



Teacher Guide

Preschool A

A LOOK AT YOUR ROLE

You Are Part of Something Big!

Christian schools are “workshops in Christian living,” where discipleship is practiced as lessons are taught, relationships are established, and the issues of everyday life are experienced. The One in Christ curriculum focuses on Christ. As a teacher of the faith, you have the privilege to tell the Good News of Jesus, our Savior, who lived, died, and now lives again, offering us forgiveness for our sins, a clean slate, and a happy home with Him in heaven. When this is emphasized in the Jesus Time lessons, the text will be blue. The goal of these materials is to help students grow in discipleship as they study God’s Word and apply the Bible truths to their lives. The materials have been developed to teach Bible stories in chronological order yet correspond closely with typical early childhood thematic units, with the understanding that the classroom environment *is* the curriculum.

Using the Teacher Guide

There is one Teacher Guide for each month of the year. You will be building up a library of Teacher Guides for your curriculum. To help you identify and organize the four quarters, the covers are color coded. The pages are three-hole punched in case you would like to place each month or quarter in a separate binder. They are also perforated so you can take out individual weeks or lessons to place in file folders. Or you may keep the books intact to set on a shelf.

Each month will have four weeks of lessons for four days per week. And each quarter will have one bonus lesson because of variations in schedules and calendars. You will find that there is an abundance of ideas. This provides you with the freedom to pick and choose what works best for you and your students. The first page of a weekly plan gives you an overview of the week. This is followed by two pages of ideas for each of the four days of Jesus Time lessons. Note that each activity has a heart icon. To keep track of the activities you choose, you can put a cross inside. Any ideas that are not marked can be used at the end of the week if you need more ideas, or they can be saved for another year. The key point to repeat throughout the week is at the top of the right-hand lesson pages.

The second main section of each weekly portion of the guide provides Circle Time and Center ideas on the monthly theme. Though independent of your Jesus Time, connections to our faith are made to show children that Jesus is a part everything in our day. These activities help children to Express (language development), Create (artistic expression), Explore (science and math development), and Relate (social activities and physical development).

Take note of the numbers in parentheses at the end of each activity. These numbers relate the activity to an early childhood curriculum standard. Reproducible copies of these standards are found in the Administrator Guide for this curriculum. The standards are based on a compilation of state and national preschool standards.

Student materials consist of a packet of Family Letters. They illustrate the story and include a section for the children to color, emphasizing a key concept of the lesson.



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3558 S. Jefferson Ave., St. Louis, MO 63118-3968
1-800-325-3040 • www.cph.org

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OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS

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FROM THE EDITOR: A LOOK AT THIS MONTH

The front cover shows a boy happily helping with the chores on the farm. Children and animals have a special relationship. When children help to take care of animals, they learn responsibility and empathy along with a greater knowledge about God's special creations. And they have a lot of fun! This month, as children think about how farmers, ranchers, and zookeepers care for animals and meet all their needs, children can also think about how our heavenly Father cares for us and gives us everything we need—including eternal life through Christ! God is our protector, not only from harm in this world, but also in the next. Our Good Shepherd is mightier than the wily, wolflike devil.

Throughout the month, the Bible stories show that not everyone will appreciate the message of Jesus' love. It's certainly not age appropriate to go into detail about how people are persecuted for their faith; however, if you're not doing so already, this is a good month to specifically pray for missionaries (at home and away) who may run into others hostile to their message. But the Holy Spirit can change cold hearts to warm, receptive ones. We know that God's Word brings life and salvation; the seed of God's Word is good and will bear abundant fruit. Thank God for the harvest!

Here are a few things to keep in mind as you teach from this guide:

- Feel free to first teach a song and add the actions later if it's too challenging for the children to do it all at once. We encourage you to repeat the same songs throughout the week so the children successfully learn them.
- Teach students the Invocation as the beginning of each Worship Time. The words can become an important part of your classroom worship routine. Tell your students that you are starting your Worship Time in the same way that Worship Time begins at church. Echo prayer sections to be repeated are indicated with slashes.
- Remind students to wash their hands before making any food.
- Remember that process is more important than the finished product. Although we may suggest how projects can be completed, there is not one right way to make it.
- Make adjustments according to the needs of your children. We provide you with many ideas. Pick, choose, and adapt for what works best in your classroom. Think of this resource as a guide, not a prescription. As you view the Materials List, consider that you may not need everything, depending on which activities you choose. Also, the materials needed for the thematic portion of the lesson are not included.
- Throughout the lessons, you will see "The Basics" as an item on every Materials List. We assume that you will always have on hand the following items: a Bible, the *Little Ones Sing Praise (LOSP)* songbook and CD, the *Lift Little Voices (LLV)* songbook and CD, markers or crayons, scissors, a stapler, transparent tape, and a CD player. Other optional materials are suggested. *The Story Bible* (hardback version) is often mentioned. Some resources may become unavailable after this publication. Search the Internet for new or similar resources that could replace these, if necessary.

Individualizing Instruction

Many students love to finger-paint, touch shaving cream, and work with glue; some find it difficult to work with messy items. Giving them a tool to use instead of making direct contact with the activity can help them participate in a way that they find enjoyable. Allowing modifications (while keeping expectations high) is easier to achieve if students are given options. Potential tools include tongue depressors, old washcloths or towel sections, toy cars (wheels), various paintbrushes, paint-filled bingo dabbers, pipe cleaners, toothbrushes, dusters, and items from nature.

Lesson 41—God's Word Is Powerful

THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER

MATTHEW 13:1-23

Discovery Points

Law: Our hearts are sinful, so we don't want to listen to or receive God's Word.

Gospel: Through the seed of God's Word, you receive eternal life and salvation. The seed of God's Word is good and will bear abundant fruit for those who receive it.

Sanctification: Through the power of the Holy Spirit, know that God provides the harvest and do not grow weary in sharing Jesus' love.

Background

"Hearing, they do not hear" (Matthew 13:13). Do you ever feel like that as a teacher? Some days, it may feel as if we say the same things over and over again—"Please sit with your feet in front of you. . . . Use your inside voice"—but the students don't seem to hear. So we try to sing it or whisper it or use sign language, hoping that some form of communication will be heard.

Perhaps God often feels the same way. "Long ago, *at many times and in many ways*, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets" (Hebrews 1:1, emphasis added). In the parable of the sower, the farmer tosses the seeds out everywhere, it seems. But of course, not all of it will take root and grow. The problem is not with the seed, but with the ground. And don't forget those pesky birds! As Christian teachers, we are blessed to be used by God to sow His Word to the children in our care. We don't always know what the soil is like. And plants take a while to grow, so we may never see what they produce. But that's not our row to hoe. God says, "[My Word] shall not return to Me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it" (Isaiah 55:11).

We just keep preparing the soil and sowing the seed. We keep sowing out of the abundance of God's love that is already in our heart, trusting that He will provide the harvest. Pray the following prayer by Norman Olsen:

Lord, plow the trodden way, and clear the stone away;

Tear out the weed and sow the seed,
Prepare our hearts Your Word to heed
That we good soil may be.
Begin, O Lord, with me!

Bible Words

I have stored up Your word in my heart. Psalm 119:11

Week 41

Letter of the Week: F

Day 1 Materials

- The Basics
- Large shallow pan
- Potting mix or soil
- Yarn
- Pea gravel or rocks
- Small bunch of scraggly looking artificial flowers for "weeds"
- *Optional:* Play dough
- Construction paper bird
- Tweezers or spring-type clothespin
- Clear plastic sandwich bag
- Grass seed
- Church, Families, and Recreation Photo Card Sets (CPH)

Day 2 Materials

- The Basics
- Zippy puppet (CPH)

Day 3 Materials

- The Basics
- Egg shakers or maracas, 1 per child
- Several ears of corn with varying amounts of corn on the cobs, corn seed or cobs with dry corn
- *Optional:* Poster board

Day 4 Materials

- The Basics
- Family Letter 41 or *The Seeds That Grew and Grew* (CPH Arch Book)



Before class, fill a flat shallow pan (such as a jelly roll pan) with soil. Divide the pan into quarters using strands of yarn. Compress the soil in the first section to make it hard and flat. (You might want to spray it with water to compact it, then allow it to dry hard.) Place rocks or pea gravel on the second section. In the third section, place several plastic plants. Buy inexpensive flowers at the dollar store and cut 3- to 4-inch sections of only the leaves. To make them stand up in the soil, you may have to stick them in lumps of play dough and conceal that under the soil. The fourth section should be just the soil.

Fold a piece of construction paper in half. Draw a simple bird on the paper, and cut both layers to make two birds. Tape or glue them to both sides of a pair of tweezers or a spring-type clothespin so the pincher part is where the bird's beak should be.

Hold up a clear sandwich bag in which you have placed some grass seed. Assess prior knowledge by asking the following questions, or others, as necessary. **Does anybody know what this is?** Accept responses. **These are seeds. What do you do with seeds?** (Plant them in the ground to grow plants.) **How do you think you plant the seed?** Accept responses, then reply as appropriate: **Yes, you could use a machine, but long ago, seeds were planted by tossing them onto the ground. That's called sowing seeds. What is the name of a person who sows seeds to grow food?** (Farmer)

Set the tray in front of you as you begin. Say, **One day, a lot of people came to hear Jesus talk. He decided to tell them a story about a farmer. Jesus said that a farmer went out to sow some seeds.** As you tell the story, sprinkle the grass seed on the first section of the soil tray, the compacted dirt.

First, the farmer tossed some seeds on a path where people walked. But the ground was so hard that the seeds couldn't grow, and birds came and ate them. Use the tweezer bird to pick up some of the seeds. Later, take out more. **Next, the farmer tossed some seeds that fell on ground where there were a lot of rocks.** Sprinkle the seed on the second section. **Do you think many of those plants grew? (No)** **Now, the farmer sowed some seed where there were a lot of pokey, prickly weeds.** Sprinkle the seed on the third section. **But the weeds took up all of the sun and water, and the seeds had a hard time growing.** **Last, the farmer tossed some seed on some good soil, where there were no rocks or weeds and where the seeds could grow so the birds couldn't get them.** Sprinkle the seeds on the fourth section. **We are going to keep this tray of seeds and water them all week and see what happens to the seeds.**

Add the tray to the Science Center. Place in a sunny window, and keep the grass seed moist. Encourage the students to check it daily. Create a chart with five columns. Write these titles at the top of the columns: "Date," "Good Soil," "Rocky Soil," "Weedy Soil," and "Hard Soil." Once the seeds have begun to sprout, record observations daily. You might have a designated "reporter" each day.

Conclude, **Jesus said that the farmer is like someone who tells others about God's love. Some people are like the path or the rocky ground or the weedy ground, and they will not believe that God loves them. But others are like the good soil—the Holy Spirit helps them listen and learn about God's love and then tell others about our Savior, Jesus. God's Word gives life and salvation!**

✦ ✦ ✦ God's Word Is Powerful ✦ ✦ ✦



Have students stand. Divide them into four groups, and have them crouch on the ground. Say, **You are going to be the seeds on the different types of ground. Group 1, you are the seeds that fell on the path. I am going to be the bird who comes to eat you.** Pretend to fly and swoop down to touch each of the children, saying “Yum, yum, yum!” **Group 2, you will be the seeds on the rocky ground. Try to reach one arm up, but pretend there is a rock in your way and you can’t grow!**

Demonstrate trying but being unable to lift an arm. To make it more concrete, hold your hand on top of their palm or fist and gently prevent them from lifting up their arms. **Group 3, you are the seeds in the weeds. Start to grow. But I am pretending to be a weed, and I am going to keep you from growing.** As they grow, move to them and wrap your arms around them. **Group 4, you are on good soil. Grow up straight and tall, and wave your fingers to show all of the grain you are making!**



Say, **God’s Word is like the seed that the farmer tried to plant. We want to make sure it stays in our heart where Jesus keeps it safe. When we want to keep something in a safe place, we say we’re *storing* it.** Sing the following to the tune of “The Farmer in the Dell”:

The Spirit stores God’s Word. (*Put hands on heart.*) The Spirit stores God’s Word.

I’ll keep it in my heart. (*Hold hands on heart.*) The Spirit stores God’s Word.

No one can take it there, no one can take it there. (*Shake head and move finger back and forth.*)

I’ll keep it in my heart. (*Put hands on heart.*) No one can take it there. (*Shake head and finger.*)



Show the photo card of the children sitting next to the pastor during the children’s message. **What do you think this pastor is saying?** Accept responses. **Yes, I bet he is telling that child how much God loves him. He is being like the farmer and sowing the seed of God’s Word. The more we hear God’s Word, the better we will grow! Can we only hear about God’s love at church?** Show the card of the family reading devotions together. **This family is hearing about God’s love at home. The mom and dad are being like the farmer. Can you share God’s love?** Show the card of the child kneeling by a crying child to help and sympathize. **Yes, you can be like the farmer too, sharing God’s love.**



Teacher: Oh, hi, Zippy!

Zippy: Caw! Caw! Caw!

Teacher: *(Looking confused and surprised)*
What did you say?

Zippy: Caw! Caw! Caw!

Teacher: Well, you're just in time to hear about what Jesus . . .

Zippy: Caw! Caw! Caw!

Teacher: . . . what Jesus told His disciples when they asked Him . . .

Zippy: Caw! Caw! Caw!

Teacher: Zippy, you're being very disrespectful and interrupting . . .

Zippy: Caw! Caw! Caw!

Teacher: Zippy, please be quiet and listen to me. What are you doing? Why were you making that sound?

Zippy: I was trying to help. I heard that there are some birds in your story, so I was pretending to be a bird.

Teacher: Well, thank you for trying to help. You really *were* like the birds in our story.

Zippy: I was?

Teacher: Yes. As I was saying, Jesus' disciples asked Him what He meant in that story. He told them that the seed is God's Word. The seed fell on a path, and the birds came to eat it and snatch it away. The devil tries to come and take God's Word away from us.

Zippy: But I was just trying to make some noise, not take God's Word away.

Teacher: Yes, Zippy, but when you made that noise, could the children hear what I was telling them about God's love?

Zippy: *(Looking down)* No.

Teacher: Jesus Time is a time every day when we hear about God's love for us. **The Bible tells us that Jesus is our Savior, who takes away our sins.** But if the students are talking to a friend or making noises or touching others or not listening, can they hear God's Word?

Zippy: No. I guess I wasn't helping the children learn about God's love when I made all that noise. I'm sorry. Will you forgive me?

Teacher: Yes, Zippy, I forgive you. How about instead of making noise, you sit and listen to God's Word too?

Zippy: Okay, Teacher. I want to hear God's Word.

✦ ✦ ✦ God's Word Is Powerful ✦ ✦ ✦



Tell the story today by singing it to the tune of “The Farmer in the Dell.” Invite the children to clap in rhythm as you sing or pretend to toss seed.

A farmer sowed some seed, a farmer sowed some seed,
A farmer sowed seed in a field. A farmer sowed some seed.

Some seed fell on hard ground, some seed fell on hard ground.
The birds came by and ate it up. Some seed fell on hard ground.

Some seed fell on the rocks, some seed fell on the rocks.
It couldn't grow with all those rocks. Some seed fell on the rocks.

Some seed fell in the thorns, some seed fell in the thorns.
The thorns grew up and squeezed the plants. Some seed fell in the thorns.

Some seed fell on good ground, some seed fell on good ground.
It grew and grew and made more seed. Some seed fell on good ground.



Say, **We never want to forget what we have learned about God's love. Remember, I told you yesterday that to store something means to keep it safe. When we hear God's Word and remember it, it is like we are storing it in our heart. Our Bible Words this week go like this: "I have stored up Your word in my heart."** Ask the children to hold their hands in front of them, cupped together in a bowl shape. **I am going to share God's Word with you now by speaking it into your hands. When I do that, bring your hands up and press them on your heart.** Demonstrate. Go to each child,

and speak Gospel phrases into their cupped hands. Repeat some of the following phrases: **Jesus loves you; you are forgiven; you have eternal life; and you have salvation.**

Say, **Now, we will say our Bible Words. Do what I do.** Hold hands out in cupped shape. **I have stored up Your word** press hands to you heart **in my heart.** Repeat several times, having the children echo each phrase and do the motions. Allow any children who wish to say the verse by themselves to do so. Conclude with an echo prayer: **Dear Jesus / help us to be good listeners / to Your Word / so we can store it / in our hearts. / Amen.**



Take a walk, and check out the yard and flower beds at your school. Point out weeds; let the students be gardeners and pull the weeds. They might also spot weeds growing in sidewalk cracks, on the playground, or in a parking lot. Be aware of any allergies students may have. Avoid thorny weeds, or be sure to have some gloves available. Pray that nothing prevents your students from learning God's Word.

Farmer Listening Skills



FARM

Litany

(Worship) Speak the following litany with the children. After you say your line, put your hands on your heart to indicate that the students should put their hands on their heart and say the response.

Teacher: Thank You for Your Holy Word.

Students: I'll store it in my heart.

Teacher: Help me listen to Your Word.

Students: I'll store it in my heart.

Teacher: Help me share Your Word with all.

Students: I'll store it in my heart. (P.2.2.1)



I've Got God's Word

(Worship) Sing to the tune of "I Have the Joy" (*LOSP*, p. 62)

I've got God's Word, God's Word stored
Down in my heart, down in my heart, down in my heart.
I've got God's Word, God's Word stored
Down in my heart. Stored in my heart to stay!

For it reminds me of my Savior
And His forgiveness for each day.
The Holy Spirit helps me share it
So others, too, will say:

Repeat Refrain. Another appropriate song is "Cling Tightly to the Word of God" from page 113 of *My First Hymnal* (CPH). (P.4.4.1)

Love in a Box

(Worship) Say, **We do want to store God's Word in our heart—but it can't just stay there! We need to share it with others so they can learn about their Savior and love God too. This song is about how we can share God's love with others. There's enough love to give away and still have it left.** Sing "Love in a Box" (*LOSP*, p. 35). (P.4.4.1)

You've Got to Tell

(Worship) Add these motions to the song "You've Got to Tell" (*LLV*, p. 42).

When you know Lord Jesus (*Point index finger to head as if thinking.*)
And His love for you, (*Cross arms across chest.*)
There is just one thing you've simply got to do: (*Point index finger.*)

Refrain:

You've got to tell, tell, tell, tell, tell. (*Count with fingers, holding up 1 for each "tell."*)
You've got to tell, tell, tell, tell, tell. (*Count with fingers on other hand.*)
In a whisper, (*Hold finger to lips.*) in a shout, (*Cup hands next to mouth.*)
Let it out, (*Burst open fist of one hand.*) let it out! (*Burst with both hands.*)
You've got to tell, tell, tell, tell, tell! (*Count with fingers.*)

Jesus' love inside you (*Cross hands over heart.*)

Isn't meant to stay. (*Shake head no.*)

He's got more for you, so give that love away! (*Extend hands out.*) (P.3.4.3.3)

Express