

Bible Time
Teachers Guide

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Contributors: Carla Fast, Jim Haack, Jeffrey Meinz

Snacks: Anne Francisco, Helen Heeszal, Jeanne Thomas

Edited by Rodney L. Rathmann

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Introduction

What Is Jesus Company?

Jesus Company provides materials for use in grades 4, 5, and 6 that can be used by any congregation wanting to design a midweek program tailored especially to its unique needs, circumstances, and available resources. Jesus Company has been developed with the understanding that sharing the Good News of Jesus happens most effectively in the context of developing relationships with both God and others.

Approaches to midweek programming generally fall into three categories—the club approach, traditional approach, and whole congregation design. The club approach involves children through the use of specially planned team-building experiences and projects and sometimes includes distinguishing clublike apparel with rewards and incentives. Traditional midweek designs focus mainly or exclusively on Bible teaching and may or may not include other aspects of midweek programming, such as recreation, worship, or a meal. Whole congregation midweek approaches involve congregational members of all ages. The LOGOS program, for example, provides Bible time, recreation, worship and music, and a meal for persons of all ages. Activities in whole congregation programs sometimes have all age groups participating together; at other times participants meet in groups according to age.

Jesus Company is designed to prepare students for junior high interactive confirmation approaches, such as those provided by *My Journey in Faith* and *My Christian Faith*. Jesus Company provides individual modules for grades 4, 5, and 6 in each of the following areas.

Options to Explore

Bible Time. Student materials help participants to recognize and grow in their understanding of God and His loving plan to save all people through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Materials have been developed for 30 sessions, covering 30 different Bible stories. Stories have been chosen so that at the completion of grades 4, 5, and 6 of Jesus Company, students will have learned and applied 90 Bible stories to their lives. Student materials share the Bible story in words and pictures and are especially designed to bring the Bible stories into the student's home. This Teachers Guide for

the Bible Time module helps leaders teach Bible stories through the use of active, interactive, and cooperative experiences. In order to emphasize relationship building and social interaction, only the Bible Time module offers student materials.

Worship. These modules provide devotional and life-related worship opportunities to enhance the midweek experience. One activity and one alternative worship activity accompany each Bible story. In those settings where all ages come together for opening and/or closing worship, leaders may choose one story's worship activity to develop a plenary worship. In addition, grade level teachers or other small group leaders may use these activities for classroom worship.

Friendship Builders. For those programs incorporating games and recreational experiences into their program design, one recreational experience and one option have been prepared for each session. Activities and games have been planned to reinforce or reflect Christian living, teamwork, and fellowship building. Opportunities for intergenerational use were considered in the creation and selection of the games and activities included in each module.

Service Center. Modules have been designed for each grade level with the goal of merging the energy and enthusiasm of the young and the young at heart with a desire to put the Christian faith into action. Developed with a strong emphasis on family involvement, Service Center activities help midweek participants to live out the behaviors talked about in Bible Time as the Holy Spirit works in their hearts through God's Word.

Witness Workshop. This module provides arts and crafts activities for each session. Each activity has a special faith focus and application. While students design and construct with simple, easy-to-follow instructions, leaders have opportunity to reinforce behaviors that honor God in keeping with the Bible Time objectives. Ideas for discussion and witness training are also included.

Jesus Company modules have been especially developed and produced to help congregational leaders design a midweek model effective for meeting the unique needs of each congregation and community. The Bible Time module

can be used at each level for more traditional midweek programs or in combination with one, two or more, or all of the Worship, Friendship Builders, Service Center, and Witness Workshop modules for expanded or unique programs. Choosing from among the modules, midweek leaders can breathe new life into existing programs and assist in the introduction of gradual programmatic changes over time. The variety of modules encourages us to see Christ's impact in all that we do in all parts of our lives.

The flexibility offered by Jesus Company allows congregations to also incorporate music, drama, and sports programs into the midweek model. Worship and Witness Workshop module suggestions are especially helpful for those midweek leaders placing special emphasis on involving midweek participants and their families in Sunday morning congregational worship.

Establishing Goals and Objectives

As you and your church's board of Christian education or midweek program committee plan for midweek Christian education programs, you will need to know what you want to accomplish. As you assess your goals, you will want to consider the needs of your congregation and community together with the resources God has given and the overall mission statement of your congregation. Five aspects of the church's purpose, which are often called the "Five Functions of the Church," can guide you as you plan.

After you have reviewed these functions, think of ways that they can guide you as you develop a midweek program of Christian education for your congregation.

The Five Functions of the Church

The following "five functions of the church" can guide you as you begin to plan your congregation's midweek program of Christian nurture and outreach. As you review each of the functions, encourage participants to think of ways a midweek program could help your congregation better achieve and/or improve these functions.

Worship How might a midweek program help the people of God in your congregation develop a more meaningful worship life? How could midweek participants connect with and contribute to the Sunday morning worship experience?

Could, for example, midweek participants sing, make banners, or provide a drama? Parents and other family members are likely to attend services in which a child from their family is part of a special presentation. Also, invite parents to attend the worship portion of your midweek program.

Witness Christians witness their faith wherever they may be through words and actions. How might midweek programs help members of your congregation reach out to the world with the Gospel of Jesus Christ? How might a midweek program strengthen the future of your church as it equips young people to witness their faith to others?

Nurture As we Christians study God's Word by the power of the Spirit, we are strengthened in our faith, empowered to live God-pleasing lives, equipped for witness and service in the world, and more actively engaged in the ministry and mission of the church. How might your congregation better fulfill this function through midweek programs?

Service In response to the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ, we Christians care about our fellow human beings and seek to serve them in all of their needs—physical as well as spiritual. How might midweek programs enable your congregation to better fulfill this function of the church? How might this help young and old to work together, united in faith and purpose?

Fellowship In bringing us to saving faith in Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit has placed us in a community of believers. As members of this family of God, we share a close relationship both with our Savior and with our fellow believers. Within this fellowship we encourage one another and work together in fulfilling the ministry and mission of the church. To accomplish this, we need to meet together regularly for mutual assistance, friendship, and service. How can your congregation strengthen the fellowship among God's people through a midweek program?

Using Jesus Company

Each session in the Teachers Guide for **Bible Time** provides five options from which you may choose to design the core of midweek experience for grade 4. Review each of these and choose one or more to teach the Bible story to your students and to help them apply its faith theme to their lives.

With each activity you choose, remember to apply both the Law and the Gospel to your students.

The Law shows us our sins. Only those who recognize their sinful condition are ready, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to receive the gifts of grace Jesus earned for us through His life, death, and resurrection.

The Gospel is the Good News of what Jesus has done to earn forgiveness, life, and salvation for us. The Gospel also empowers God's people, through the working of the Holy Spirit, in the new lives we live for Jesus. Only by the Spirit's power do we respond to God's goodness in actions of love toward God and others.

Of the options provided with each lesson, one will help you use the Story Pages, which include both the Bible story and a related life application story with discussion questions. Another of the options will involve the use of a reproducible activity sheet included in the appendix.

Each Bible Time session in this guide has related snack suggestions (see the appendix). If possible, involve students and their families in providing ingredients and in making these snacks, perhaps taking turns on a week-by-week basis.

To accompany **Bible Time**, you will want to choose suggestions from the **Worship, Friendship Builders, Witness Workshop, and Service Center** modules provided for grade 4. The midweek planning team may also choose to use suggestions included in the **Celebrate Together** theme module for events that also involve students in the grade 5 and grade 6 levels of Jesus Company. May God bless you as you use the wealth of materials Jesus Company provides to help participants grow in their relationship with God and with one another.

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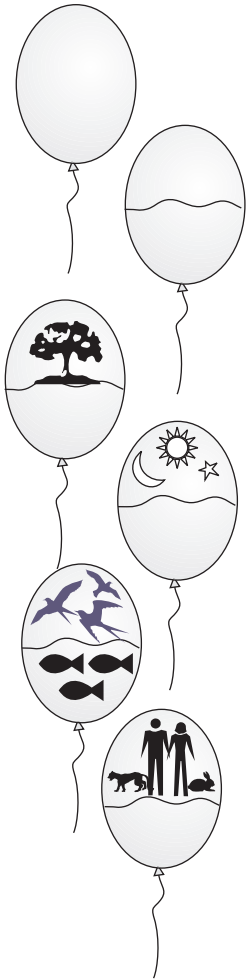
1

God Makes the World (Genesis 2-3)

Point to Remember

God made us; He gives us all we have, including Jesus, our Savior from sin.

Drawing the Story



Materials Black marker; three inflated balloons: yellow, blue, and green; a small cardboard cross, placed inside one of the balloons

Procedure Use the following words and simple drawing to tell the story.

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. God said, “Let there be light,” and light appeared. God saw that the light was good. (Hold yellow inflated balloon. Point out that the yellow balloon stands for light.)

He made day and night and that was the first day.

God separated the water above from the water below. That was the second day. (Show a blue inflated balloon. Draw a horizontal line on the balloon to indicate the separation of the sky and the water.)

On day three, God separated the land and the water on earth. He called the large bodies of water “seas.” He made all the plants. He called everything good that He had made. (Show a green balloon. Draw a line to indicate the ground. Draw a tree on the balloon.)

Then God placed the lights in the sky. He made the sun to bring the light of day and the moon to give light at night. He made the stars also. (Draw the sun, moon, and stars on the yellow balloon.) **God saw that what He had made was good. And it was the fourth day.**

On the fifth day, God made the animals of the water and the animals of the air. (Draw simple fish in the sea and birds in the sky on the blue balloon.)

Then, on the sixth day, God made all land animals. (Draw simple animals on the green balloon.) **Taking the dust of the ground, He made Adam, the first man.** (Draw a stick man.) **God took a rib from the first man and from it made the first woman.** (Draw a stick woman.) **He told the first people to rule over all the other things He had made. God saw that all He had made was very good.**

And then on the seventh day, God rested from His creating. God had made a beautiful home for Adam and Eve. He gave them a special garden in which to live, called Eden. The climate was so perfect in Eden that Adam and Eve didn’t need to wear any clothes. Adam and Eve could eat of any tree in the garden except for one.

One day the devil came to Adam and Eve in the form of a snake. He told Eve she would be like God if she ate the fruit. Adam and Eve listened to the devil and disobeyed God. God told Adam and Eve that because they had sinned, they would one day die. Sin changed everything. (Pop balloons.) **But God still loved Adam and Eve. He made them clothes from animal skins. Plus, He promised them that Jesus would one day come to take away their sins and the sins of all people, including you and me.** (Find cross from within popped balloons and display.)

God Created My Family; God Created Me

Materials Paper, markers

Procedure Review with students the account of the creation and of the fall into sin, using Genesis 2 and 3 or the story as included on the Story Page as a guide. Ask, **How do we know that God still loves people, even though we sin?** (He sent Jesus to be our Savior and to win us back from the devil and his power.)

Stress that we know God loves people because He continues to bring new people into the world, creating each one to be special and unique. Ask students to draw the members of their family, including themselves, on a sheet of paper. Allow time for students to introduce and describe the good qualities God gave to each member of their family, including themselves.

Together in a Club

Materials Story Pages

Procedure Distribute the Story Pages, one to each student. Read the section titled “The CLUB.” Discuss the section using the following questions: **God made each of us unique individuals with special interests, talents, and abilities. What differences do you find among the members of CLUB?** (Accept appropriate responses.)

Since the fall of our first parents into sin, we struggle with sin and its results in our own lives and in the lives of those around us. What examples of sin or results of sin do you find in the information about the CLUB members?

(Possibilities may include Carrie’s health problem, Ulanda’s cutting humor, Lee’s neglect of his homework and chores, Brian’s loss of his father and Brian’s temper.) **What does it mean to you in your life that Jesus came to be your Savior?** (Allow students to share. Stress that because of Jesus we have the forgiveness and salvation He earned for us at Calvary. Plus, we have the assurance that He will remain with us as we contend with sin and its consequences.)

Drawing the Connection

Materials Copies of Reproducible 1, “God’s Masterpiece,” one for each student

Procedure Distribute copies of “God’s Masterpiece,” Reproducible 1. Ask, What is a masterpiece? (A creation—usually a work of art—of highest quality.) Mention that creation is God’s masterpiece, and the best of God’s creative work is the people He has made. We know that He places a great value on us because He sent His Son to save us.

Invite students to work individually or in groups to complete the activity on the page. Review their responses. (Genesis 1:3–5—light; Genesis 1:6–8—sky and water; Genesis 1:9–13—dry land; Genesis 1:14–19—sun, moon, and stars; Genesis 1:20–23—creatures of the sea and creatures of the air; Genesis 1:24–31—land animals and people.) Review with the students the account of the fall into sin and the promise of the Savior. Ask, **What does it mean that Jesus came to save you from your sins?**

Snack

Choose a snack from those suggested for use with this session. See “Snack Options” in the back of this guide.

In Conclusion

Ask students to take the Story Pages home with them to review and discuss with their parents. Close the session with the prayer on the back of the Story Pages. Or invite a student to close the session with an extemporaneous prayer, thanking God for the wonderful world He has made and the gift of salvation He has provided for us through Jesus.

2

The Great Flood (Genesis 6–9)

Point to Remember

God hates sin, but He loves and protects those who belong to Him.

God's Signs

Materials Place various signs throughout the room, such as railroad, one-way, slow, danger, exit, yield, and stop signs

Procedure Tell the story of the great flood using the signs. For instance: **God** was very *SLOW* to anger, but the people of the world were continuing to turn away from Him. He was sad and grieved at the wickedness of the people, so He decided to send a flood to destroy them. Noah had found favor in God's eyes, so God told him to build a great boat in order to **escape** the flood. The people must have laughed at Noah, for they saw no *DANGER*. Finally, Noah and his family gathered together in the ark, along with two of every kind of living creature. God shut the ark, closing off the *EXIT*. Then the rains began. The waters rose and did not *YIELD* to anything on the earth. (Continue telling the story in this manner.)

Upon completion, bring out the sign of the *RAINBOW*. Discuss God's promise to the people concerning the rainbow and how He will never flood the earth again.

Complete the activity by discussing that Jesus is the *ONE-WAY* to heaven. Through his death on the *CROSS* and His resurrection, He has won our salvation.

Soak Up the Promises

Materials Large sponges, one for each student (the really big ones are available in the automotive section of department stores!), markers, large sewing needles, yarn

Procedure Read or ask a student to read the account of "The Great Flood." Or paraphrase the account for the class. Provide each student with a large sponge. Have each student decorate the sponge using markers with signs of God's love, including a rainbow and a baptismal font or shell. Compare the story of the great flood and its cleansing to our lives in Baptism. Our sins were washed away in the same manner as the flood washed away the wickedness of the earth and its inhabitants. (See 1 Peter 3:21–22.)

Use a large sewing needle to thread a piece of yarn through one end of the sponge. The sponge can now be used as a decoration in the bathroom, or it can be used as a cleansing instrument. Its purpose is to be a "sign" to remind the children of the flood, our Baptism, and the promises God has given to us.

Water, Water

Materials Board or newsprint, chalk or markers

Procedure Read or ask a student to read the account of "The Great Flood." Or paraphrase the account for the class. Ask students to suggest all the uses for water. List responses for the class. Possibilities include using water for irrigation, for drinking, for washing cars, for bathing, and so forth. When the items suggested begin to repeat, ask students to summarize the uses. Possibilities will center around the concept that water is used to sustain life and to clean items. Relate this to God cleaning the world

and sustaining life in the account of the great flood. Relate to the life-giving waters of Baptism for the washing away of sin.

Rainy-Day Trouble

Materials Story Pages

Procedure Distribute copies of the Story Pages. Invite students to read the account of “The Great Flood” and “Rainy-Day Trouble.” Discuss, using the questions included at the end of the story. Stress God’s hatred of sin and His love for all people. Underscore God’s loving action in sending Jesus to earth to save us from our sins.

God’s Word to You

Materials Copies of Reproducible 2, “God’s Word to You”

Procedure As you review the account of the flood with the students, stress that in sending the flood God was washing away wickedness and saving His people. Comment that God does this same action in Baptism. Stress that Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection removed our sin for all time. By faith we receive the blessings of Baptism.

Snack

Choose a snack from those suggested for use with this session. See “Snack Options” in the back of this guide.

In Conclusion

Ask students to take the Story Pages home with them to review and discuss with their parents. Close the session with the prayer on the back of the Story Pages. Or invite a student to close the session with an extemporaneous prayer, thanking God for the gift of salvation He has provided for us through Jesus.