

Thank you for being a Sunday School teacher! You are coming alongside parents and grandparents to lay the groundwork for what our students believe about God and his word. That's a task of monumental importance! We would like to share a few important points with you before you teach one or more of these lessons.

Our 1st-3rd grade curriculum is committed to:

- 1) Faithfully teach the entire Bible (Old and New Testament) as one continuous, real story that points to Jesus.
- 2) Focus our lessons on who God/Jesus/Holy Spirit is and always has been and what our response should be to him.
- 3) Provide teachers from a variety of large and small church settings, that are teaching one grade or multiple in their classroom, lessons with a clear goal, engaging questions, storytelling ideas, object lessons and activity ideas.

We have worked hard to ensure that every question and activity within these lessons reinforces the lesson goal and helps our students remember the lesson after they leave the classroom so they are armed with the knowledge of God's truth as they engage with the world around them. Why the focus on a lesson goal? When, for example, we teach about Jesus multiplying the loaves and fishes, we can choose to focus on the miracle itself, the sharing attitude of the little boy who gave his lunch to Jesus, or the truth this miracle teaches us about Jesus, our provider. Considering we typically have less than an hour per week to teach our children in Sunday School, we need to ask ourselves, what is the most important focus? This is an amazing miracle, and sharing is important, but when our students learn that Jesus is our provider, they will know they can trust him with their needs and will want to share what he gives them.

In an effort to teach these Bible lessons in a biblically faithful, age-appropriate way, our elders approved the use of two new Bible storybooks for 1st-3rd grade: the updated Egermeier, *Egermeier Interactive Story Bible*, as well as *One Big Story Bible Storybook*. Both books are available in our bookstore and both books are utilized in 1st-3rd grade lessons. Before writing a particular lesson, our authors were instructed to first read the Bible chapter(s) and verses for the Bible story twice, and then read the stories in the two Bible storybooks before they chose which Bible storybook to recommend for that lesson, based on which one best teaches the Biblical text and lesson goal for that story. We recognize that different churches have used different Bible storybooks for 1st-3rd grades (many have used Egermeier, but not all) and your church may not have the storybook recommended by the author for that lesson. While we encourage you to get both books and read them through yourself, we also realize you may choose to use the storybook that is in your Sunday School classroom...and that's ok! We believe these lessons will be a valuable tool regardless of whether you prefer to tell the story to your class, read the story out of a particular Bible storybook, or read it directly out of the Bible.

You will likely find more ideas in these lessons than you are able to use. This was deliberate, to give you choices, and provide ideas that will work in a variety of classes (small/large class, single vs mixed grade, etc.), including application questions for a variety of maturity levels.

Be sure to look through the additional resources including valuable Bible Memory suggestions, a Bible Story Timeline, and a Scope and Sequence (list of lessons) for each grade. Most importantly, thank you for teaching our children! May the Lord go before you and guide you as you teach.