

## Introductory Letter to Preschool Sunday School Lessons

### Big Promises for Little Hearts

Greetings dear teacher of little ones!

When the elder body tasked us with creating a new Sunday School curriculum for the Preschool, Pre-Kindergarten, and Kindergarten grades, we endeavored to cover the Bible stories at a 3 to 6 year-old comprehension level. To reinforce the chronological flow of the Bible for little minds, the stories are arranged by grade level so students will cover Genesis through Revelation in Preschool, Pre-Kindergarten, and Kindergarten. As stories are repeated in this 3-year span, the following grade level themes are emphasized to encourage continued learning during the timeframe.

Each grade level focuses on a theme:

Preschool – God’s faithfulness in making and keeping promises

Pre-Kindergarten – God’s power and love as he welcomes us into his family

Kindergarten – Character traits of men and women in the Bible

Across all grade levels, among other things, we aim to:

1. Faithfully teach the Bible (both Old and New Testament) as one continuous story that points to Jesus.
2. Come alongside teachers from a variety of large or small church settings that are teaching one grade or multiple grades in their classroom with a clear lesson goal, engaging questions, storytelling ideas, object lessons and crafts.

**Scope and Sequence:** A list of details for all 50 lessons for each grade level is available for Preschool – Kindergarten (this is also available for older grades). This helps show teachers how the grades tie together (especially if you have multiple grade levels in a single Sunday school class).

#### **Curriculum Overview:**

The biggest change in this curriculum is our effort to identify a **Lesson Goal** for each lesson. Each lesson has a clear lesson goal that is brought out in the simplified narrative and reinforced by the lesson activities. The lesson goal is also printed at the bottom of the coloring page, to communicate it to parents. Each story could have a different lesson goal, for example, when teaching about Jesus multiplying the loaves and fishes, we could 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. With our limited time each Sunday, we are forced to determine what is the most important learning goal we can achieve. What lesson emphasis will best celebrate God’s character and care for his people? We hope our focus on a defined and limited Lesson Goal assists you in effective teaching with the brief time each week allows. If there’s one thing the student should be able to repeat when asked “What did you learn in Sunday School today...”, it is the Lesson Goal.

The Preschool writing team recognizes that each classroom is unique and not every activity will work for your specific group of children. So, we intentionally include more teaching and activity ideas in these lessons than you will have time to complete in one Sunday. This decision gives you an array of choices and provides ideas that will work for a variety of classes. Page one of each lesson provides an overview of all the components in the lesson.

Teachers are strongly encouraged to read the passage from the Bible as part of their preparation for teaching. During class, teachers may tell the story in their own words, use the Simplified Narrative, or

read from the recommended Bible storybook *God's Big Promises Bible Storybook*. The Simplified Narrative is a child-friendly version of the story that may be used instead of the recommended Bible storybook.

The lesson plan includes vocabulary words and background information which are for your reference, particularly if you are telling the story in your own words.

Many teachers told us that young children do best when they can look at something. With that in mind, the lessons include information for flannelgraph pieces that coordinate with the simplified narrative. The "Betty Lukens Through the Bible in Felt" flannelgraph set can be purchased by contacting the AC Bookstore. Instructions for setting up a new felt kit are available digitally on the website. In addition, curriculum story pictures for use with this curriculum are being created. When complete, they will be available digitally and hard copy sets will be sold at the AC Bookstore. If digital visual aids work best for your classroom, we have found two good options. The website [freebibleimages.org](http://freebibleimages.org) is used in many lessons and is an excellent resource. And the Good Book company sells digital image sets that correspond with the God's Big Promises Bible Story Book through their online store.

Before you read/tell your students the current story, you may want to review the previous week's story with them by asking questions, showing the visual aid from the previous week, or referring to the coloring page/craft from the previous week. The lesson also includes an opening activity that you could use to introduce the story.

Each lesson includes content questions to reinforce the story, and application questions for you to discuss with the children as their attention span allows. The Essential Questions on the summary page are the two questions we feel are the most important. In addition, the question that most directly relates to the lesson goal is highlighted in bold and includes a "Let's say it together" statement to reinforce the lesson goal. Young children may struggle to answer questions, especially the first few weeks. You may want to refer to the visual aids when asking the question to help them remember or answer the question yourself and then move on.

We frequently provide two options for a take-home item – a simple craft and a coloring page. Use whatever best suits your interests and teaching time. For the coloring page, suggestions are often included for a stick-on item.

Songs and rhymes are provided that work well to fill time after the lesson. These songs are selected from *The Children's Harp*, and *WeeSing Bible Songs*, which are both available at the AC Bookstore. It is hoped that you will enjoy reviewing previously learned songs with your students. A PDF file of picture posters for the songs will be available digitally, which can be used to help children select songs. An object lesson, Life Application and Christ-connection statements are included in the lesson plan for your use as desired. Snack time is a good time to incorporate those. You may want to post a picture of Jesus or Jesus with children in the classroom to point to when discussing the Christ-connection.

Scripture memory as a class is encouraged. Instead of a weekly Bible verse, we encourage you to work on a Bible passage over time. On our website, we have provided support materials for the passages Psalm 23 and Psalm 100 for students to learn throughout the year.

If you are a new teacher, a sample schedule and veteran teacher tips are below.

May God bless you in this excellent work of teaching young hearts for the glory of God.

## Helpful Tips for New Teachers of Little Ones

### Classroom Management Tips

A predictable routine is very helpful for young children. We encourage you to thoughtfully and prayerfully create a schedule of activities that will be the same each week.

Sample schedule:

- 1) Free play with toys and books in classroom
- 2) Clean-up time
- 3) Sit for review of last week, opening activity and story
- 4) Move to tables for craft/coloring time
- 5) Small snack with object lesson and life application
- 6) Song/Finger play related to the story
- 7) Scripture memory and Christ connection
- 8) Move to floor or stand against wall for singing time

### Veteran teacher tips –

- Label each child's spot at the table with a name tag and a photo of the child
- Many children enjoy putting a sticker on an attendance chart as they enter the classroom.
- Consider involving the children in classroom tasks such as passing out papers or leading the line. A chart is useful for keeping track of turns.
- Provide a small reward (a few M & Ms, etc.) to each child once their toys are put away and they sit down for story time.
- To keep children's hands occupied during story time, pass out stuffed animals to hold or a small cup of snacks for children to eat.
- Teach children where crayon boxes are stored so they can get out and put away their own supplies. Consider rewarding the child for putting away supplies with a sticker for the craft or coloring page.
- Model coloring by sitting down and coloring with your students
- Play children's Bible songs during playtime or coloring time
- Multi-age classrooms may need a simple activity such as play-dough to occupy younger students while the teacher works with older children. Example playdough activity for Adam and Eve sin: make a tree out of green playdough, add red play-dough apples.