direct the attention of thousands of devout Jews, who had gathered for daily prayer, to their own God, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, claiming that He had visited them first (before the Gentiles) in the Person of Jesus. Faith in Jesus' name was the avenue through which God had performed this wonder. There was no glory for man in what had happened: none for the apostles, which they had declared, and none for the man that was healed.

Five thousand were converted that day (4:4) through this miracle, which is the principle that we find in this story. When God receives all the glory for His mighty miracles and wonders, the Holy Spirit is able to convict of sin and regenerate those seeking salvation by faith.

4. The apostles were put in jail at the request of the fearful ruling religious leaders. The next day the religious leaders questioned them concerning with what power they performed this miracle. This gave the apostles an opportunity to teach and preach the Gospel: *There is salvation in no other name but Jesus.* When they released them, they commanded them not to speak and teach in the name of Jesus Christ. Peter and John told them they could not stop speaking what they had seen and heard! As eyewitnesses to the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and the recipients of His Holy Spirit, they proclaimed they had to be faithful. They were very bold and courageous. They returned to their companions praising God and asked God to continue to give them confidence to speak His Word!



Singing:

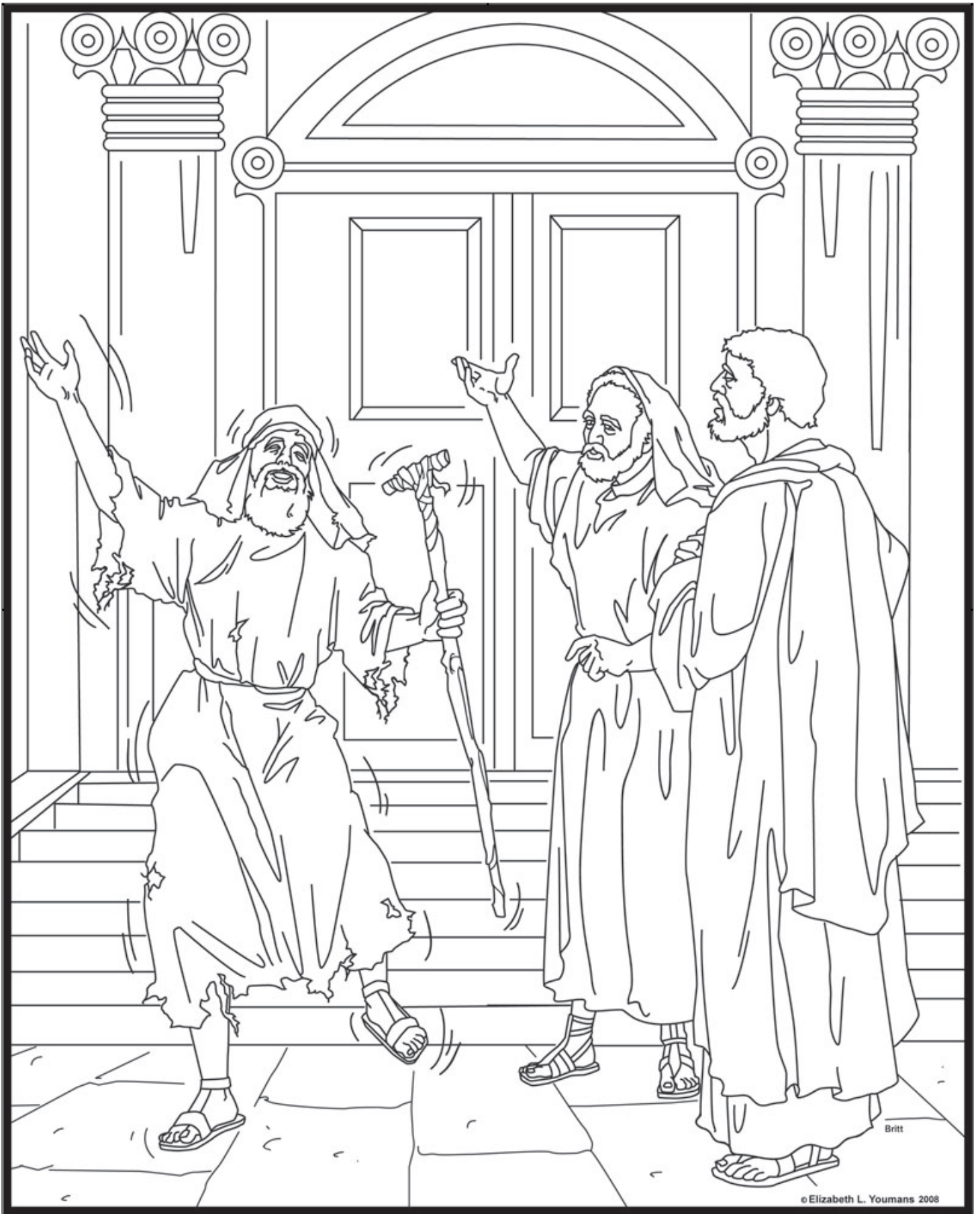
"They'll Know We Are Christians by Our Love"

NOTE TO THE TEACHER:

Remember, the Lesson Background is written for the edification of the teacher and not meant to be read to the children. It is provided to help the teacher with biblical concepts and doctrine, so that (s)he may answer questions about the doctrine and be more confident to reason with the children.

Teaching Plan:

1. Pray: *Dear Lord Jesus, pour out your Holy Spirit and illumine our minds that we may see your hand of providence in the early history of Christianity. Thank you for the faith of those who have gone before us. Give us courage and zeal to be your witnesses in our generation, just as the apostles were in theirs. Use us to spread your Gospel Story for your glory. Amen.*
2. Distribute student binders.
3. Review the principle that the greatest witness for Jesus is agape love for one another.
4. Pin the Student Vocabulary Card on the Treasure Chest bulletin board and define the word for the children.
Connect the vocabulary word to the new principle. Teach the principle and remind the children to listen for this principle during the reading. Tell them that they will hear this principle many times in the reading.
5. Distribute coloring page 4 to the children to color while you're reading the story.
6. Read Acts 3:1 to 4:31 for this lesson.
7. Ask the Reason Questions and have children respond orally.
8. Distribute the "Ways to Be a Witness for Jesus" graphic organizers. Write notes on the board for the children to copy onto their graphic organizers.
9. Teach the song, "*They'll Know We Are Christians by Our Love.*"
This is a beautiful song in a minor key with three verses. Teach the first verse.
See the following web site for words and chords:
http://www.ultimate-guitar.com/tabs/m/misc_praise_songs/they_will_know_we_are_christians_by_our_love_crd.htm
10. Conclude with a short prayer and blessing for the children.



He was walking and leaping and praising God!

Book of Acts 9

Time: 45 minutes

Reading: Acts 5:12-6:7

Review: The miracle of the man lame from birth

Principle: When asked to do something that violates God's Word, one should obey God rather than men.

Scripture: We must obey God rather than men (Acts 5:29).

TEACHER

Vocabulary:

deacon (n.) From the Greek word for "servant."

flog (v.) To beat severely with a whip or stick.

Hellenistic Jews, Greek-speaking Jewish Christians.

jealous (adj.) Suspicious or fearful of being displaced by a rival.

native Hebrews, Aramaic-speaking Jewish Christians.

one accord, United as one; of one mind and one spirit.

persecute (v.) To pursue in order to afflict pain from hatred.

rabbi (n.) Hebrew title of respect for a Jewish scholar or teacher.

reputation (n.) One's estimated character by report, either good or bad.

slay (v.) To kill intentionally with premeditation.



Preparation:

1. Read and reflect upon the assigned reading. Study the teacher vocabulary words, principle and the background materials.
2. Gather resources: Bible and Student Vocabulary Card.



Lesson Background:

1. In today's reading, we learn about the tremendous growth of the Jerusalem church under the leadership of the apostle Peter. Many thousands were coming to Christ and being healed and delivered with signs and wonders following. Many carried their sick and placed them in the street, so that if Peter walked by his shadow might fall on them and heal them. Others brought their sick and afflicted from outside Jerusalem into the city and the Scripture says that all were healed!
2. With so many Jews following Jesus Christ, persecution arose with the Jewish high priest and the religious leaders who were jealous of the ministry and enraged by the message of the apostles. The opposing spiritual forces are now seen face-to-face. The enemies of Christ were awake and agitated. The first thing the religious leaders did was put the apostles in jail, but an angel released them and instructed them to go to the temple and keep preaching the message of Life. (Eternal life in Christ)

STUDENT



Key Word:

obey (v.) To do that which is required by those in authority over us.



Reason Questions:

1. Explain why the high priest and the religious leaders were jealous of the apostles.
2. Describe the miracles that took place in this reading. Do miracles still take place today?
3. What was Rabbi Gamaliel's advice?
4. Why is it not wise to oppose the work of God?
5. Describe a time you chose to follow God's way rather than a friend's idea. What was your reward?



Notebook Record:

1. Continue to color your incomplete coloring pages.
2. Record these phrases on your "Ways to Witness for Jesus" graphic organizer:
 - 4) Minister to the needs of others in Jesus' name. (3:6, 7)
 - 5) Obey God rather than men. (5:29)
 - 6) Bear persecution with grace. (5:41)



Singing:

"They'll Know We Are Christians by Our Love"

Next they were brought before the Sanhedrin (Council of 70 religious leaders) and were admonished for continuing to teach in Jesus' name. Peter's answer is worthy of reflection with the children: "We must obey God rather than men." (5:29) Peter's statement makes a great lesson for our youth, who generally follow their peers rather than heed their parents' or God's admonitions and instructions.

The Scripture relates that the Sanhedrin intended to slay the apostles (5:33), but their anger was diffused by Gamaliel's wisdom. (Rabbi with whom the apostle Paul studied the Law.)

3. They flogged the apostles rather than kill them and again, commanded them not to speak in Jesus' name any more. The picture painted by Luke of the apostles rejoicing in their suffering is filled with beauty and reveals the depth of their relationship with Jesus. We will come to learn that the grace of God is poured out in great measure upon these Christians who will be persecuted and physically tortured.
4. As the Jerusalem church continued to grow, the apostles found they didn't have enough time to serve the needs of the converts and to pray and teach the Word. They selected deacons to serve the many needs of the new converts. These men were chosen based on their wisdom and walk in the Spirit.



Teaching Plan:

1. Pray: *Dear Lord Jesus, pour out your Holy Spirit and illumine our minds that we may see your hand of providence in the early history of Christianity. Thank you for the faith of those who have gone before us. Give us courage and zeal to be your witnesses in our generation, just as the apostles were in theirs. Use us to spread your Gospel Story for your glory. Amen.*
2. Distribute binders to the children.
3. Review the story of the man born lame.
4. Pin the Student Vocabulary Card on the Treasure Chest bulletin board and define the word for the children. Connect the vocabulary word to the new principle. Teach the principle and remind the children to listen for this principle during the reading.
5. Read Acts 5:12-6:7 for this lesson.
6. Ask the Reason Questions and have children respond orally.
7. Write notes on the board for the children to copy onto their graphic organizers.
8. Sing the song, "They'll Know We Are Christians by Our Love."
9. Conclude with a short prayer and blessing for the children.

NOTE TO THE TEACHER:

Remember, the Lesson Background is written for the edification of the teacher and not meant to be read to the children. It is provided to help the teacher with biblical concepts and doctrine, so that (s)he may answer questions about the doctrine and be more confident to reason with the children.

Book of Acts 10

Time: 45 minutes **Reading:** Acts 6:8-8:3 **Review:** Principle of obeying God rather than men.

Principle: When Christians are persecuted, the Gospel spreads to other regions. **Scripture:** Those who were scattered because of the persecution, began speaking to the Jews. But there were others speaking Greek preaching the Lord Jesus. . . and a large number who believed turned to the Lord. (Acts 11:19-21)

TEACHER

Vocabulary:

Alexandria, A city in Egypt founded and named for Alexander the Great; Jews in Alexandria translated the Old Testament into Greek, which is called the Septuagint.

Asia, The “orient”; refers to what is now modern Turkey.

betrayor (n.) One who says one thing and does another.

blasphemy (n.) Evil speech, particularly against God and His servants; slanderous.

Canaan, The strip of land between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea to the west. Part of Israel’s Promised Land.

Chaldeans, The people who lived in the Chaldean Empire, whose center is now in modern Iraq.

Cilicia, A maritime province in the southeast of Asia Minor; its capital, Tarsus, was the birth place of the apostle Paul.

Cyrene, Ancient city of North Africa now in modern Libya.

fell asleep, Expression used of the physical death of believers, but not their spiritual death.

stiff-necked (adj.) Haughty and obstinate.

Preparation:

1. Read and reflect upon the assigned reading. Study the teacher vocabulary words, principle and the background materials.
2. Gather resources: Bible, Student Vocabulary Card, and coloring page 5, “The martyrdom of Stephen.”

Lesson Background:

1. You will remember that the word “witness” in Greek is “martyr.” Tertullian (155-222 A.D.), an early Church father, observed after 150 years of Church history in the Roman Empire, “The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church.” What he meant is that in the area of spiritual growth, life springs forth from death. Jesus taught this lesson in the parable of the seed: “Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.”

STUDENT

Key Word:

martyr (n.) One who suffers death for his principles and beliefs.

Reason Questions:

1. Describe the character of the young deacon, Stephen.
2. From the lives of Jesus and Stephen, what have you learned is the response to persecution?
3. How did the hand of God use persecution to spread the Gospel?
4. If you are a Christian, has anyone ever teased or persecuted you for your faith in Christ? Describe the incident and how you reacted.

Notebook Record:

1. Color your coloring page with your colored pencils.
2. Record the following phrases on your “One Another’s” graphic organizer:
 - 4) Serve one another (Galatians 5:13)
 - 5) Have the same care for one another (1 Corinthians 12:24, 25)
 - 6) Forgive one another (Colossians 3:12, 13)

Singing:

“They’ll Know We Are Christians by Our Love”

This is true of Jesus, who died on the cross that we might have eternal life. He taught us that if they persecuted Him, they will persecute us. (John 15:20) Read the teachings of Jesus found on the next page in the right-hand column for a summary.

2. Young Stephen, with his servant's heart, had just been commissioned by the apostles to serve the church as a deacon. Luke described him as "a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit." (6:5) He also said Stephen "was full of grace and power, performing great wonders and signs among the people." (6:8) The anointing of the Holy Spirit was mightily upon this young man, for Luke then relates that the Jews who were offended by his teaching and ministry "were unable to cope with the wisdom and the Spirit with which Stephen spoke." As is often the case, when an individual is moving in the anointing of God's Spirit, great resistance and opposition arise. This is the history of Christianity throughout the ages! When these men found Stephen impervious to their verbal assaults, they bore false witness against him accusing him of blaspheming Moses and God. They brought Stephen before the Sanhedrin. Yet the glory of the Lord manifested itself upon Stephen, whose "face was like the face of an angel." When asked whether the charges were true, Stephen proceeded to give a history of the Hebrews, to testify of Christ, and to rebuke the leaders for their opposition to the Messiah, Jesus Christ.

You will find a summary of this history on the next page in the right-hand column.

3. People sometimes react violently to the truth and this was no exception. The people were "furious and gnashed their teeth," covered their ears, yelled at the top of their voices, rushed him, and began to stone him. However, in the midst of his martyrdom Stephen saw a miraculous vision—he saw the glory of God and Christ standing at the right hand of the Father. Verbally expressing what he saw in the spirit only agitated his listeners further. Perhaps even more spectacularly, Stephen then called upon the Lord to receive his spirit, fell on his knees, and then in imitation of Christ on the cross, he cried out, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." After he finished, Stephen died.
4. Stephen's martyrdom marks the beginning of "the great persecution that broke out against the church at Jerusalem." Tradition relates that over 2,000 Jewish Christians were put to death in the Stephenic outbreak. [Baxter, *Explore the Book*, p. 26] His martyrdom also marks the continued Jewish rejection of Jesus as their Messiah-Savior-King.
5. The apostles remained in Jerusalem but other members of the church scattered throughout Judea and Samaria. This was a fulfillment of what Jesus had spoken to His apostles in Acts 1:8, "You will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." We will soon discover that this time of great persecution births a new center of Christianity in Antioch, Syria. (Acts 11:19-22)

Jesus' Teaching about Persecution

"My kingdom is not of this world; if My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting, that I might not be delivered up to the Jews. But My kingdom is not of this realm" (John 18:36).

"... If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they kept My word, they will keep yours also. But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake, because they do not know the One who sent Me" (John 15:20, 21).

"Blessed are you when men cast insults at you, and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely, on account of Me. Rejoice, and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you" (Mt 5:11, 12).

"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor, and hate your enemy'; But I say to you, 'Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you in order that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. For if you love those who love you, what reward have you?'" (Mt 5:43-46).

"You will be hated by all on account of My name, but it is the one who has endured to the end who will be saved. And whenever they persecute you in this city, flee to the next; for truly I say to you, you shall not finish going through the cities of Israel, until the Son of Man comes" (Mt 10:22-23).

"Do not fear those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Mt 10:28).

"If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life shall lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it" (Mt 16:24, 25).

6. We first meet the apostle Paul in this reading, who is introduced as Saul, his Hebrew name. We find him participating in the great persecution of the Jerusalem church.

Teaching Plan:

1. Pray: *Dear Lord Jesus, pour out your Holy Spirit and illumine our minds that we may see your hand of providence in the early history of Christianity. Thank you for the faith of those who have gone before us. Give us courage and zeal to be your witnesses in our generation, just as the apostles were in theirs. Use us to spread your Gospel Story for your glory. Amen.*
2. Distribute binders to the children.
3. Review the principle of obeying God rather than men.
4. Pin the Student Vocabulary Card on the Treasure Chest bulletin board and define the word for the children. Connect the vocabulary word to the new principle. Teach the principle and remind the children to listen for this principle during the reading.
5. Distribute coloring page 5 to the children to color while you read.
6. Read Acts 6:8 to 8:3 for this lesson.
7. Ask the Reason Questions and have children respond orally.
8. Write notes on the board for the children to copy onto their “One Anothers” graphic organizers. Discuss where in the story each “one another” is manifested.
9. Teach the second verse of “*They’ll Know We Are Christians by Our Love.*”
10. Conclude with a short prayer and blessing for the children.

Summary of Stephen’s Sermon

The God of glory called Abraham to leave his people and his homeland. Abraham obeyed and settled in Canaan, which the Lord promised to give his descendents.



Abraham begat Isaac; Isaac begat Jacob; and Jacob begat 12 sons who became the 12 patriarchs of Israel. Eleven of Jacob’s sons conspired to sell the twelfth brother, Joseph, into slavery in Egypt. The Lord used Joseph’s presence in Egypt to preserve the children of Israel from the famine in Canaan.



The Israelites settled in Egypt and began to multiply greatly. Four hundred years later, a Pharaoh came to power who was fearful of their great number and enslaved them. The Lord raised up a deliverer, Moses, who with signs and wonders afflicted the Egyptians and set God’s people free.



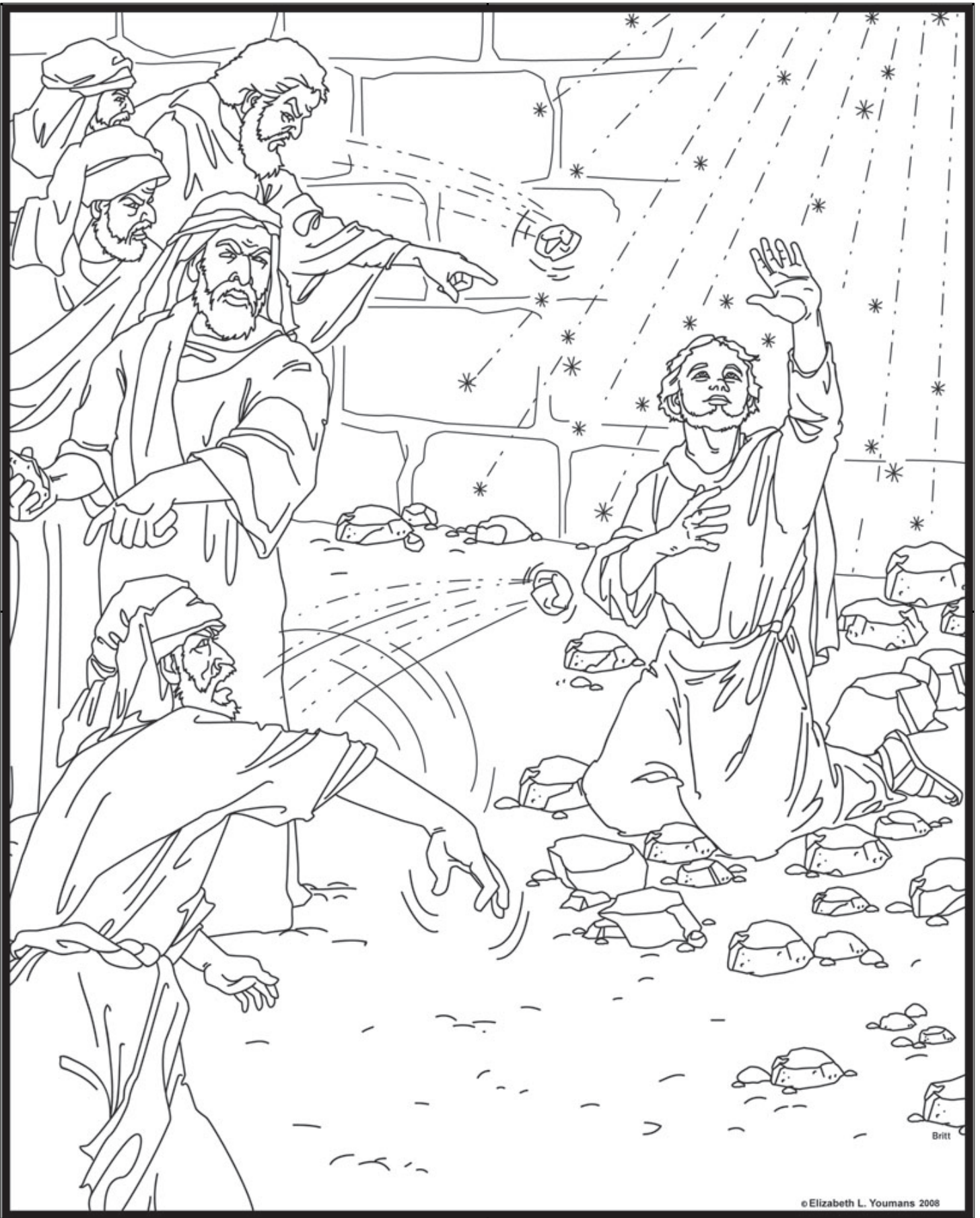
Through Moses, the Lord gave the Israelites the Law. He also gave him the pattern to make a portable Tabernacle, where God could be in their midst and be worshiped. Sadly, the people complained and rebelled, which caused them to wander forty years in the wilderness. All those that had rebelled died in the wilderness and never saw the Promised Land.



After forty years, Joshua and the children of God entered the Promised Land of Canaan. The Lord continued to dwell in the mobile Tabernacle until king David’s son, king Solomon, built the permanent Temple in Jerusalem.



With the coming of the gift of the Holy Spirit, who dwells within each believer, Stephen declared that “the Most High does not live in houses made by human hands,” meaning that the ceremonial day of the Temple was now over.



Britt

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“Lord, do not hold this sin against them.”

Book of Acts 11

Time: 45 minutes **Reading:** Acts 8:4-40 **Review:** When Christians are persecuted, the Gospel spreads to other regions. **Principle:** Baptism is a Christian sacrament signifying spiritual cleansing.

Scripture: Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on His name (Acts 22:16).

TEACHER



Vocabulary:

Candace, An Ethiopian title for all queens.

Ethiopia, The ancient land of Cush (Noah's grandson), which is located in Africa. Semitic people groups have lived in northern Ethiopia for thousands of years. The Queen of Sheba is known from Ethiopian history to have born a son with king Solomon and begun a lineage in Ethiopia that many still claim as their heritage. The Bible does not relate this story. (Gen 10:7; 1 Kings 10)

sacrament (n.) A holy ordinance instituted by Jesus Christ, i.e. water baptism and the Lord's Supper/Communion/Eucharist.

Samaritans, The Samaritans were descendants of Assyrian colonists who arrived after the fall of the Northern kingdom of Israel. The Jews despised them because of their mixed Gentile blood and different form of worship.

sorcerer (n.) A magician; an enchanter.

unclean spirit, A spirit that is dirty in thought and language.



Preparation:

1. Read and reflect upon the assigned reading. Study the teacher vocabulary words, principle and the background materials.
2. Gather resources: Bible, Student Vocabulary Card, and coloring page 6, "The baptism of the Ethiopian."



Lesson Background:

1. This reading relates how Christianity spread from Jerusalem to Judea and Samaria. What a dark moment it was for the apostles when their community of believers was persecuted; however, they continued to preach outside Jerusalem.

God's Spirit spoke to Philip and directed him to the prime minister of the Queen of Ethiopia, who was riding home in his chariot reading the Book of Isaiah. Philip spent time teaching him that this portion of Scripture (chapter 53) was a description of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, who had died for the sins of all. The Ethiopian asked to receive Christ and be baptized. This is an amazing witness to the providential hand of God directing the affairs of two individuals. Ethiopia is on the continent of Africa, and so the Gospel spread from Samaria to northern Africa.

STUDENT



Key Word:

baptism (n.) The Christian sacrament through the use of water that signifies one's cleansing from sin and union with God.



Reason Questions:

1. How did the Gospel spread from Jerusalem?
2. Name the three geographic areas where the Gospel spread in this reading. Locate each on your map of the Roman Empire and tell what continent each is on.
3. How did the deacon Philip share agape love with the Ethiopian?
4. Describe a time you were willing to go out of your way to help someone else. What was the result?



Notebook Record:

1. Color your coloring page with your colored pencils.
2. Record the following phrases on your "One Anothers" graphic organizer:
 - 7) Rejoice with one another. (Romans 12:15)
 - 8) Admonish one another. (Romans 15:14)
 - 9) Give preference to one another. (Romans 12:10)



Singing:

"They'll Know We Are Christians by Our Love"

2. The word “baptize” is a Greek word which means “to dip, pour, or totally immerse an object into a liquid.” Today, water baptism is one of two sacraments of the universal Christian Church ordained by Jesus Christ, the other is the Lord’s Supper. Baptism is the washing with water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Water baptism does not regenerate a person’s spirit. It points to the reality of God’s saving power and regeneration by the Holy Spirit. (2 Cor 1:22)

There are three modes of baptism: immersion, sprinkling, and pouring. All have their foundation in the Scriptures. Immersion and its symbolism is based largely on Romans chapter 6. Sprinkling has its roots in certain biblical passages such as Ezekiel 36:25, 27, “I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean . . . and I will put My Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes.”

There are many references to baptism in the New Testament beginning with Jesus’ baptism by John the Baptist. (Luke 3:21) When Christ commissioned His apostles, He told them to baptize those who would follow Him in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. (Mt 28:19) When Peter preached on the day of Pentecost, the people demanded to know what they must do in response to the Gospel message. Peter told them, “Repent and be baptized.” (Acts 2:38) In our reading today, deacon Philip baptized the Samaritan converts and the Ethiopian eunuch. (Acts 8:36-39) The apostle Paul was baptized by Ananias following his conversion. (Acts 9:18) Peter baptized the Gentile Cornelius and his household. (Acts 10:47, 48) Lydia was baptized (Acts 16:14, 15), and the Philippian jailer was baptized along with his whole household (Acts 16:33).

There is also the mode of pouring as in the baptism of the Holy Spirit. John the Baptist said, “As for me, I baptize you with water for repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, and I am not fit to remove His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.” (Mt 3:11) Jesus said to His apostles on the Mount of Olives, “John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.” (Acts 1:5) This occurred to His disciples in the upper room on the day of Pentecost. (Acts 2) As Paul wrote to the Ephesians. “there is one Lord, one faith and one baptism.” (Eph 4:5) I.e., the baptism of the Spirit, which brings us into the unity of the body of Christ. Clearly, the New Testament writers recorded that baptism was a vital, essential part of every Christian’s spiritual life and remains so today.

Teaching Plan:

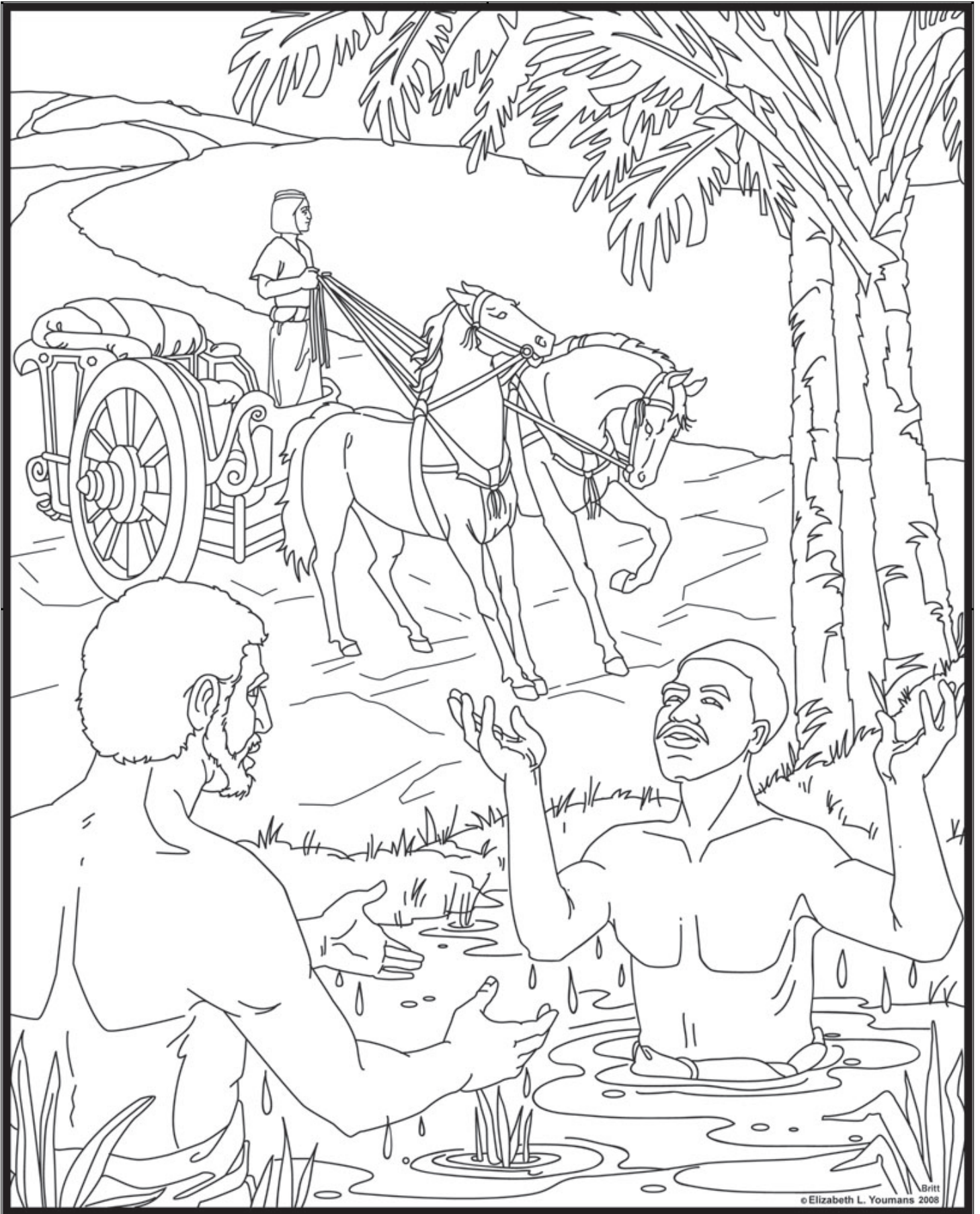
1. Pray: *Dear Lord Jesus, pour out your Holy Spirit and illumine our minds that we may see your hand of providence in the early history of Christianity. Thank you for the faith of those who have gone before us. Give us courage and zeal to be your witnesses in our generation, just as the apostles were in theirs. Use us to spread your Gospel Story for your glory. Amen.*

2. Distribute binders to the children.
3. Review the principle that when persecution comes, it is an instrument for spreading the Gospel.
4. Pin the Student Vocabulary Card on the Treasure Chest bulletin board and define the word for the children.

Connect the vocabulary word to the new principle. Teach the principle and remind the children to listen for this principle during the reading.

5. Distribute coloring page 6 to the children to color while you read.
6. Read Acts 8:4-40 for this lesson.
7. Ask the Reason Questions and have children respond orally.
8. Write notes on the board for the children to copy onto their "One Anothers" graphic organizers.

Discuss where in the story each "one another" is manifested.
9. Sing the two verses of "*They'll Know We Are Christians by Our Love*" and your other songs.
10. Conclude with a short prayer and blessing for the children.



“If you believe with all your heart, you may be baptized.”

Book of Acts 12

Time: 45 minutes

Reading: Acts 9:1-42

Review: Baptism is a Christian sacrament signifying

spiritual cleansing.

Principle: When a person receives Jesus Christ as his Savior and Lord, all things

become new!

Scripture: Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold new things have come (2 Corinthians 5:17).

TEACHER

Vocabulary:

Caesarea, Ancient Roman seaport on the Mediterranean Sea built by king Herod in NW Palestine.

confound (v.) To throw into disorder; to cause to be unable to think clearly.

Damascus, Ancient city of Syria and most likely the oldest city in the world. Today it's the capital of Syria.

Galilee, An area in N. Palestine; the place of Jesus' ministry.

Lydda, Ancient city just outside Judea east of Joppa.

Sharon, The plain extending southward from Lydda 50 miles along the Mediterranean sea.

Tarsus, Ancient cultural and intellectual center in Cilicia (now southern Turkey) where the apostle Paul was born.

the Way, The early Church saints were called the people of "the way." Jesus had taught them, "I am the way, the truth and the life." (John 14:6)

Preparation:

1. Read and reflect upon the assigned reading. Study the teacher vocabulary words, principle and the background materials.
2. Gather resources: Bible, Student Vocabulary Card, and coloring page 7, "Paul's conversion."

Lesson Background:

1. This chapter in our history of the birth of Christianity contains a very important historic event—the conversion of the apostle Paul, the greatest missionary of all time. Paul was famous throughout the Roman Empire and, undoubtedly, one of the most influential figures in all of history! He was used by the Lord to promote the establishment of the Christian Church (the Body of Christ) on earth. Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Paul wrote letters of exhortation to the baby churches that were established under his ministry, which became the founding documents for the Christian way of life. Through his missionary activities and his writings, Paul has affected untold billions of Christians throughout the last 2,000 years.

STUDENT

Key Word:

new creature, The spirit within the person is alive in Christ and all his affections are changed.

Reason Questions:

1. In what ways was Paul blind even before his trip to Damascus? In what ways can you be blind?
2. In what ways was Paul made new?
3. Why were Ananias and the apostles reluctant to accept Paul?
4. How did Barnabas help spread the Gospel? Name some ways you could be a "Barnabas" in your community.
5. Describe the miracles of Peter.
6. Recount all the geographic regions where the Gospel has spread.

Notebook Record:

1. Color your coloring page with your colored pencils.
2. Record the following phrases on your "One Anothers" graphic organizer:
 - 10) Be kind to one another. (Ephesians 4:32a)
 - 11) Weep with one another. (Romans 12:15)
 - 12) Accept on another. (Romans 15:7)

Singing:

"They'll Know We Are Christians by Our Love." verse 3

Paul, whose Hebrew name was Saul, was a very learned man. He was born in Tarsus, Cilicia, a Greek province in the Roman Empire. His family was of the tribe of Benjamin (Phil 3:4-7). Jews in Cilicia were Roman citizens, as well.

As a ten-year-old, Paul was properly educated in the Law under the tutelage of rabbi Gamaliel, a member of the Sanhedrin and one of the most famous rabbis of the Hillel school in Jerusalem. Young Paul spoke Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and Aramaic.

2. Paul was a Pharisee and a zealot for Judaism. When we first meet him, he believed that Christ-followers were heretics. He was zealously persecuting God's people while under the assumption that he was doing God's work. It was not until his direct encounter with Christ on the road to Damascus that his assumption was proven incorrect. Christ made it very clear to him that when you persecute the Body of Christ, you are persecuting Him! Furthermore, Paul knew the Scriptures, but it was not until his encounter with Christ that he was able to spiritually discern Christ in those Scriptures. We know this illumination occurred instantaneously as Paul began immediately to preach and teach in the synagogue that Jesus was the Messiah.
3. Finally, Paul was not initially received by the apostles in Jerusalem. This is understandable since Paul had a reputation for having believers imprisoned or stoned to death. Thankfully, Paul had a friend and a sponsor in the man, Barnabas.
4. As part of Paul's education, he explains in his letter to the Galatians (1:17-18) that he spent three years in the Arabian desert studying and learning about Jesus with the Holy Spirit as his Teacher.
5. Paul also had a way of earning money for himself in the trade of tent making. His birthplace of Tarsus was well known for making a certain type of felt cloth from the wool of shaggy black goats.

Teaching Plan:

1. Pray: *Dear Lord Jesus, pour out your Holy Spirit and illumine our minds that we may see your hand of providence in the early history of Christianity. Thank you for the faith of those who have gone before us. Give us courage and zeal to be your witnesses in our generation, just as the apostles were in theirs. Use us to spread your Gospel Story for your glory. Amen.*
2. Distribute binders to the children.
3. Review the sacrament of baptism and its significance.
4. Pin the Student Vocabulary Card on the Treasure Chest bulletin board and define the word for the children. Connect the vocabulary word to the new principle. Teach the principle and remind the children to listen for this principle during the reading.

The Spread of the Gospel

Jesus laid out the way for the spread of the "Good News" of the kingdom of God in Acts 1:8: "You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the remotest part of the earth."

Early in the book of Acts, Peter took center stage as he proclaimed the Gospel throughout the city of **Jerusalem**. In our last history lesson, we saw how Philip proclaimed Christ both in the lands of **Judea** and **Samaria** and also led the Ethiopian eunuch to Christ, who carried the Gospel home to northern **Africa**.

We learned in today's lesson that Peter carried the Gospel message to the Hellenistic Jews in **Lydda**, **Sharon**, and **Joppa** where many believed. (9:42) Several miracles occurred as he prayed for people. These miracles were used by God to spread the Gospel message.

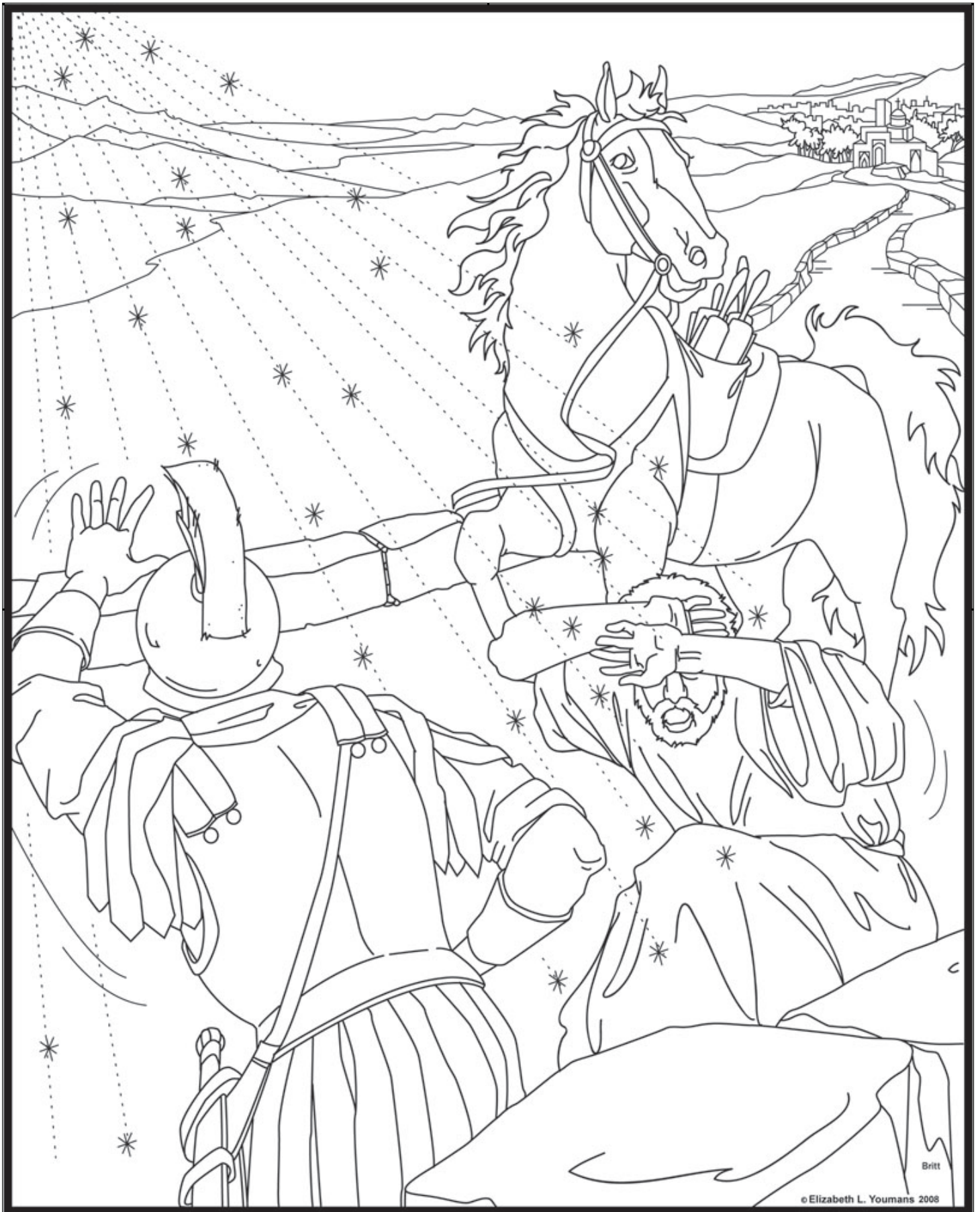
Soon, with the conversion of Paul, the Gospel will begin to spread throughout the Roman Empire, as the Holy Spirit directs him and his disciples into many lands. Because he was a master of many languages, Paul never needed an interpreter. He was also a well-educated man in secular subjects, as well as the Old Testament Scriptures.

God birthed Christianity through Jewish believers, or followers of the Way, as they were called. When the apostles entered a new city, they always went first to the Jewish synagogue to teach and preach. But the Gospel spread to many Gentile peoples through apostle Paul's missionary journeys around the Roman Empire. When the Jews consistently persecuted him and resisted the Gospel message, Paul became the "apostle to the Gentiles."

Many Christians in the first century suffered greatly, were brutally persecuted, and even martyred for their faith in Jesus Christ, but they counted it an honor to suffer and be killed for their

5. Distribute coloring page 7 to the children to color while you read.
6. Read Acts 9:1-42, as well as the background information about Paul, and the history of “The Spread of the Gospel” found in this lesson. Point out the geographic regions and cities where these readings take place on your Roman Empire wall map.
7. Ask the Reason Questions and have children respond orally.
8. Write notes on the board for the children to copy onto their “One Anothers” graphic organizers.
Discuss where in the story each “one another” is manifested.
9. Teach verse 3 of “*They’ll Know We Are Christians by Our Love*” and continue singing all your songs.
10. Conclude with a short prayer and blessing for the children.

belief in Jesus. History records that every one of Jesus’ apostles were martyred except John, “the beloved disciple.”



“Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?”

Book of Acts 13

Time: 45 minutes
spread of the Gospel

Reading: Acts 9:43-11:18

Review: The new birth in Jesus Christ; the

Principle: Prejudice and partiality have no place in the Body of Christ.

Scripture: God is not one to show partiality (Acts 10:34b).

TEACHER

Vocabulary:

centurion (n.) A Roman soldier in command of 100 men.

exclusive (adj.) Preventing others from participation.

partiality (n.) An inclination to favor one group, view, or opinion over others.

resolute (adj.) Firm in purpose or belief; determined.

trance (n.) Detachment from one's physical surrounding as in contemplation or daydreaming.

unholy (adj.) 1) Not holy; not renewed and sanctified.
2) Profane.

Preparation:

1. Read and reflect upon the assigned reading. Study the teacher vocabulary words, principle and the background materials.
2. Gather resources: Bible, Student Vocabulary Card, "Portrait of the Apostle Peter" graphic organizer, and coloring page 8, "Peter and the Roman centurion."

Lesson Background:

1. In the Mediterranean seaport of Caesarea, a centurion named Cornelius resided. Cornelius and his household were Gentile proselytes—Romans who accepted Jewish beliefs and practices and prayed to God regularly. Cornelius had a vision in which an angel of the Lord commanded him to find the apostle Peter. Cornelius immediately sent two servants and a soldier to fetch Peter.

While the men were traveling to Joppa, Peter also had a vision in which he saw a large sheet filled with animals and heard a voice telling him to "kill and eat." Peter refused, saying he had "never eaten anything impure or unclean." As an observing Jew, Peter would not have eaten anything the Law had declared unclean. The voice replied, "Do not call anything impure that God has made clean." This occurred three times, when the Spirit said to him, "Simon, three men are looking for you. So get up and go downstairs. Do not hesitate to go with them, for I have sent them." Peter met the men who recounted Cornelius's vision.

STUDENT

Key Word:

prejudice (n.) An unfair bias of mind for or against any person or thing.

Reason Questions:

1. Unbiblical traditions and prejudice can be obstacles to understanding God's ways. Give two examples of obstacles from today's reading.
2. Can you think of any ways your culture is at odds with the Gospel?
3. How might your obedience to the Gospel result in conflict with your family, community, or culture?
4. How should you respond to new experiences or information that challenge your thinking?
5. How can you be certain whether your thinking is based on truth or man's tradition?

Notebook Record:

1. Color your coloring page with your colored pencils.
2. Record the following phrases on your "Portrait of the Apostle Peter" graphic organizer:
 - Born in Galilee
 - Fisherman by trade
 - Apostle of Jesus Christ
 - Leader of the early Church

Singing:

"They'll Know We Are Christians by Our Love"

This portion of the story is quite remarkable as both men have a vision in which God speaks something extraordinary to them. Both of them, though quite astonished, were obedient to God. God was doing something new in the community of the Jewish believers. Jews were forbidden by law to fellowship with Gentiles in their homes or eat the food prepared by them. But God was teaching Peter that Jewish exclusivism had come to an end in God's plan for individuals and nations. God gave Peter a new revelation about the kingdom of God. His answer reflects that he understood God's way: "I most certainly understand now that God is not one to show partiality, but in every nation the man who fears Him and does what is right is welcome to Him." (Acts 10:34, 35)

Salvation may have been for the Jew, but now God made it available for the Gentile, as well. While Peter proclaimed Christ to Cornelius and his household, the Holy Spirit came upon all who heard the message. Peter then baptized them.

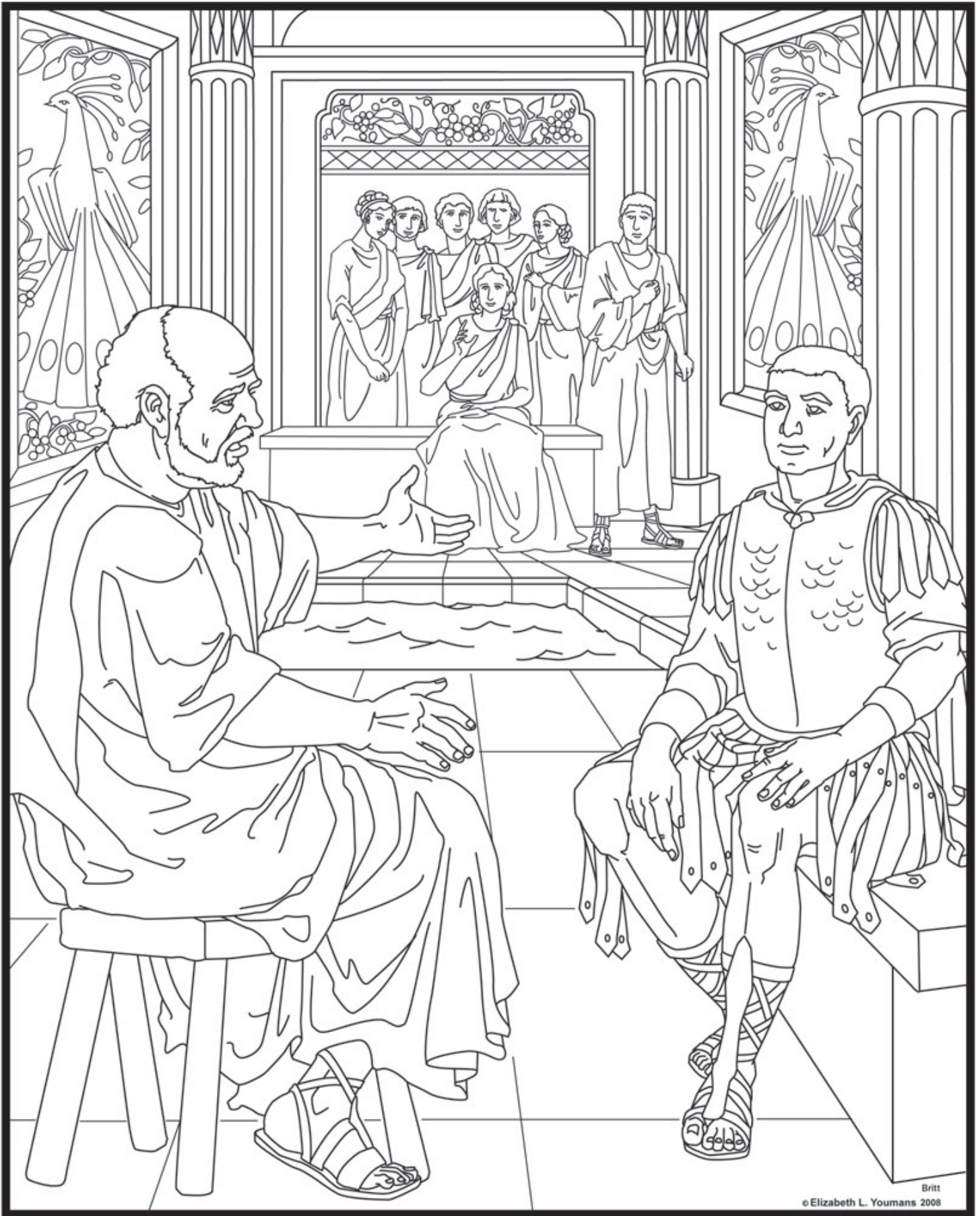
2. This was, indeed, an unexpected breakthrough. Thus far, the Gospel had been proclaimed and received by Aramaic and Hellenistic Jews, but now a Gentile household had repented and received the Holy Spirit.
3. The churches in Jerusalem and Judea heard about the event and criticized Peter for entering a Gentile home and eating Gentile food. Peter explained all that had happened and completed his defense by saying, "So, if God gave them the same gift as He gave us who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I to think that I could oppose God?" When the apostles and brothers accepted his words, they praised God saying, "So then, God has granted even the Gentiles repentance unto life." They laid aside their prejudices and followed the light! This was the birth of the Gentile church in Caesarea.
4. Just as in the 1st century, today, prejudice and partiality get in the way of God's full purposes in the 21st century Christian church. Before asking the children the Reason Questions, reflect upon your church and national culture and ask the Lord to show you areas or traditions that could be blocking the truth of God's Word from having its perfect way.

Teaching Plan:

1. Pray: *Dear Lord Jesus, pour out your Holy Spirit and illumine our minds that we may see your hand of providence in the early history of Christianity. Thank you for the faith of those who have gone before us. Give us courage and zeal to be your witnesses in our generation, just as the apostles were in theirs. Use us to spread your Gospel Story for your glory. Amen.*
2. Distribute binders to the children.
3. Review the new birth in Jesus Christ and the spread of the Gospel.
4. Pin the Student Vocabulary Card on the Treasure Chest bulletin board and define the word for the children.

Connect the vocabulary word to the new principle. Teach the principle and remind the children to listen for this principle during the reading.

5. Distribute coloring page 8 to the children to color while you read.
6. Read Acts 9:43-11:18.
7. Ask the Reason Questions and have children respond orally.
8. Write notes on the board for the children to copy onto their "Portrait of the Apostle Peter" graphic organizers.
9. Sing "*They'll Know We Are Christians by Our Love*" and all your songs.
10. Conclude with a short prayer and blessing for the children.



Britt
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Peter preaching the Gospel in the Roman centurion's house.

Book of Acts 14

Time: 45 minutes

Reading: Acts 11:18-12:25

Review: Prejudice and partiality have no place

in the Body of Christ.

Principle: The spread and success of the Gospel message is in part dependent upon Christians encouraging one another.

Scripture: Therefore, encourage one another and build up one another just as you are doing (1 Thessalonians 5:11).

TEACHER

Vocabulary:

Christian (n.) One who acknowledges Christ as Lord and Savior and adheres to His teachings. (adj.) Pertaining to Christ and His teaching.

diaspora (n.) 1) Dispersion of the Jews outside their homeland. 2) The dispersion or spread of a people, language, or culture that was originally localized.

encouragement (n.) The act of giving courage, hope of success, or support to someone.

execution (n.) Putting a condemned person to death.

famine (n.) A severe shortage of food due to crop failure resulting in violent hunger, starvation, and death.

Preparation:

1. Read and reflect upon the assigned reading. Study the teacher vocabulary words, principle and the background materials.
2. Gather resources: Bible, Student Vocabulary Card, and coloring page 9, "An angel delivers Peter from prison."

Lesson Background:

This reading has two historic events that affected the growth of the early Church:

1. The discipleship of the Antioch believers (Acts 11:19-30):
Antioch on the Orontes River was located in Asia Minor, 300 miles north of Jerusalem. In 64 B.C. Pompey made the city the capital of the Roman province of Syria. Many Hellenistic Jews resided there. Antioch became the cradle of Gentile Christianity; the first center of outreach to the Gentiles (Acts 11:20); the base from which Paul and Barnabas were sent out on their missionary journeys (Acts 13:2, 3; 15: 35-41; 18:22, 23); and a city where Peter spent time prior to relocating in Rome. (Gal 2:11)

In today's reading, believers, who had fled the Jerusalem persecution, settled as far away as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch. Most preached the Gospel to fellow Jews, but a few

STUDENT

Key Word:

encouragement (n.) The act of giving courage, hope of success, or support to someone.

Reason Questions:

1. Who were the leaders of the new converts in Antioch? In what ways did the Gentile church grow?
2. What have we learned so far in this history unit about agape love?
3. In what ways can you encourage others?
4. Describe the hand of providence in Peter's life. In Herod Agrippa's life.
5. Explain the following: Christ always triumphs over evil!

Notebook Record:

1. Color your coloring page with your colored pencils.
2. Record the following phrases on your "One Anothers" graphic organizer:
 - 13) Encourage one another (1 Thessalonians 5:11)
 - 14) Bear one another's burdens (Galatians 6:2)
 - 15) Pray for one another (James 5:16a)

Singing:

Medley of Songs

began to tell the local Greeks who received Christ. When news of these conversions reached Jerusalem, Barnabas was sent to Antioch. Barnabas, whose name means “son of encouragement,” saw the work of the Lord in the lives of these believers and rejoiced. He encouraged them mightily and large numbers came to the Lord. He realized he would need help to disciple them, so he traveled to Tarsus to find Paul. The two returned to teach and disciple the believers in Antioch for one year. Under their leadership and willingness to invest themselves in teaching and building Christian relationships, it would not be long before Antioch became the center of Christianity. It was in Antioch that the followers of Christ were first called Christians. During this time, a prophet foretold that a famine would spread over the entire Roman world. (History records this during the reign of Emperor Claudius.) The disciples in Antioch took up an offering for the believers in Judea, which Barnabas and Paul delivered. Their teaching and discipleship produced a large community of Christians who learned how to serve one another with agape love.

2. Christians Persecuted by Herod Agrippa (Acts 12:1-25):

Herod Agrippa I was Herod the Great’s grandson and the puppet king of Judea from A.D. 37 to 44. He thought highly of himself and to the shock of his Jewish subjects, Agrippa lived as a zealot defending all Jewish customs and traditions. He hated the disciples of Christ and to their horror arrested many of them. He had James, the brother of John, put to death by the sword, who became the first martyr of Jesus’ apostles. When his popularity among the Jews soared because of this murder, the sinister king had Peter seized and imprisoned.

Many Christians began to earnestly pray for Peter’s deliverance. The night before Peter’s trial, an angel awoke Peter in his prison cell and miraculously led him out of prison. Peter came to realize that he was free from prison, from Herod, and from the murderous plot and went to the house of Mary to share what had happened. Truly his deliverance was an act of God in response to their prayers! The following morning Herod conducted an unfruitful search for Peter and then ordered the men charged with guarding him to be executed.

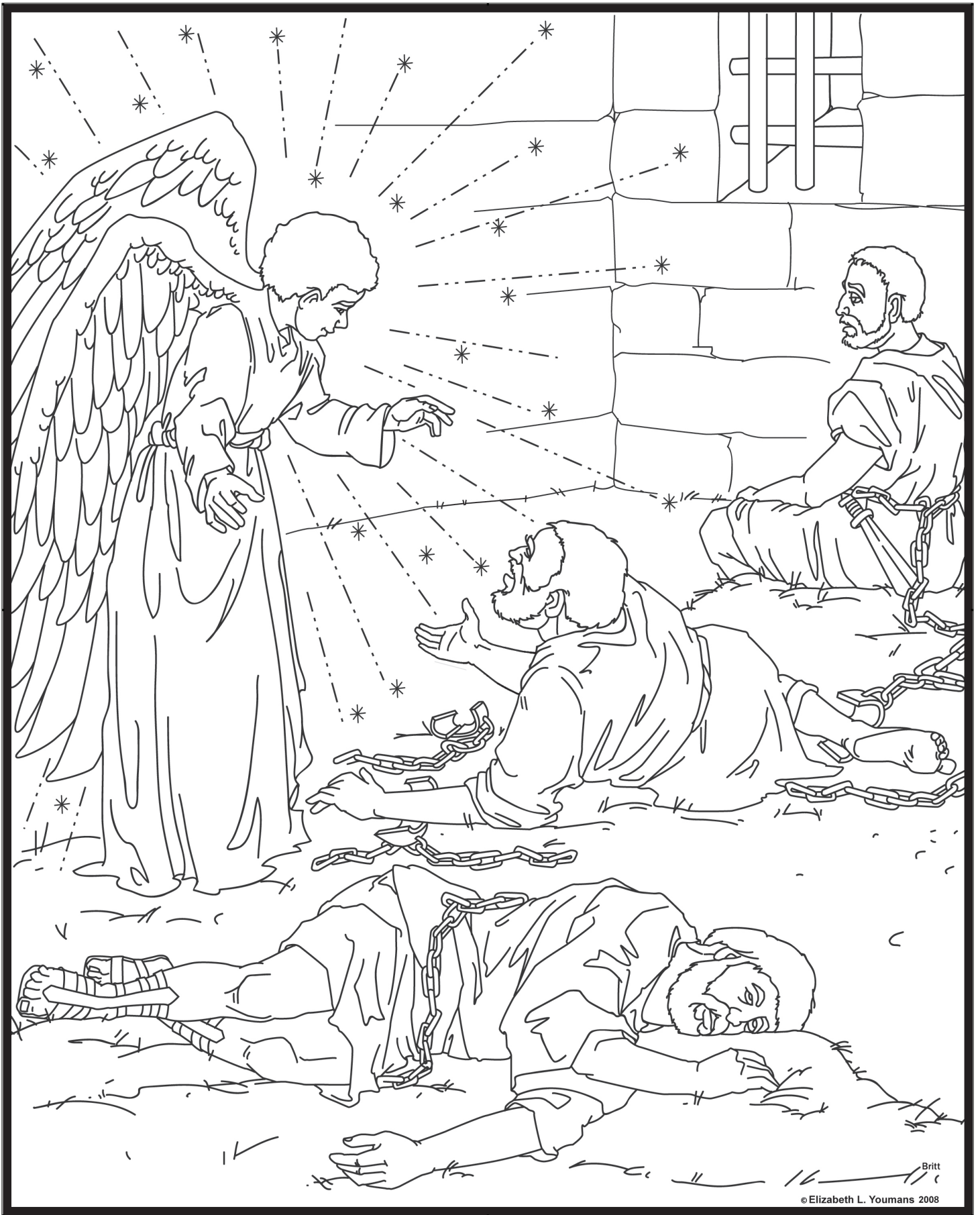
Herod traveled from Judea to Caesarea where he met with representatives of Tyre and Sidon. Herod, wearing his royal robe made wholly of silver, addressed the people. The crowd shouted, “This is the voice of a god, not of a man.” Because Herod did not rebuke them or reject their flattery, he was immediately struck down by an angel of the Lord and eaten by worms. Despite Herod’s attempt to silence the Gospel, “the word of God continued to increase and spread.” So has it been throughout all the centuries. Sooner or later, those who have opposed Christ and the Gospel have been swept aside, while the march of the triumphant Word continues.

Geographic Sites in Our Reading

- **Antioch on the Orontes River:** One of many Antiochs; Was the capital of Syria in Asia Minor; Many Hellenistic Jews lived there; Became the cradle of Gentile Christianity.
- **Cyprus:** An island in the eastern Mediterranean Sea located off the western coast of Phoenicia and Syria.
- **Phoenicia:** The province immediately north of Galilee and west of Syria; Corresponds roughly to modern day Lebanon.
- **Sidon:** Coastal city of renown in Syria north of Tyre.
- **Tarsus:** A city located in the Roman province of Cilicia. Paul’s hometown; Was a cultural city with a university; Known for learning and commerce.
- **Tyre:** Ancient coastal city in Syria known for its splendor, might, and wealth.

 **Teaching Plan:**

1. Pray: *Dear Lord Jesus, pour out your Holy Spirit and illumine our minds that we may see your hand of providence in the early history of Christianity. Thank you for the faith of those who have gone before us. Give us courage and zeal to be your witnesses in our generation, just as the apostles were in theirs. Use us to spread your Gospel Story for your glory. Amen.*
2. Distribute binders to the children.
3. Review the principle that prejudice and partiality have no place in the Body of Christ.
4. Pin the Student Vocabulary Card on the Treasure Chest bulletin board and define the word for the children.
Connect the vocabulary word to the new principle. Teach the principle and remind the children to listen for this principle during the reading.
5. Distribute coloring page 9 to the children to color while you read.
6. Read Acts 9:43-11:18. Relate some of the interesting facts from the background information.
7. Ask the Reason Questions and have children respond orally.
8. Write notes on the board for the children to copy onto their “One Anothers” graphic organizers.
Discuss where in the story each “One Another” is noted.
9. Sing the medley of all your songs.
10. Conclude with a short prayer and blessing for the children.



“Peter, get up quickly and follow me.”

Book of Acts 15

Time: 45 minutes

Reading: Acts chapters 13 and 14

Review: The role of encouragement in

the spread of the Gospel

Principle: A missionary of the Gospel is one called by God and sent by a

body of believers.

Scripture: . . . the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul for the work

to which I have called them.” Then, when they had fasted and prayed and laid hands on them, they sent them

away (Acts 13;2, 3).

TEACHER



Vocabulary:

deceit (n.) 1) A trick. 2) An attempt to deceive or lead into error.

elder (n.) A church leader who preaches, teaches the Word, and prays for the believers.

embitter (v.) To cause to be bitter or resentful.

exhortation (n.) A communication intended to persuade the recipients to take a specific action.

fasting (n.) A religious discipline requiring abstention from food and/or water for a proscribed period of time.

fraud (n.) Deliberate trickery intended to gain an advantage.

laying on of hands, A formal sign of appointment to service; invocation of faith for healing; impartation of the Holy Spirit.

proconsul (n.) The governor of a Roman province.

repudiate (v.) To reject as untrue or unfounded.

tribulation (n.) Severe affliction; troubles and distresses proceeding from persecutions.



Preparation:

1. Read and reflect upon the assigned reading. Study the teacher vocabulary words, principle and the background materials.
2. Gather resources: Bible, Student Vocabulary Card, and “Portrait of the Apostle Paul” graphic organizers.



Lesson Background:

So far the majority of the historic events have taken place in Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria, and the primary leaders have been Peter and Philip. Here, in Acts 13, the focus shifts. The apostle Paul becomes the central figure as his calling as a witness of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles manifests itself.

Paul’s First Missionary Journey: As the church in Antioch was worshiping and seeking the Lord in fasting and prayer, the Holy Spirit spoke to them to set apart Barnabas and Paul for a special

STUDENT



Key Word:

missionary (n.) One called by God and sent to spread the Gospel.



Reason Questions:

1. How were Paul and Barnabas commissioned as missionaries?
2. Where did Paul always preach first when he arrived in a new city?
3. Who believed and who opposed the Gospel in Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra?
4. What purposes do miracles serve?
5. What was Paul’s response to being stoned?
6. How did Paul and Barnabas strengthen the baby churches on their return home?
7. Would you like to be a missionary? If so, where might your mission field be located? If not, how do you see yourself serving Christ?



Notebook Record:

1. Continue to color your coloring pages.
2. Record the following phrases on your “Portrait of the Apostle Paul” graphic organizer:
 - Born in Tarsus, Cilicia
 - Well educated
 - Pharisee, studied with Rabbi Gamaliel
 - Spoke Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek and Latin.

assignment. The Christians laid hands on the two men, sent them off, and thus began the first most distinctly missionary movement which was independent of man's initiation.

2. As was Paul's custom, when visiting a city he always began teaching in the synagogue among the Jews. He frequently told his own history and how he met Jesus Christ face-to-face on the road to Damascus. He made clear to those who would listen, that the whole Gospel movement was in harmony with and fulfilled the Old Testament Scriptures. Then he would proclaim Christ to the citizens at large, often in the city square or marketplace. The Gentiles were brought to a knowledge of the truth and received the blessings of the new covenant.
3. Acts 13 records that Paul spoke boldly to the Jews saying, "It was necessary that the word of God be spoken to you first; but since you repudiate it and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles. For the Lord commanded us, 'I have placed You [Jesus] as a light for the Gentiles, that You should bring salvation to the end of the earth.'" The Gentiles' reception and the Jews' rejection (13:48-50) is the recurring theme throughout the remainder of the book of Acts.

This always stirred the hatred of the Jews who frequently persecuted Paul and Barnabas. As they traveled from city to city along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea in Asia Minor, they preached the Gospel leaving behind believers filled with the Holy Spirit and joy and unbelievers filled with hatred and repudiation. Many signs and miracles manifested themselves, which opened opportunities for them to preach and teach. With relentless anger, the persecuting Jews of Antioch and Iconium followed Paul to Lystra. "Here they stoned him and dragged him out of the city, supposing that he was dead." (14:19) This close encounter with death must have brought back memories of the stoning that killed young Stephen, of which he had been a part. In all probability, Paul would carry the marks of this fearful incident with him to the end of his life. Part of Paul's message would forever be, "Through many tribulations we enter the kingdom of God." (14:22).

4. They got as far west as Derbe and turned around to retrace their path to Antioch. They revisited all the places where they had preached and been persecuted. As they did, they strengthened and encouraged each church group and appointed elders to take the oversight of affairs. Upon returning to Antioch and the community that sent them out, they reported on their missionary experiences and all that the Lord had done.

Paul's first missionary journey (46-48 A.D.) was the shortest in time and distance, but it was a very significant event in the history of Christianity. It also established Paul as a true apostle of Jesus Christ. This first missionary journey was facilitated by the wonderful state of Roman commerce and communication that existed in the Roman Empire at that time. The Romans kept sea lanes open and relatively free from piracy. They also built a system of paved roads throughout the entire empire

Singing:

"He Is Lord"

Geographic Sites in Our Reading

- **Attalia:** A seaport on the Mediterranean Sea, now located in southern Turkey.
- **Derbe:** A city in Lycaonia.
- **Iconium:** A famous city and the capital of Lycaonia, a province in Asia Minor.
- **Lycaonia:** A province in Asia Minor.
- **Lystra:** A city in Lycaonia located on a great, fertile plain.
- **Perga:** The capital of Pamphylia on the coast of Asia Minor.
- **Pisidian Antioch:** Another city named Antioch located in Phrygia near the border of Pisidia.
- **Salamis:** A city on the southeast coast of Cyprus.
- **Seleucia:** The seaport of Antioch, Syria near the mouth of the Orontes River.

upon which the “Good News” of Jesus Christ traveled to the “remotest part of the earth.”

 **Teaching Plan:**

1. Pray: *Dear Lord Jesus, pour out your Holy Spirit and illumine our minds that we may see your hand of providence in the early history of Christianity. Thank you for the faith of those who have gone before us. Give us courage and zeal to be your witnesses in our generation, just as the apostles were in theirs. Use us to spread your Gospel Story for your glory. Amen.*
2. Distribute binders to the children.
3. Review the role of encouragement in the spread of the Gospel and the birth of the Gentile church in Antioch.
4. Pin the Student Vocabulary Card on the Treasure Chest bulletin board and define the word for the children.
Connect the vocabulary word to the new principle. Teach the principle and remind the children to listen for this principle during the reading.
5. Read Acts chapters 13 and 14. Relate some of the interesting facts from the background information.
6. Ask the Reason Questions and have children respond orally.
7. Distribute “Portrait of the Apostle Paul” graphic organizers. Write notes on the board for the children to copy onto their graphic organizers.
8. Teach the children the song, “He Is Lord.”
Melody is found online:
<http://www.ilovewavs.com/ForKids/Christian/He%20Is%20Lord.wav>
Words:
<http://www.higherpraise.com/Lyrics3/HelsLord.htm>
9. Conclude with a short prayer and blessing for the children.

Book of Acts 16

Time: 45 minutes

Reading: Acts 15

Review: The definition of a missionary and Paul's first missionary journey

Principle: In Jesus Christ we are saved by grace not by serving the law.

Scripture: For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God: not as a result of works, that no one should boast (Ephesians 2:8, 9).

TEACHER

Vocabulary:

abstain (v.) To voluntarily refrain from indulging one's appetites or passions.

catholic (adj.) Universal, general. (In *The Apostles' Creed*, it does not refer to the Roman Catholic church.)

circumcision (n.) A religious rite signifying submission to the Abrahamic covenant undergone by male Israelites at birth.

contaminate (v.) To make impure.

conversion (n.) A change of heart, from enmity with God to the love of God, that occurs when one comes to Christ by faith.

disension (n.) A disagreement in opinion which usually leads to debate or angry words or a breach of friendship and union.

unity (n.) 1) The state of being one. 2) The oneness which subsists between Christ and His saints, by which the same spirit dwells in both.

yoke (n.) 1) The collar placed on two animals that joins them together. 2) Figuratively, an oppressive burden placed upon an individual.

Preparation:

1. Read and reflect upon the assigned reading. Study the teacher vocabulary words, principle and the background materials.
2. Gather resources: Bible, Student Vocabulary Card, and *The Apostles' Creed* bookmarkers.

Lesson Background:

1. With more and more Gentiles being saved and having fellowship with the Church at Antioch, a problem developed with the Jewish believers that had to be solved. For 1,500 years, since God had given Moses the Law on Mt. Sinai, the Jews had been serving the Law. They had strict rules about what they could eat, how to prepare their food, as well as keeping covenant with God through circumcision. They knew themselves to be the chosen people of God. Jewish followers of Christ did not believe that you could be saved without

STUDENT

Key Word:

grace (n.) The free unmerited love and favor of God; the wellspring of all benefits we receive from Him.

Reason Questions:

1. How did the Holy Spirit bring unity to the apostles and elders at the Jerusalem council?
2. What did you learn from this lesson about salvation and God's grace?
3. How did the resolution of both disagreements in this lesson contribute to the spread of Christianity?

Notebook Record:

1. Continue to color your coloring pages.
2. Record the following phrases on your "Portrait of the Apostle Paul" graphic organizer:
 - Was frequently persecuted for his faith in Christ
 - Was called to the Gentile nations
 - Discipled other missionaries
 - Wrote many letters to encourage the young churches

Singing:

He Is Lord

Oral Work:

Begin to memorize *The Apostles' Creed*.

adhering to the Old Testament laws. In addition, the strict Jew never associated with Gentiles. They saw them as unclean. They would not invite them into their homes or do business with them. Now that so many Gentiles were coming to Christ, the believing Jews were faced with a crisis. Their solution was to require that Gentile believers adhere to the Judaistic laws.

2. Acts chapter 15 describes how the Judaistic and Gentile believers arrived at a peaceful and acceptable solution for both. All the apostles and church elders came together in a council in Jerusalem. Peter addressed them by telling about the vision God had given him and how God has sent him to the Gentiles. Paul and Barnabas also spoke about their ministry to the Gentiles, testifying that God makes no distinction between Jew and Gentile. James added wisdom to the council by suggesting that Gentiles not be troubled with things that were purely Jewish.

The debate ended with the apostles and elders in total agreement. A summary was written and several elders were selected to return to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas. When the church in Antioch received the message and their witness, they greatly rejoiced! Had this dissension not been completely resolved, the unity of the body of Christ, the Church, would have been shattered from the outset. This situation could have been a huge stumbling block in the growth of the Christian Church, but God in His wisdom guided their reasoning and decision making, and the Jewish and Gentile believers moved forward in a social and spiritual bond of peace and unity.

3. Another sharp disagreement is related in Acts 15 at the beginning of Paul's second missionary journey. The resolution also affected the spread of Christianity in the first century. Paul and Barnabas disagreed about taking John Mark on the trip. Paul did not trust him as he had deserted them on their last journey. Barnabas wanted to give him another chance. They could not agree, and so they separated. Paul took Silas with him and Barnabas took John Mark (the author of the second Gospel). God caused this situation "to work together for good" (Romans 8:28) as two missionary teams went out to preach and teach the Gospel. It must be noted that eventually Paul reconciled his relationship with John Mark. (Colossians 4:10; 2 Timothy 4:11; Philemon 1:24) And so the body of Christ continued to grow in the bond of peace and unity.

Teaching Plan:

1. Pray: *Dear Lord Jesus, pour out your Holy Spirit and illumine our minds that we may see your hand of providence in the early history of Christianity. Thank you for the faith of those who have gone before us. Give us courage and zeal to be your witnesses in our generation, just as the apostles were in theirs. Use us to spread your Gospel Story for your glory. Amen.*
2. Distribute binders to the children.

The word *creed* is from the Latin word *credo*, meaning "I believe." A creed is a brief summary of the principles which are believed and professed by a person.

The simplest Christian creed of the first century was "Jesus is Lord!"

The Apostles' Creed was developed in the second century as a summary of Christian doctrine for new converts in the churches of Rome wishing to be baptized. Its central doctrines are those of the Trinity and God the Creator.

In an early version, the creed was presented in question and answer format. The baptismal candidates had to answer that they believed each statement. Today, it is used in the Church as a corporate confession of belief.

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
the Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ,
His only Son our Lord:

Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended into hell.

The third day He arose again
from the dead.

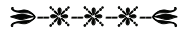
He ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand
of God the Father Almighty,
whence He shall come
to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and life everlasting.
Amen.

3. Review the definition of a missionary and Paul's first missionary journey.
4. Pin the Student Vocabulary Card on the Treasure Chest bulletin board and define the word for the children.

Connect the vocabulary word to the new principle. Teach the principle and remind the children to listen for this principle during the reading.
5. Read Acts 15 and then the Lesson Background to the children. Relate how important these two disagreements were in the whole dynamic of the growth of Christianity in the first century.
6. Ask the Reason Questions and have children respond orally.
7. Write notes on the board for the children to copy onto their "Paul's Portrait" graphic organizers.
8. Distribute *The Apostles' Creed* bookmarkers to the children. Have the children begin to memorize it.
9. Sing "He Is Lord" and the remainder of your songs.
10. Conclude with a short prayer and blessing for the children.

The Apostles' Creed



I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
the Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ,
His only Son our Lord.

Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended into hell.

The third day He arose again
from the dead.

He ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand
of God the Father Almighty,
whence He shall come
to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and life everlasting.

Amen.

The Apostles' Creed



I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
the Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ,
His only Son our Lord.

Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended into hell.

The third day He arose again
from the dead.

He ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand
of God the Father Almighty,
whence He shall come
to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and life everlasting.

Amen.

Book of Acts 17

Time: 45 minutes

Reading: Acts 16:1-18:22

Review: The outcome of the Jerusalem Council.

Principle: Comparing what is taught against the truth of Scripture is noble-minded.

Scripture: [The Bereans] were more noble-minded for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily, to see whether these things were so (Acts 17:11).

TEACHER

Vocabulary:

Areopagus, A rocky hill in Athens (also known as Mars Hill) west of the Acropolis, where citizens met for commerce and debate.

babbling (n.) An idle talker.

catacomb (n.) A cave or underground tunnel where the dead were buried in ancient Rome.

divination (n.) Foretelling future events.

Epicurean philosophers, Followers of the teachings of Epicurus, who taught that the natural world was all that existed, that there was no Creator, and that man should seek pleasure and avoid pain.

ignorance (n.) Want, absence, or destitution of knowledge.

magistrate (n.) A civil ruler.

Stoic philosophers, Followers of the teachings of Zeno, who taught that an impersonal force called the Logos created all things for man's benefit.

Preparation:

1. Read and reflect upon the assigned reading. Study the teacher vocabulary words, principle and the background materials.
2. Gather resources: Bible, Student Vocabulary Card, and coloring page 10, "Apostle Paul teaching the Greeks."

Lesson Background:

Paul's Second Missionary Journey: After the Jerusalem Council, Paul decided to return and visit the believers in every city in which they had proclaimed the Gospel to see how they were doing. Paul and Barnabas had a disagreement and separated to go their own way. Paul took Silas with him.

1. As Paul and Silas passed through Derbe, they met Timothy, a young righteous believer whose mother and grandmother were devout Jews converted under Paul's ministry and whose father was a Greek Gentile. Paul chose Timothy to be a part of his missionary team and disciplined him in the pastoral care of

STUDENT

Key Word:

noble-minded (adj.) Having a high moral or intellectual standard.

Reason Questions:

1. What was Paul's custom when he first arrived in a new city? Why did he do this?
2. Where did the Holy Spirit direct Paul and his team to go on their second missionary outreach? Why is this significant?
3. Why were the Bereans more noble-minded than the Thessalonians?
4. What would you have to do to be considered noble-minded by Luke?

Notebook Record:

1. Color your coloring page with your colored pencils.
2. Record the following phrases on your "Ways to Be a Witness for Jesus" graphic organizer:
 - 7) Persevere in times of testing (16:22-25)
 - 8) Proclaim that Jesus is Lord! (16:31)
 - 9) Practice the "One Anothers" (2:42-47)

Singing:

Medley of Songs

Oral Work:

Continue memorizing *The Apostles'*

the Church. (1 and 2 Timothy) They taught the message and decrees from the Council, which strengthened the believers in their faith, and the churches increased in numbers daily.

2. As Paul was preparing to carry the Gospel into Asia, he had a vision in which he saw a man from Macedonia appealing to him to “come over to Macedonia and help us.” Paul believed this was a message from God and changed his plans. Luke, a Greek believer and author of the book of Acts, joined Paul’s missionary team, and they departed for Europe the next day. They started in Samothrace and Neapolis and on to Philippi, Macedonia, which was built by the Romans as a “second Rome.” There was no synagogue there, so they met to pray at the riverside. They met a businesswoman named Lydia from Thyatira, who was baptized along with her whole family. She invited them to stay at her home. This would become the first Christian church in Europe. Paul and Silas were beaten and imprisoned for preaching the Gospel. Through the hand of God in an earthquake, the prison doors were opened. Paul and Silas departed, and Luke remained behind to strengthen the baby Macedonian church. It would be another six or seven years before Luke rejoined Paul, and then remained with Paul to the end of the Acts account. (16:40)

3. It was in Thessalonica that Paul and Silas encountered a mob of jealous Jews who dragged a new Greek convert named Jason to the city magistrates saying, “These men who turned the world upside down have come here to Thessalonica, too! They all act contrary to the decrees of Caesar [Emperor Claudius] saying, ‘There is another king, King Jesus.’” (17:6, 7) The Christian men sent Paul and Silas away, and they went to the Berean Jews at the synagogue. This was always Paul’s custom when he visited a city for the first time. He went first to the synagogue to reason from the Scriptures with the Jews. His pattern was the Jew first and then the Gentile. His heart was grieved for the resistance his kinsmen, the Jews, had for Christ. (Rom 9:1-5)

The Jews from Thessalonica, who gave them so much trouble, came to Berea, as well, to agitate the Greeks about their teachings. Paul was then sent to Athens, and Silas and Timothy followed him. Paul was reasoning in the marketplace daily. They took him to Areopagus, which was west of the Acropolis. Some of Paul’s best teaching is found in this chapter. There is no record of a Christian church being planted in Athens. However, Paul later states that the Corinthian church was the first assembly in Greece. (1 Cor 15:16)

4. Paul traveled on to Corinth. Silas and Timothy arrived from

Macedonia and joined Paul, who began to testify to the Jews in the synagogues that Jesus was the Christ. They were not receptive, but the ruler of the synagogue and his household believed in the Lord and were baptized. The Lord comforted Paul saying that he would not be harmed in this city despite attempts by the non-believing Jews to stir up trouble once again. Paul remained in Corinth for 18 months and then returned to Antioch, Syria.

Creed.

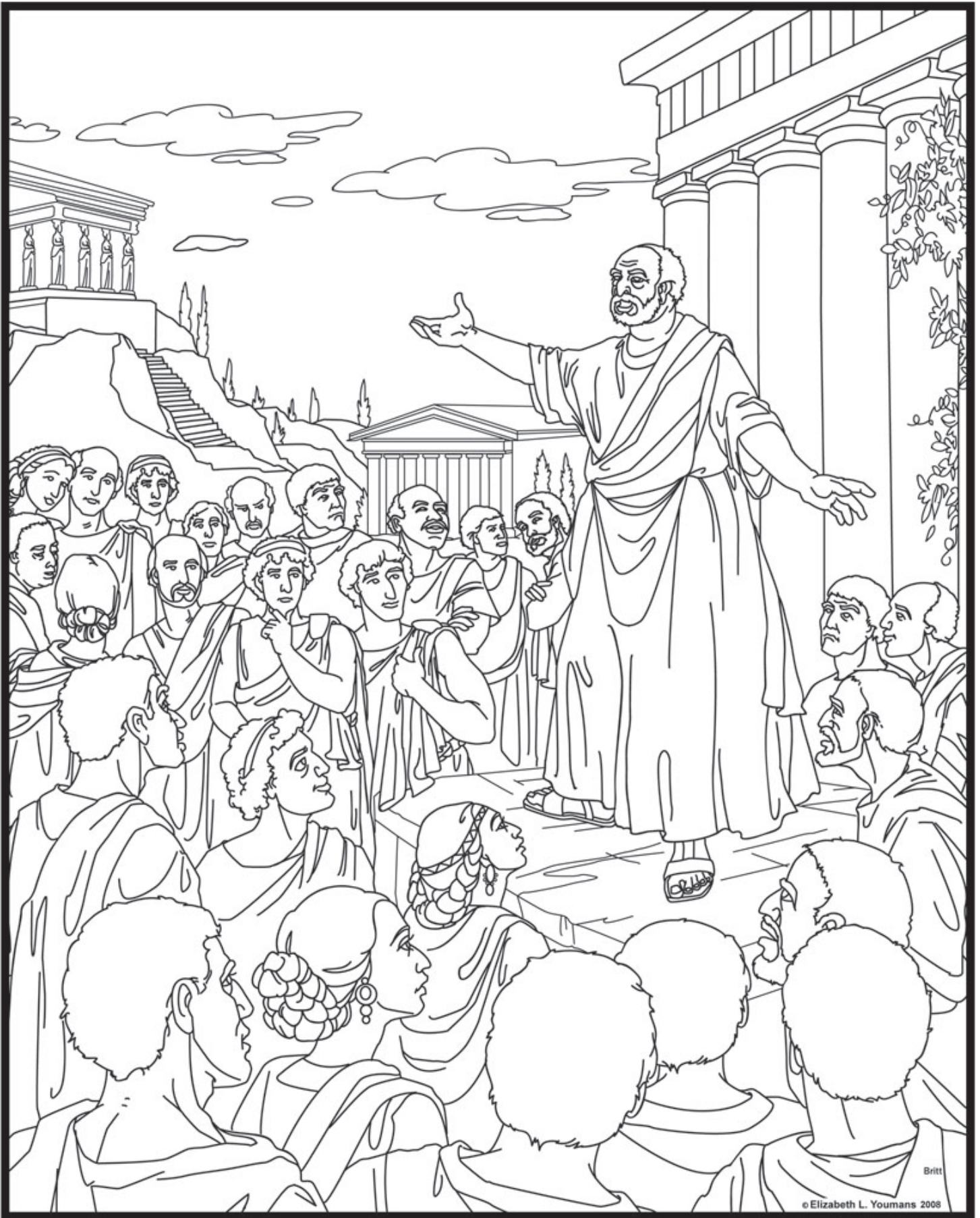
Geographic Sites in Our Reading

- **Areopagus:** A rocky hill in Athens west of the Acropolis, where citizens met for commerce and debate; also known as Mars Hill.
- **Athens:** A city in Greece renowned for its learning and sophistication, especially during the golden age of Greece.
- **Berea:** A city in Macedonia whose believers were considered “noble” because they searched Scripture to confirm the words of the apostles.
- **Bithynia:** A province in northwest Asia Minor just east of Mysia.
- **Cilicia:** A province in Asia Minor; home of the apostle Paul.
- **Corinth:** An ancient and famous city of Greece west of Athens.
- **Macedonia:** A province on the Aegean peninsula across the Dardanelles from Mysia. Birthplace of Alexander the Great.
- **Mysia:** A province in northwest Asia Minor across the Dardanelles from Thrace and Macedonia.
- **Neapolis:** A port city in Macedonia.
- **Pamphylia:** A province in Asia Minor bound by Cilicia in the east, Lycia and Phrygia in the west, Galatia in the north, and the Mediterranean Sea to the south.
- **Philippi:** The leading city in Macedonia; the “second Rome,” located on the continent of Europe.
- **Samothrace:** A small island in the Aegean Sea between Troas in Mysia and the province of Thrace.
- **Syria:** A Roman province north of Galilee. Paul was converted in Syria on the road to Damascus and the city of Antioch, Syria was the center of Gentile Christianity.
- **Thessalonica:** A large and famous capital in Macedonia where the Roman governor resided.

 **Teaching Plan:**

1. Pray: *Dear Lord Jesus, pour out your Holy Spirit and illumine our minds that we may see your hand of providence in the early history of Christianity. Thank you for the faith of those who have gone before us. Give us courage and zeal to be your witnesses in our generation, just as the apostles were in theirs. Use us to spread your Gospel Story for your glory. Amen.*
2. Distribute binders to the children.
3. Review the outcome of the Jerusalem Council.
4. Pin the Student Vocabulary Card on the Treasure Chest bulletin board and define the word for the children.
Connect the vocabulary word to the new principle. Teach the principle and remind the children to listen for this principle during the reading.
5. Distribute coloring pages to the children. Read Acts 16:1-18:22.
6. Ask the Reason Questions and have children respond orally.
7. Write notes on the board for the children to copy onto their “Ways to Be a Witness for Jesus” graphic organizers.
8. Continue working with the children to memorize *The Apostles’ Creed*.
9. Sing your medley of songs.
10. Conclude with a short prayer and blessing for the children.

- **Thyatira:** A city in Macedonia famous for its purple dye.
- **Troas:** A city on the northwestern coast of Asia Minor in the province of Mysia.



The apostle Paul teaching the Greeks about the living God

Book of Acts 18

Time: 45 minutes

Reading: Acts Reading 18

Review: Paul's second missionary journey

Principle: The Gospel has the power to turn the world upside down. **Scripture:** These that have turned the world upside down have come here also; . . . and these all do contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying, there is another king, one Jesus (Acts 17:6, 7b).

TEACHER



Vocabulary:

allegiance (n.) The loyalty that citizens owe to their country.

Anointed One, The Messiah, the Son of God, consecrated to the great office of Redeemer.

apostolic (adj.) Relating to the Apostles or their teachings.

Church (n.) 1) The Body of Christ (Eph 1:22, 23). 2) The Greek word in the New Testament is “ekklesia,” which means “the called out ones” or the gathering of local believers.

decree (n.) An established rule or law made by the emperor.

Gospel (n.) The “good news” of the kingdom of God.

herald (n.) A person who announces important news.

incense (n.) A substance that produces a fragrant odor when burned.

kerygma (n.) [Greek, proclamation.] The preaching of the Gospel in the manner of the early Church.

patriotic (adj.) Inspired by the love of one's country.

republic (n.) A form of government in which the supreme power lies in the citizens who elect their representatives.



Preparation:

1. Read and reflect upon Acts Reading 18, “The Early Church and Her Proclamation.”
2. Study the teacher vocabulary words and the principle.
3. Gather resources: Acts Reading 18, Bible, Student Vocabulary Card, and the “Royal Proclamation” graphic organizers.



Teaching Plan:

1. Pray: *Dear Lord Jesus, pour out your Holy Spirit and illumine our minds that we may see your hand of providence in the early history of Christianity. Thank you for the faith of those who have gone before us. Give us courage and zeal to be your witnesses in our generation, just as the apostles were in theirs. Use us to spread your Gospel Story for your glory. Amen.*

STUDENT



Key Word:

proclamation (n.) An official announcement.



Reason Questions:

1. What is the New Testament meaning of the word “church”?
2. Describe life in the early New Testament church.
3. What is a kerygma? a royal herald? a proclamation?
4. Why did the Christians in the Roman Empire refuse to participate in the emperor's loyalty test?
5. What was the fate of Christians when they refused?
6. Are Christians treated this way today in your country? in any place in the world? Explain your answers.



Notebook Record:

1. Complete coloring your coloring pages.
2. Write your name on the first blank line on your “Royal Herald” graphic organizer.
3. Decide on a statement of faith that you would like to write as your proclamation and then print it on your Royal Proclamation graphic organizer.



Singing:

His Banner over Me Is Love

2. Distribute binders to the children.
3. Review the noble-minded principle of examining what is taught against the truth of Scripture and Paul's second missionary journey.
4. Pin the Student Vocabulary Card on the Treasure Chest bulletin board and define the word for the children. Connect the vocabulary word to the new principle. Teach the principle and remind the children to listen for this principle during the reading.
5. Read the Acts Reading 18 to the children.
6. Ask the Reason Questions and have children respond orally.
7. The Bible tells us that if we have already confessed Jesus as Savior and Lord of our lives, we belong to Him. We are sons and daughters of the Most High King. We are "royalty"!

I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty (2 Cor 6:18).

Write the following proclamations on the chalkboard. Have the children choose one and copy onto their "Royal Proclamation" graphic organizers.

Suggestions:

- Jesus Christ is Lord!
- Jesus Christ is King!
- Jesus Christ is King of kings and Lord of lords!

8. Continue working with the children to memorize *The Apostles' Creed*.
9. Teach the children the first verse of our final song of this unit, "His Banner over Me Is Love."

Melody and Words:

<http://www.my.homewithgod.com/heavenlymidis2/banner.html>

10. Conclude with a short prayer and blessing for the children.

Oral Work:

Continue memorizing *The Apostles' Creed*.

The Early Church and Her Proclamation

The Reading for the book of Acts Lesson 18

*These that have turned the world upside down have come here also.
... and these all do contrary to the decrees of Caesar,
saying there is another king, one Jesus.
– Acts 17:6, 7b*

The Word “church” in the New Testament

The word “church” in the New Testament is the Greek word “ekklesia,” which means “the called out ones” or “assembly.” The early church was a brotherhood of believers, “those called of Jesus Christ.”¹ There was no church organization or different denominations. First century believers did not go to a building called “church.” They gathered as an “assembly” of Jewish believers at their synagogues or in their homes.

Jesus first used the word “ekklesia” when He was teaching His disciples. He asked Peter, “Who do you say that I am?” Peter answered, “You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God.” And Jesus answered him saying, “Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. And I also say to you that you are Peter [which means “little stone”], and upon this rock [the rock of revelation] I will build My church [ekklesia] and the gates of Hades shall not overpower it.”² What Jesus was saying to Peter was that the Holy Spirit had inspired Peter’s understanding about who Jesus really was, and on that understanding Jesus planned to build His Church. The Christian Church continues to exist 2,000 years later because Jesus, the Anointed One, is the Son of the Living God and holds all authority in heaven and earth.

The Early Church

Christianity in the beginning was simply the Gospel. Church organization came into existence as a result of the spread of Christianity and the multiplied numbers of converts. Churches were established by the spontaneous gathering of believers, as individuals and families were drawn together by their common belief in Jesus Christ. Their common interest in the Gospel of the kingdom of God grew to become a community united by the vital force of Christian ideas and principles. Their new ideas became a bond of union; and though not yet separated from the Jewish people, nor anticipating such a separation, they were becoming a distinct community with a life all its own.

¹ Romans 1:6

² Matthew 16:15-18

The mother church began in Jerusalem with Jesus' apostles and was essentially under their guidance. The Jerusalem church consisted of local groups of Jewish believers that grew into little republics. You will remember from our readings at the beginning of our history lessons that the republican form of government is one in which the people select their leaders to represent them. It first began in Greece and spread to Rome hundreds of years before the birth of Jesus. Each local gathering was complete in itself with elders to preach, teach and baptize new converts and deacons to serve the needs of the people. Each church was responsible to Jesus Christ for its own character. The glue that held each group together was their one faith and hope, a unity of common ideas and principles, which set them apart from all the world. Such was the apostolic New Testament Church of the first century.

Paul taught that God the Father put all things under the authority of Jesus, and appointed Him head over all things in the church, which is His body.³ Stated more simply, the Church is the mystical Body of Jesus Christ made up of believers all over the world, and Jesus is the Head over all.

The Word “Christian” in the New Testament

The word “Christian” was first used in A.D. 40 to describe the believers in Antioch, the first Gentile center of Christianity. In the beginning it was used as a term of ridicule. Roman officials most likely coined the word to differentiate the Jews who followed Jesus from the Jews who didn't follow Him. It has also been suggested by Bible scholars that “Christian” was used to designate the movement that was hostile toward king Agrippa.

Its root word, “Christ,” is a Greek word meaning, “Anointed One.” The Jewish word for Anointed One is “Messiah.” The ending of the word “Christian” means “followers of,” so the word “Christian” means “followers of the Anointed One.” Early believers called themselves “saints,” “the Way,” “brothers,” and “disciples.” In summary, the early Christians were those called out by Jesus Christ to follow Him. They met in synagogues and homes of prominent citizens for preaching, teaching, and fellowship. They were taught by elders, who nurtured them spiritually, and were served by deacons in the area of physical needs.

The Roman Emperors' Kerygma

From the reign of Caesar Augustus, Roman emperors were worshiped as human gods. This was called the Roman Imperial Cult and was considered the official religion of the Empire. Roman citizens

³ Ephesians 1:22, 23

worshipped many gods, but were required by law to proclaim their allegiance to the emperor and worship him. The emperor had temples built in all the principal cities in the Empire. The temples had altars upon which loyal citizens were required to sprinkle incense and proclaim the kerygma—“Caesar is Lord.” For the Romans, this kerygma of proclamation was an act of patriotism, and at all state functions the royal herald proclaimed, “Caesar is Lord.”

The Christians’ Kerygma

Jews were exempt from having to repeat the Roman kerygma. Even though Jews worshiped the One, True, Living God, they did not try to convert others to Judaism. However, the emperor took exception with the Christians, because they publicly proclaimed their kerygma that “Jesus Christ is Lord.” The emperor did not like that many Roman citizens were converting to Christianity, and, in fact, that the Christians were “turning his world upside down.”⁴ The loyalty of the Christians was to Jesus Christ,⁵ the King of kings and Lord of lords, and they preached that every knee should bow to Christ, the King.⁶ Their royal proclamation was a summons to the allegiance of another King⁷ besides Caesar. This offended the Roman emperor because the conversion of the Romans to Christianity spread the spirit of disloyalty. The offense was political not religious, and it had legal consequences for the Christians, which we will learn about.

Martyrdom of the Christians

In general, the Christians in the Roman Empire lived quiet, moral lives. The letters read in their gatherings, which were written by Paul and other apostles, exhorted them to obey those in civil authority.⁸ If they would not pray to the emperor and scatter incense on his temple altars, they never failed to pray for him in their meetings. In every respect, except for the matter of burning incense and proclaiming, “Caesar is lord,” they were model Roman citizens. However, the Christians openly refused to participate in this prescribed loyalty test. For this reason they were always legally in contempt of Caesar and therefore liable to punishment. Many Christians over the next 200 years of rule in the Roman Empire would be persecuted, beaten, flogged, crucified, burned, or fed to wild animals during the Roman games in the Coliseum. Martyrdom⁹ would be their eternal witness.

⁴ Acts 17:6

⁵ Romans 1:5

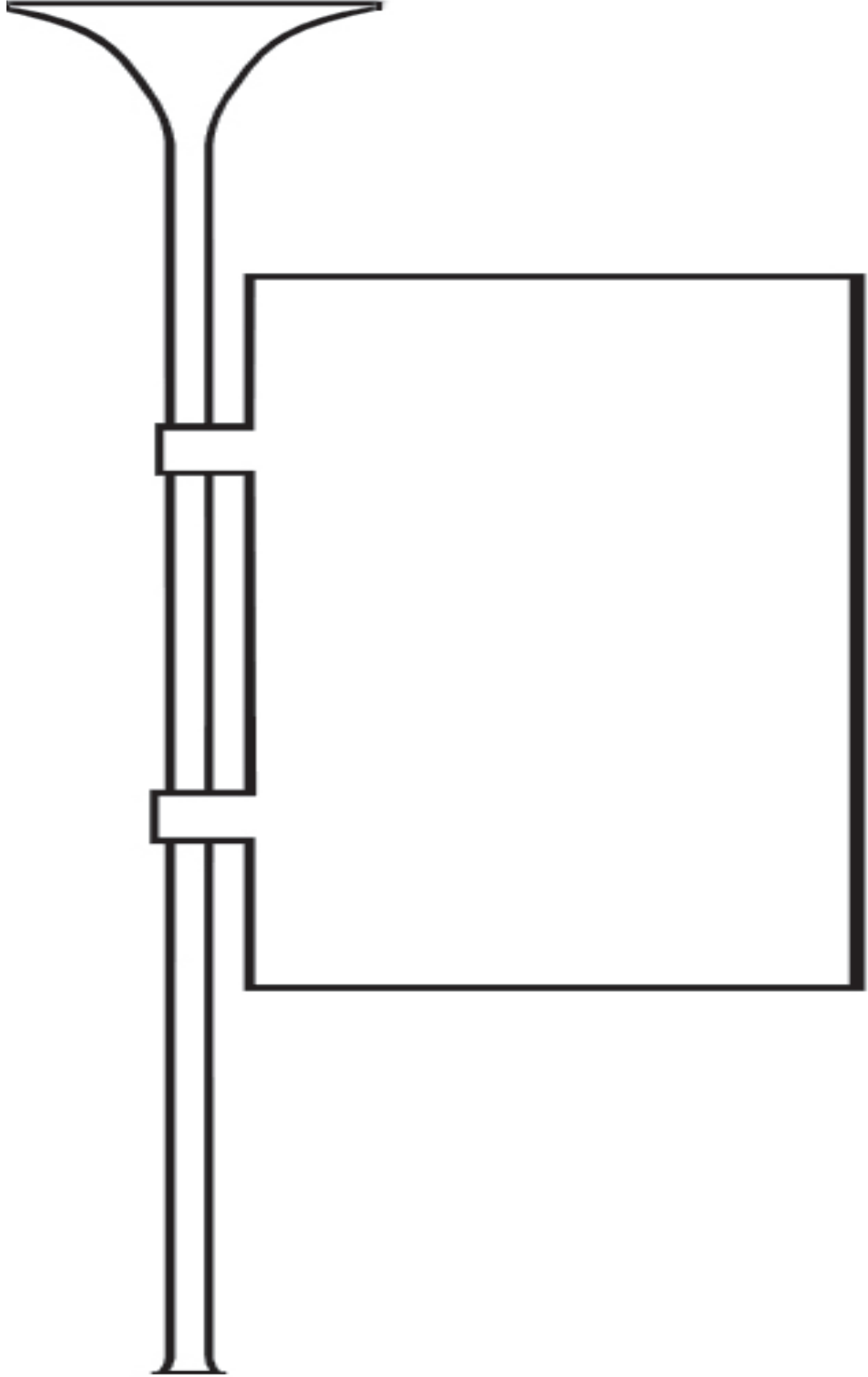
⁶ Philippians 2:11

⁷ Acts 17:7

⁸ Romans, chapter 13. The Christian view of civil rulers is that “they are servants of God.” (13:6)

⁹ “Martyr” is a Greek word, which means witness.

Royal Proclamation



Book of Acts 19

Time: 45 minutes

Reading: Acts 19:21-21:19

Review: The Gospel has the power to turn

the world upside.

Principle: Effective missionaries are those who testify of the Gospel with all humility, tears, and trials.

Scripture: From the first day I [Paul] was serving the Lord with all humility and with tears and trials (Acts 20:18b-19).

TEACHER



Vocabulary:

drachma (n.) A Greek unit of currency.

evangelist (n.) One who preaches the Gospel to unbelievers.

forbear (v.) To treat with patience and indulgence.

grievance (n.) Complaint that arises from feelings of injustice.

lecture hall of Tyrannus, Many Greek or Hellenistic cities had halls where philosophy was taught and debated. Paul lectured and taught on the kingdom of God in the hall in Ephesus.

obstinate (v.) To make hard or stiff; stubborn; to refuse to bend or agree.

overseer (n.) One charged with administrative duties.

perverse (adj.) Distorted from what is right; obstinate in the wrong; marked by immorality.

Shrine of Artemis, A pagan Greek temple dedicated to the goddess Artemis, also known as Diana. Ephesian commerce and culture were dominated by the worship of Artemis.



Preparation:

1. Read and reflect upon the assigned reading. Study the teacher vocabulary words, principle, and background materials.
2. Gather resources: Bible, Student Vocabulary Card, and coloring page 11, "Paul sails the Mediterranean."



Lesson Background:

Paul's Third Missionary Journey: Paul's third missionary journey took him first to Ephesus which began when he laid hands on the believers and they received the Holy Spirit. Paul remained in Ephesus for two years proclaiming the kingdom of God to both Jew and Greek. His ministry was marked by extraordinary signs and miracles.

1. Paul spent the next three months in Greece strengthening the hearts of the believers. A plot to kill him was devised by the local Jews, and Paul decided to return to Syria. With eight disciples waiting for him in Troas, he spent a week in ministry with the leaders and disciples there. Late one evening a young

STUDENT



Key Word:

humility (n.) The virtue of not thinking too highly of one's self.



Reason Questions:

1. Summarize Paul's third missionary journey.
2. How does Paul's ministry as an apostle compare with Peter's ministry as an apostle?
3. Why did all Paul's friends and disciples urge him not to press forward to Jerusalem?
4. What does Paul's willingness to go to Jerusalem tell you about his faith and his character?



Notebook Record:

1. Color your coloring page with your colored pencils.
2. Record the following phrases on your "One Another's" graphic organizer:
 - 16) Forbear one another. (Ephesians 4:1-3)
 - 17) Stimulate one another to love and good deeds. (Hebrews 10:24)
 - 18) Be devoted to one another. (Romans 12:10)



Singing:

His Banner over Me Is Love



Oral Work:

Continue memorizing *The Apostles' Creed*.

man, who had fallen asleep in the window of the room where Paul was speaking, fell three stories to his death. Through Paul's ministry he was brought back to life.

2. Paul left Troas in a hurry hoping to reach Jerusalem by the feast of Pentecost. On the way, he stopped at Miletus and called for the elders of the Ephesian church to come to him. This would be his farewell address, one characterized by great clarity and beauty. Reviewing his own missionary work, he made no apologies. His care for them was tenderly expressed, as they were filled with grief and tears. Paul blessed the elders and urged them to keep watch over themselves and over all the flock of which the Holy Spirit had made them overseers.

He knelt and prayed with them and explained that he was compelled by the Spirit to go to Jerusalem. He shared that in every city the Holy Spirit had warned him that prison and hardships were in his future.

3. Moving on towards Jerusalem, Paul and those with him reached Tyre. Again his disciples urged him not to go to Jerusalem, but having received a revelation from the Holy Spirit of all that lay before him, he pressed on.
4. Arriving at Caesarea in Galilee, the evangelist Philip, one of the original deacons of the Jerusalem church (Acts 6:5), offered them his hospitality. While spending some time there, the prophet Agabus prophesied over Paul and confirmed what Paul already knew from the Holy Spirit—that he was on his way to suffering at the hands of the pagans. Again, those in leadership urged him not to go to Jerusalem. Again, Paul pressed forward in the spirit of the Lord, ignoring the warnings of his friends and disciples. Like Christ, he knew what he must do, and he faced his future with great conviction and courage. Life itself was not dear to him, but being in the center of God's will and fulfilling his ministry for Christ were his greatest passion.

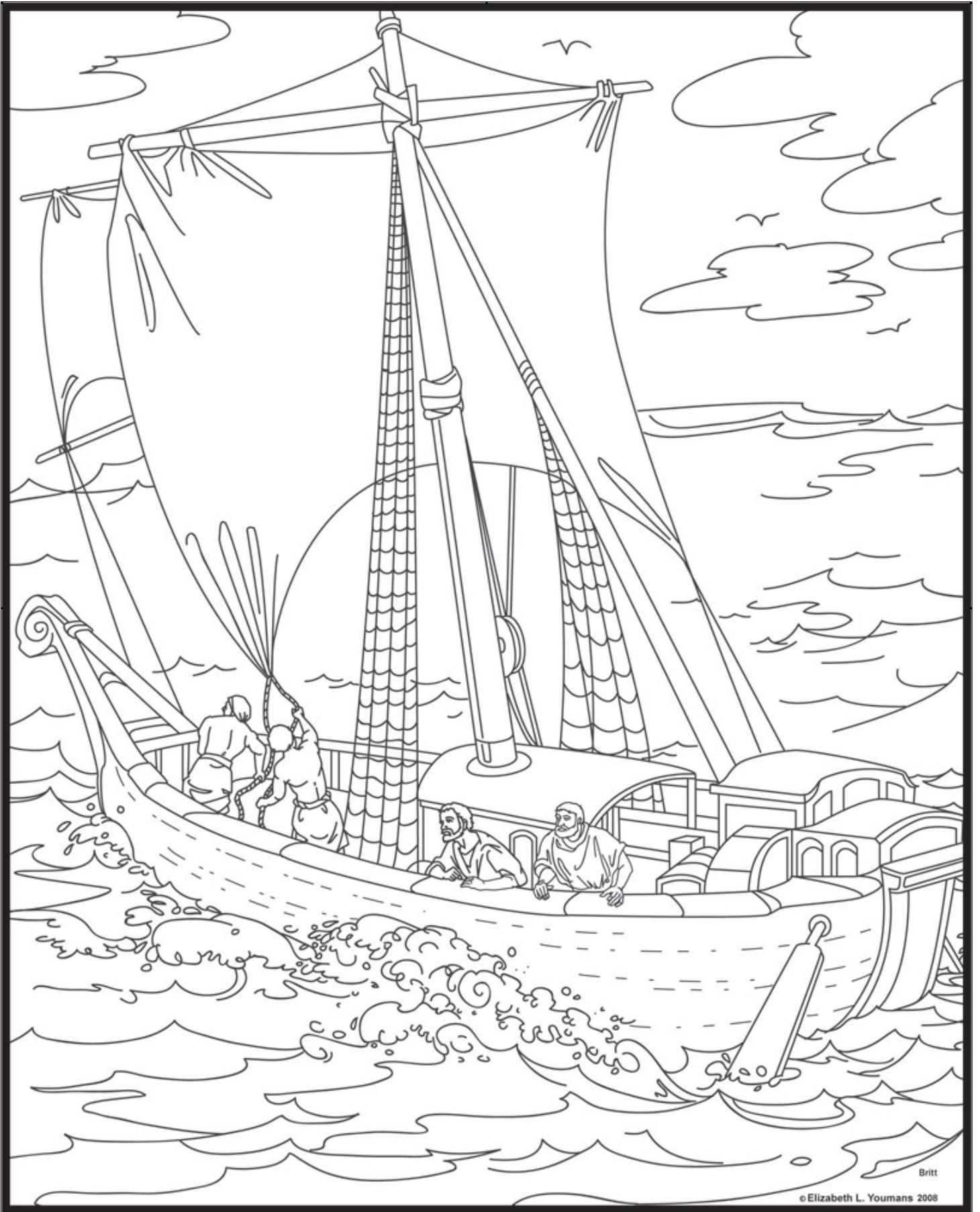
Teaching Plan:

1. Pray: *Dear Lord Jesus, pour out your Holy Spirit and illumine our minds that we may see your hand of providence in the early history of Christianity. Thank you for the faith of those who have gone before us. Give us courage and zeal to be your witnesses in our generation, just as the apostles were in theirs. Use us to spread your Gospel Story for your glory. Amen.*
2. Distribute binders to the children.
3. Review the principle that the Gospel has the power to turn the world upside.
4. Pin the Student Vocabulary Card on the Treasure Chest bulletin board and define the word for the children. Connect the vocabulary word to the new principle. Teach the principle and remind the children to listen for this principle during the reading.

Geographic Sites in Our Reading

- **Achaia:** The Roman province corresponding to Greece.
- **Ephesus:** A major port city in Asia Minor; it is due east and across the Aegean Sea from Athens.
- **Galatia:** Literally, “the land of the Gauls”; in general, the region in the center of Asia Minor.
- **Phrygia:** A region of Asia Minor west of Galatia.

5. Distribute coloring pages to the children. Read Acts 19:21-21:19.
6. Ask the Reason Questions and have children respond orally.
7. Write the notes on the chalkboard for the children to copy onto their “One Anothers” graphic organizers.
8. Continue working with the children to memorize *The Apostles’ Creed*.
9. Sing “His Banner over Me Is Love.”
10. Conclude with a short prayer and blessing for the children.



Britt
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Paul and Luke sail the Mediterranean with the Gospel.

Book of Acts 20

Time: 45 minutes

Reading: Acts 21:15-24:27

Review: Biblical profile of an effective

missionary

Principle: Keeping our conscience clear before God and man enables us to be strong

witnesses for Jesus.

Scripture: Paul, looking intently at the Council, said, "Brethren, I have lived my life with a perfectly good conscience before God up to this day" (Acts 23:1).

TEACHER



Vocabulary:

arraign (v.) To bring an accused to court to answer charges against him to see if a trial is needed.

barracks (n.) A military encampment or fortress.

cohort (n.) A unit of soldiers in a Roman legion.

conspiracy (n.) A plot to carry out something harmful or illegal.

defense (n.) In law, the defendant's reply to the demands or charges against him.

oath (n.) A solemn declaration made with an appeal to God for the truth of what is affirmed.

Pharisees (n.) A Jewish sect that believed in the Old Testament and oral traditions; they emphasized righteousness through external ritual and believed in angels, a coming Messiah, and the resurrection of the dead.

scourge (v.) To flog or whip.

terrorist (n.) An assassin; one who conceals a weapon so as to strike another down in secrecy.

vow (n.) A solemn pledge or promise to do something or to behave in a certain way.

zealous (adj.) Intense enthusiasm in the pursuit of something.



Preparation:

1. Read and reflect upon the assigned reading. Study the teacher vocabulary words, principle, and background materials.
2. Gather resources: Bible and Student Vocabulary Card.



Lesson Background:

1. Paul arrived in Jerusalem for the fifth time since becoming a Christian. Many Gentiles had repented and acknowledged Christ under his ministry, something many Jews resented. Paul, despite making a vow, engaging in purification rites, and even paying for the sacrificial animals, was accused of turning Jews away from the Law of Moses.

STUDENT



Key Word:

conscience (n.) That little spark of heavenly fire that tells me right from wrong.



Reason Questions:

1. Why were the Jews in Jerusalem ready to kill Paul?
2. Why was the Roman commander afraid when he found out Paul was a Roman citizen?
3. Why was Paul, a Jew, permitted a trial in this Roman province?
4. What did Jesus tell Paul he would soon be doing? Was this going to be easy? Who would be with Paul to strengthen him?
5. Describe something Jesus may have asked you to do that seemed difficult or impossible at the time. Did Jesus expect you to do it in your own strength? How did you respond?



Notebook Record:

1. Continue to color your coloring pages with your colored pencils.
2. Record the following phrases on your "Ways to Be a Witness for Jesus" graphic organizer:
 - 10) Reason with others from the Scriptures. (17:2, 17)
 - 11) Always glorify God's hand in your life. (21:19)
 - 12) Serve God's purposes in your own generation. (13:36)

Within a week some Jews recognized Paul in the temple. In no time a mob seized him. Soon, Roman soldiers appeared to preserve Paul's life. Paul requested and received permission to address the mob. He recounted his own conversion experience; but when he mentioned his call to the Gentiles, the mob immediately became furious once again. The soldiers whisked Paul away to their barracks and prepared to scourge and interrogate him. Paul challenged the soldier, however, asking whether it was lawful to scourge a Roman citizen who had not yet been found guilty of a crime. The commander was alarmed to discover that he had placed Paul, a Roman citizen by birth, in chains.

2. Paul was arraigned before the Jewish Sanhedrin by action of the Roman governor. A great dissension developed and the commander was fearful that Paul would be killed by the religious leaders. It was then that the Lord stood by him and said, "Take courage! As you have testified about Me in Jerusalem, so you must also testify in Rome."
3. Under Roman escort, Paul then reached Caesarea. Felix, the Roman governor, had Paul placed under guard in Herod's palace as he awaited his accusers to make their case. Paul defended himself before Felix with such faithfulness and force that it produced terror in Felix's mind.
4. Paul remained for two years in the Caesarean prison, which protected him from his enemies while waiting for his hearing. Meanwhile, Felix was succeeded by Festus as the Roman governor and left Paul in prison.

Teaching Plan:

1. Pray: *Dear Lord Jesus, pour out your Holy Spirit and illumine our minds that we may see your hand of providence in the early history of Christianity. Thank you for the faith of those who have gone before us. Give us courage and zeal to be your witnesses in our generation, just as the apostles were in theirs. Use us to spread your Gospel Story for your glory. Amen.*
2. Distribute binders to the children.
3. Review the Biblical profile of an effective missionary of the Gospel.
4. Pin the Student Vocabulary Card on the Treasure Chest bulletin board and define the word for the children. Connect the vocabulary word to the new principle. Teach the principle and remind the children to listen for this principle during the reading.
5. Read Acts 21:20-23:30 to the children.
6. Ask the Reason Questions and have children respond orally.
7. Write the notes on the chalkboard for the children to copy onto their graphic organizers.

Singing:

His Banner over Me Is Love, 2nd Verse

Oral Work:

Continue memorizing the Apostles' Creed.

Geographic Sites in Our Reading

- **Caesarea:** Mediterranean seaport in Judea built by Herod the Great and dedicated to Augustus Caesar; capital of Roman Judea.
- **Jerusalem:** The Jewish capital of Judah.

8. Continue working with the children to finish memorizing *The Apostles' Creed*.
9. Teach the second verse of "His Banner over Me Is Love" and practice the medley of other songs.
10. Conclude with a short prayer and blessing for the children.

Book of Acts 21

Time: 45 minutes

Reading: Acts 25:1-26:32

Review: Keeping a clear conscience

Principle: When brought before governors and kings on account of Jesus' name, God will give us words and wisdom that no adversary of the Gospel will be able to contradict.

Scripture: . . . Do not worry beforehand about what to say. Just say whatever is given you at the time, for it is not you speaking, but the Holy Spirit. (Mark 13:11b).

TEACHER



Vocabulary:

appeal to Caesar, Roman citizens had a legal right under Roman law to have their case heard by the highest court in Rome.

contradict (v.) 1) To oppose what has been stated. 2) To resist or deny the truth.

defense (n.) A defendant's answer or plea denying the truth of the charges against him.

Nazarene sect, Another name for Christianity; so-called because Christ grew up in Nazareth.

reform (v.) To implement new policies in order to correct abuses.



Preparation:

1. Read and reflect upon the assigned reading. Study the teacher vocabulary words, principle, and background materials.
2. Gather resources: Bible, Student Vocabulary Card, and copies of the coloring page 12 "Paul's defense before king Agrippa."



Lesson Background:

In our last reading, we read of Paul's witness in Jerusalem. This reading contains Paul's witness in Caesarea. Paul spent nearly two years imprisoned there and had an opportunity to present the Gospel to Felix, the Roman governor, Festus, who replaced Felix as governor, and king Herod Agrippa II.

1. **Paul before governor Felix:** (Not in our reading) The high priest Ananias and his entourage arrived in Caesarea to make their case before Felix. After flattering the governor, the Jewish lawyer accused Paul of being "a troublemaker, stirring up riots among the Jews all over the world," "a ringleader of the Nazarene sect," and of trying to "desecrate the temple." The governor gave Paul an opportunity to speak. Paul explained how the charges were untrue, and that he was actually being tried for believing in the resurrection of the

STUDENT



Key Word:

persuade (v.) To win over by words or deeds; to convince another of the truth.



Reason Questions:

1. Why do you think Paul never grew tired of giving his testimony or sharing the Gospel with others?
2. Although Paul was recounting his testimony and defending himself, what was his ultimate purpose in what he said to Festus and Agrippa?
3. Agrippa's statement was probably asked in a sarcastic manner. How did Paul respond to it?
4. Where did Paul get the words that he shared and the courage to say them to this Roman governor and Jewish king and queen?
5. What does God ask of His sons and daughters when we are persecuted?



Notebook Record:

1. Color your coloring page with your colored pencils.
2. Record the following phrase on your "Ways to Witness for Jesus" graphic organizer:
 - 10) When persecuted for your faith, courageously say the words the Holy Spirit gives you. (23:11)



Singing:

His Banner over Me Is Love

dead. Felix, who was familiar with Christianity, adjourned the proceedings and then called for Paul who spoke of his faith in Christ. Felix was moved by Paul's speech, but because he was hoping for a bribe and wished to win favor with the Jews, kept Paul in prison for two years.

2. Paul before governor Festus: History tells us that the Gentile governor Felix was removed and that the Gentile Porcius Festus took his place. Upon taking the office, governor Festus immediately called for Paul's trial to resume. The Jews from Jerusalem returned to Caesarea and again accused Paul. Festus, wanting to gain favor with the Jews, asked Paul if he was willing to return to Jerusalem to stand trial. Paul proclaimed his innocence and appealed to have his case tried in Caesar's court, which was his right to do as a Roman citizen.
3. Paul before king Agrippa: King Agrippa Herod II and his wife Bernice (who was his sister!) came to Caesarea to pay their respects to the newly named governor. The visit was an impressive one. The leaders attended in full state, surrounded by the military authorities, with all due pomp and ceremony.

Festus told Agrippa and Bernice about Paul, and the two asked for an audience with the apostle. Paul's two-fold response included: 1) his own defense, and 2) the declaration of the way of salvation. He made plain "the way of life!" The learned Jewish king Agrippa sneered, "In a short time you will persuade me to become a Christian." Meanwhile, Festus thought Paul mad for believing in the resurrection from the dead. Both Agrippa and Festus agreed that Paul had not violated the law. Nevertheless, because Paul had appealed to Caesar, Festus was compelled to send him to Rome.

4. The Lord had already spoken to Paul that he must be a witness for the cause of Jesus Christ in Rome. Therefore, we know this was God's will for the apostle, and that He would provide for his every need and the words for his defense.

Jesus had also spoken to His disciples before He was crucified saying,

"You must be on your guard. You will be handed over to the local councils and flogged in the synagogues. On account of Me you will stand before governors and kings as witnesses to them. And the gospel must first be preached to all nations. Whenever you are arrested and brought to trial, do not worry beforehand about what to say. Just say whatever is given you at the time, for it is not you speaking, but the Holy Spirit. . . And you will be hated by all on account of My name, but the one who endures to the end, he shall be saved" (Mark 13:9-11, 13).

Courageously, Paul purposed in his heart to be a witness for Christ in Rome, the capital of the vast Roman Empire. Paul's confession in a later letter to the Roman church describes his understanding that nothing could separate him from the love of God:

Oral Work:

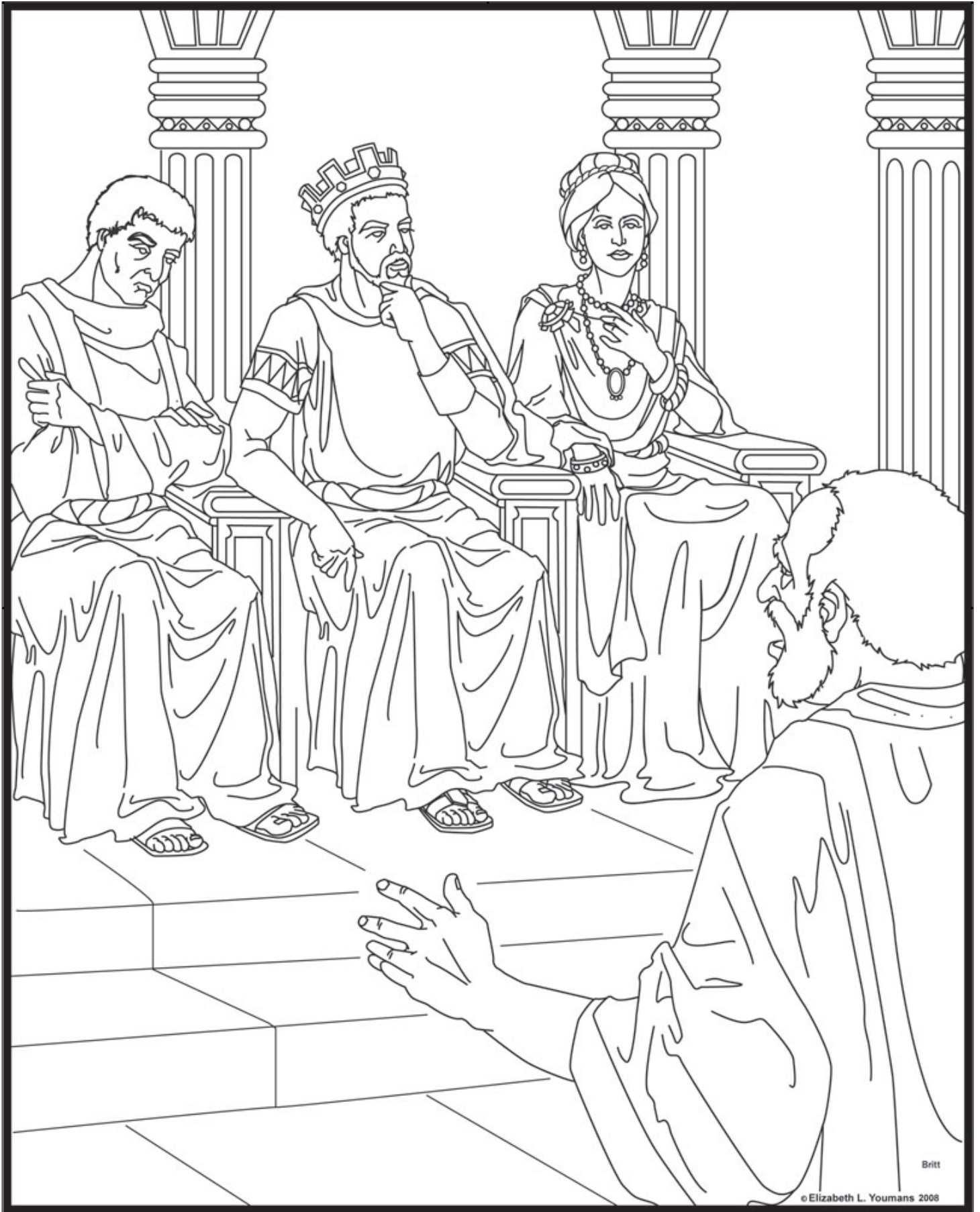
Continue memorizing *The Apostles' Creed*.

Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? . . . But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom 8:35, 37-39).



Teaching Plan:

1. Pray: *Dear Lord Jesus, pour out your Holy Spirit and illumine our minds that we may see your hand of providence in the early history of Christianity. Thank you for the faith of those who have gone before us. Give us courage and zeal to be your witnesses in our generation, just as the apostles were in theirs. Use us to spread your Gospel Story for your glory. Amen.*
2. Distribute binders to the children.
3. Review why it's important to keep a clear conscience with God and man.
4. Pin the Student Vocabulary Card on the Treasure Chest bulletin board and define the word for the children.
Connect the vocabulary word to the new principle. Teach the principle and remind the children to listen for this principle during the reading.
5. Distribute coloring pages to the children. Read Acts chapters 25 and 26 to the children.
6. Ask the Reason Questions and have children respond orally.
7. Write the notes on the chalkboard for the children to copy onto their graphic organizers.
8. Continue working with the children to finish memorizing *The Apostles' Creed*.
9. Teach the third verse of "His Banner over Me Is Love."
10. Conclude with a short prayer and blessing for the children.



Britt

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Paul's defense before governor Festus and king Agrippa.

Book of Acts 22

Time: 45 minutes

Reading: Acts 27:1-28:31

Review: The Holy Spirit's help in time of

defense

Principle: Even when difficulties and dangers multiply, God's eternal plan goes forward by His overruling hand!

Scripture: For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, can separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 8:38, 39).

TEACHER



Vocabulary:

Adramyttian ship, From the port of Adramyttian on the west coast of Asia Minor just south of Troas.

Alexandrian ship, From the port of Alexandria, Egypt in northern Africa.

assail (v.) To launch an attack either physically or emotionally.

Euraquilo, A treacherous east-northeast wind.

jettison (v.) To throw away something that is encumbering.

reef (n.) A submerged ridge of rock near the surface of the water.

shallows (n.) A stretch of shallow water.

stern (n.) The rear part of a ship.

tackle (n.) Equipment found on a ship such as ropes and riggings.

viper (n.) A venomous snake.



Preparation:

1. Read and reflect upon the assigned reading. Study the teacher vocabulary words, principle, and background materials.
2. Gather resources: Bible, Student Vocabulary Card, and copies of the "My Creed" graphic organizer.



Lesson Background:

Because Paul had appealed to Caesar, Governor Festus was compelled to send him to Rome guarded by a Roman centurion. The study of Paul's last voyage contains experiences that are common to all saints who live by faith. On the one hand, difficulties and dangers continued to multiply. On the other hand, God's purpose was being carried out. It seemed as though all the forces were combined in an effort to prevent his arrival in Rome; and yet, we see how all were guided, cared for, comforted, and encouraged. From the beginning to the end, there was no complaint spoken by this servant of the Master!

STUDENT



Key Word:

His hand, God's eternal and overruling power in the affairs of individuals and nations for His Story.



Reason Questions:

1. Why do you suppose Paul found so much favor with Julius the centurion when he had the responsibility of delivering Paul to Rome?
2. Notice how superstitious the natives of Malta were. How did their opinions about Paul change over time? What caused this?
3. Romans 8:28 says, "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to His purpose." Illustrate this principle from the calamities that Paul faced.
4. Share an experience of how God has used a challenge or danger for your welfare.
5. What do you think was Paul's creed of faith?



Notebook Record:

1. Complete coloring all your coloring pages with your colored pencils.
2. Write your personal creed on your "Royal Herald" graphic organizer.



Singing:

His Banner Over Me Is Love

1. They set sail, and the ship hugged the coast of Phoenicia and southern Asia Minor. They harbored on Crete; but rather than heed Paul's warning that it was too late in the season to proceed further, the pilot, ship owner, and centurion all ignored his advice and pressed on. A fierce storm arose and threatened the ship. The crew sent cargo and tackle overboard to lighten the load, but after many dark days the passengers finally gave up all hope of being saved. Paul reminded the passengers of his warning and then proceeded to comfort them—he must stand trial before Caesar and, though the ship would be destroyed, not one life would be lost. Fourteen days later Paul urged all to eat and then ordered that the rest of the grain be thrown overboard. The next morning the ship ran aground and began to break up. The soldiers planned to kill the prisoners, but the centurion prevented them from doing so. Those who could swim were ordered to jump overboard while the rest paddled to shore on debris. All 276 of them survived.
2. The shipwrecked passengers had landed on Malta and found the natives to be unusually kind. Because it was raining they built a fire, but while Paul gathered wood from a brush pile, a viper fastened itself to his hand. The islanders were convinced he was a murderer and that the viper was divine judgment. However, Paul shook off the viper and suffered no ill effects. When he did not suffer or die, the islanders changed their minds and decided he was a god. Paul and his companions were invited to the home of an official. While there, they learned that the official's father was sick. He was healed after Paul prayed and laid hands upon him. After that, the islanders brought their sick to Paul and were cured. They then provided the passengers with the means to sail to Italy.
3. Paul and his companions eventually arrived in Rome where a church had formed sometime before. Paul was placed under house arrest, but was permitted to receive and teach visitors about the kingdom of God. He spent two very fruitful years in Rome and wrote letters to the churches at Ephesus, Philippi, Colossi, and to Philemon.
4. Acts ends rather abruptly, but is illuminating. The burden of Paul's preaching was the kingdom of God. Luke's closing words are historic and prophetic, "with all openness, unhindered." They tell us of the wonder of how the overruling Hand of God made a prisoner in the imperial city for two years an apostle of the King of kings and used his letters to the churches he had established all over the empire to inspire, encourage, and instruct millions of believers through the millennia.

Scholars generally agree that Paul was acquitted of charges and released. Romans 15:28 tells us that Paul desired to preach the Gospel in Spain, but we can only speculate as to whether he actually made a fourth missionary journey. Paul wrote letters to Timothy and Titus after his release, but was eventually arrested again, taken back to Rome, and martyred (beheaded) around A.D. 67. Paul is one of the greatest figures in history, and his life is worthy of our study and emulation.

Oral Work:

Practice reciting *The Apostles' Creed* for your Agape Feast celebration.

Geographic Sites in Our Reading

- **Crete:** A large, fertile island south of Athens in the Aegean Sea.
- **Italy:** The peninsula south of the Alps Mountains in Europe that juts out into the Mediterranean Sea; the primary province of the Roman Empire.
- **Lasea:** The ancient town of Crete, south of Candia, near the harbor called Fair Havens.
- **Malta:** A small, rocky island south of Sicily and north of Africa.
- **Rome:** The capital city of the Roman Empire; located in Italy.
- **Syracuse:** A large port on the coast of Sicily (an island just off the southwest tip of the Italian peninsula). It was founded as a Greek colony centuries before Paul's arrival.

 **Teaching Plan:**

1. Pray: *Dear Lord Jesus, pour out your Holy Spirit and illumine our minds that we may see your Hand of Providence in the early history of Christianity. Thank you for the faith of those who have gone before us. Give us courage and zeal to be your witnesses in our generation, just as the apostles were in theirs. Use us to spread your Gospel Story for your glory. Amen.*
2. Distribute binders to the children.
3. Review the help that the Holy Spirit provides when defending oneself for the sake of Jesus Christ.
4. Pin the Student Vocabulary Card on the Treasure Chest bulletin board and define the word for the children.

Connect the vocabulary word to the new principle. Teach the principle and remind the children to listen for this principle during the reading.
5. Read Acts chapters 27 and 28 to the children.
6. Ask the Reason Questions and have children respond orally.
7. Distribute the “My Creed” graphic organizers. Ask the children to think carefully about a simple creed that would personalize their belief. Have them write it on their graphic organizers. If they can’t think of anything, have them get out their Apostles’ Creed bookmarkers and select something from it. There are two lessons given to complete this assignment.
8. Practice reciting *The Apostles’ Creed* for the children’s presentation at your Agape Feast celebration.
9. Sing *His Banner over Me Is Love* and the complete medley of songs the children have learned throughout this unit.
10. Conclude with a short prayer and blessing for the children.

My Creed

*The Lamb will overcome them because He is Lord of lords and King of kings.
- Revelation 17:14b*

Book of Acts 23

Time: 45 minutes

Reading: Acts Reading 23

Review: Even when difficulties and dangers

multiply, God's eternal plan goes forward by His overruling Hand!

Principle: The fiery trials and

persecution that God's people must often endure do not compare with knowing Jesus and walking in fellowship with other believers.

Scripture: I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish in order that I may gain Christ (Philippians 3:8).

TEACHER

Vocabulary:

charity (n.) Love, benevolence, good will; that disposition of heart which inclines men to think favorably of their fellow men and to do them good.

imperial (adj.) Relating to or associated with an empire.

Judaism (n.) The religious doctrines and rites of the Jews.

legacy (n.) A gift handed down from the past or an ancestor.

persecution (n.) The infliction of unjust punishment, pain, or death for adherence to a particular creed or manner of worship.

plague (n.) An epidemic disease with a high death rate.

plight (n.) An unpleasant or trying situation from which it is difficult to escape.

scourge (v.) To whip severely.

tolerate (v.) To allow or permit without hindrance.

tribulation (n.) A severe distress that proceeds from persecution.

Preparation:

1. Read and reflect upon the Acts Reading 23. Study the teacher vocabulary words, principle, and background materials.

Based on the ages of your students and their walk with the Lord, choose which story of Blandina you will read to them.

2. Gather resources: Acts Reading 23, Bible, Student Vocabulary Card, and coloring page 12, "A young witness sharing the Good News."

Teaching Plan:

1. Pray: *Dear Lord Jesus, pour out your Holy Spirit and illumine our minds that we may see your Hand of Providence in the early history of Christianity. Thank you for the faith of those who have gone before us. Give us courage and zeal to be your witnesses in our*

STUDENT

Key Word:

fellowship (n.) 1) Partnership; a state of being together. 2) Intimate communion with others.

Reason Questions:

1. Who first persecuted the early Church? What changed in A.D. 64?
2. How did the Gospel spread so quickly throughout the Roman Empire?
3. What was the center of Christian fellowship?
4. What were the Christians known for in their communities and cities?
5. Can you explain how the Roman persecution of the Christians caused the Church to grow?
6. Does one have to be a preacher or a missionary to be a witness for Jesus? Explain your answer.
7. What will your witness be in your community? How will you fulfill this?

Notebook Record:

1. Color your last coloring page with your colored pencils.
2. Transfer your personal creed onto your "My Creed" graphic organizer.

Singing:

Medley of Songs

generation, just as the apostles were in theirs. Use us to spread your Gospel Story for your glory. Amen.

2. Distribute binders to the children.
3. Review the principle that even when difficulties and dangers multiply, God's eternal plan goes forward by His overruling Hand!
4. Pin the Student Vocabulary Card on the Treasure Chest bulletin board and define the word for the children. Connect the vocabulary word to the new principle. Teach the principle and remind the children to listen for this principle during the reading.
5. Read the Acts Reading 23 to the children.
6. Ask the Reason Questions and have children respond orally.
7. Have the children finish transferring their personal creed onto the "My Creed" graphic organizers.
8. Practice reciting *The Apostles' Creed* for the children's presentation at your Agape Meal celebration.
9. Sing the medley of songs.
10. Conclude with a short prayer and blessing for the children.

Oral Work:

Practice reciting *The Apostles' Creed* and your assigned presentations for the Agape Meal celebration.

To the Remotest Part of the Earth

The Reading for the book of Acts Lesson 23

“The blood of the martyrs became the seed of the Church.”

– Tertullian, 3rd century A.D.



*Young Blandina in the Roman amphitheater
one of the Lyons martyrs of the 2nd century*

First Century Christian Church

The book of Acts, which describes the birth of Christianity and its first thirty years in the Roman Empire, ends abruptly with the apostle Paul in prison awaiting his trial. We will learn later what happened to apostle Paul, as well as the other apostles, but first let's summarize the history of God's Hand in these early years. They were important years of transition that laid the foundation for the Christian Church. With the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon Jesus' disciples on the Day of Pentecost, the Old Testament pattern of synagogue and temple were made obsolete.¹ No longer were priests needed to offer animal sacrifices to atone for the sins of the Jews, because Jesus' perfect sacrifice on the cross became the final atonement for man's sins. Jesus Himself had predicted the destruction of the Jerusalem temple.² God gave a new pattern of worship when He sent forth the Holy Spirit to indwell each believer. Now, as the apostle Paul taught, "your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you."³

The Gospel was preached first to Jews, so the newborn Church was largely Jewish believers. However, most Jews rejected Jesus as their Messiah. As the apostle Paul and other apostles preached and witnessed of Jesus Christ throughout the Empire, the Church grew to become primarily Gentile

¹ Dowley, T. (Ed.) (1977.) *The history of Christianity*. Oxford, England: Lion Publishing. p. 19.

² Matthew 24:2

³ 1 Corinthians 6:19

believers. As more Gentiles were added to the Church, it grew apart from Judaism, especially after the Roman Army destroyed the city of Jerusalem and burned the temple in A.D. 70. After this Jewish-Roman war, most of the Jews left Judea and dispersed to other cities and regions in the Empire.

The early Christians joyfully served and supported one another. To embrace the Gospel meant to embrace one another in brotherhood and fellowship as members of the family of God. As Paul wrote to the Ephesians,

So now you Gentiles are no longer strangers and foreigners. You are citizens along with all of God's holy people. You are members of God's family. Together, we are His house, built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets. And the cornerstone is Christ Jesus Himself. We are carefully joined together in Him, becoming a holy temple for the Lord. Through Him you Gentiles are also being made part of this dwelling where God lives by his Spirit.⁴

The Holy Spirit not only transformed the lives of individuals but also created a new community of shared life and work. Proclaiming the Gospel and discipling others became the new fellowship, and the Gospel spread like wildfire. The first century Church was united in spirit, as Christians were of one accord in heart and mind. Their unity ignited the power of God as miraculous signs and wonders accompanied the apostles' preaching and ministry. These miracles drew many to Jesus Christ; but many more thousands came to Christ as individuals shared their personal testimonies, witnessed to their changed lives, and served quietly as the hands and feet of Jesus in their communities. We do not have their names written in our history books, but their witness brought many into the kingdom of God. Their witness also brought a tremendous cost to them, as well.

Persecution Increases

The first century Church was assaulted by suffering and trials, persecution, torture, and martyrdom. For the first thirty years, this tribulation came from the Jewish religious leaders and Jewish king Agrippa. However, after A.D. 64 there were imperial actions against Christians as the Roman government attempted to crush Christianity. This was remarkable for two reasons: 1) The pagan Romans had always worshiped many gods and goddesses and tolerated the worship of foreign gods in their Empire; and 2) The Christians held to a noble standard of charity that ministered to the sick and the poor. In following Jesus' commandment "to love your neighbor as yourself,"⁵ they understood that brotherly love was to be extended to both the least lovable and the most hostile. As we have learned from the book of Acts, Christians demonstrated their love by serving the needs of one another with kindness and generosity, even while being persecuted. And it was not just other

⁴ Ephesians 2:19-22, NLT

⁵ Matthew 22:36; Matthew 25:34-46; 1 John 4:11, 12

Christians they served, but all who needed help in their local communities. During the plagues that spread throughout the Roman Empire, the doctors and wealthy pagans fled the cities, but the Christians stayed and cared for the sick and dying. That sacrificial love fueled the growth of the early Church. This is the consistent testimony throughout the centuries. Today, history credits Christians with building the first hospitals and orphanages, as well as feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, and visiting prisoners.⁶

Christianity had reached the city of Rome as early as A.D. 58, where a large body of believers lived. The apostle Paul in his letter to the Romans commended them for their great faith saying, “your faith is being proclaimed throughout the whole world.”⁷ In the summer of 64, Rome suffered a terrible fire that burned for six days and consumed nearly three-fourths of the city! The citizens blamed Emperor Nero (who by all accounts was insane) for setting the fire for his own amusement. His response was to blame the local Christians and arrest and torture them. His cruel methods for putting them to death were so ghastly, that great compassion for their plight was felt among the Romans towards the Christians. This was one of many great persecutions of Christians during the four and a half centuries that the Roman Empire existed. But it seemed that the more the enemy tried to purge the Empire of Christians, the more Christianity spread. As Jesus had told His apostles, “the gates of Hell would not prevail against His Church.” Neither the Jewish religious leaders and kings nor the powerful Roman emperors and their mighty armies could extinguish the fire of the Holy Spirit. Christian churches continued to be established throughout the Mediterranean provinces, Asia Minor, northern Africa, and western Europe. The Hand of God used the Pax Romana, the Jewish synagogues, the Roman roads and seaways, and the Greek language as His instruments for the spread of the Gospel. And the fiery tribulation and opposition fanned the flame of the Gospel causing it to burn brighter and the faith of believers to grow stronger!

The Age of the Apostles Ends

Before the close of the first century, all of Jesus’ apostles were martyred except the apostle John. It began as early as A.D. 44 with the apostle James, the brother of John, who was beheaded by the Jewish king Herod Agrippa.⁸ Both the apostle Peter and the apostle Paul were martyred in the city of Rome. Peter was hung upside down and crucified on a cross, and Paul was beheaded at the request of Emperor Nero. Each one counted it an honor to suffer and die for the name of Jesus!

⁶ James 1:27

⁷ Romans 1:8

⁸ Acts 12:2

The Catacombs

Christians in the second and third centuries expected to die for their faith. As the persecutions and the hunt for Christians intensified, many of the followers of Christ literally went underground to the catacombs to avoid capture. The catacombs were underground burial sites that the Christians made by tunneling into the soft rock. There they gathered to worship God and honor the lives of the martyrs. How they were able to live underground for long periods of time without detection by the Romans remains a mystery. Obviously, the mighty Hand of God preserved and protected them, and they were strengthened inwardly for the call of fellowship in Christ's sufferings. Much early Christian art can be found on the walls of the catacombs, and if you visit Rome today, you can still see many of their paintings and Christian symbols on the walls.

The Witness of Young Blandina

There was a great persecution in the second century during the reign of emperor Marcus Aurelius. In Lyons, Gaul (now France) in the year A.D. 177, an event took place in which a number of Christians, who had confessed their faith, were thrown into prison. Among those tortured was a young slave girl in her teens named Blandina. Her companions greatly feared that, because of her frail body, she might not persevere under torture and betray her faith in Jesus Christ. Although she was tortured in a very cruel manner, she remained faithful and answered every question saying, "I am a Christian, and we commit no wrongdoing."

Option I Reading for Older Children:

Instructions were sent from the emperor to behead all Roman citizens who persisted in the faith, but to torture those without citizenship until they died. As a slave, Blandina was therefore subjected to new tortures with a number of her young male companions. With each new assault, these youths were given the opportunity to recant their faith in Jesus Christ, but they would not! They were taken to the large Roman amphitheater in which the Romans were gathered for their pagan public games. Blandina was bound to a stake, and wild beasts were set loose upon her. According to legend, the lions did not touch her, as was the case of the young prophet Daniel in the Old Testament! After enduring the lions for a number of days, she was led into the arena to watch the sufferings of her companions. She was heard encouraging them to remain strong in their faith in Jesus Christ, as they died one-by-one. Blandina was now the last of the martyrs. She was scourged, placed on a red-hot grate, enclosed in a net, and thrown to a raging bull, which tossed her about with its horns. She finally

met her Savior and Lord face-to-face, when she was killed with a dagger. Her story has remained throughout the centuries as a testimony to the amazing grace of God in her life, as she endured the cruelest of Roman atrocities.

Option 2 Reading for Younger Children:

Instructions were sent from the emperor to behead all Roman citizens who persisted in the faith, but to torture those without citizenship until they died. As a slave, Blandina was therefore subjected to new tortures with a number of her young male companions. This took place in the large Roman amphitheater during the pagan public games. She was bound to a stake, and wild beasts were set loose upon her. According to legend, the lions did not touch her, as was the case of the young prophet Daniel in the Old Testament! After enduring the lions for a number of days, she was led into the arena to watch the sufferings of her companions. She was heard encouraging them to remain strong in their faith in Jesus Christ, as they died one by one. Blandina was the last to die, and her story has remained throughout the centuries as a testimony to the amazing grace of God in her life as she endured the cruelest of Roman atrocities.

The account of these very young martyrs of Lyons, which was written in a letter to the saints in Asia Minor by a Christian who escaped, closes with these words of exhortation, “The inner strength of these martyrs, in enduring these cruel and most bitter tortures with so much constancy, proves to us that those who really love Jesus Christ and are dedicated to His service, can easily overcome, by the assistance of God’s grace, whatever tribulations we are doomed to suffer in this life.”⁹

Third Century Christianity

One hundred years of Christianity produced a Christian minority in almost every province of the Roman Empire and several countries to the east. After another fifty years, around A.D. 300, Christians formed a majority of the population in parts of the provinces of Africa and Asia Minor.¹⁰ Finally, the emperor Constantine himself had a conversion experience with Christ and decreed Christianity the state religion of the entire Roman Empire in A.D. 312. As historian Tertullian wrote in his account during the third century, “the blood of the martyrs became the seed of the Church.”

⁹ From a letter by Alphonse, who survived the slaughters of Lyons, to the saints in Asia Minor, which historian Eusebius included in his writings, HE 5.1.47.

¹⁰ Dowley, T. (Ed.) (1977.) *The history of Christianity*. Oxford, England: Lion Publishing.

Your Witness for Jesus Christ

Today, we Christians have a great legacy of God's providence and power in our Christian history. Before God created the world, He had a plan to reveal Himself through individuals and events throughout time "in the remotest parts of the earth!" Two thousand years have passed since the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Truly, as Luke wrote in his Acts of the Apostles, "these men who have turned the world upside down have come here also saying, there is another king, King Jesus!"¹¹ As Christians, we are called to share this "Good News" and turn our own world upside down—in our families, our schools, our communities, and ultimately our nations—whatever the cost may be.

Persecution in the 21st century comes in many ways depending upon the culture in which we find ourselves. Are you prepared? Like the apostles and the young slave, Blandina, is your faith strong enough to witness of your belief in Jesus Christ in your family, your neighborhood, and your school? Are you ready to share God's transforming story with others? Is your personal lifestyle one that loves and serves others in agape love? If God is asking you to do this, then He will give you the words and the courage. We must believe by faith as did the apostle Paul and confess:

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? . . . In all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.¹²

Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.¹³

¹¹ Acts 17:6, 7

¹² Romans 8:35, 37-39

¹³ 1 Timothy 1:17

A Portion of Foxe's Book of Martyrs, 1563

John Foxe, an English Protestant of the 16th century, wrote an account of the persecutions of Protestants, mainly in England, many of whom had died for their beliefs within the decade immediately preceding its first publication in 1563. He also wrote a history of persecution within the Christian Church, beginning with Stephen, the first martyr in the New Testament.

"After the Bible itself, no book so profoundly influenced early Protestant sentiment as the *Book of Martyrs*. Even in our time it is still a living force. It is more than a record of persecution. It is an arsenal of controversy, a storehouse of romance, as well as a source of edification." (Forbush)

Following is Foxe's description of the death of Jesus' apostles and several other New Testament leaders that lived in the first century:

"1. **Stephen:** Stephen suffered the next [after Jesus Christ] in order. His death was occasioned by the faithful manner in which he preached the Gospel to the betrayers and murderers of Christ. To such a degree of madness were they excited, that they cast him out of the city and stoned him to death. The time when he suffered is generally supposed to have been at the Passover, which succeeded to that of our Lord's crucifixion, and to the era of his ascension, in the following spring.

"Upon this a great persecution was raised against all who professed their belief in Christ as the Messiah, or as a prophet. We are immediately told by St. Luke, "there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem;" and that "they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles."

"About two thousand Christians, with Nicanor, one of the seven deacons, suffered martyrdom during the "persecution that arose about Stephen."

"2. **James the Great:** The next martyr we meet with, according to St. Luke, in the History of the Apostles' Acts, was James the son of Zebedee, the elder brother of John, and a relative of our Lord; for his mother Salome was cousin-german to the Virgin Mary. It was not until ten years after the death of Stephen that the second martyrdom took place; for no sooner had Herod Agrippa been appointed governor of Judea, than, with a view to ingratiate himself with them, he raised a sharp persecution against the Christians, and determined to make an effectual blow, by striking at their leaders. The account given us by an eminent primitive writer, Clemens Alexandrinus, ought not to be overlooked; that, as James was led to the place of martyrdom, his accuser was brought to repent of his conduct by the apostle's extraordinary courage and undauntedness, and fell down at his feet to request his pardon, professing himself a Christian, and resolving that James should not receive the crown of martyrdom alone. Hence they were both beheaded at the same time. Thus did the first apostolic martyr cheerfully and resolutely receive that cup, which he had told our Savior he was ready to drink. Timon and Parmenas suffered martyrdom about the same time; the one at Philippi, and the other in Macedonia. These events took place A.D. 44.

"3. **Philip:** Was born at Bethsaida, in Galilee and was first called by the name of "disciple." He labored diligently in Upper Asia, and suffered martyrdom at Heliopolis, in Phrygia. He was scourged, thrown into prison, and afterwards crucified, A.D. 54.

"4. **Matthew:** Whose occupation was that of a toll-gatherer, was born at Nazareth. He wrote his gospel in Hebrew, which was afterwards translated into Greek by James the Less. The scene of his labors was Parthia, and Ethiopia, in which latter country he suffered martyrdom, being slain with a halberd in the city of Nadabah, A.D. 60.

“5. **James the Less:** Is supposed by some to have been the brother of our Lord. . . . He was elected to the oversight of the churches of Jerusalem; and was the author of the Epistle ascribed to James in the sacred canon. At the age of ninety-four he was beaten and stoned by the Jews; and finally had his brains dashed out with a fuller's club.

“6. **Matthias:** Of whom less is known than of most of the other disciples, was elected to fill the vacant place of Judas. He was stoned at Jerusalem and then beheaded.

“7. **Andrew:** Was the brother of Peter. He preached the gospel to many Asiatic nations; but on his arrival at Edessa he was taken and crucified on a cross, the two ends of which were fixed transversely in the ground. Hence the derivation of the term, St. Andrew's Cross.

“8. **Mark:** Was born of Jewish parents of the tribe of Levi. He is supposed to have been converted to Christianity by Peter, whom he served as an amanuensis, and under whose inspection he wrote his Gospel in the Greek language. Mark was dragged to pieces by the people of Alexandria, at the great solemnity of Serapis their idol, ending his life under their merciless hands.

“9. **Peter:** Among many other saints, the blessed apostle Peter was condemned to death, and crucified, as some do write, at Rome. . . . Hegesippus said that Nero sought matter against Peter to put him to death; which, when the people perceived, they entreated Peter with much ado that he would flee the city. Peter, through their importunity at length persuaded, prepared himself to avoid it. But, coming to the gate, he saw the Lord Christ come to meet him, to whom he, worshipping, said, "Lord, whither dost Thou go?" To whom He answered and said, "I am come again to be crucified." By this, Peter, perceiving his suffering to be understood, returned into the city. Jerome said that he was crucified, his head being down and his feet upward, himself so requiring, because he was (he said) unworthy to be crucified after the same form and manner as the Lord was.

“10. **Paul:** Paul, the apostle, who before was called Saul, after his great travail and unspeakable labors in promoting the Gospel of Christ, suffered also in this first persecution under Nero. Abdias, declared that under his execution Nero sent two of his esquires, Ferega and Parthemius, to bring him word of his death. They, coming to Paul instructing the people, desired him to pray for them, that they might believe; who told them that shortly after they should believe and be baptized at His sepulcher. This done, the soldiers came and led him out of the city to the place of execution, where he, after his prayers were made, gave his neck to the sword.

“11. **Jude:** The brother of James, was commonly called Thaddeus. He was crucified at Edessa, A.D. 72.

“12. **Bartholomew:** Preached in several countries, and having translated the Gospel of Matthew into the language of India, he propagated it in that country. He was at length cruelly beaten and then crucified by the impatient idolaters.

“13. **Thomas:** Called Didymus, preached the Gospel in Parthia and India, where exciting the rage of the pagan priests, he was martyred by being thrust through with a spear.

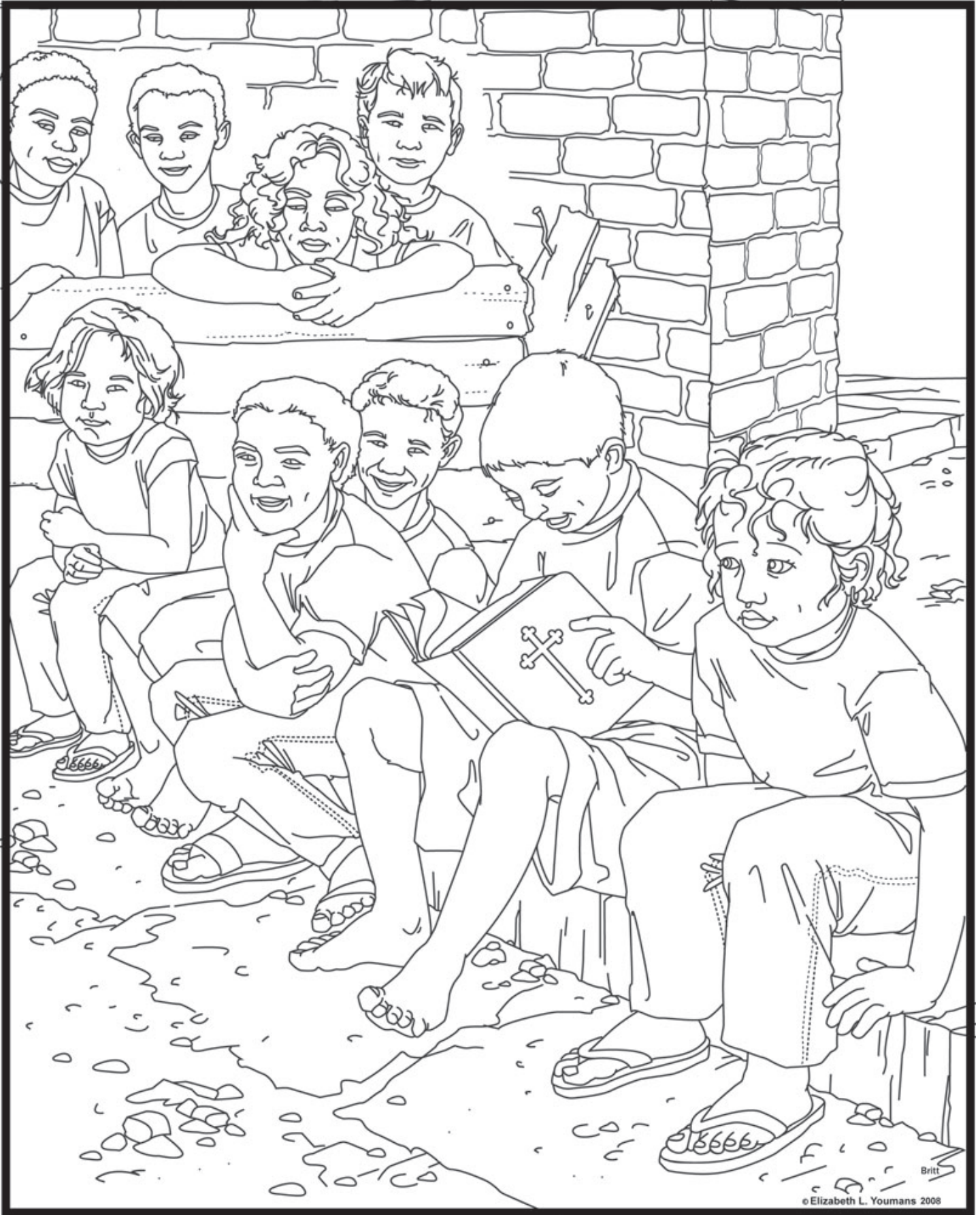
“14. **Luke:** The evangelist, was the author of the Gospel which goes under his name. He traveled with Paul through various countries, and is supposed to have been hanged on an olive tree, by the idolatrous priests of Greece.

“15. **Simon:** Surnamed Zelotes, preached the Gospel in Mauritania, Africa, and even in Britain, in which latter country he was crucified, A.D. 74.

“16. **John:** The “beloved disciple,” was brother to James the Great. He founded the churches of Smyrna, Pergamum, Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodicea, and Thyatira. From Ephesus he was ordered to be sent to Rome, where it is affirmed he was cast into a cauldron of boiling oil. He escaped by miracle, without injury. Domitian afterwards banished him to the Isle of Patmos, where he wrote the Book of Revelation. Nerva, the successor of Domitian, recalled him. He was the only apostle who escaped a violent death.

“17. **Barnabas:** Was of Cyprus, but of Jewish descent, his death is supposed to have taken place about A.D. 73.

“And yet, notwithstanding all these continual persecutions and horrible punishments, the Church daily increased, deeply rooted in the doctrine of the apostles and of men apostolical, and watered plenteously with the blood of saints.”



A young witness sharing the Good News.

Agape Meal Celebration



*Day by day continuing with one mind and breaking bread from house to house,
they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart,
praising God and having favor with all the people.
And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved.*

— Acts 2:46, 47

This AMO® celebration is inspired by the unity and fellowship that the first century Christians enjoyed, as the Gospel was preached and the Lord continued to add to their numbers daily. They enjoyed communion around a simple table of food, much like our 21st century church potluck dinners, and they celebrated the Lord's Supper together in one accord ending with praises and joyful singing. We desire to celebrate in the same spirit.

The celebration of learning is designed to 1) memorialize the completion of our AMO providential history unit, the *Book of Acts*—a study of the birth of Christianity and the spread of the Gospel of the kingdom of God; and to 2) encourage the children to follow Christ as the first century Christians did, being willing to be His witnesses wherever He leads them in life.

Goals:

1. Memorialize our study of *the book of Acts* in a spirit of Christian fellowship, worship, and unity
2. Commune and fellowship like the first century Christians through an agape meal
3. Give each child opportunities to sing, recite, and testify to the faithfulness of God

Events:

Opening Exercises; Share the themes of this providential history unit
Crown of Life Craft
What It Means to be a Witness for Jesus Christ in the 21st Century
Invitation to Dine and Prayer
The Agape Meal
Singing and Recitation: *The Apostles' Creed*; Royal Proclamation; and Creeds
The Lord's Supper (if appropriate)
Pledge to Uphold the New Testament "One Another's" with Each Other
Concluding Prayer

Length of Time Needed for the Celebration:

2 hours

Preparation:

1. Decide on a location for your agape meal based on the number that will attend. If your ministry building has a large multi-purpose room, plan how you can utilize this space to accommodate your meal.
2. Invite your pastor/minister/priest to attend and ask him if he would offer the sacrament of the Lord's Supper with a small teaching for the children.
3. Create tables "first-century-style" by placing panels of particleboard on cinder blocks or sturdy boxes for the base. People reclined at tables low to the ground for meals and fellowship. Arrange in large U-shaped patterns so all can sit on both sides of the tables. Cover with paper tablecloths.
4. The children have made mosaic placemats, which can be placed around the tables.
5. Print the place cards with the "One Anothers" on them. (Located with the Resources.) Cut and fold in half. Write the names of the children and coordinate with their individual placemat.
6. Decorate the center of the tables with the children's oil lamps and some of their scrolls. Set platters of fresh fruit and pitchers of grape juice on the tables. If you have a large clay chalice, place it in the center of the table with the bread.
7. Hang the children's mobiles of Christian symbols from the ceiling over the tables.
8. Practice songs, reciting *The Apostles' Creed*, and presentations.
9. Ask the children to dress in a simple first-century costume. Clothing for the Jews and the Gentiles was highly influenced by the Roman culture:

Girls	Boys
1. long tunic of a solid color, belted at the waist, with a rectangle of cloth over the head and shoulders	1. long tunic with a rectangle of cloth over the shoulders
2. sandals	2. sandals
3. wear shorts and T-shirt underneath	3. wear shorts and T-shirt underneath
4. crown of life	4. crown of life

A tunic is easily made from an old, solid-colored sheet: Fold in half with the fold at the top. Cut a hole in the center of the folded fabric for the head and sew or glue the sides together leaving an opening for both arms to go through. Cut the length as needed.

10. Assign one mother or grandmother to organize the preparation of the food, its service, and cleanup with other mothers. Plan a simple Mediterranean meal:

Broiled Fish

Cooked Fresh Vegetables

Seasoned Sliced Tomatoes in Olive Oil

Assorted Cheeses and Olives

Fresh Baked Bread and Olive Oil for Dipping

Fresh Fruit, especially Grapes and Dates

Pitchers of Grape Juice

11. Set the table with utensils, plates, and glasses and put out salt in small bowls.
12. Serve the food "family style."
13. Assign someone to take photos of the celebration.

Opening Exercises:

Open with prayer.

Summarize the themes of *the book of Acts*.

Introduce the children to the key vocabulary word for the celebration

communion (n.) 1) Fellowship in worship and doctrine with two or more people. 2) The act of celebrating the Lord's Supper.

Crown of Life Craft:

Instruct the children on how to make their crowns of life.

Help them dress in their costumes and crowns and prepare their hearts and minds for the Agape Meal celebration.

Invitation to Dine:

*He brought me to the banqueting house,
and his banner over me is love. — Song of Solomon 2:4*

Have the children enter the fellowship hall. Select two children to carry their "Maranatha Banner," while singing "His Banner over Me Is Love."

Hang the banner on the wall.

Have either the AMO Program director or one of the teachers review what it means to be a witness for Jesus Christ.

Introduce all the foods that are on the table and share their importance in the first century diet of the Mediterranean culture, which is one of the healthiest in the world.

Pray for the meal, the fellowship, and the time of praise and worship.

The Agape Meal:

Enjoy your first-century, Mediterranean meal.

Recitation, Singing and Sharing:

Recite *The Apostles' Creed*.

Select individual children to read their Royal Proclamations and Creeds.

Offer each child the opportunity to testify or give thanks for what this providential history unit has meant to him spiritually.

Sing "Go Tell It on the Mountain"; "Spirit of the Living God"; and "He Is Lord"

The Lord's Supper/Communion/Eucharist (optional):

Introduce the pastor/minister/priest you have invited to instruct and serve The Lord's Supper. Invite those who have received Christ as their Savior to partake of it.

“One Anothers” Pledge:

Write a simple pledge for the children to read to uphold with one another. Have them form a circle and hold hands as they make the pledge and sing the following song.

Sing:

“They’ll Know We Are Christians by Our Love”

Conclude with Blessings and Prayer:

With the laying on of hands, have the pastor and teachers invoke a blessing for each child.

Pray that each child will follow Christ all his days and be a witness for Christ throughout his life.

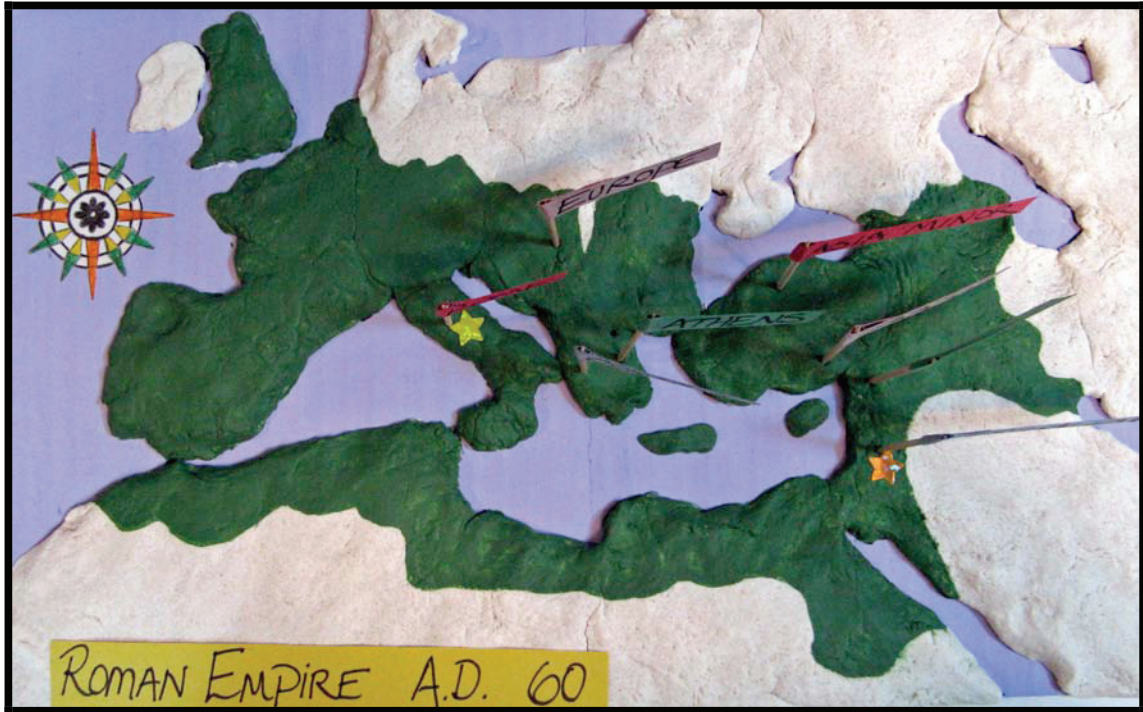
Arts and Crafts Lesson Plans

Every child is an artist.

The problem is how to remain an artist once he grows up.

~ Pablo Picasso ~

Salt Dough Map



This is a project for children ages 9 years and older.

Our Project:

Each child will make and label a salt dough map of the Roman Empire.

Supplies:

- salt dough
- 1 cardboard base (15 x 9 inches) per child
- light blue spray paint
- 1 Roman Empire map (Use the Roman Empire map coloring page enlarged to fit 15 x 9 inch base.)
- construction paper for labels and compass rose
- green acrylic paint and brushes
- toothpicks
- black pens and magic markers
- star stickers (2 per map)
- scissors
- glue

Instructions:

1. Create a sample salt dough map.
2. The teacher should prepare the cardboard bases and spray paint blue. Also enlarge and duplicate one Roman Empire map for each child.
3. Have children cut away all bodies of water from the map. Save and cut out all large islands.
4. Distribute a blue cardboard base to each child. Have them trace their Roman Empire on the base. Be certain to trace the islands, as well.
5. Press and mold salt dough into the land areas leaving water exposed.
6. Insert toothpicks for cities and continents being labeled.
7. Allow to dry for at least 2 days.
8. Remove toothpicks and paint Roman Empire area green. Leave remainder of the land white.
9. Make labels and glue to toothpicks. Insert labels in correct places.
10. Glue star stickers near Rome and Jerusalem.
11. Design a compass rose on white paper and color with magic markers. Cut out and glue to map.

Salt Dough:

4 cups flour 1 cup salt
1½ cups hot tap water 2 tablespoons vegetable oil

1. Mix and knead until soft like clay.
2. Store in a sealed plastic bag or container until ready to use.
3. Allow maps to air dry. **(Do not bake in oven.)**

Map Labels:

ROMAN EMPIRE A.D. 60

Rome

Athens

Corinth

Tarsus

Jerusalem

Caesarea

Antioch

Asia Minor

Europe

Clay Oil Lamps



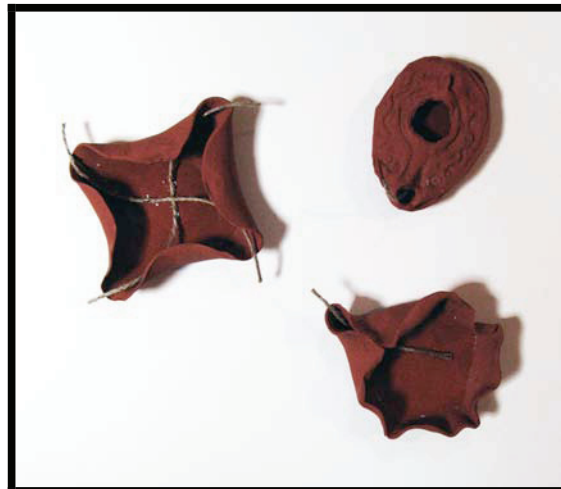
*Thy word is a lamp unto my feet
and a light unto my path.
– Psalm 119:105*

Early lamps were small clay bowls made by hand and filled with olive oil. A flax or wool wick floated in the oil and was lit to produce light. Other lamps had a tapered spout with the wick emerging from the end. The lamps held little oil and needed constant refilling. They did not shed much light and were often placed on a lamp stand to brighten a larger area.

Clay is a naturally occurring material that can be pinched, molded, rolled or coiled into almost any shape. Children love to work with clay and will love making these oil lamps.

Materials

Clay (terra-cotta)	Toothpicks
Glaze and brush	Piece of string or yarn for a wick
Dish with water	Oil (if you want to burn the “wick”)



Instructions:

1. Create a sample to show the children.
2. Distribute a piece of clay to each child and have them “work it” into a ball with their hands.
3. Insert thumbs into the clay ball until the bottom is nearly reached. Begin to press outward, making the hole larger as the clay is rotated. Work slowly to fashion into a flat-bottomed bowl.
4. Keep fingers moist with water, but not too wet so as not to weaken the clay. The object is to get the sides of the lamp thin, but not so thin that a hole forms! Try to keep the thickness of the lamp the same on all sides, as well as smooth.
5. For a spout like Figure A, pinch over a finger, or fashion four wide-mouthed spouts as in Figure B.
6. Decorate the lamp by gently pressing a toothpick into the clay to make several Christian symbols. Have each child put his or her initials on the bottom.
7. Let the oil lamps dry for one week. When the terra-cotta clay lightens in color, paint with a glaze. Fire lamps in a kiln.
8. When cool, insert a piece of yarn or string, add oil and light, if permitted.

Samples of Oil Lamps from the Time of Jesus Christ:



Figure A



Figure B



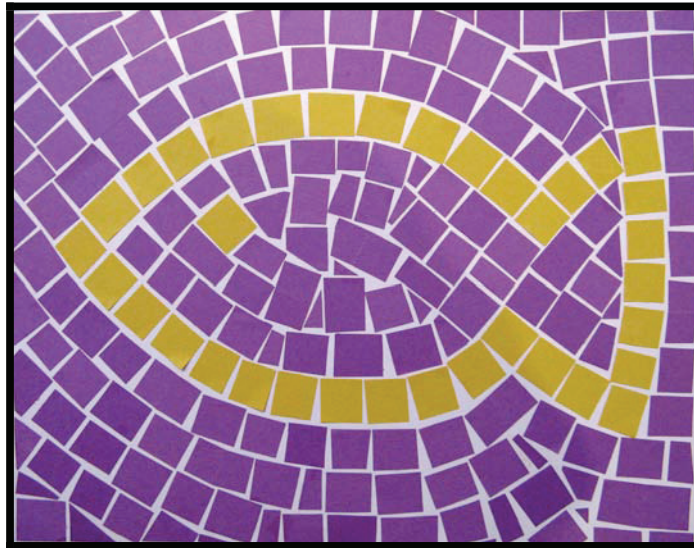
Figure C



Figure D

Mosaic Placemat

A project inspired by the beautiful Greek and Roman mosaic floors and walls.



A fish was used by early Christians as a sign of their faith in Jesus Christ.

History of Mosaics:

Mosaic art began in ancient Mesopotamia with the Sumerians, who decorated a temple with broken pieces of seashells and onyx in the fourth millennium B.C. In Greece, there are ancient remains of mosaic floors made of pieces of rubble and natural pebbles. In Macedonia a fourth century B.C. king's residence has elaborate mosaic floors inspired by the ancient myths. They are remarkable for their workmanship.

Mosaics spread from Greece to Italy and developed there during the Roman Empire, especially in Pompeii and Rome. Wealthy Romans decorated the floors and walls of their houses, temples, and baths. After the death of Jesus Christ, Christians decorated many floors and walls using natural stones, colored glass, and marble. Mosaic art reached its highest level of quality in Ravenna, Italy during the Byzantine Era.

Our Project:

Children make a mosaic placemat to use at their Agape Meal celebration.

Supplies:

- construction paper in two contrasting colors
- 1 sheet of white paper (15 by 12 inches) for each child
- pencils
- scissors
- rubber cement glue

Instructions for Class:

1. Create a sample placemat.
2. With a pencil, have children draw a fish pattern on their white sheet of paper.
3. Have children cut their tiles into squares (1 inch) from two colors of paper.
4. Select one color tile and glue onto the fish pattern, leaving white space between tiles to look like grout.
5. With contrasting tiles fill the remainder of the white paper. Some of the tiles will need to be cut to fit.

Maranatha Banner

He brought me to His banqueting table, and His banner over me is love.

— Song of Solomon 2:4



Our Project:

Children work together to create one classroom banner. Each child creates his or her face to glue onto the banner. Older children may help with cutting and gluing letters and food. The teacher completes the banner to be carried at the Agape Meal celebration. “Maranatha” is an Aramaic word that means, “Come, Lord Jesus.” It is found in Revelation 22:20.

Supplies:

- 1 piece of green felt (36 inch square or larger)
- felt in various colors: red, gold, purple, white, beige, tan, brown, black, grey, and light green
- assorted colored ribbons
- letters (either precut or patterns to cut your own from felt)
- yarn for hair and mouth (black, red, yellow, and brown)
- assorted buttons for eyes (have each child bring buttons from home)
- scissors
- rubber cement glue
- dowel or plastic pipe that is cut 12 inches longer than the width of the banner

Preparation:

1. Cut 3-inch felt circles for the children: 1 ½ circles are needed for each child in the class (1 for the head and ½ for the shoulders).
2. Decorate your face to use as a sample for the children.
3. Fold the top edge of the banner over the dowel to make a pocket and glue to the back edge of the banner for a finished look.
4. Cut the table and the dove and glue them onto the banner. Be certain to arrange in such a way that there is space for all the children's faces and shoulders.

Instructions:

1. Distribute one 3-inch felt circle to each child to make his or her own face. Have them use yarn for their hair and mouths and buttons for eyes. Glue to the circle.
2. Older children may help cut out the letters and the food. Suggestions: pitcher or chalice for wine, bread, grapes, dates, olives, fish, and vegetables on plates.
3. Arrange all the faces and shoulders around the table. Glue onto the banner.
4. Arrange the phrases "Maranantha" and "Agape Meal" and glue onto the banner.
5. Glue a piece of ribbon three inches from the bottom edge and wrap to the back side of the banner to finish.
6. Cut fringe at the bottom.
7. Insert the dowel.
8. Tie the ribbons on each end of the dowel.
9. Hang in the classroom until ready to use.
10. For the celebration, select two children to hold either side of the banner and lead the remainder of the children to the celebration.

Shield Mobile

A project inspired by the many Christian symbols used throughout the ages.



Long ago, symbols were developed for each of the twelve original apostles and they appeared on a shield. The shield was part of the equipment that a soldier in the ancient world carried. It protected him from the arrows and swords of the enemy. The original apostles were truly soldiers of Christ as they spread the Gospel throughout the Roman Empire. “Take up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming missiles of the evil one” (Ephesians 6:16).

Our Project:

Children make mobiles with shields and Christian symbols.

Symbols Used:

1. shield: symbolic of our faith in Jesus; the shield of faith which extinguishes all the flaming missiles of the evil one (Ephesians 6:16)
2. anchor-cross: anchor is symbolic of hope in Christ (Hebrews 6:19); The anchor-cross is an early Christian symbol that represents the Church. It was found in many early Christian tombs.
3. dove: symbolic of the presence of the Holy Spirit (Luke 3:22)
4. cup and grapes: symbolic of the cup in the Lord’s Supper; Christ’s blood that was shed for the remission of our sins. (Luke 22:17, 18; 1 Corinthians 11:25)

Supplies:

- construction paper (various colors)
- dowels or sticks
- string
- scissors
- glue

Instructions:

1. Create patterns for shield and symbols and make a sample mobile to show the children.
2. Cut four colors of construction paper 8 x 5 inches. Distribute one set with patterns per child.
3. Have each child trace the shield pattern on four different colors and cut.
4. Have children trace symbols on colored paper and cut. Glue onto shield.
5. Cut a small hole in the top of each shield and thread with string. Knot the two ends together.
6. Crisscross two dowels. Wrap string in such a way that it forms an "X" around the two dowels. Knot at the "X" and then knot at the ends of the strings to form a hanger.
7. Glue each string's knot to the top of one dowel.
8. Hang from a hook.

Unity with Diversity Necklace

A project inspired by the unity of the first century Christians who were both Jew and Gentile.



Our Project:

Children make and decorate their own beads and then exchange with every other classmate to string a necklace that represents the unity with diversity of the AMO class.

Supplies:

- string (3 feet per child)
- salt dough
- acrylic paint in various colors and brushes
- toothpicks

Salt Dough Recipe:

4 cups all purpose white flour 1½ cups hot tap water
1 cup salt 2 tablespoons vegetable oil

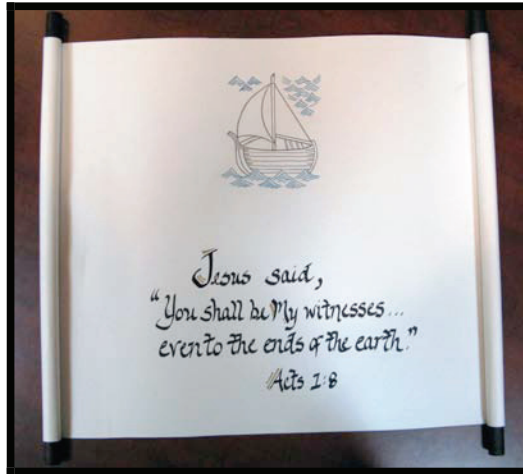
1. Stir with a wooden spoon until it forms a ball. Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to one week.
2. Bake in a 250 degree oven for 15-20 minutes

Instructions for Class:

1. Make salt dough according to recipe and distribute a portion to each child.
2. Instruct children to create a specialty bead and make one exactly the same for every child in the class.
3. Beads can be round, oval, square or twisted with designs etched in with a toothpick or pressed in. Push a toothpick through the center of each bead to make a hole for stringing. Be certain holes are large enough to pass the string through easily.
4. Bake beads in a 275-degree oven for 15 to 20 minutes or until beads are hard. Cool.
5. Distribute beads to the children. Have them paint each of their beads the same. Allow to dry.
6. Have the children exchange their beads and then string their necklace.
7. Tie the string in a secure knot and slip the necklace over the head.
8. Teach the children how stringing all the diverse beads to make one necklace represents “unity, which means oneness of mind and spirit, with diversity.” This is a great example of the Christian Church. We are one in the Spirit of the Lord.

New Testament Scroll

A project inspired by the writings of the New Testament



Our Project:

Children will make, letter and illustrate a scroll. The ship is the Christian symbol for a missionary.

Supplies:

- 1 sheet of plain paper (14 x 20 inches, if possible) per child
- black fine-point magic markers
- # 2 pencils and colored pencils
- 2 dowels or sticks per child
- string or ribbon (12 inches per child)
- glue or stapler

Instructions for Class:

1. Create a sample scroll.
2. Write the Scripture verse, Acts 1:8, on the chalkboard.
3. With a pencil, have the children copy the verse in the center of the paper leaving the sides blank.
4. Trace over the Scripture with a black magic marker.
5. Have children sketch a ship at the top and color with colored pencils.
6. Glue or staple the sides of the paper to the dowels or sticks, one on the left and one on the right.
7. Roll into a scroll from both sides and tie with a piece of string or ribbon.



Crown of Life

A project inspired by the Olympics and James 1:12

Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love Him.



Our Project:

Children will make a crown of life from green construction paper to wear at the Agape Meal celebration.

Supplies:

- two laurel leaf patterns per child, one large (4 inches long) and one small (3 inches long)
- cut headbands from green construction paper (one per child)
- green construction paper
- scissors
- glue
- pencils
- stapler

Instructions for Class:

1. Create a sample crown.
2. Give each child a sheet of green construction paper and two patterns. Have them trace 15 large leaves and 15 small leaves and then cut them out.
3. Glue the large leaves around their headband. Then glue smaller leaves.
4. Wrap the wreath around each child's head and staple together.

