

LESSON 42

The Great Commission

MATTHEW 28:16-20



BIBLE TRUTH

THE GOSPEL FULFILLS GOD'S PROMISE TO ABRAHAM

LESSON SNAPSHOT

1. OPENING ACTIVITY AND INTRODUCTION 5 MIN

2. BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

SUPPLIES: *The Gospel Story Bible* (story 120)

3. BIBLE STORY DISCUSSION 5 MIN

Where Is the Gospel?

SUPPLIES: Bible (ESV preferred); Review “Where Is the Gospel?” to prepare

4. SNACK QUESTIONS 10 MIN

SUPPLIES: snack food and beverage

5. SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5–10 MIN

6. ACTIVITIES AND OBJECT LESSONS (CHOOSE ONE OR MORE) 20–30 MIN

Coloring Activity

SUPPLIES: coloring page for NT Lesson 42—one for each child; markers or crayons

Baptize the Rags

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ a batch of red dye
- ✓ bucket
- ✓ stirrer and/or tongs
- ✓ water
- ✓ disposable rubber gloves
- ✓ plastic drop cloth
- ✓ white rags
- ✓ rubber bands (optional)

Go and Tell Them

SUPPLIES: several sheets of red construction paper

7. CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

TOTAL 60–75 MIN

THE LESSON

OPENING ACTIVITY AND INTRODUCTION 5 MIN

In today's lesson the children will learn about telling others the good news of Jesus and the gospel.

Passing on a message can be a very important job. You may be asked by your parents to tell a brother or sister something important. If you get it wrong, it may get them into trouble. Being a messenger is a very important job.

Play a game of "telephone" with the class. Have the class form a circle. Start the game by whispering a message into the ear of the person to your right. Then instruct that person to share it with the next, and so on. Make the message simple enough to remember, but not so simple that accuracy is easy. If you need to keep the children from becoming silly just remind them how important it is to be a messenger.

Once the message makes it around the whole circle and back to you, let the class know if what you heard is right or wrong. Tell the whole group what the original message was. Do this a few times.

Take time to pray, thanking God for the Holy Spirit, who helps us get the message right. Pray for the remainder of the class time before moving forward with the lesson.

BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

Read story 120, "The Great Commission," from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

BIBLE STORY DISCUSSION 5 MIN

After reading the story, use the following questions to involve the children in a discussion:

- **What did the disciples do when they saw Jesus had risen from the dead?**
(*The disciples worshiped him, but some doubted.*)

■ **Why did they worship Jesus?**

(By this time, knowing Jesus had risen from the dead, most of them finally understood that Jesus was not just a prophet but he was God.)

■ **Why is this important for us today?**

(Some people do not believe Jesus was God. They say he was only a good man. These Scriptures and others help us to know Jesus was God and was even worshiped by the disciples.)

SNACK QUESTIONS **10 MIN**

While the children are eating the snack, engage them by asking the following questions:

■ **Who did Jesus say should get baptized?**

(Jesus said that disciples should be baptized.)

■ **Do people become disciples today?**

(Yes, people become disciples of Jesus today.)

Where Is the Gospel? _____

How does today's Bible story fit into God's greater plan of redemption?

The Great Commission of Matthew 28:16–20 is not found in the other Gospels, but has a companion passage in Luke. Jesus had earlier commissioned the disciples to spread the message of his death and resurrection (Luke 24:47). Both passages tell us that the gospel is to be preached to all nations. The salvation of Jesus Christ is not limited to the Jews, but is to go to all nations and all peoples. Matthew records that those who receive the message are to be baptized. That baptism, Paul later explains, is an identification with the death and resurrection of Jesus in the life of the individual believer (Romans 6:3–4).

■ **How does a person become a disciple?**

(You become a disciple by believing the gospel—the message that Jesus died on the cross and rose again for the forgiveness of sins—and trusting in Jesus for your own life. That is what it means to follow Jesus.)

■ **Have you ever been to a baptism?**

(If one of the children has been to a baptism here or at another church, allow him to tell the children what it was like.)

SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5-10 MIN

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult.

ACTIVITIES AND OBJECT LESSONS. 20-30 MIN

Coloring Activity

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ coloring page for NT Lesson 42—one for each child
- ✓ markers or crayons

While the children are coloring, engage them by asking the following questions:

■ **What are the disciples doing around Jesus?**

(Some are just standing; others are worshiping Jesus.)

■ **The Bible tells us that some of the disciples still doubted and had trouble believing it was really Jesus. Can we tell which disciple doubted by looking in the picture?**

(No, we can't tell those who believe by the way they look because believing is something that a person does in his heart.)

■ **Why are there only eleven and not twelve disciples?**

(Judas, the disciple who betrayed Jesus, killed himself. He did not ask Jesus for forgiveness from his sin but ran away from Jesus instead.)

Baptize the Rags

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ a batch of red dye
- ✓ bucket
- ✓ stirrer and/or tongs
- ✓ water
- ✓ disposable rubber gloves
- ✓ plastic drop cloth
- ✓ white rags
- ✓ rubber bands (optional)

Before class put water in the bucket and set it on a plastic drop cloth. Then stir the red dye into the water with the tongs.

Jesus told the disciples to baptize new disciples. The word “baptize” comes from the Greek word that means “to submerge.” It was used to describe the dying of garments. Lead the class in saying “baptize” a few times. Then show them what happens when a rag is dipped fully into the dye. Explain to the children that this is what the disciples did to new converts, dunked them under the water.

Romans 6:3–4 tells us that going down under the water in baptism represents Jesus’ death and burial in the tomb. Coming out of the water represents Jesus’ resurrection.

If you want to have a little fun, twist up a rag with a number of rubber bands, put on the gloves, and then dip it quickly into the water. Squeeze out the excess and then undo the rubber bands to reveal a tie dyed effect. The kids will think the design is interesting. This exercise will help them understand and remember baptism.

Go and Tell Them

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ several sheets of red construction paper

Demonstrate the spread of the gospel by the following activity. Take a sheet of red construction paper and tell the class it represents the gospel. Explain that

the gospel is the story of Christ's death on the cross to pay for our sin and his resurrection. The red paper represents the blood of Christ covering our sins.

Organize your group like bowling pins, one person in front followed by two, then three, then four, and so on. Tell the children that we are going to see how the message of Jesus spreads. You as the teacher can demonstrate by tearing up a sheet of paper at the start of the exercise. When a child receives a piece of the red construction paper he should tear off a small piece for himself, then tear what is left in half (two pieces) and pass it along to someone else.

This should have the effect of multiplying the pieces. You can have the children in the back send pieces forward if you want. Each time they should take a piece for themselves and then tear the remaining paper in half. Eventually everyone will have multiple pieces. Look for the smallest piece of paper torn and hold it up to the class.

Ask them what color the paper is. They, of course, will tell you red. You can explain to them that no matter how many people we did this to, no matter how small the piece, it would still be red.

Similarly, the gospel spreads and though it goes from person to person, the message is still powerful. Jesus Christ died on the cross to save us from the punishment we deserve for our sins.

CLOSING PRAYER **5 MIN**

Take time at the end of class to thank God for what you learned today. Include parts of your Bible lesson in your prayer as a way for the children to remember today's lesson.

