

Why Is the Bible Important?

JOHN 20:31

Background

Children love stories. Stories shape how we relate to our world, one another, and ourselves. When we meet new people, we tell stories as a way of explaining who we are. We often base our relationships on similar or shared stories, such as events from childhood or school days. We hear and tell stories to understand the world around us.

God knows our need for stories. The Bible is God's story, one great story consisting of many smaller ones, including our own. Whenever we hear this story, we learn about

our God and ourselves. God's story *is* our story. It tells us about our creation, salvation, and continuing life as God's children. It provides meaning, even to difficult or painful parts of our story. It offers truth, which can comfort or cause pain.

The Bible is a solid rock on which to stand, a true story in a world where people often misrepresent facts and mislead others. Here, in the true story of the Scriptures, we know that what God says, He says for our good.

Classroom Devotion

Preparation: Get a phone book, dictionary, local map, or an atlas, and your Bible. Hold each book up at the appropriate time. Encourage student answers.

What do people do with a phone book? Why do we use a dictionary? Why would you use a map? All of these books have a purpose. What about the Bible? What is its purpose?

The Bible is important for a lot of reasons, but the most important one is written in John 20:31: "These [words] are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name."

God gave us the Bible so that we could see and know Jesus by reading it. If we didn't have the Bible, it

would be very hard to know Jesus. God knew that, and so He gave us words and accounts we can trust.

Now when we want to know what God is like, all we need to do is look at what the Bible says, what the Bible shows us about Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit uses the Bible to create faith in our hearts and to make us stronger in faith. This is why the Bible is our treasure.

PRAY: Dear Father, thank You for giving us Jesus our Savior and for giving us the Bible so we can know Him. Amen.

Sing: "We All Believe in One True God" (*HOS* 1, track 1; *LSB* 953).

Central Truth

The Bible uniquely tells us of God's love for us in Christ Jesus, His Son and our Savior.

Objectives

- Recognize that the Bible records the testimony of eyewitnesses to Jesus' ministry, death, and resurrection.
- Praise God that He has kept these writings for us so we can know Jesus, our Savior.
- Receive the blessings of God's Word.

Materials

- The Basics (see p. 7)
- Hymnals (*LSB*) and music CD (*HOS*); see CD list on p. 6
- Yellow highlighters
- Reproducible 5
- Web Resource 5
- Phone book
- Dictionary
- Atlas or map
- Children's picture book
- Newspaper or magazine

Bible Prep

Post in advance so students can bookmark references before class time.

- John 20:31

INTO the Lesson

Why Is the Bible Important?

Third graders understand the Bible best as God's story for them. Third graders love stories, but remember to emphasize that the Bible reports real-life events, not made-up stories.

Ask, **What's your favorite reading book? What do you like best about it?** As students respond, repeat phrases they use that describe "the story."

Hold up the children's picture book and newspaper or magazine. Say, **These resources all tell stories.** Read a paragraph from each resource.

Then ask, **How are these stories different from the story in your favorite book?** Differences may include difficulty of the words, presence of pictures, photos or cartoons, fiction or real life.

Say, **It's important to know where to get information. You wouldn't go to a children's book to find news. You'd read a newspaper, magazine, or online news page.**

Ask, **Where do we get our information about Jesus?** Our source for information about Jesus is the Bible.

INTO the Word

One Story

Ask students to turn to page 16 in their Student Books. Ask someone to read the first paragraph aloud.

Say, **We learn about Jesus in the Bible. The Old Testament looks forward to His coming as our Savior. The New Testament tells about Jesus and the first Christians. The Bible is one long true story about Jesus.**

Ask students to open their Bibles to the Table of Contents. Ask a volunteer to read the first paragraph by the circle in the Student Book. Then ask children to find the green words in the paragraph (Old Testament) in the Table of Contents and write them in the outer ring, around "The Story of Jesus."

Continue, reading each paragraph, finding the bold words in the Table of Contents, and writing them in the outer ring. As you do, ask questions and dialogue to expand understanding.

- **Name the four Gospels.** Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.
- **Who wrote the books about Jesus' life? Why and for whom did they write?** Help students know that Jesus' disciples (Matthew, John) and other first-century Christians (Mark, Luke) wrote

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John 20:31

One Story

The Bible is important because it tells us the truth about Jesus. It is the source of all that we believe and teach as Christians.

Turn to the Table of Contents in your Bible.

God's story begins in the **Old Testament**. It tells how God created the world and promised a Savior.

The **New Testament Gospels** tell about Jesus, the Savior God promised to send.

The story continues with the story of Jesus' first disciples in the Book of **Acts**.

Letters to the early Christian churches are called **Epistles**.

We learn that Jesus promises to come again in **Revelation**.

Beginning to end, the Bible tells about God's love for His creation and His plan to save us from sin, death, and the devil.



Word Study

Write definitions of these words using the Bible Dictionary in the back of your book.

Testament: **a witness's account**

Epistle: **a letter**

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the Gospels to report their eyewitness accounts about Jesus. Mark wrote down Peter's remembrances. Luke, a doctor, learned about Jesus from Paul. John wrote his Gospel last. It contains many things that are not in the others. Matthew wrote to a Jewish audience. The others were written in Greek for Gentiles and other believers in the Early Church. The authors wrote for all of us!

- **Who were the apostles in the Book of Acts?** Refer to "apostles" in the Word Study from Lesson 4. An apostle was an eyewitness to Jesus' resurrection. Jesus' disciples became apostles when He sent them into the world to tell about His death and resurrection. Acts tells about the work of Jesus' disciples/apostles, especially

Peter, James, Philip, and John, plus Paul, the apostle who saw the risen Christ later, on the Damascus Road.

- **How do you think an epistle is different from an article your pastor writes for your church Web site or newsletter?** An epistle may have many things in common with a modern pastoral letter if it is doctrinal and personal. However, although a pastor's letter may contain the Gospel and other good messages, the epistles in the Bible are the Word of God. "Men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit" (2 Peter 1:21).
- **Epistles are named after their author, the person who received the letter, or the towns or regions of the churches that received the letters. Look at the**

God's True Story

Add these words to complete the sentences: **cares, saved, created, calls.**



The Bible tells how God the Father **created** us, how Jesus **saved** us, and how the Holy Spirit **calls** us to faith and **cares** for us.

The Bible is God's great true story, the most important one ever told.

The events in the Bible are about people and places long ago and far away.

It may seem that these events are not about you, but they are.

God's True Story, for You and about You

Directions: Write the words *I* or *me* in the blanks.

The whole Bible tells about Jesus. It also tells about **me**.

God created the people in the Bible who lived before **me**. God created **me** and loved **me**, even before **I** was born.

The people in the Bible who lived before **me** were sinners. **I** am a sinner who needs a Savior too.

I hear about my Savior, Jesus, in the Bible. As a member of God's family, **I** hear the story of my family when **I** read the Bible.



Bible Words to Remember

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

WHY IS THE BIBLE IMPORTANT? 17

Table of Contents. Name epistles named after authors. Peter, James, John, Jude.

- **Name epistles named after people who received letters.** Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews.
- **Name epistles named after towns and regions.** Rome, Romans; Corinth, Corinthians; Galatia, Galatians; Ephesus, Ephesians; Philippi, Philippians; Colossae, Colossians; Thessalonica, Thessalonians.

Say, **Revelation is different from the other New Testament books because it is prophecy. Inspired by the Holy Spirit, John wrote about things that have not yet happened. The whole Bible, beginning to end, is one story about God's love for His creation and His plan to save us.**

Bible Words to Remember

Help students find John 20:31 in their Bibles and highlight it. Read the verse aloud, then say, **The Bible was written by eyewitnesses who were there! The Bible was written so that we may believe that Jesus is the Savior of the world. We are blessed to have the Bible to hear and learn about God's love in Christ.**

God's True Story

Turn to page 17. Say, **The Bible tells God's story in three parts. Each part tells us something important about God. Work together fill in the blanks.**

Say, **The three parts of the story correspond to the**

three persons of the Trinity. The Father created us in His image, the Son saved us by His death and resurrection, and the Holy Spirit calls us to faith and cares of us in our new life as Christians.

Remind students how "We All Believe in One True God," the hymn from the devotion, shows each part of God's story.

The Apostles' Creed

Explore these ideas in the Apostles' Creed, with Reproducible 5 and Web Resource 5. Ask students to circle words that describe our triune God or His work. Explain terms, as needed.

Help students know the Holy Spirit provides these blessings. The "holy Christian Church" and "communion of saints" both describe God's people, those who believe in Jesus Christ.

Then say, **The Bible tells the greatest story ever told! Remember, this story, God's story, is absolutely true!**

INTO our lives

God's True Story, for You and about You

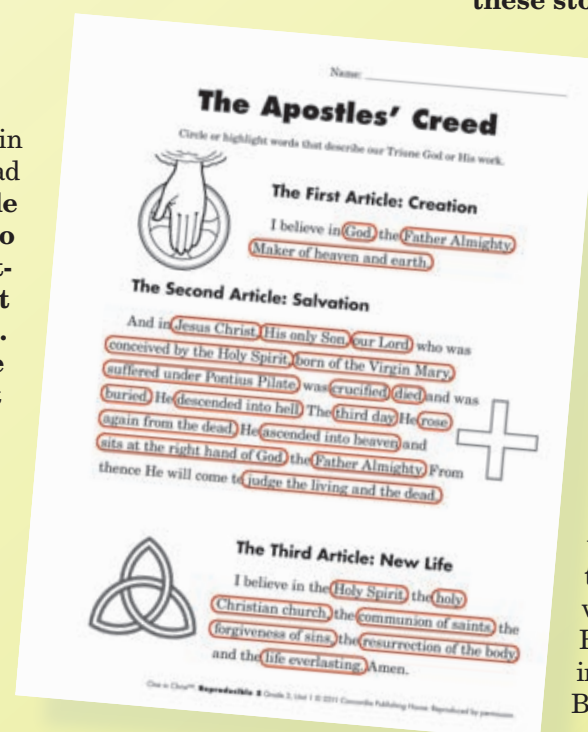
Say, **Sometimes we tell true stories about our day at school or what we did over the weekend. Stories are an important part of our lives.**

The events in the Bible are about people and places long ago and far away. It may seem that these stories are not

about you, but they are. Read the directions on the Student Page and give students time to complete the activity.

Word Study

Ask students to write definitions for the words, using the Bible Dictionary in the Student Book Appendix.





TEACHER TIPS

Sharing personal thoughts and ideas can be difficult for some students. When you lead a discussion that involves sharing personal thoughts and ideas, be sensitive to the students who may not feel comfortable speaking. Give students a chance to write down their thoughts and ideas before asking volunteers to share. If you have a shy class, offer to read students' responses yourself or share them in small groups to reduce the anxiety of speaking to the whole group. Finally, allow students to consider some questions *without* sharing their answers with others, even you. This is especially appropriate when you are dealing with questions about personal sins, failures, or painful experiences of the past.



Celebrating GROWTH

Challenge your students to read the Bible at home and record their progress on a chart. Start with one of the four Gospels, perhaps Mark or Luke. Ask students to consider the question "What does this show me about Jesus?" and record their answers with every chapter they read.



Searching Further

Ask students to write a response in a journal or short writing assignment to this question: What is your favorite Bible story? Why? What does it tell you about God?



Curriculum Connection

As God's Word, the Bible has had enormous impact on culture. Areas affected include art, music, literature, and law.

Explore one or more of these areas using "Effects on Culture by Writers and Artists" in the Grade 3 Social Studies volume of the Concordia Curriculum Guide (section 3.3.3.1).

For example, look at biblical themes in art from early Christian days through the Renaissance art of Giotto, Michelangelo, and Leonardo da Vinci and to modern art such as that of Marc Chagall.

Or consider music, from ancient chants and hymns through the works of Bach, Beethoven, and Mozart. Include modern music such as new hymns, praise songs, and Christian pop. Even non-Christian musicians sometimes borrow biblical themes and images for their work, though sometimes these are abused.

Who Was Martin Luther? (Part 2)

ISAIAH 43:1–4, 25

Background

Christian friends and mentors can have a great impact on our lives. This was true also for Martin Luther, who found comfort, wisdom, and encouragement in his teacher and monastic superior, Johann Staupitz.

Staupitz counseled Luther during his crises of conscience as a student and monk. He encouraged Martin Luther to look closely into the Scriptures. This ultimately led to Luther's realization of God's saving grace, and ultimately, to the Reformation.

Staupitz never left the Roman Catholic Church, but he was very much aware of the impact of Luther's role in the Reformation. In a letter to Luther, he wrote: "We owe you much, Martin, for having led us from the husks of swine back to the pastures of life and the words of salvation" (*This Is Luther*, by Ewald M. Plass, p. 41).

Staupitz played a key role in Luther's faith and life. As a teacher, you, too, may be used by God as the spark that sets your students' faith aflame.

Classroom Devotion

Rob was worried. In Sunday School, they had been learning the Ten Commandments and what they meant, and Rob had them all memorized now. His grandma had even given him a plaque of the Commandments, which he had hanging on his bedroom wall. But it made him nervous whenever he looked at it.

"I haven't killed anyone," he thought. "But I did have a big fight with John last week, and it was mostly my fault. I don't steal either—well, not really—I wonder if it counts if you take your sister's video game? I wasn't going to keep it. I just wanted to play the game. She hardly ever does . . ."

As he got more and more worried, his parents asked him what was wrong, but he didn't want to tell them. He tried harder to be good, but something always went wrong. Finally, he couldn't take it anymore. He took the plaque down and hid it under his bed.

At Christmas, Grandma noticed the empty spot. "What happened?" she asked. "Did the plaque get broken?"

Rob twisted his hands. "Um, ah," he said. Finally he blurted out: "Grandma, what do you do if you can't keep the Commandments?"

She sat down on his bed and pulled him close. "Oh, Rob," she said. "Nobody can keep the Ten Command-

ments—except Jesus, of course. We're all sinners. We will never be perfect no matter how hard we try.

"That's why Jesus came to be our Savior. He kept the Commandments perfectly, and then He laid down His life for us so we could be forgiven. And He rose from the dead so we would know it's all really true."

Rob mumbled, "I just felt so guilty."

"I know," his grandma said. "But God doesn't even look at your sins anymore. When we belong to Jesus, we are new, clean people. When God looks at us, He doesn't see sin—He sees Jesus."

Rob looked relieved. His grandma noticed and smiled. "How about if we put a cross beside the plaque to remind you that Jesus paid for all your sins!"

PRAY: Lord, thank You for taking away all our guilt and sin, so we don't have to be afraid of You. Thank You for loving us. Amen.

Say or sing: The Third Article and Luther's meaning (*STF*, tracks 23–26; *SB* Appendix).

Sing: "I Am Trusting You, Lord Jesus" (*HOM* 9, track 2; *AGPS* 126) or "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God" (*HOM* 2, track 1; *HOS* 2, track 1; *AGPS* 50; *LSB* 656 or 657).

Central Truth

Even in our darkest times, God is leading and guiding us, calling us through the Gospel to believe in His Son, Jesus.

Objectives

- Recognize that God is always with us to save us.
- Identify ways that God reaches out to us with the Gospel.
- Rely on our almighty God to help us with our fears and weaknesses, no matter how troubled we are.

Materials

- The Basics (see p. 7)
- Hymnals (*LSB*, *AGPS*) and music CDs (*STF*, *HOS*, *HOM*); see CD list on p. 6
- Yellow highlighters
- Reproducible 20
- Web Resource 20

Bible Prep

Post in advance so students can bookmark references before class time.

- Isaiah 43:1–4, 25
- Hebrews 13:5



Martin Luther Becomes a Monk

INTO the lesson

Martin Luther Becomes a Monk

Luther became God's child when he was baptized at one day old. But it would be many years later before he fully came to understand the sweetness of the Gospel. In the years in between, like a good Catholic of his day, he thought he also needed to do good works in order to satisfy God's judgment on sin. Luther was troubled for many years because of his sin. Help students also see that God was with Luther, working through His Word to assure him, just as God is with us in our troubles and doubts.

Direct students to the picture of Luther at the university on page 46 in their books. Say, **Luther was a good student. His father wanted him to become a lawyer, so Luther went to study at the University of Erfurt. But Luther wasn't happy studying law. Although Luther didn't know it, God had other plans for his life.**

Have students look at Luther in the storm. Say, **One day, when Luther was walking home, a big storm rolled in. Thunder and lightning were all around him. Luther was terrified! He prayed, "Saint Anne, save me, and I will become a monk."**

Luther got home safely. Soon after, he sold his schoolbooks, said good-bye to his friends, and went to join the Augustinian monastery. His father was very angry, but Luther thought he was doing the right thing. He wanted to find a way to make his life right with God.

Look at the illustration showing Luther confessing his sins. Say, **Being a monk wasn't an easy life. Luther had to work very hard. He prayed for hours every day. He confessed every sin he could think of and did penance to make up for them. Penance is a punishment for sinning that the priest told Luther to do to show he was sorry. While at the monastery, Luther also studied to become a priest.**

But Luther still couldn't find peace. He confessed more and more sins. He prayed harder and harder. He did all the things the church said people who wanted to be right with God should do. He went without food and sleep for long periods of time and slept in the cold without a blanket. But Luther still couldn't find a way to be good enough to satisfy God. Luther knew he was still a sinner. He was still afraid of God's judgment.

Ask students to look at Luther climbing the stairs in Rome. Say, **After a few years, Luther was sent to visit Rome, the headquarters of the Roman Catholic Church. Luther was very impressed at first; he thought Rome was a wonderful, holy place because so many famous Christians had lived and died there, and there were so many special churches and places to visit. There was even a stairway that**



Word Study

Fill in the blanks.

A promise, often one that is made to God: vow

A man who has promised to spend his life serving God by leaving his family and living with other monks, praying, and working together: monk

people said Jesus had walked up when he was taken as a prisoner to Pontius Pilate. Luther decided to go up the stairs on his hands and knees to earn favor with God.

But the longer Luther stayed in Rome, the more upset he became. He saw that the priests and the leaders of the church were doing sinful things. Some of them treated the Lord's Supper with no respect at all. They made fun of holy things and laughed at Luther for his faith. Luther was shocked to see how they broke the Commandments in their daily lives. How could they behave like that? He went home again very unhappy.

Ask students to look at the last illustration showing Staupitz sending Luther to teach at the university.

Say, **Dr. Johann Staupitz was Luther's superior in the Augustinian order of monks. He was Luther's friend and teacher. Staupitz was worried about Luther. He told Luther that he should trust in the love of Jesus and stop worrying so much. He encouraged him to study the Bible.**

God was working through Staupitz to help Luther. Staupitz was also dean of the religion department at the University of Wittenberg. He sent Luther back to the university to study and teach. Luther became a professor in Wittenberg, and he taught classes about the Psalms and the Book of Romans. He kept studying the Bible, trying as hard as he could to understand what God wanted. And while he did this,



Lesson Support



Just for Fun

Celebrate the German heritage of Martin Luther. Decorate your room with pictures from travel brochures of Germany. Have students make a passport. In it, list the cities from Martin Luther's life.

If you or someone you know has traveled to the places where Luther lived, bring in some German souvenirs or postcards. Download German polka music to play.

Serve pretzels and root beer, or make German chocolate cupcakes. If anyone has peanut allergies, make chocolate cupcakes with chocolate icing and top with butter-scotch chips. Bake cupcakes ahead of time and freeze. The children can frost with plastic knives or craft sticks and put on topping.

Look to see if your neighborhood or church has an Oktoberfest celebration. Send information home for families to enjoy.



Curriculum Connection

Your students can also serve as mentors and teachers in other ways—for example, teaching their classmates a special skill they possess.

Use activities in "Giving Directions Orally" in the Grade 3 Language Arts volume of the Concordia Curriculum Guide (section 3.4.1.8).



Searching Further

Read or skim a biography on Martin Luther as you continue to teach lessons about him to get a better sense of the events in his life and his spiritual struggles. Some possibilities include *Luther: Biography of a Reformer*, by Frederick Nohl (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2003); or *Luther: The Reformer*, by James M. Kittelson (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing, 1986). A good picture book to have in your classroom for students to browse or read is *Martin Luther: A Man Who Changed the World*, by Paul Maier (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2004).



Check it Out

Have students find information about thunderstorms and create a fact sheet of lightning safety tips. (For example, they could check out the FEMA for kids site.) Discuss as a class. Then talk about how God used a scary event in Luther's life, the thunder and lightning of a bad storm, to change Martin Luther's life and ultimately to bless us through the Reformation!



TACTILE REVIEW

One theory of the origin of pretzels is that a monk took leftover scraps of bread dough and baked them into treats. He twisted the dough to look like someone praying. Praying with arms folded was a custom at that time. If your school has a cooking area, try making your own pretzels. Use original Pillsbury breadsticks (refrigerated dough that comes in a tube). Hold the ends of the breadstick dough and twist ends. Place on cookie sheets lined with parchment paper. Sprinkle with coarse salt. Bake according to directions on can. Let cool before eating.

If you don't have a place to cook, have store-bought pretzels for a snack. If your budget permits, buy plain, chocolate-covered, and white chocolate-covered pretzels. Have a tasting party. Record everyone's favorite kind (or none, if they don't like them), and make a graph showing the results.



TEACHER TIPS

Keep an eye on the emotional health of your students. Children who seem withdrawn, worried, preoccupied, or angry all the time may be suffering from depression, just as Luther did.

Speak to their parents about your concerns, referring them to your school counselor or pastor (who will also be able to refer them to a professional counselor, if necessary).



Ideas for the Gifted

Arrange to have the students in your class with higher reading levels to be "reading buddies" to children in the kindergarten class. Use the Hear Me Read Bible or Arch Books to help them share Scripture stories with the younger kids.

Remind students they are leading the children to God's Word as Johann Staupitz led Martin Luther.

How Did All Things Come to Be?

GENESIS 1:1–2:3

Background

Creation Worship. Have you ever noticed that some people worship creation rather than the Creator? Some cannot make a distinction between the two. Humans sinfully worship creation by trusting anything other than the Lord. Christians eagerly wait for salvation from sin and its bondage of the world (Romans 8:19–22).

How does God redeem us from this sinful idolatry? God sent His Son to redeem the world (John 3:16–17). Jesus will redeem creation as well as its people. Revelation 21–22 reveals that God will bring about a new heaven and a new earth. Christ will make all things new. Creation and God’s children will live in peace and harmony, the way He originally intended.

A Word about Rest. Resting provides refreshment and rejuvenation after a stressful, joyful, or ordinary day. Our brains process and file information while we sleep; rest helps us be creative and productive humans. Not surprisingly, rest is part of God’s plan for creation.

Genesis tells how God created the universe out of nothing (Latin: *ex nihilo*). In six days, God formed, ordered, and filled creation. On the seventh day, He rested. Rest was a part of His creative process, and He intends it to be part of ours.

For more insight, read the section on the First Commandment in Luther’s Large Catechism.

Classroom Devotion

For over a year, Noah had asked his parents for a pet. With his ninth birthday only days away, Noah asked again. “I think I am old enough to take care of a dog. Can I have one?” Noah’s parents replied, “We’ll think about it.”

The next morning, Noah’s mom and dad said, “You can have a dog for your birthday. You can choose one at the dog shelter.” “Yahoo!” Noah yelled.

Noah’s parents told him a dog shelter rescued hurt or abandoned animals. These animals were special. They needed homes where people cared for them and gave them a second chance at a new life. Later that day, Noah excitedly picked out a dog named Buddy.

That night, when Noah’s parents tucked him in, they asked how he

planned to care for Buddy. Noah listed many things, including making sure he had food, water, and exercise. Noah’s dad reminded him that just as he cares for Buddy, Jesus cares for us every day. Noah rescued Buddy. Jesus rescued us and gave us new life in His death and resurrection. As they said bedtime prayers, Noah smiled. Buddy licked his hand. He had a new home, at last!

PRAY: Dear God, thank You for making all creatures and us. Thank You for rescuing us and making us Your children in Christ Jesus, our Savior. Amen.

Sing: “Breath of the Living God” (*JPS* 1, track 6; *AGPS* 77) or “Earth and All Stars” (*AGPS* 90).

Central Truth

Because we believe in the inspiration and inerrancy of God’s Word, we also believe in the scriptural account of God’s wise and orderly plan of creation in six days by the power of His creative Word.

Objectives

- Confess that we often selfishly and sinfully act as if the world belongs to us to do with as we please.
- Recognize that God, who created the world, has also sent His Son to save that world.
- As one who has been saved, honor God by caring for the people and resources in His world.

Materials

- The Basics (see p. 7)
- Hymnals (*AGPS*) and music CD (*JPS*); see CD list on p. 6
- Reproducible 27
- Web Resource 27 or pictures of galaxies and the universe (see nasa.gov)

Bible Prep

Post in advance so students can bookmark the reference before class time.

- Genesis 1:1–2:3

INTO the Lesson

Where Are We?

Show Web Resource 27 or your own pictures of the universe. Say, **The universe is a very big place. Where do we live in it?** Lead students to name your location by street address, town, county, state, country, hemisphere, and planet.

Say, **One of eight planets, Earth orbits our sun, which is one of 200 billion stars in the Milky Way galaxy. Scientists estimate that there are hundreds of billions of galaxies with 70 sextillion stars. That's the number seven followed by twenty-two zeroes, more than all the sand grains on the Earth's beaches.** Write this number on the board.

Then write 24,634,663,200,000 on the board. Say, **Proxima Centauri, Earth's next closest star, is 4.2 light years away. A light year measures how far light travels in a year. Light moves at 186,000 miles per second. Moving at that speed, we'd travel over 24 trillion miles to get to Proxima Centauri.**

Ask, **How did the universe get so big?** The simple and faithful answer is that God created the universe.

Use this opportunity to discuss other ideas about the universe's beginning, such as the big bang theory. More scientists credit "intelligent design" or creation by God as they learn more details about our world and its structure. Creation's orderly, mathematically precise design convinces many. It also refutes the core concepts of Darwin's theory of evolution.

Then ask students to turn to the Student Book Appendix and read the First Article of the Apostles' Creed together. Say, **God created earth and the entire universe. Let's find out more about our awesome God and His remarkable creation.**

INTO the Word

The Creation of the World

Ask students to turn to Genesis 1 in their Bibles and to page 60 in their Student Book. Have them cut the strip of pictures off the left side of the page.

Read Genesis 1:1-2 aloud from the Bible or page 60. Continue reading the Scripture aloud together, pausing to identify what God made each day and whether it was forming, filling, or resting. Have students choose the correlating picture and glue it to the chart.

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Genesis 1:1-2:3

The Creation of the World

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. Genesis 1:1-2



And God Said . . .

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him was not any thing made that was made. In Him was life . . . to all who did receive Him, who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God. John 1:1-4, 12

	Forming	Filling	Resting
Day 1		Day 3	Day 7
Day 2		Day 4	
Day 3		Day 5	
		Day 6	

Word Study

Define *creation*: **something that someone makes or brings to life**

Define *Trinity*: **a word that describes God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit; three in one, three persons in one God**

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HOW DID ALL THINGS COME TO BE?

Emphasize each time that the Scripture says that God saw that His creation was good.

- 1:3-5: light and darkness (day 1)
- 1:6-8: water separated, sky (day 2)
- 1:9-10: land, seas (day 3)
- 1:11-13: vegetation (day 3)
- 1:14-19: sun, moon, stars, seasons (day 4)
- 1:20-23: water creatures, birds (day 5)
- 1:24-31: animals, people (day 6)
- 2:1-3: resting (day 7)

Then ask, **Who made the world?** Children will likely say "God." Agree, but then ask, **Who then is "Us" and "Our" in Genesis 1:26?** ("Let Us make man in Our own image, after Our likeness.") Let students speculate.

Say, **These words give a hint about our triune God. Triune means "three in one." Our God is one God with three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The first chapter of John also tells about God's creation. Let's read those verses.**

Ask volunteers to read verses on page 60.

- **Who is this mysterious "Word" in John 1?** Help students identify phrases that tell about the Word's identity. **The Word was "in the beginning," the Word was "with God," and the Word "was God." "All things were made" through the Word. In the Word "was life." The Word gives all who receive Him and believe in Him "the right to become children**

Honoring God by Caring for Creation

Circle pictures that show how we can take care of God's creation. Put an X on the pictures that show actions that do not care for God's creation.



Bible Words to Remember

Worthy are You, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for You created all things, and by Your will they existed and were created. Revelation 4:11

HOW DID ALL THINGS COME TO BE? 61

of God.” The Word is Jesus, as the rest of John 1 clearly says. He is our Savior and Lord! If needed, read other verses in John 1:1–18 to clarify understanding.

- **Where do we see each person of the Trinity in the creation story?** Help students identify God the Father (“God said”), God the Son (the Word), and God the Spirit (hovering over the water).

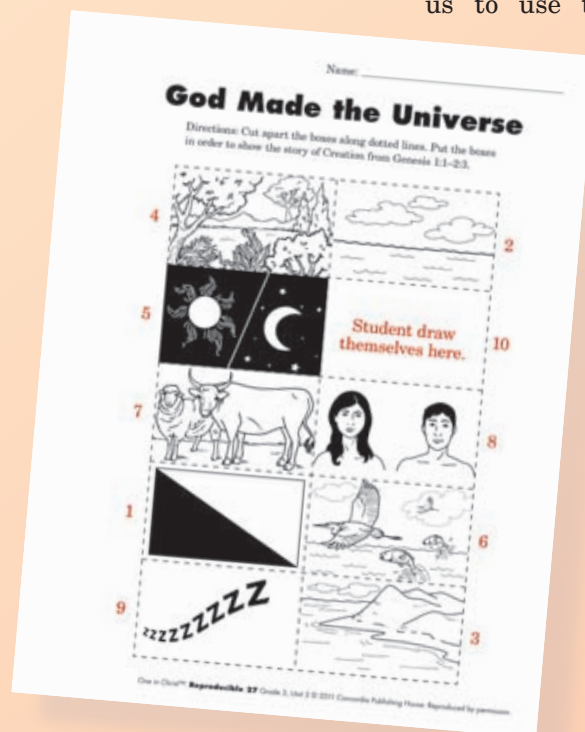
Say, **Draw a triangle or three intertwined circles on the picture of the earth to show the triune God’s work in creation.**

Word Study

Write “creation” and “Trinity” on the board. Ask what each means. Use the Bible Dictionary in the Student Book to write definitions on the board and have students write them on page 60.

God Made the Universe

For review, use Reproducible 27. Tell students to draw themselves in the blank box to show how they are



part of God’s creation. Then cut apart the boxes and put them in the order of creation.

If you like, have students glue the boxes in the correct sequence on another sheet of paper.

Have students take boxes home and tell the story to a family member to share what they learned.

INTO our lives

Honoring God by Caring for Creation

Say, **Do you remember the directions God gave Adam and Eve? God said to be fruitful and multiply, fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over other creatures. What does this mean for us today?** Help students know that God still expects people to care for creation.

Ask, **What might prevent us from caring for creation?** Discuss things that stop us, such as selfishness, lack of knowledge or understanding, and lack of power, influence, or money.

Ask, **How does sin keep us from caring for creation?** Help students use examples from previous answers to show that sin is the core of our problem. Help them to know that sometimes, in sin, we worship creation instead of our Creator God.

Now assign students to work through page 61 with a friend to identify ways we care for or fail to care for God’s creation.

If you have time, discuss responses as a large group. Answers will vary depending on how students interpret the pictures. Help kids know that

God gives all good gifts (James 1:17) and wants us to use them in moderation. Video

games are a gift of God, well used in moderation. However, playing instead of exercising our bodies is not a good use. Eating nutritious food is good for our body, but eating too much or eating too many foods with less nutritional value is not.

Bible Words to Remember

Read the Bible memory verse together. As time allows, let students practice memorizing this verse with friends.



Working in Groups

Let students work together to create magazine collages of God's creation. Divide students into groups of three. Pass out poster board and magazines with pictures of nature, landscapes, outer space, and microscopic things (e.g., *National Geographic*).

Ask students to cut out pictures and affix them to the poster. Then have students write sentences that describe the work that each pictured item does in creation (e.g., the sun brings light and warmth). Once complete, let groups show their posters to the whole class. Display posters in your classroom or a nearby hallway.



Searching Further

St. Francis of Assisi lived from 1181 to 1226. We commemorate his life on October 4. Our Lutheran Confessions recognize Francis as a "saint" and a "holy man."

He preached about the Lord's compassion and is known for his call to show compassion for all of God's creatures. God first gave the job of caring for the world and its creatures to Adam and Eve, from whom we inherited it.

To find out more, lead your class to research the life and history of St. Francis; or do research to prepare for this lesson.



Critical thinking

This lesson explores the power of God's Word. When God spoke, things happened. God said, "Let there be . . ." and there was! This is still true of His Word today.

Lead students to discuss how God's Word is active and powerful today. Talk about how God works through His Word combined with water in Baptism to wash away sin and release people from bondage to sin, death, and the power of the devil. And the Words of Institution spoken at Communion join with the bread and wine so that Christ gives His body and blood in, with, and under the blessed bread and wine (1 Corinthians 10:16–17).

In the Large Catechism, Luther explains that the Word makes and sets a Sacrament apart. St. Paul said, "Everything . . . is made holy by the word of God and prayer" (1 Timothy 4:4–5). St. Augustine said, "When the Word is joined to the element or natural substance, it becomes a Sacrament."

God's Word also works in the hearts of individuals. The message of the death and resurrection of Jesus for the salvation of the world has power to create faith. The Holy Spirit works through God's Word to give us faith and to strengthen and keep us in that faith. There is nothing more powerful than the Word of our good and gracious God.



Bringing it home

Send Reproducible 27 home and ask students to do it with a parent.

This sequencing activity gives parents and children an opportunity to talk about creation. Anticipate parents engaging you in conversation about the topic in the days after the assignment. Be ready to share your faith in God, our Creator.



Curriculum Connection

As your students learn about how God created people, they can also explore the many different ways people live around the world and in your country. Use "Cultural Diversity" from the Grade 3 Social Studies volume of the Concordia Curriculum Guide (section 3.3.4.6).

While learning about different people groups, encourage students to identify things that we all have in common and the things that make us different. Then thank God together for making such a wonderful variety of people.



Celebrating GROWTH

Students learned to use a Bible concordance in unit 1. To give students more practice with this tool, ask them to look up the two review words in this lesson and list other Bible references that use them.



HANDS TO SERVE

This lesson has an objective to take action and care for God's creation. God gave all of creation as a gift, including animals. Give your class a positive experience with caring for God's creatures.

Talk with your administrator about having your class or school organize a Pet Adoption Day. Take time to research animal shelters in your area that care for hurt or abandoned animals. Find one willing to host an adoption event at your school.

Students can volunteer to welcome attendees, hand out information about adoptable pets, set up or clean up, and make posters or write press releases to publicize the event. To prepare for the event, talk with your students about how animals are creatures that God made and gave to us.