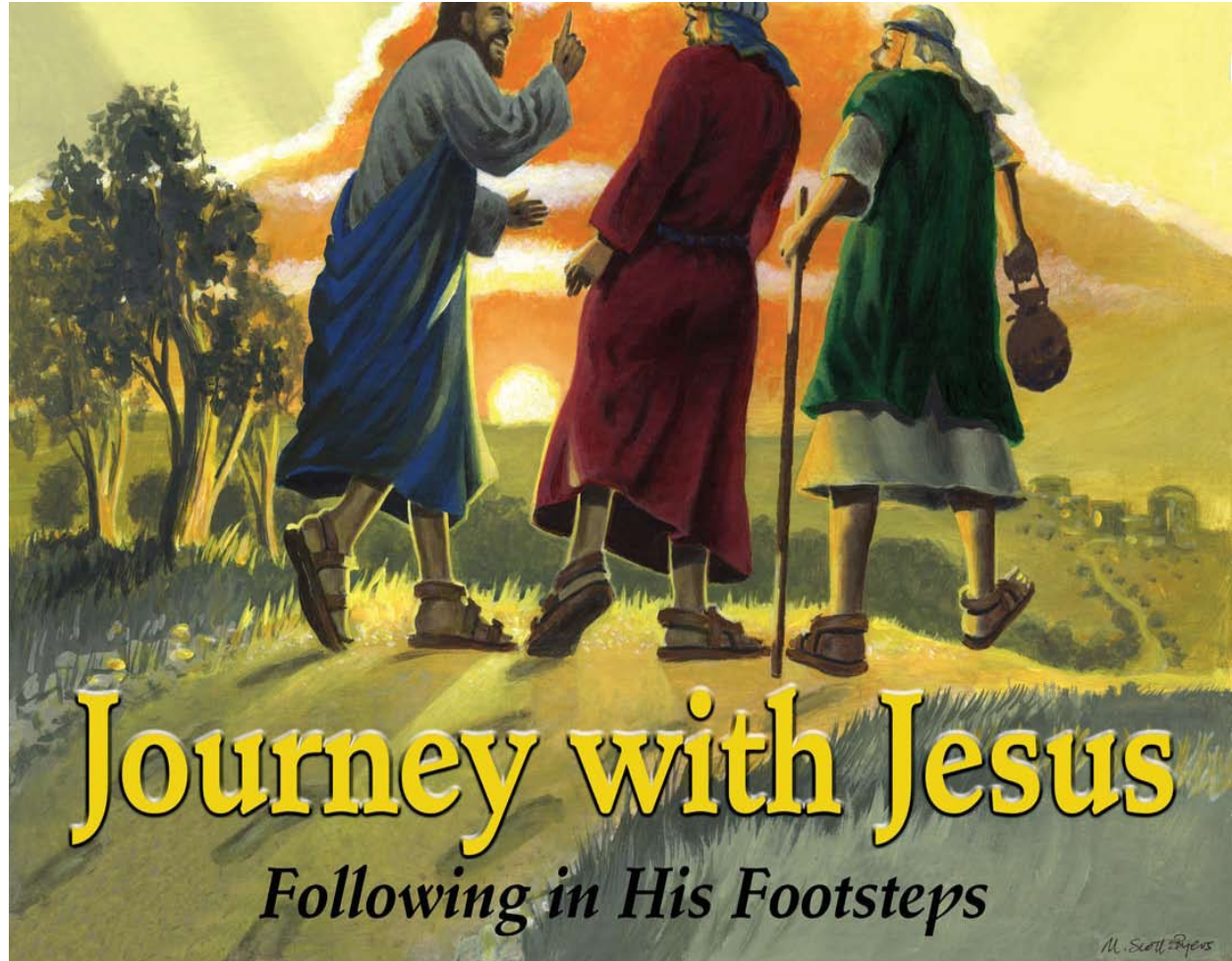


PreTeen & Teen



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Vacation Bible School

Preteen & Teen

Journey with Jesus— Following in His Footsteps

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Session 1: | Jesus Teaches Us to Be a Friend: <i>The Four Friends</i> (Luke 5:17-26) |
| Session 2: | Jesus Teaches Us About Caring for Others: <i>The Good Samaritan</i> (Luke 10:25-37) |
| Session 3: | Jesus Teaches Us About Loving Others: <i>Zacchaeus</i> (Luke 19:1-10) |
| Session 4: | Jesus Loves Us: <i>The Resurrection</i> (Matthew 28:1-12; Mark 16:1-11; John 20:1-18; Luke 24:1-12) |
| Session 5: | Jesus Teaches Us to Witness: <i>Go and Tell Others</i> (Matthew 28: 16-20; Luke 24:13-53; Acts 1:1-11) |

The **Mission Stories** were written by Lisa Keeling, Minister to Kids at Tallowood Baptist Church, Houston.

BAPTISTWAY PRESS® Team:

David Hardage: Executive Director, Baptist General Convention of Texas

Phil Miller: Director, Center for Church Health

David Adams: Director of Discipleship, Center for Church Health

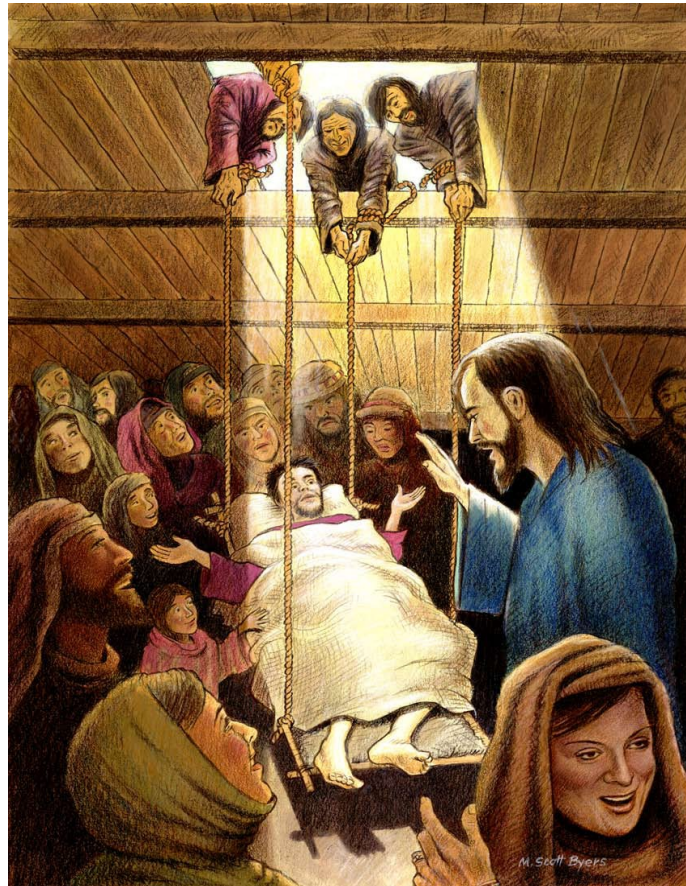
Bob Billups: Publisher, BaptistWay Press, Center for Church Health

Adlín Cotto: Editor, BaptistWay Press VBS

VBS Preteen Curriculum Overview

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| <p>Session Title and Bible Story Jesus Teaches Us to Be a Friend: <i>The Four Friends</i> (Luke 5:17-26)</p> | <p>Session Title and Bible Story Jesus Teaches Us About Caring for Others: <i>The Good Samaritan</i> (Luke 10:25-37)</p> | <p>Session Title and Bible Story Jesus Teaches Us About Loving Others: <i>Zacchaeus</i> (Luke 19:1-10)</p> | <p>Session Title and Bible Story Jesus Loves Us: <i>The Resurrection</i> (Matthew 28:1-12; Mark 16:1-11; John 20:1-18; Luke 24:1-12)</p> | <p>Session Title and Bible Story Jesus Teaches Us to Witness: <i>Go and Tell Others</i> (Matthew 28:16-20; Luke 24:13-53; Acts 1:1-11)</p> |
| <p>Unit Bible Verse But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8).</p> | <p>Unit Bible Verse But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8).</p> | <p>Unit Bible Verse But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8).</p> | <p>Unit Bible Verse But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8).</p> | <p>Unit Bible Verse But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8).</p> |
| <p>Daily Bible Verse But there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother (Proverbs 18:24b).</p> | <p>Daily Bible Verse Love your neighbor as yourself (Luke 10:27b).</p> | <p>Daily Bible Verse My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you (John 15:12).</p> | <p>Daily Bible Verse But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God... (John 20:31a).</p> | <p>Daily Bible Verse But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8).</p> |
| <p>Teaching Aim To help children learn from Jesus that they can help people who hurt</p> | <p>Teaching Aim To help children know God wants us to show love and concern for all people</p> | <p>Teaching Aim To help children learn from Jesus how to love all people</p> | <p>Teaching Aim To help children know that Jesus is the risen Savior</p> | <p>Teaching Aim To help children learn that Jesus returned to heaven and commissioned his disciples to continue his work</p> |

Session 1



Bible Story and Scripture:

Jesus Teaches Us to Be a Friend: *The Four Friends*
Luke 5:17-26

Unit Bible Verse:

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8).

Daily Bible Verse:

But there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother
(Proverbs 18:24b).

Teaching Aim:

Children will learn from Jesus that they can help people who hurt

Study the Bible

Bible Background: Luke 5:17-26

Word spread quickly that Jesus had returned to Capernaum (Mark 2:1). Situated on the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee, Capernaum served as a major center of trade and commerce in Galilee. After being rejected in his hometown of Nazareth, Jesus had moved to Capernaum making it "his own town" (Matthew 9:1).

Capernaum served as the base of Jesus' ministry (4:12-16). Its socially diverse population was given many unique opportunities to hear Jesus' message firsthand and witness Jesus' awesome power and love (Mark 1:32-34).

As people learned that Jesus had come home, they hurried to the house where he was staying. They crowded the street outside the small house as they struggled to see and hear Jesus. Among the curious and devoted followers were the Pharisees and scribes. These teachers of the law had come from surrounding towns and villages to investigate the stories they had heard about the miracles being performed by the popular teacher.

As Jesus was in the house speaking, four men arrived carrying a paralyzed friend on a mat. Unable to penetrate the crowd, the men climbed the stairs to the roof of the house. The normal houses in a Palestinian village at this time usually consisted of a single room, box-shaped, made from adobe or sun-dried bricks. The flat roof, accessed by an outside staircase, sometimes contained a guest room. The roof was used for drying fruit or grain or even for sleeping in the summer. The roof was usually made of branches laid on wooden beams plastered over with clay. The homes of more affluent Palestinians would have had a tile roof. Luke tells that the house in which Jesus was teaching had a tile roof. It would have been sturdy enough to walk on, yet easy to break through to get into the room below.

The four men made a hole in the roof and lowered their friend on his mat into the middle of the crowd, right in front of Jesus. Recognizing the faith of the four friends, Jesus said to the paralyzed man, "Friend, your sins are forgiven" (Luke 5:20).

This bold statement certainly did not sit well with the Jewish religious leaders. In their theology, a person could be an instrument for healing, but only God had the power to forgive sin. Yet, here was a man claiming to do both! They began expressing hostility toward Jesus. They did not believe that Jesus was God's Son, but just an ordinary man who claimed to have God's power. The Pharisees called this healing blasphemy. Blasphemy involves using the divine name of God in a way that is dishonoring to him. Although the Pharisees were teachers of the law, they knew little of the character of God. They did not recognize Jesus as the Son of God.

The Scripture says, "Jesus knew what they were thinking... (5:22), when he responded to their silent accusations. Through this miracle, Jesus was trying to help people understand he had God's power to both forgive sins and heal. The evidence was right before their eyes, and somehow they still refused to believe.

Jesus commanded the man to get up, pick up his mat, and go home. The use of the word "immediately" (5:25) helps us know the man obeyed without hesitation. He left praising God. Everyone who saw what had taken place was filled with awe and recognized they had seen the power of God at work that day. Jesus healed physically and restored spiritually.

Bible Story

We Journey With Jesus!

Our Bible story today is about four friends who worked together to help another one of their friends.

Jesus Teaches Us to Be a Friend: *The Four Friends* (Luke 5:17-26)

Open your Bible to Luke 5:17-26 and tell the story from memory. Tell the children that this story is found in the book of Luke in the New Testament, which is in the Gospel division.

News spread quickly that Jesus was in town. People from Capernaum and the surrounding area hurried to the house where he was staying. Soon the crowd grew very large, and many people were forced to stand outside and listen as Jesus taught. Among those in the crowd were Pharisees scribes and Jewish religious leaders who had come to hear what Jesus had to say.

Four men came carrying their paralyzed friend on a mat. He had never been able to walk in his whole life. The men tried to squeeze past the crowd but could not get through all the people gathered around the house. They were determined to get their friend to Jesus so they came up with an idea. The men climbed the outside stairs to the roof. They began digging in the roof and removed the tiles until they made a hole large enough to lower their friend through it to Jesus. As the crowd watched, the men lowered the mat into the middle of the crowd, right in front of Jesus. Jesus saw the great faith of the four friends and told the paralyzed man, "Friend, your sins are forgiven" (5:20).

The religious leaders did not speak aloud, but were thinking to themselves, "Who is this fellow who speaks blasphemy? Who can forgive sins but God alone?" (5:21). They did not believe that Jesus was God's Son. They thought he was dishonoring or blaspheming God.

Even though they did not say it aloud, Jesus knew what they were thinking and said to them, "Why are you thinking these things in your hearts? Which is easier: to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'?" (5:22-23). He told them that he was doing this to show them that he truly was God's Son and that he had the power on earth to forgive sins.

Turning to the man lying on the mat, Jesus said, "I tell you, get up, take your mat, and go home" (5:24). Immediately the man stood, rolled up his mat, and went home praising God. Everyone was amazed and praised God saying, "We have seen remarkable things today" (5:26).

Closing: As time allows, guide a discussion of the story by referring to the picture of the Bible story. Pray, thanking God for the gift of friends and asking him to help us be good friends to everyone this week.

Journey Through the Marketplace

Unroll the Scroll

(Daily Bible Verse Skills)

Bible Skills Activity: This activity is designed to be fun and help the children learn the unit and daily Bible verses. At the end of the week, the children will complete a Bible scroll including the unit and daily Bible verses. The Bible verse puzzles are provided as a resource item. Each day, the children will add their completed Bible verse puzzle to the previous day.

Resources needed: Unit and Daily Bible Verse Puzzles; 8 ½" x 11" white copy paper (8 sheets); pencils; 12-16 inch dowel sticks, dry cleaner hanger cardboard tubes, or extra long drinking straws (2); clear tape; glue or glue sticks; chenille stems (1 per child); Bibles

Prepare: Make copies of the Bible verse puzzles (**Resource Item 12**). Cut the rollers if needed. Tape one roller to the left side of the unit Bible verse puzzle.

Guide the activity: Give each child a partially assembled Bible verse scroll and ask the child to write their name on the back of the paper. Explain that they will be completing the scroll this week. Review the unit Bible verse together. Talk about the location of the unit verse in the Bible. Encourage the children to find Acts 1:8 (unit verse) in a Bible. Say, *The book of Acts is in the history division of the New Testament.* Set aside the scrolls. Give each child a copy of the session one daily Bible verse puzzle and a pencil. Explain that today's puzzle uses a secret code. Use the code at the top of the page to write down today's Bible verse. For example, when they see a "Ⓞ," students should write the letter "a" on the line above it. Encourage the children to begin to break the code. Offer help as needed. Once a child has completed their daily Bible verse puzzle, show them how to add it to their scroll by taping it to the right of the unit Bible Verse page. Roll up the scroll when finished. Encourage the children to find Proverbs 18:24b (daily Bible verse) in a Bible. Say, *The book of Proverbs is in the poetry division of the Old Testament.*

Journey On Down the Road

Resources needed: Die-cut footprints (5 per child, 1 per day); 9" x 12" construction paper (any colors) or 8 ½" x 11" copy paper (any color); markers or pencils

Guide the activity: Each day, the children will write a question about the Bible story on one side of a footprint and something they can do to follow in Jesus' footsteps on the other side. Encourage the children to take the footprint home and ask the question about the story to a parent, friend, or sibling. Then, ask them to share what they wrote on the back of the footprint.

Session 2



Bible Story and Scripture:

Jesus Teaches Us About Caring for Others: *The Good Samaritan*
(Luke 10:25-37)

Unit Bible Verse:

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8).

Daily Bible Verse:

Love your neighbor as yourself (Luke 10:27b).

Teaching Aim:

To help children know God wants us to show love and concern for all people

Study the Bible

Bible Background: Luke 10:25-37

At this point in Jesus' ministry, there were many people who confronted him because they wanted to entrap him. On this occasion, a law expert asked, "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" (Luke 10:25). Jesus said, "What is written in the Law?" The man knew the laws of the Old Testament and quoted verses from Deuteronomy and Leviticus. "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind" (10:27a; Deuteronomy 6:5). He followed by saying, 'Love your neighbor as yourself' (Luke 10:27b; Leviticus 19:18).

Jesus agreed that he had answered correctly. He commissioned him to follow those guidelines and he would have eternal life. The lawyer's true intent (to test Jesus) in his question now became clear. Had his first question been genuine, the lawyer's next question should have been, *How can I do this? I am not able. I need help.* But instead, he tried to justify himself, defend himself against what Jesus was saying. He knew what was required of him. He was to love God and his neighbor. He was unwilling to apply it personally and admit his own lack of love for God and for those around him. So he tried to take the focus off himself by asking, "Who is my neighbor?" (10:29). To the lawyer and the Jews of Jesus' day, a neighbor would be a fellow Jew—one who strictly observed the law. Other people were thought to be enemies. This question has a basic flaw in that it assumes we can do something to inherit (earn) eternal life. Being a follower and disciple of Jesus brings us eternal life. It is a gift because of God's love. The good deeds we do are a result of following Jesus and not an attempt to gain eternal life.

Jesus answered this question with a parable. A parable is a brief story from which a moral or religious lesson may be learned. The parable begins, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he fell into the hands of robbers" (10:30). The road from Jerusalem to Jericho was very dangerous. One must travel over treacherous rocks and down steep hills. There were many places thieves could hide and wait for people to rob. One would have thought the Jews would have tried to make it safer because it was the road the temple workers used often. This man (a Jew), was attacked by robbers who beat him, took his possessions, and left him dying beside the road.

A priest and a Levite (both of whom were Jewish religious officials) were also on the road that day. The priests made the sacrifices, and the Levites took care of practical matters concerning the services. Jesus may have used them in this story because they were the ones most likely expected to help people in need and show mercy. And it was not too unusual that a priest and a Levite were the first ones to come across the injured man. Priests and Levites traveled most frequently on this road between Jerusalem and Jericho. One estimate placed 12,000 priests living in Jericho. What was unusual was that neither one stopped to help. They were both religious officials who knew the Scriptures and knew they were obligated to perform works of mercy. Yet, they did nothing except walk past the injured man. Their conduct was a breach of the Old Testament law (Deuteronomy 22:1; Exodus 23:4; Jeremiah 22:3-4).

The third man to come along was a Samaritan. He was perhaps a businessman. For him to help, no doubt, would cost him time and money and even some lost business opportunities. He did not stop to consider whether the injured man was a Jew or a neighbor, and neither did he check out a book of rules to see whether helping such a one would be proper. The Samaritan had compassion and love for the injured man and did what he could to help. He bandaged the man's wounds, placed him on his own donkey, and took him to an inn. The next day, he gave money to the innkeeper and asked him to care for the man until his return. He promised to reimburse the innkeeper for any extra expenses.

As Jesus finished the parable, he asked the lawyer, "Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?" The lawyer replied, "The one who had mercy on him." Jesus' final comment was, "Go and do likewise" (10:36-37).

Jesus made a shocking statement to the expert of the law when he used the Samaritan as the hero of the story. Jews and Samaritans were enemies. The Jews hated the Samaritans because of the Samaritans' mixed Gentile blood and their worship. In the parable, a Jew was ignored by his fellow Jews, and it was the hated Samaritan who offered aid. The fact that the Samaritan was a better neighbor would have greatly offended the Jewish listeners.

Jesus had redefined the word *neighbor* to mean any person in need, even if the person was a member of another race or considered an enemy. Since every person has a need of some kind, so a neighbor can be every person we meet along life's way. Jesus wants us to be a neighbor and show mercy and love to all people he places in our pathway. We learn this love through our personal relationship with Jesus.

Bible Story

We Journey With Jesus!

In Session 1, we talked about being a friend. It is easy to be friends with people who are like us, but it is hard to be a friend to those who are different. In our Bible story today, Jesus teaches that we are to show love and concern for everyone, not just people whom we like or who are like us.

Jesus Teaches Us About Caring for Others: *The Good Samaritan* (Luke 10:25-37)

Open your Bible to Luke 10:25-37 and tell the story from memory. Tell the children that today's story comes from the New Testament book of Luke, which is in the Gospel division.

A law expert who knew the Scriptures very well asked Jesus a question one day in order to test him. He wanted to see if Jesus really knew the answer that was in Scripture. He asked, "Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus answered, "What is written in the Law?" (10:25-26).

The law expert answered him by quoting Scripture. He answered: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind'; and 'Love your neighbor as yourself'" (10:27).

Jesus told him that he had answered correctly. Jesus told the law expert that if he followed this command he would live. Then the law expert asked, "And, who is my neighbor?" (10:29). This again was a test question. The only people he considered to be his neighbors were other Jews just like himself.

To answer this question, Jesus told a parable. A parable is a story that teaches a lesson on how to live. Jesus told him that there was a man going down from Jerusalem to Jericho who was attacked by a band of robbers. The robbers stripped the man of his belongings, beat him, and then left him alone lying in the road and close to death. This road was very dangerous for travel for it was rocky and steep and gave robbers many places to hide.

A Jewish priest happened to be going down the same road. A priest is the one who offers sacrifices in the temple. When he saw the injured man, he passed by on the other side of the road. A little later a Levite came down the road. A Levite was responsible for the practical matters in the temple service. He saw the injured man, and like the priest, he too passed by on the other side of the road and offered no help.

Jesus then continued his parable by telling of a Samaritan who was also traveling along this same road. The Samaritan was a man who lived in Samaria. The injured man was a Jew. The Jews and the Samaritans had hated each other for hundreds of years. They had nothing to do with each

other. This did not stop the Samaritan from helping. He went straight to the injured man and put medicine on his wounds and then bandaged them. He gently lifted the injured man onto the back of his own donkey and took him to an inn and took care of him.

The next day, the Samaritan gave two silver coins to the innkeeper and asked him to take care of the injured man. The Samaritan promised on his return trip to pay the innkeeper for any extra expenses that he might have in taking care of the injured man.

After Jesus finished his story, he asked the law expert, "Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?" (10:36). The law expert answered, "The one who had mercy on him." Jesus then said to him, "Go and do likewise" (10:37).

Jesus' parable was used to teach a very important lesson to the law expert and to us. That lesson is that God expects us to have love and concern for everyone. If we truly love God, then we must show love and mercy to all, even to our enemies. Anyone who needs our help is our neighbor.

Closing: Use the *Who Am I (Resource Item 15)* cards to identify characters in the story. Read one of the statements (or allow different children to read). After hearing the information direct children to look at the cards with the characters named and identify the one making the statement. Ask them to also look at the teaching picture and identify the character if he is there. (Answers: Who Am I characters: 1: law expert; 2: Jesus; 3: injured man; 4: priest; 5: Levite; 6: a Samaritan) Close in prayer asking God to help us realize that everyone is to be treated with love and concern.

Journey Through the Marketplace

Unroll the Scroll

(Daily Bible Verse Skills)

Resources needed: Bible scrolls (from session 1); pencils; clear tape; Bible

Guide the activity: Say, *Let's find the Bible verses from Day 1.* Tell the children to find Acts 1:8. See if any children can say it without looking. Ask, *Is Acts in the Old or New Testament?*

What division of the Bible is it found? Do the same with Proverbs 18:24b. Then, ask the children to find Luke 10:27. Ask if anyone knows if Luke is in the Old or New Testament. Then say, *Luke is one of the four gospels. The gospels tell us stories about Jesus. Does anyone know the names of the other three gospels?* (Matthew, Mark & John) Give each child a copy of the session two Bible verse puzzle and a pencil. Explain that in today's puzzle all the vowels have been left out of the words. They must fill in the vowels to discover today's Bible verse. Encourage them to use their Bibles to complete the puzzle. Offer help as needed.

Once a child has completed their daily Bible verse puzzle, show them how to add it to their scroll by taping it to the right of the session one daily Bible verse puzzle. Roll up the scroll when finished.

Journey On Down the Road

Resources needed: Die-cut footprints (prepared in session 1); 9" x 12" construction paper (any colors); markers or pencils

Guide the activity: Instruct the children to write a question about the Bible story on one side of a footprint and something they can do to follow in Jesus' footsteps on the other side. Then, ask them to share what they wrote on the back of the footprint.

Session 3



Bible Story and Scripture:

Jesus Teaches Us About Loving Others: *Zacchaeus*
(Luke 19:1-10)

Unit Bible Verse:

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8).

Daily Bible Verse:

My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you
(John 15:12).

Teaching Aim:

To help children learn from Jesus how to love all people

Study the Bible

Bible Background: Luke 19:1-10

As the time was nearing for Jesus to be taken up into heaven, he was on his last journey to Jerusalem. While on this journey, he shared lessons about God's kingdom through telling parables. He showed God's mercy to many individuals along the way.

Jericho was the last city he visited before reaching Jerusalem. Large crowds of people were in Jericho because they knew he was journeying through there and wanted to see and hear him.

Zacchaeus was a man who lived in Jericho. He had heard many interesting things about Jesus and wanted to see him as he passed through. Zacchaeus was a chief tax collector for the Roman government and he was wealthy. Rulers of the Roman Empire collected taxes from the provinces under their power by hiring men like Zacchaeus. Those who promised to bring in the most money were given the job of chief tax collector. In turn, the chief tax collector hired others to work for them. First-century tax collectors were particularly unpopular, disliked, and even hated because they forced the citizens to pay their taxes plus an additional amount of money which they pocketed for themselves. The Jews in Jericho hated Zacchaeus and considered him to be one of the worst sinners.

Zacchaeus was curious and wanted to see who Jesus was. He went out to stand by the road hoping to see Jesus as he passed by. However, he was not a tall man and the crowd was so great he could not see over it. So, he ran ahead of the crowd and climbed up into a tree, which would give him a view above the crowd. This probably made a funny sight—a little rich man climbing up a tree.

As Jesus walked down the road, he came to the tree and stopped. He looked up into the tree and told Zacchaeus to come down immediately. Jesus told him that he must stay at his house today. Zacchaeus thought he was seeking Jesus but Jesus was really seeking him.

Zacchaeus came down at once and welcomed Jesus to his house gladly. He was ecstatic, overjoyed, and exceedingly happy to have Jesus in his home. Very few people in Jericho would ever want to go to his home. But this well-known and popular man wanted to be in his house.

Zacchaeus was in need and Jesus knew it. Zacchaeus had no idea that Jesus would know he was in that tree. When Jesus spoke to him, he recognized that Jesus loved him. Jesus wanted to be with him, not to enjoy the benefits of his earthly wealth, but because he truly cared for him. Many people in the crowd expressed their feelings. They knew that Zacchaeus had become rich at their expense and considered him a sinner. They thought that a person like Jesus should know better than to associate with a person like Zacchaeus.

This little tax collector was so touched by Jesus' expression of love that he made a public commitment to the crowd gathered at his home. He said he would give half of all he owned to the poor and would restore four times the amount to any he had cheated.

Jesus recognized Zacchaeus' heart change (conversion) and called him a son of Abraham. This indicated that Zacchaeus had become a spiritual family member who had made a covenant with God. He had experienced salvation. This statement was a shock to those who heard it because Jesus was saying that anyone who believed would be saved.

All through his ministry Jesus had been criticized for spending time with sinners. His critics failed to recognize that all people are sinners. Luke 19:10 sums up the reason God came to earth in the form of a man--to save the lost.

Closing: Compare yourself to the characters in this story. Whom do you most resemble? Are you like Zacchaeus, a person who has received salvation and exhibits a changed life? Are you more like the taxpayers of Jericho, guilty of judging those around you in a harsh manner and ostracizing them from your social circle? Do you find yourself making fun of others because of their differences, the way the taxpayers treated Zacchaeus?

While the rest of the town shunned Zacchaeus, Jesus showed him love and kindness. If we are willing, we can learn from Jesus a valuable lesson—how to love all people. Have you ever been in a situation where someone made fun of you? How did it make you feel? Think about people in your church or your neighborhood who seem unlovable. Write down their names and pray for God to give you a kind heart toward the unlovable people in your life. Remember that they, too, need Jesus.

Bible Story

We Journey With Jesus!

Jesus Teaches Us About Loving Others: *Zacchaeus* (Luke 19:1-10)

Open your Bible to Luke 19:1-10. Tell the children that this story is found in the New Testament division of the Gospels and is in the book of Luke. It is about a man named Zacchaeus who wanted to see a person who was very important. He wanted to see Jesus. Say, *I could tell you this story, but there is a guest here today who can tell you about it.* (Have another teacher escort "Zacchaeus" into the room and introduce him to the children.)

Hello! My name is Zacchaeus. I live in the town of Jericho. As you can see, I'm a rather short man. People have always made fun of me because I am so short. But you know what? I don't think anyone really cared that I am short in stature. I think people in Jericho just picked on me because I, well, I was really unpopular. They were just looking for some way to make fun of me. Let me tell you why no one liked me.

I'm a tax collector—a tax collector for the Roman government. I take money from people who live in Jericho and give it to the Romans so they can run their government. Actually, I always took more money from the people than they really owed. Yes, I was a dishonest tax collector. The people in Jericho knew I was demanding more money from them than they owed. But there was not anything they could do about it, and so they hated me and talked about me. I had zero friends!

One day, I found out that Jesus was coming to Jericho. He was passing through Jericho on his way to Jerusalem. I had heard much talk about this man named Jesus. I heard that Jesus loves everyone, no matter how unlovable you are. I knew I had to see this person named Jesus.

On the day Jesus arrived, I rushed to town so I could see him. There was such a huge crowd in the streets of Jericho that I could not see anything that was happening. I decided to climb a sycamore-fig tree. I scrambled up into the branches and waited for Jesus to walk by. With all the people around, I knew I would not be able to actually meet him. I just wanted to catch a glimpse of him. That would be enough to satisfy my curiosity!

Suddenly—there he was—Jesus himself. He stopped walking and looked right up at me in that tree. He said, "Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I need to stay at your house today." At first I was shocked. Jesus was actually talking to me. How did he know my name? I was so excited that Jesus wanted to go to my home.

The townspeople muttered that Jesus was going to the house of a "sinner." But that didn't stop Jesus. He spent time with me in spite of the reactions of the townspeople.

Meeting Jesus changed my life. Do you know what I am doing now? I am still a tax collector for the government, but I am an honest person. I only take what people owe. I know you are wondering how I feel about all the extra money I took from the people of Jericho. I returned all of it and more—four times the amount to be exact! I have also given half of everything I own to the poor in my city.

Jesus knew my heart had changed and he called me a son of Abraham. This meant that I was part of God's family and my sins were forgiven. He said he came to earth to seek and save those who were lost. Well, I was certainly lost and he saved me.

Jesus taught me how important it was for me to love other people. I learned that I can show love to other people by treating them with respect and being honest.

I must be on my way now. Thank you for having me here today and listening to my story.

(Children say good-bye to Zacchaeus and thank him for coming.)

Closing: Refer to the teaching picture and identify the characters portrayed. Invite discussion about the story as you look at the picture. Close in prayer thanking God for the change he can make in people's lives.

Journey Through the Marketplace **(Rotating Activities)**

Unroll the Scroll **(Daily Bible Verse Skills)**

Resources needed: Bible scrolls (from session 2); extra copies for new children; pencils; clear tape

Guide the activity: Give each child a copy of the session three Bible verse puzzle and a pencil. Explain that in today's puzzle complete words are left out of the verse. To complete the verse, they must fill in the missing words. Offer help as needed. Once a child has completed their daily Bible verse puzzle, encourage them to add it to their scroll by taping it to the right of the Session two daily Bible verse puzzle. Roll up the scroll when finished.

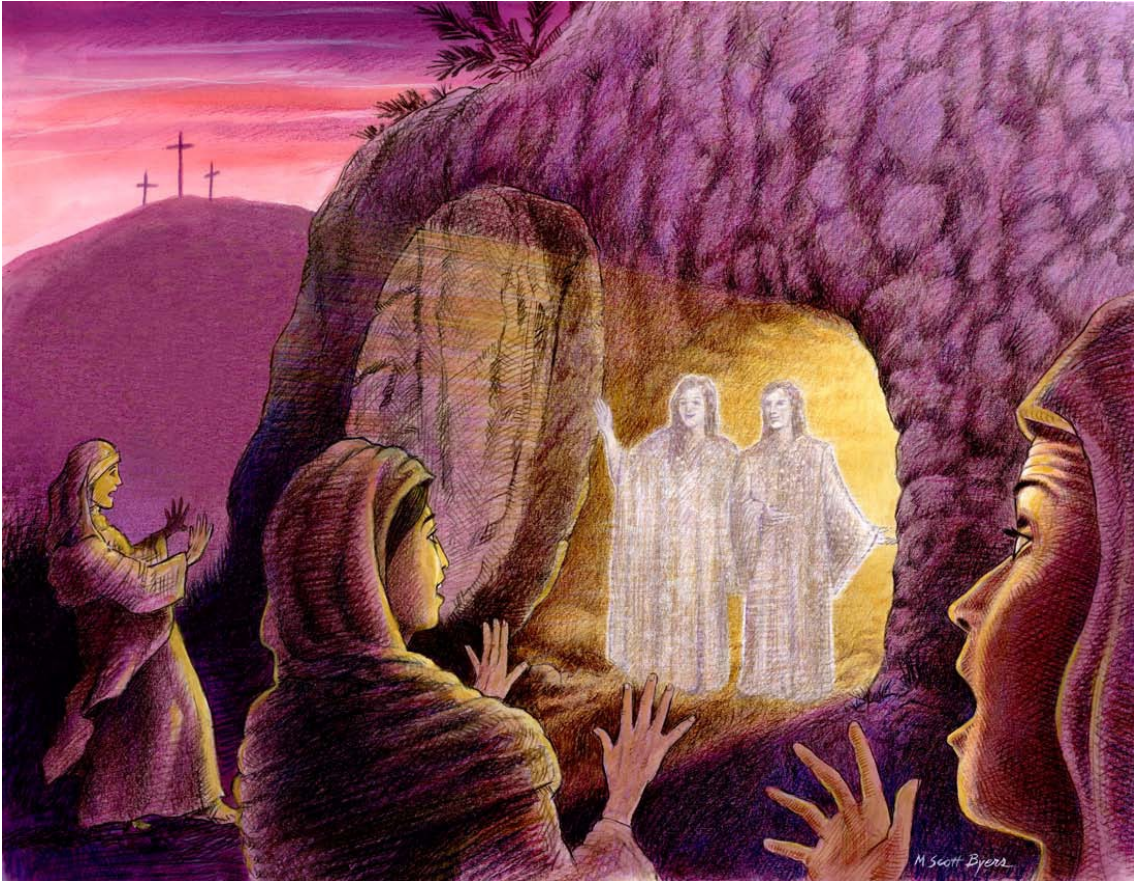
Journey On Down the Road **(Closing activity in small groups or activity at the end of the large group time)**

Resources needed: Die-cut footprints (prepared in session 1); 9" x 12" construction paper (any colors); markers or pencils

Prepare: If footprints for each day were not prepared before session 1, die-cut more footprint shapes for each child.

Guide the activity: Instruct the children to write a question about the Bible story on one side of a footprint and something they can do to follow in Jesus' footsteps on the other side. Encourage the children to take the footprint home and ask the question about the story to a parent, friend, or sibling. Then, ask them to share what they wrote on the back of the footprint.

Session 4



Bible Story and Scripture:

Jesus Loves Us: *The Resurrection*

(Matthew 28:1-12; Mark 16:1-11; John 20:1-18; Luke 24:1-12)

Unit Bible Verse:

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8).

Daily Bible Verse:

But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God (John 20:31a).

Teaching Aim:

To help children know that Jesus is the risen Savior

Study the Bible

Bible Background: (Matthew 28:1-12; Mark 16:1-11; Luke 24:1-12; John 20:1-18)

Friday had been a time of indescribable loss and confusion for the disciples and followers of Jesus. Only a few women and one apostle had been with Jesus at his crucifixion. After three years of living with Jesus and seeing his ministry of miracles, they were stunned at the outcome and afraid of what could lie ahead. Any hopes they clung to were wiped out. He was dead and buried in a tomb hollowed out of rock. A massive stone sealed Jesus in. The chief priest and the Pharisees had gone to Pilate to secure guards for the tomb. Nobody was going anywhere. It was over.

Early Sunday morning, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and a few other women made their way to the tomb with spices to mourn and tend to the body. On the day Jesus died, Joseph from Arimathea asked for Jesus' body, took it from the cross, wrapped it in linen cloth and placed it in his own tomb. There was no time to properly prepare the body for burial because the Sabbath was about to begin. They rested on the Sabbath in obedience to the commandment. On Sunday as they walked to the tomb, they were discussing how they would roll the stone away from the tomb. They knew it normally took two or three men to roll the stone over the entrance to the tomb.

God had the answer to that as a violent earthquake hit the area. An angel of the Lord rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning and his clothes were white like snow. The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and were like dead men. They had just fainted away. The women were also frightened when they saw the angel and bowed their heads to the ground.

The angel told the women not to be afraid. He told them he knew they were looking for Jesus who had been crucified. But, he told them that Jesus was not here. Jesus had risen from the dead just as he had said he would. He invited them to look at the place where Jesus had been. The grave clothes were undisturbed, as though Jesus' body had simply passed through them (John 20:6-7). The angel told the women to go and tell the disciples that Jesus was alive and that he would see them in Galilee.

The women ran to tell the eleven disciples this amazing story! Before they reached their destination, Jesus himself intercepted them on the way. "Greetings!" he said (Matthew 28:9). The women clasped his feet and worshiped him. Jesus told them not to be afraid but to tell his brothers to go to Galilee. He would meet them there. Galilee was the place where Jesus had called them to follow him. Many theologians believe that when Jesus referred to his disciples as brothers, he was telling them that he had forgiven them for deserting him and that they had a new relationship with him.

John 20 tells of a poignant encounter between Jesus and Mary Magdalene, whom Jesus delivered from seven demons. Her devotion to him was evident in her deep sorrow and grief. She may have been the first to discover the empty tomb. She then dashed away to tell the disciples before

seeing the angel. At some point, Mary Magdalene returned to the tomb. As she stood outside weeping, she heard a voice ask why she was crying. Thinking it was the gardener, she replied that someone had taken her Lord away, and she did not know where he was. Jesus asked who she was looking for, and she answered with another question, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him" (John 20:15). Jesus then called her by name, saying, "Mary." Immediately she recognized his voice, turned toward him, and cried out, "Teacher!" After Jesus spoke with her, she ran to the disciples to report, "I have seen the Lord!" (20:18).

When the women left the tomb and announced that Jesus was alive again, the disciples did not believe them. They thought their words were "like nonsense" (Luke 24:11). But nonsense or not, Peter and "the other disciple" ran to the tomb (John 20:3-4). With every step, their confidence must have grown that Jesus would not be there. The news the women brought began to renew their trust in the Jesus they knew and served.

Bible Story

We Journey with Jesus!

These are four books in the Bible called the Gospels. They are all in the part of the Bible known as the New Testament. The Gospels tell us about Jesus. All four books tell about when Jesus came back to life after being put to death on the cross. This event is known as The Resurrection. Keep your Bible opened to the passage in Luke as the story is told.

Jesus Loves Us: *The Resurrection* (Matthew 28:1-12; Mark 16:1-11; Luke 24:1-12; John 20:1-18)

Early Sunday morning, some of the women who were devoted to Jesus came to the tomb, bringing spices to anoint Jesus' body and finish the burial preparations. There was no time to do this on the day Jesus died because the Sabbath had begun as he was placed in the tomb. The women were obedient to the commandment that required rest on the Sabbath. So, while it was still dark this Sunday morning, they were walking to the tomb. As they walked, they talked about how they would remove the huge stone that had been placed at the opening.

God took care of this problem. There was a violent earthquake as an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and rolled away the massive stone and then sat down on it. He was bright like lightning and his clothes were white as snow. The guards at the tomb fainted and the women bowed their heads to the ground.

The angel told them not to be afraid. He told them that he knew they were looking for Jesus, who was crucified, and that Jesus was not there. He had risen, just as he said. The angel invited them to look into the tomb to see the place where Jesus lay. It was empty!

Then the angel told the women to tell the disciples that Jesus had risen and would meet them in Galilee. This was the place where Jesus had asked them to follow him. It was their home.

The women ran to tell the disciples all about what they had seen. As they were leaving, Jesus met them and said, "Greetings!" He told them to go and tell his brothers (disciples) to go to Galilee where they would see him. The women worshiped Jesus and then continued on to tell the disciples. When they gave their report, the disciples did not believe them. They thought the women were talking nonsense. But Peter and John took off running to the tomb to investigate themselves. They entered the tomb and saw the grave clothes lying there. But Jesus was gone! John and Peter began to remember what Jesus had told them and began to believe.

Sometime later, Mary Magdalene returned to the tomb, searching for Jesus' body. She was crying when she heard a voice ask why she was crying. She thought it was the gardener and asked him to take her to Jesus' body if he was the one who had taken it. Then Jesus called her by name, "Mary." Instantly, she recognized the voice. She turned to him and cried out, "Teacher!" She ran to tell the disciples that she had seen the Lord!

Closing: Review the story by discussing the teaching picture. Pray thanking God for loving us so much that he sent Jesus to show us this great love.

Journey Through the Marketplace

Unroll the Scroll

(Daily Bible Verse Skills)

Resources needed: Bible scrolls (from session 3); pencils; clear tape

Guide the activity: Give each child a copy of the Session 4 Bible verse puzzle and a pencil. Explain that in today's puzzle, the Bible verse is all mixed up! To complete the verse, students must unscramble the words and write them in the correct order. Offer help as needed. Once a child has completed their daily Bible verse puzzle, encourage them to add it to their scroll by taping it to the right of the Session 3 daily Bible verse puzzle. Roll up the scroll when finished.

Journey On Down the Road

Resources needed: Die-cut footprints (prepared in session 1); 9" x 12" construction paper (any colors); markers or pencils

Guide the activity: Instruct the children to write a question about the Bible story on one side of a footprint and something they can do to follow in Jesus' footsteps on the other side. Then, ask them to share what they wrote on the back of the footprint.

Session 5



Bible Story and Scripture:

Jesus Teaches Us to Witness: *Go and Tell Others*
(Matthew 28:16-20; Luke 24:13-53; Acts 1:1-11)

Unit Bible Verse:

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8).

Daily Bible Verse:

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8).

Teaching Aim:

To help children learn that Jesus returned to heaven and commissioned his disciples to continue his work

Study the Bible

Bible Background: (Matthew 28:16-20; Luke 24:13-53; Acts 1:1-11)

Jesus' resurrection from his borrowed tomb brought the disciples from despair to euphoria. They were likely stunned by the extraordinary events being witnessed in Jerusalem. Their "old" world no longer made sense. Everything the disciples thought they understood about their faith and life was suddenly open for questioning. They found that they could trust none of their old assumptions. But they could trust Jesus. He was there with them as they began to put their world back together again.

It is important to understand that the disciples never returned to their old relationship and lifestyle with Jesus. Before Jesus' death on the cross, the disciples were with Jesus twenty-four hours a day. They witnessed the reality of both his divinity and humanity. They heard his wisdom, saw his miracles, and felt his authority. They also saw that he required food and sleep and that he tired and felt the burden of his mission. He was their leader but also their companion and friend.

The disciples experienced the resurrected Jesus in a different way. He would "appear" to the disciples, and then he would just not be there. His body seemed to be in an altered state. He was much less bound by natural laws; he could move from place to place without the effort and time we are so familiar with. Jesus appeared to individuals and groups of people at various times. At first, his appearances seemed to have an effect of restoration and hope. They included a re-telling of God's plan as it had been accomplished through Jesus' death and resurrection. Later appearances seemed to be guiding his followers further along the road toward greater spiritual understanding.

On the evening of the day of his resurrection, he joined two preoccupied travelers as they journeyed the seven miles from Jerusalem to Emmaus. As he began walking with them, he asked what they were discussing. They asked him if he was only a visitor to Jerusalem and didn't know about the things that just happened. At this point they did not recognize Jesus. He asked them, "What things?" (Luke 24:19) So they told him all about Jesus being crucified and the women who went to the tomb and saw angels and were told that Jesus was alive. Then as they continued walking, Jesus explained how the law and prophets foretold his death and resurrection. It wasn't until they were at the table eating when Jesus took bread, gave thanks, and shared it with them that they recognized that their companion was Jesus. At that moment, he disappeared from their sight. Then the two men left the table, walked the seven miles back to Jerusalem, and told the gathered disciples that the Lord had risen and appeared to them. The resurrection was true.

The disciples clearly were in the midst of enormous spiritual growth and transformation. No longer would they be confused followers. In a few weeks they were to become spiritual leaders helping to evangelize and disciple thousands of new Christians. Jesus' last appearance included a focus on a great task he was giving his followers and on the power they would be given to accomplish that task.

After the resurrection, the eleven disciples went to the mountain in Galilee as they had been instructed. Perhaps this group included a crowd of Jesus' followers, possibly referring to the group of 500 mentioned in 1 Corinthians 15:6. When they saw Jesus, they worshiped him. Still, some people doubted. Jesus had fulfilled his mission of redemption on the cross. The disciples' mission was about to begin (Matthew 28:16-17).

Jesus told them that all authority in heaven and earth had been given to him. With that authority, he sent them out. Jesus promised them power and assured them of his constant presence. "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age" (28:19-20).

About a week later, Jesus led his followers back to the area of Bethany. They asked Jesus whether he was going to restore the kingdom to Israel. He answered that it was not for them to know the times the Father had set by his own authority. Jesus promised them power when the Holy Spirit came upon them. He also told them that they would be his witnesses throughout the world (Acts 1:8). Jesus then raised his hands and blessed them. As Jesus spoke, he was taken up before their eyes and disappeared in the clouds. As they were staring intently into the sky, two men dressed in white stood beside them and asked, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven" (1:11).

The Holy Spirit was promised so that the Great Commission could be accomplished. And it was! And it is being! And it will be!

Bible Story

We Journey With Jesus!

Say, When someone is leaving to go on a trip or move to a new place, that person may have many important things to tell those left behind. For example: when and how much to water the plants, what the pets eat and when to feed them, and how they can be reached in an emergency. Jesus knew he was leaving to go back into heaven and he had many things he wanted to tell his followers before he left.

Jesus Teaches Us to Witness: *Go and Tell Others* (Matthew 28:16-20, Luke 24:13-53, Acts 1:1-11)

The women left the open tomb feeling great joy at having seen Jesus. He had given them an assignment. They were to tell the disciples of Jesus' resurrection and to meet him in Galilee.

During the evening on the day he arose, he joined two men walking from Jerusalem to Emmaus. Cleopas and his friend did not recognize Jesus. They had been in Jerusalem and had witnessed the chief priests and other religious Jewish leaders hand Jesus over to be crucified. They knew all about his death on the cross and being placed in the borrowed tomb. They told this stranger with them that they had hoped that this Jesus would be the one to redeem Israel. They had heard Jesus preach before and knew he said that he would rise on the third day. They said that this was the third day and some of the women they knew had found the tomb empty and angels there saying that Jesus was alive. They said some of their companions went to the tomb and found it just as the women said, empty.

Then Jesus began to explain to them all that the Scriptures had told about him from Moses through all the Prophets. He was helping them to understand that he (Jesus) was the redeemer as foretold in Scripture. They invited him to stay with them when they reached Emmaus. When Jesus took the bread, prayed, and shared it with them, they recognized who he was. He suddenly disappeared from their sight. They quickly left the table and even though it was night and a seven-mile walk, they returned to Jerusalem, went straight to the disciples, and told what had happened. They were witnesses to the fact that Jesus was who he said he was and that he had truly risen from the dead.

The disciples followed Jesus' order that the women had shared. They journeyed to Galilee. There on a mountaintop Jesus gave his instructions. Jesus knew he would be returning to heaven to be with his Father. The disciples and other followers would no longer see him every day. He needed the disciples to be strong and courageous so they could carry on his work.

Jesus spoke to the disciples and gave them instructions. (*Read Matthew 28:18-20 aloud from your Bible.*) Jesus wanted the disciples to tell other people about him, to baptize those who became believers, and to teach them Jesus' commands. Their mission was to witness to the world. If the world was going to hear about Jesus, his love, and his gift of life, they were going to have to be the ones to tell it. But, he promised that they would be given power to do this. He told them that when they returned to Jerusalem for the Passover that they were to stay there until they received that power.

About a week later, Jesus and his disciples were on the Mount of Olives. Jesus reminded them of their mission. ***Read Acts 1:8 aloud from your Bible.*** He was telling them that the Holy Spirit would give them power to tell about him. They were to tell people in Jerusalem, the city where they were. They were to tell people in Judea, the area around Jerusalem. They were to tell people in Samaria, the country to the north filled with people they did not like. And they were to tell people to the ends of the earth, which meant the whole world wherever there are people. Jesus was saying that everyone, everywhere, must be told. This mission wasn't just meant for those who lived when Jesus did, but for all of us today who believe in Jesus. It is our mission today.

After Jesus reminded them of their purpose, he was taken up "before their very eyes" and a cloud hid him from sight. They just stood there looking up. Can you imagine it? He just started rising off the ground and kept going until they lost sight of him in the clouds. They must have been standing there staring with their mouths hanging open! Then two messengers from heaven dressed in white appeared. They asked, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11).

The disciples returned to Jerusalem to wait as Jesus had told them. They were rejoicing and praising Jesus as the risen Savior.

Closing: Review the story as you look at the teaching picture. Pray, asking God to help us in our mission of telling others about Jesus.

Unit Verse

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

Acts 1:8

Resource Item 12: Unit and Daily Bible Verse Puzzles (Sessions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5: Bible Skills)

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Session 1

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18:24b

Resource Item 12: Unit and Daily Bible Verse Puzzles (Sessions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5: Bible Skills)

Session 2

L__v__ th__ L__rd y__ __r

G__d w__th __ll y__ __r

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L _ k _ 10:27

Session 3

My _____ is this:

_____ each _____

as _____ have _____ you.

_____ 15: _____

Session 4

John Son are may But God, believe these of
Christ, written Jesus you the that is and by
name. you believing his that the may 20:31
life have in that

Session 5

Resource Item 12: Unit and Daily Bible Verse Puzzles (Sessions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5: Bible Skills)

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Acts 1:8

the Samaria, to and
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and Judea in all and

Jerusalem, witnesses in
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earth. the ends of
my and be you will

"Who am I" Cards

- | |
|---|
| <p>1. I came to Jesus with a question. Actually, I was testing him to see what he would say. I asked, "Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus answered by asking me a question, "What is written in the law?" I then asked another question, "Who is my neighbor?" Who am I?</p> |
| <p>2. On one occasion a man asked me, "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" I answered this question with another question, "What does the law say?" He responded correctly by saying, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind and love your neighbor as yourself." I told him to do this and he would live. Then he asked another question, "Who is my neighbor?" I told him a story. Who am I?</p> |
| <p>3. It was lonely on the road to Jericho that day. I should have been traveling with others, but I was not. Suddenly, some robbers jumped on me. They beat me badly and took all my money and clothes. They left me lying beside the road. I was afraid I was going to die. Who am I?</p> |
| <p>4. I was on my way to offer sacrifices in the temple in Jerusalem. Suddenly, I saw a man lying beside the road. He was not moving. I stared at him a moment and then decided I had too many important things to do to get involved with this man. There was also the rule in religious law that if I were to touch a dead person, I would be considered ceremonially unclean and could not offer sacrifices in the temple. So I walked on by. Who am I?</p> |
| <p>5. I also came down the road that day. Although I was not a priest, I helped in the temple in Jerusalem. I saw a man lying beside the road, but I did not want to get involved. Someone else would probably help him if he were still alive. I knew that if the man were dead I would, according to our religious law, become unclean and unable to perform my temple duties. Who am I?</p> |
| <p>6. I was from the country of Samaria—the country to the north. I was on my way to Jericho to conduct some business. I saw the man lying beside the road. He appeared to be badly injured. I felt sorry for him. Some robbers had evidently attacked him. I put medicine on his wounds and bandaged them. Then I put him on my donkey's back and took him to an inn where I cared for him until the next morning. I gave the innkeeper some money to continue to care for the injured man until he was able to recover. Who am I?</p> |

Resource Item 15: *Who Am I* Cards (Session 2: Bible Story)

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