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**Adult
Bible Study
in
Simplified
English**

**Teaching
Guide**



Living Faith in Daily Life

Bob Coder

Adult Bible Study in Simplified English Teaching Guide

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Introduction for Teachers

The purpose of this teaching guide is to provide teachers with a plan for teaching a quality Bible lesson while helping participants improve their English language skills. Use of this material is suggested for International Sunday School classes or any Bible study group taught at a Basic English level.

The Teaching Guide begins with listings of the Lesson Focus, Focal/Background Text, and Memory Verse, all of which provide the premise for the lesson. This information is followed by a teaching plan under headings of Connect with Life, Guide the Study, and Encourage Application. At the end of each lesson, Supplemental Teaching Ideas are provided under those same headings. As the teacher, you may pick and choose from these helps to use along with the student's Study Guide to fit the lesson to your class members' abilities and needs.

The Bible text printed in the lesson material is from the NEW LIFE Version of the Bible (NLV), an inexpensive translation (not a paraphrase) which uses only an 850-word vocabulary. The NLV is available from Christian Literature International, P. O. Box 777, Canby, Oregon 97013; e-mail christian@canby.com; telephone (orders only) 1-800-324-9734.

The NLV Bible often uses simplified phrases to express terms generally familiar to anyone raised in a Christian environment. In the Teaching Guide, these terms will usually be expressed using the NLV terminology, followed by the more common term in parentheses; for example, "proud religious law-keeper (Pharisee)" or "early preacher (prophet)." The teacher has the option of using the NLV term for new Christians or beginning students, or the common term where it will be better understood and less cumbersome in teaching. Once a word or phrase has been introduced in the Word List or teaching procedures, however, the familiar expression may be used to help students add it to their vocabulary.

Prayer is sometimes specifically suggested in the teaching procedures. It should be an integral part of your lesson plan. Use your own judgment as to where it best fits into the teaching session.

The writers and editors wish you success and give you prayerful support in your teaching of this Adult Bible Study in Simplified English.

Adult Bible Study in Simplified English is published by the Baptist General Convention of Texas and follows the same curriculum plan as the Bible Study for Texas materials, but has no Texas emphasis. Teachers may wish to purchase Bible Study for Texas lesson comments and teaching guides as additional resources. These may be ordered through your church or directly from the Sunday School/Discipleship Division, Baptist General Convention of Texas, 333 North Washington, Dallas, TX 75246-1798, e-mail baptistway@bgct.org; FAX 214-828-5187; or toll-free telephone 1-800-355-5285.

About the writer

Bob Coder is retired and lives in Allen, Texas. His wife, Lenora, died in November 2009. Bob is a member of the First Baptist Church of Richardson where he is co-director of a senior adult class. Bob has previously written teaching procedures for youth Sunday School lessons. After taking early retirement, he and his wife served for three short-term mission assignments in Zimbabwe, Africa and London, England. Since returning from the mission field, Bob has written several previous Teaching Guides for this Adult Bible Study in Simplified English curriculum.

Suggestions for Teaching

General Suggestions

1. Provide language edition Bibles so students can read the focal passage in their native languages.
2. Beginning students may require three sessions to complete one lesson.
3. Review the Word Study before beginning the study. Provide page (see resources) for class to keep vocabulary studies in their notebooks.
4. Prepare 9-12 core sentences which tell the most important part of the Bible focal text. Illustrate each sentence with stick figures and symbols in *picture sequence* form (see details below).
5. Prepare lesson outlines or written materials before class—make your own cling sheets by cutting apart white plastic garbage bags and writing on them with markers. The plastic bags will cling to the wall.

Bible Comments/Focal Text

1. Help students hear English and practice their pronunciation by modeling phrases and sentence. Allow the entire class to repeat. Be consistent with stress and intonation. Speak naturally.
2. Allow individual students to read a sentence or paragraph at a time. For further practice, ask students to tell sections from Bible comments in their own words.
3. When time allows, pairs may read the lesson again to each other.
4. Class may close books and listen as a native speaker reads the section again.
5. Discuss lesson using “Things to Think About.”

Memory Verse

1. Challenge class members to say the Memory Verse several times each day.
2. Provide Study Sheets for students to write Memory Verses.
3. Write phrases or individual words on separate pieces of paper. Give to students to place in order.
4. Write entire verse on board. Read in unison. Erase key words a few at a time. Recite verse until entire verse is erased and class can repeat by memory.
5. Make a symbol for each word or phrase of the

verse. 6. Use the symbols as a reminder for saying the verse.

Picture Sequencing (Lipson Method)

This method is especially suited for teaching beginners. It consists of a series of pictures with accompanying sentences that tell a story. It may be used solely for oral production (using pictures alone) or for integrated skills (engaging students in reading and writing the story).

You may use real pictures, videotape, pictures that are professionally drawn, or stick figures

Other benefits include the following:

1. Relaxed, low-anxiety atmosphere as students focus on the pictures and create their own sentences to tell the story
 - Focus on fluency, not just accuracy
 - Focus on a message or task rather than form or grammar
 - Minimal error-correction as students tell the story
2. Pictures (even stick figures) convey meaning in every language.
3. The same set of pictures can be used with more than one level of students by making the sentences easier or more difficult.
4. The use of pictures helps students learn the language in “chunks” rather than words in isolation.
5. The only item needed is a piece of chalk—or a marker, if using a cling sheet or overhead transparency.

Preparation

1. Put a story into sentences that are suitable for the level of your students. Try to tell the story with a maximum of ten sentences. For low beginners, choose the simplest and fewest words possible. Keep sentences in their most basic form, so students can combine sentences later.
2. Draw simple pictures or stick figures to illustrate key points in the story. These serve as prompts for the telling of the story. Other drawing tips:
 - An “x” in a small square beside a picture enables you to cue for a negative as you tell the story.
 - Direct quotations may be indicated with a cartoon-type bubble.

Suggestions for Teaching

Procedure

1. Introduce the story by following your prepared script of sentences (for consistency) and pointing to the pictures as you speak. This will give students the main idea and help them think in chunks of language (as in real-life language use).
2. Introduce the new words as you again reference the pictures. Use props and/or dramatization as needed to establish understanding. Work on individual sounds and word stress as students repeat new words.
3. Lead students in repetition of the story, one sentence at a time, working on sentence stress and intonation.
4. Lead the class in one more repetition of the story (going straight through and continuing to refer to the pictures throughout the story).
5. Ask the class to tell you the story as you cue the story sequence by pointing to the pictures. (You become “stage prompter” at this point.)
6. Then ask for a single volunteer to tell the story. (This may open the door for several more proficient students to use what they know.)
7. Divide the class into small groups of 3-5 students to give each person practice in telling the story. (Inevitably, the most eager student will go first, followed by another “semi”-eager student. By the time it is the least proficient student’s turn, he/she will have learned a lot by listening, will have observed a good model at least a couple of times, and will have bolstered courage for risk-taking.)
8. Follow with questions to review story (begin by naming the setting, the characters, etc.—easy questions).
9. Conclude with life application questions that require some thought and give students opportunity to express opinion, emotion, and their own ideas.

Lesson Expansion

If the setting and circumstances permit, use these ideas:

- Sequencing pictures (a set for each pair of students) while listening to you or to a taped voice tell the story
- Picture sequencing without hearing the story told
- Matching pictures and sentences
- Scrambled sentences to arrange in order (writing numbers or letters in front of sentences to show sequence; cutting up sentences and moving around to position correct order)

- Strip story (cutting up sentences, issuing one strip per student, asking students to arrange themselves in order, having them retell the story by contributing the portion on their paper strip)
- Cloze (supplying a written copy with every nth word blank; students work in pairs to fill in the missing words)
- Dictation (teacher or student telling the story while students write what they hear)
- Provide a copy of the sentences for each student. Ask that they read the story to a partner.
- Ask students to write the story in their own words.

Bible passage as content for reading

Procedure:

1. Tell the parable or story using pictures. Use animation and simple sentences.
2. Ask questions about the main idea of the story.
3. Read story aloud while students follow along and underline unknown words. Go over the meaning of these words with the whole class.
4. Intermediate or advanced students: Have students read silently a second time to look for answers to two or three questions about details that you have written on the board. Ask students to discuss their answers with a partner. Then go over answers with the whole class.
5. Beginning or low-intermediate students: Read story again and ask students to repeat it with you line by line.
6. Invite the class to read the story with you in unison.
7. Ask pairs to read the story to each other.
8. Ask for volunteers to tell the story in their own words.
9. Make drawings large enough for the back row to see.
10. Select a list of new words in the story—unfamiliar words that the students would not likely be able to figure out from context (generally 8-10 new words per lesson).
11. List the new words in categories: verbs, nouns, adjectives, adverbs. When listing verbs, you may write both simple present and past tense forms (e.g., eat/ate, walk/walked). Basic beginners would do well to tell the story in present tense, but high beginners could work in present tense, then retell the story in past tense.

Suggestions for Teaching

Checklist for Successful Classrooms

Right Kind of Input

1. New language in every lesson
2. Input that is slightly above the students' current level of proficiency
3. Content relevant to the students' real-life needs and interests
4. Language learned in meaningful chunks, not words in isolation
5. Comprehensibility achieved by use of the following:
 - Realia or authentic materials
 - Simplified language (rephrasing, repeating, clear enunciation)
 - Demonstration and multiple examples rather than explanation
 - Lots of gestures and nonverbal language

Low Anxiety Environment

Students should not be afraid to make mistakes or take risks in language learning. The following factors contribute to a relaxed and comfortable atmosphere and build a sense of community:

- Personally greeting and bidding farewell to students
- Sincere and frequent affirmation
- Minimal error correction from the teacher
- Frequent reference to the culture(s) of the students
- Smiles and laughter that are commonplace
- Connecting with students through eye contact and positioning yourself on students' eye level
- Calling students by name

Checklist for Real-Life Interaction

1. Pace activities with a balance of noisy/quiet and still/active
2. Attention to different learning styles (visual, auditory, tactile, kinesthetic)
3. Variety in grouping (predominately pairs and small groups of three or five; using whole class in initial presentation and again for feedback and wrap-up at the end)
4. A focus on a task or message rather than form (grammar)
5. Provision for all four skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing)
6. Avoidance of questions for which answers are known

7. Use of information gap activity in which partners have different pieces of information and must ask each other questions in order to fill in their gaps of understanding
8. Other useful activities: surveys, interviews, role-play, problem-solving, and interactive games
9. Review previous material.

Some suggestions based on material developed for the EFL Training Manual—Beyond our Borders.

Resources for *Living Faith in Daily Life*

From BaptistWayPress

www.baptistwaypress.org

Posted a week in advance of the first Sunday of use.

Teaching Resource Items: Go online to www.baptistwaypress.org and click on “Teaching Resource Items.” Permission is granted to download these teaching resource items, print them out, copy as needed, and use in your class.

Additional Teaching Plan: Enrichment teaching help is provided in the Internet edition of the Baptist Standard. Access the free Internet information by checking the Baptist Standard website at www.baptiststandard.com. Call 214-630-4571 to begin your subscription to the printed edition of the Baptist Standard.

From EasyEnglish

www.easyenglish.info

EasyEnglish is a form of simple English developed by Wycliffe Associates (UK). This site contains Bible commentaries, Bible translations, Bible studies, and other materials written in simple English. The materials are free to download and use.

Teaching Guide

Lesson 1: Knowing God in Daily Life

Lesson Focus

Because God knows us so well, we should seek to know Him in our everyday lives.

Bible Text

Psalms 139:1-12; 23-24; Proverbs 3:5-6

Memory Verse

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not trust in your own understanding.” (Proverbs 3:5)

Connect with Life

1. Introduce the class to the term *quarter*. Use four quarters and a one-dollar bill to explain how a quarter is one-fourth of a dollar.

Say: *In time, a year is made up of four quarters. Each quarter is one-fourth of the year. There are thirteen weeks in a quarter.* Go on to explain that our Bible study lessons are written quarterly so that we have thirteen lessons in each quarter. Note that we usually study just one book of the Bible in a quarter. Add that we do sometimes study two or three books in a quarter.

Finally, refer to the introduction to this study on page 2 of the study guide. Read the introduction and then relate how each lesson this quarter talks about a different way God helps us through our everyday lives. Call attention also to how the Bible texts are taken from two to four books in each lesson and verses are taken from twenty-one different books for this quarter of study.

2. Say: *Think of a close friend. How did you get to be such good friends?* Listen to responses and bring out such ideas as these: you met, you enjoyed talking and being with that person, the two of you feel close to one another, you have the same feelings about life, you trust each other, and you can talk openly with her or him. You may want to jot these down briefly on the board and suggest any that have not been mentioned.

Then ask: *Have you met God? Have you made Him your best friend? Do you talk openly with God in prayer? Do you trust Him? Do you feel close to Him?*

Can God trust you? Urge class members to know God as their best friend in their daily lives.

Guide the Study

3. Ask: *How much do you think God knows about you?* Say: *I want us to read a part of the Bible text that may surprise you.* Call for someone to read Psalms 139:1-6 with the rest of the class following along in the study guide.

After the reading, ask each person to read silently through the first seven paragraphs from “The Power of God” in the study guide. After a couple of minutes, call on a class member or two. Remind each one that God is watching. Then ask each one whether she or he will be more careful about what they think and do from now on.

4. Let another person read Psalms 139:7-12 to the group. Then relate the comments in the last four paragraphs of “The Power of God” about God’s great love. Ask: *If God loves us that much, how can we love God any less?*

5. Instruct the class to read Psalms 139:23-24 silently. Allow plenty of time for the silent reading, then say: *The psalmist asked God to be a part of his life. He asked God to make any changes needed in his life. Will you trust in God to allow Him to make changes in your life?* Read to the class the section in the study guide entitled “I Will Pray.”

6. State that we now come to the last part of the Bible text, Proverbs 3:5-6. Begin at the top of the board and write verse 5 as shown below:

Trust in the Lord
with all your heart,
And do not trust
in your own understanding
-Proverbs 3:5

Identify this as the memory verse for this lesson. Suggest that the verse is very easy to learn. Point to each of the underlined phrases in order and read one phrase at a time to the class. Finally, request one or two class members to read the verse individually, phrase by phrase, and then lead the entire class in reading it one

last time. (Suggestion: Write this verse on the board before class and allow it to remain there for the class to view, without comment, until you begin this step.)

7. Say: *Proverbs 3:6 finishes out the thought of verse 5.* Read verse 6 and then use “I Will Trust God” in the study guide to affirm that, if we trust in God, He will provide a much smoother road for us to follow.

Encourage Application

8. Say: *This lesson has is called “Knowing God in Your Daily Life.” We learned earlier that you cannot know everything about any other person.* Suggest that we can, however, say the prayer of the psalmist in Psalms 139:23-24. Ask everyone to look at those verses again. Then lead them in reading the same two verses as a prayer to God.

Supplemental Teaching Ideas Connect with Life

- Provide a brief explanation of psalms and proverbs. Refer to the word list for the definition of a psalm. Explain that psalms were often used in public worship.

Say: *Some of the psalms gave praise to God.*

Some thanked God for his loving-kindness (mercy). Some told about great sadness. State that the psalms talk about every part of life.

Say: *Proverbs were little stories or wise sayings.*

They were passed from one person to another. People remembered the proverbs because they told about something important in life. Tell how both the psalms and the proverbs were written down by the teachers of the Law (Scribes). Add that, later, many of the psalms and many of the proverbs were put together in books that became parts of the Bible.

Guide the Study

- (Alternate Step 3) Request a class member to read Psalm 139:1-6 from the Bible text. Stress that, as the psalmist said in verse 6, “it is too much” for us “to understand.” State that God *does* expect us to try to understand Him.

Ask: *How can we do this? How can we have a better understanding of God?* Lead the class to identify such ways as reading the Bible, praying often, meditation, attending Bible study and church worship services, or making Christian friends.

Encourage Application

- Lead the class to notice how personal the verses from Psalms 139 are. Observe how in verse 1 the psalmist says, “Oh, Lord, You have looked through *me*.” Point out how the psalmist repeats *me* and *my* and *I*. He does not use *we* or *us* or *them*.

Refer especially to verse 23 (the memory verse) and 24 where he says “look through *me*” and “try *me*” to “see if there is any sinful way in *me* and lead *me* in the way that lasts forever.” Stress that the psalmist must have been very close and personal with God. Suggest that we should likewise be very close and personal with God when we pray.

Teaching Guide

Lesson 2: Using Work Skills

Lesson Focus

All work and work skills are given to us by God to be used in serving Him.

Bible Text

Exodus 35:30-35; Proverbs 6:6-11; Colossians 3:23-24; 2 Thessalonians 3:10-13

Memory Verse

“Whatever work you do, do it with all your heart. Do it for the Lord and not for men.” (Colossians 3:23)

Connect with Life

1. Say: *Let’s start by looking at two words.* Direct the class to refer to the word list and find the words *skills* and *talents*. Explain that skills are something you learn to do well. Then describe talents as special gifts God gives to some people. Give as an example that you can learn the skill of building a house, but you must have talent to sing well, or paint pictures or write stories.

Guide the Study

2. Because of the difficult names in these verses, either you or an assistant should read Exodus 35:30-35 from the Bible text.

After the reading, say: *Verse 30 tells us that God called Bezalel by name to build the meeting tent (tabernacle).* Point out that, today, when we talk about someone being *called*, it is usually to a job in the church.

Say: *This tells us that God calls people to do other kinds of work. He doesn’t call them just to do work for the church.* Go on to explain how Bezalel was a man who had both talent and skills and could also teach his skills to others.

3. Recall from the previous week’s lesson that a proverb is a little story or wise saying that teaches a lesson. Explain that Chapter 6 of Proverbs tells of a father teaching his son some important lessons about life. Direct attention to the next part of the Bible text, Proverbs 6:6-11. Call on a class member to read those verses aloud.

Ask: *What was this father trying to teach his son here?* Refer the class to read “God Tells Us We Should Use Our Gifts” in the study guide. Instruct them to read that story silently. Then lead the class to identify the main point of the proverb as being that a person must work or go hungry.

Point out that the ant is a good example for us to follow. Stress that ants work hard without a boss watching over them. Say: *They somehow know where to go and what to do. They work hard to do the job.*

Further emphasize that whatever our job and however small it may seem, God has called us to do that job, and He wants us to do it well.

4. Suggest that the next two verses may change the way you feel about work. Refer to Colossians 3:23-24 in the Bible text. Mention that in verse 22 (not part of the Bible text), we learn that Paul was talking to slaves.

Say: *This is what Paul said to these slaves.*

Immediately begin reading the two verses of Bible text. Note that verse 23 is the memory verse and encourage the class to memorize it.

Say: *Think about this! You are the slave boss. You have one worker who is lazy. You have another worker who always does good work because he is working for the Lord. Which worker are you likely to be hard on?* Let a class member then read the comments under “God Tells Us How to Use Our Gifts” in the study guide.

5. Comment that we have one more part of the Bible text that talks about work. State that these last verses come from Paul’s second letter to the church at Thessalonica.

Read 2 Thessalonians 3:10-13 as the class members read along silently. Describe how, in the verses just before this, Paul told how he and his helpers had worked and paid for their own food. Continue, citing how Paul had heard of some men who would not work.

Question the class as to what Paul said about such men in verse 10. Then, ask a class member to read “God Wants Us to Work” from the study guide.

Encourage Application

6. Say: *All work and work skills are given to us by God to be used in serving Him.* Follow immediately with the memory verse to conclude the session.

Supplemental Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

- Without encouraging answers, ask a series of quick questions: *Do you have a job? Where do you work? Do you have your own business? Do you work at home? Do you work in a factory? Do you work in an office? Do you like the work you do? Do you ever feel like a slave? Would you be happy if you didn't have to work? Would you like to just stay at home and do nothing?* Remark that those are hard questions, but the lesson today may cause you to change the way you think about work.

- Engage early-arriving class members in a lively discussion of ants. Share information you have gathered from encyclopedias or the Internet. Ask each person what they know about ants and their work habits, how many different kinds of ants there are, what things we can learn from ants, etc. Try to develop the idea that ants keep busy and work together as a team.

- Begin by asking if anyone in the class has ever seen the Walt Disney movie *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*. Explain that a dwarf is a very small man with very short legs. Mention that this was a cartoon movie for children but that adults enjoyed it too. Recall the names of the dwarfs: Happy, Grumpy, Sneezy, Doc, Bashful, Dopey, and Sleepy.

Describe how all through the movie the dwarfs went around their workplace whistling and singing a happy little song called *Whistle While You Work*. Then question individuals about what they do at work. Do they whistle and sing while they work? Are they happy, bashful, dopey, sleepy, or grumpy? Explain that we will be talking about how we do work as we study the lesson today.

Guide the Study

- Provide some information about the meeting tent that God called Bezalel to make. Describe it as a tent-building with a large courtyard around it. Explain that Bezalel made a special box and a special room for God. This room was always kept dark like the night. Only the high priest could enter this room, once a year, to honor God. Only the priests could enter the second room, where they honored God. The courtyard was a large rectangular area around the meeting tent. A high wall went around the courtyard. The people could make their gifts given on the altar (sacrifices) inside this courtyard, but they could not go inside the meeting tent itself. (See Exodus 25-27, 30-31 for further details.)

Encourage Application

- Question the class what they have learned from this lesson. Ask: *How will you think and act differently when you go back to work next week?* Encourage each person to do their work in a way that would please God. Mention that if they please God, they will please their boss as well.

Teaching Guide

Lesson 3: Resting Is Not a Choice

Lesson Focus

Rest, like work, is part of God’s plan for human life.

Bible Text

Deuteronomy 5:12-15; Psalm 127:1-2; Mark 6:30-32

Memory Verse

“Remember the Day of Rest, to keep it holy, as the Lord your God told you.” (Deuteronomy 5:12)

Connect with Life

1. Display a facsimile of a stop sign or simply draw the familiar octagonal shape on the board with the word STOP in the middle. Question the class as to why we have stop signs, why the stop sign is red (red means danger), and what may happen if you go through a stop sign without coming to a full stop (accident or ticket).
Say: *God has given us a special stop sign. It tells us to STOP work after six days. On the seventh day, we are to honor the Day of Rest.*

2. Say: *Last week’s lesson was about work. This week we will talk about rest.* State that one of God’s Ten Great Laws says this: “Remember the Day of Rest to keep it holy” (Exodus 20:8). Question the class as to what it means to rest. Help them understand that it means to stop working and relax or be at ease. Stress that rest, like work, is part of God’s plan for human life.

Guide the Study

3. Refer to Things to Think About in the study guide. Ask the questions one by one and encourage responses. For the third question, you may need to define *benefits* as good or helpful things that happen.

4. Ask a class member to read Deuteronomy 5:12-15 from the Bible text. Suggest that each person take a pencil or pen, if they have one, and draw a line under the words *rest* and *holy* in verse 12.

Repeat verse 13, pause, and then repeat verse 14a. Allow a moment for class members to absorb that emphasis, and then question the class about the last part

of verse 14. Ask: *Who does this verse tell us should not work on the Day of Rest?*

Lead them to conclude that you, your family, anyone working for you, even your animals or a stranger who happens by—none of these should work on the Day of Rest. Point out that verse 15 simply reminds the people of Israel that they were once slaves in Egypt and were made to work even on the Day of Rest. Add that this makes the point that they should allow their own slaves to have a day of rest as well as themselves.

5. Say: *Here’s what I would like for you to do now. Put yourself in Jesus’ place for a minute.*

Lay the background: *Jesus had sent His twelve followers out to many small towns and villages. He had given them powers to teach and heal. They had worked hard. They had healed many people. They had told the people about Jesus. The followers did all of those things. Then they came back to Jesus. They told Him all that they had done. The crowd got larger. The people wanted more teaching. They wanted to be healed.*

At this point, pause and ask: *What do you think Jesus should say to the tired missionaries, or do?* Listen for appropriate responses, and then read Mark 6:30-32 from the Bible text.

Say: *Jesus knew the twelve followers were tired. They had worked hard. They needed rest. So He took them away in a boat to a place of rest.*

Encourage Application

6. Use the study guide section “Jesus Teaches the Disciples to Rest” to summarize the Bible text and its application to our own circumstances.

Supplemental Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

- Tell the story of Anna Elneich as told in the study guide introduction. Explain a generation as the time it takes one set of children to grow up and have children of their own—about 30 years.
- Use a digital camera or electronic device to take a few pictures of someone at rest in a chair, recliner, lying on a couch, or nested outside in a hammock. The persons in these pictures do not necessarily need to be asleep, but

may be reading, watching TV, listening to music, etc., but must clearly be at rest.

As class members arrive, display these photos on the device or as prints. As they view the photos, ask what the person in each picture is doing. Try to bring out that they are resting, or at rest. If you have difficulty in getting this response, hand them a copy of the study guide and ask them to look for the answer to your question in the lesson text.

- Begin by asking if anyone in the class has ever seen the Walt Disney movie *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*. Explain that a dwarf is a very small man with very short legs. Mention that this was a cartoon movie for children but that adults enjoyed it, too. Recall the names of the dwarfs: Happy, Grumpy, Sneezy, Doc, Bashful, Dopey, and Sleepy.

Describe how during the movie the dwarfs went around their workplace whistling and singing a happy little song called *Whistle While You Work*. Then question individuals as to what they do at work. Do they whistle and sing while they work? Are they happy, bashful, dopey, sleepy, or grumpy? Explain that in our lesson today we will look at how we should feel about work.

Guide the Study

- Provide some information about the meeting tent (tabernacle) that God called Bezalel to make. Describe it as a tent-building with a large courtyard around it. Explain that Bezalel made a special box and a special room for God. This room was always kept dark like the night. Only the high priest could enter that room, once a year, to honor God. Only the priests could enter the second room, where they honored God. The courtyard was a large (rectangular) area around the meeting tent. A high wall went around the courtyard. The people could make their gifts given on the altar (sacrifices) inside this courtyard. (See Exodus 25-27, 30-31 for further details.)

- Say: *Some people must work on the Day of Rest. Firemen and policemen must work to keep us safe. Doctors and nurses sometimes must work in hospitals. They care for people who are sick or have been hurt. But many other people work in stores, shops, restaurants, movie theaters, and at gas stations or sports arenas, or driving trucks.*

Explain that most of these do get a day or two off for rest other than Sunday. Question class members as to what is good and what is bad about people working on Sunday. Then ask them what they can do to help keep some people from having to work on the Day of Rest.

Teaching Guide

Lesson 4: Enjoying God’s Gift of Life

Lesson Focus

When we follow God’s way of life, we find fullness of joy.

Bible Text

Psalm 16:7-11; Ecclesiastes 5:18-20; Luke 7:31-35

Memory Verse

“You will show me the way of life. Being with You is to be full of joy. In Your right hand there is happiness forever.” (Psalm 16:11)

Connect with Life

1. Refer to the introduction at the beginning of the study guide. Ask the question: *How can I find happiness?*

Use the first paragraph and perhaps add a comment or two of your own to get the class thinking about the question. Then make two reading assignments. Let the first person read the two-paragraph story of Miguel, the painter. Then ask the second person to read the two-paragraph story of Bob, the plumber. Point out how the joy these two men had came from their hearts.

Then write on the board the acrostic from the study guide, as follows:

J e s u s
O t h e r s
Y o u r s e l f

Express the thought that by placing Jesus first and then others before yourself, you will always have JOY (spelled downward) and find happiness in your life.

Guide the Study

2. Refer to the first part of the Bible text in the study guide, Psalm 16:7-11. Explain first that the person who wrote this psalm had apparently had something bad happen to him (see Psalm 13). State that he felt as if he was near death at some point in his life but that God had given him new life. Assert that he now feels secure; he is full of joy and thankful for God’s help.

Read each verse slowly and deliberately from the Bible text. Use comments from the study guide section “God Wants Us to Have a Joyful Life” as well as these:

Verse 7 – We all have a little voice inside us (conscience) that tells us what is right and what is wrong to do. The psalmist said that God taught him even during the night. God told him what was right to do.

Verse 8 – The psalmist says that he has placed “the Lord in front” and that “He is at my right hand.” Observe that this places the Lord in what would be considered the strong points of the psalmist’s life.

Verse 9 – The psalmist said that his heart, soul, and body all felt joy because of God’s presence.

Verses 10 -11 – The psalmist had joy again because God had saved him from almost dying and made him feel safe and secure again.

3. Introduce the next book of the Bible in this study, Ecclesiastes. Explain that the first words of the book tell us that “these are the words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem” (Ecclesiastes 1:1).

Say: *This was Solomon, the king of Israel, who was very wise. His kingdom grew very large. He became very rich. But Solomon later turned to a sinful life. He lost God’s favor. His words at this time, though, still have the same wisdom as when they were first written.*

Allow someone to read Ecclesiastes 5:18-20 from the Bible text. Refer to the comments from “God Gives Us the Joy that We Need” in the study guide. Point out that we all need certain things—food, water, air to breathe, and a home. Emphasize that God provides us with those things as our pay for work. Say: *Those things—not riches—are what give us joy in the Lord.*

4. Request a class member to read Luke 7:31-35 from the Bible text. Say: *Jesus asked what the people of that day were like. He answered His own question. “They are like children playing in front of stores.”*

Comment that the parents were probably shopping in the stores. Refer to “Jesus Speaks to Us about Joy” in the study guide. Comment on the differences between John the Baptist and Jesus; that is, John led a very simple and basic life while Jesus went among people who were sinners.

Draw comments from the study guide as needed to bring out that fact that “the people of [that] day” didn’t want to play by the rules. Emphasize that those people didn’t simply turn away from either John the Baptist or Jesus; they turned away from the message of God.

Encourage Application

5. Go back to the stories of Miguel, the painter, and Bob, the plumber. Question class members to see what stories like these they might tell about their own jobs. Say: *These are the kind of people we need to try and be like. Be like them and put JOY in your life.*

Supplemental Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

- Ask: *Have you ever noticed how some people always have a happy face (draw a smiley face on the right side of the board) and others always look sad (draw a sad face on the left side of the board)?*

Call attention to the lesson title and ask: *Which one of these do you think is “enjoying the life God gives”?* Follow up with the question: *Which do you want to be?*

Say: *Today’s lesson will tell you how to have a happy face because you are living a life that pleases God.*

Encourage Application

- Instruct the class to look at the four questions from this lesson’s Things to Think About. Say: *These are really things for you to think about. Sometimes we do not like to talk about such questions openly. You can think about the first three questions on your own. But let’s look at Question 4 and talk about it.*

Read the question aloud. Suggest that it requires only a simple “yes” or “no” answer, but that it is really deeper than that. Encourage class members to offer their thoughts on the question. Finally, state that the answer to Question 4 takes us back to Question 3, “How can you share the joy of God’s gift of life with others?”

Teaching Guide

Lesson 5: Reaching Out to Others

Lesson Focus

God's people are to reach out to their community in a way that shows others the love of God.

Bible Text

2 Kings 7:3-9; Nehemiah 2:17-18; 4:6; Luke 10:30-37

Memory Verse

"You must love the Lord your God with all your heart. You must love Him with all your soul. You must love Him with all your strength. You must love Him with all your mind. You must love your neighbor as you love yourself." (Luke 10:27b)

Connect with Life

1. Begin by asking the three questions in the study guide from Things to Think About. Say: *I want you to think about those questions as I read the story at the beginning of the study guide.*

Direct the class to follow in the study guide as you read. When you come to the word *destiny*, refer briefly to the word list definition. To further clarify the meaning of this word, state that Mr. Booth had found a purpose in life; he had found what he wanted to do for the rest of his life. Emphasize that he thought of it as his destiny.

Continue reading the last part of the story. Comment that the Salvation Army now does work in countries all over the world reaching out to people—their neighbors—in need. Explain that the word *salvation* (as in Salvation Army) means *saving*. Emphasize that William Booth and his wife spent the rest of their lives saving and helping people who were poor and hungry.

Guide the Study

2. Ask: *Have you ever started something and then you realized that what you were doing was wrong, so you stopped and started doing what was right?*

Say: *We begin the lesson today with a story about four men who had that happen to them. Listen...*
Instruct the group to follow in the study guide as you

read 2 Kings 7:3-9. Then ask a class member to read "Four Men Bring Food to a City" from the study guide.

3. Set the scene for the next story, as follows: *The city of Jerusalem had been captured by the armies of Babylon many years earlier. The walls had been broken down and the gates had been burned. Most of the Jews had been carried away to Babylon and made to live there. Over the years, as they gained more freedom, many people returned to Jerusalem to live. But the walls of the city were still broken down. No one tried to build the walls back again. There was a Jew in Babylon named Nehemiah. He had not returned to Jerusalem but still thought of it as the holy city of the Jews. He learned from some travelers that the walls of the city had not been built up again. This news disturbed him. Nehemiah had done well in Babylon. He had become wealthy and important there. Because of his high position, Nehemiah asked the king of Babylon to make him governor of Judah. The king agreed. So Nehemiah went to Jerusalem as governor and led the people to build up the walls and make the gates of the city strong again.*

4. With the scene set, request a class member to read Nehemiah 2:17-18 from the Bible text. Then use "People Who Wanted to Work" to show how Nehemiah led the people to build a strong wall around Jerusalem again. Finally, read Nehemiah 4:6 to the class.

5. Comment that our next story is one of the great stories of the Bible. State that it is called *The Picture—Story Of The Good Samaritan*.

Explain that Samaria was at one time part of Israel but that it had been captured by an enemy nation. Say: *The Jews did not like the people of Samaria.*

Call on someone to read Luke 10:30-37 from the Bible text. Give attention briefly to the man who knew the Law (in the verses just prior to the Bible text). Say: *He wanted to trap Jesus. Instead, he got caught in his own trap.*

Then go directly to the parable. Comment that the first two men who passed by the man lying on the road were religious men. Say: *They didn't want to take the time or get themselves dirty by helping the man (who was likely a Jew himself). And besides, it was dangerous with thieves possibly nearby.*

Explain that the Samaritan man not only stopped to clean up and bandage the man's wounds, he put him on his own donkey and led the donkey to the inn as well. Add that he spent his own money to pay the keeper of the inn to care for the man.

Encourage Application

6. Say: *In this lesson, we have seen three good examples of people reaching out to others.* Recall the three incidents and perhaps list them on the board, as follows:

- (1) The men with the bad skin disease who helped a city
- (2) Nehemiah, who helped the Jews build up the walls of Jerusalem again
- (3) The Good Samaritan who saved a man from dying

Remark that these three stories should help us watch for ways we can reach out to others and help them in some way.

Say: *Who knows? One of us might start another group like William Booth did with the Salvation Army. But we are more likely to help people in small ways. The idea is to be willing to help people and not to just walk on by "on the other side of the road."*

Supplemental Teaching Ideas Guide the Study

- As an introduction to the story of Nehemiah, describe the importance in Bible times of a stone wall with strong gates. Explain that this allowed the people to control who came into the city. Mention also that it gave them the means to defend the city from its enemies. Emphasize that the wall was very important to the safety of the city and its people.
- Explain that the skin disease (called *leprosy*) that the four men in the first story of this lesson had was greatly feared by the people of that day. Emphasize that the disease was so bad that people who had the disease were made to live away from the city. State that what the four men did, then, was even more an act of kindness since they were not even allowed to live in the city that they helped.

Encourage Application

- Call attention to the memory verse in the study guide. Let someone read the verse. List on the board the key words: *heart, soul, strength, and mind*. Then read the verse stressing these words.

Say: *Just remember these words and you can remember the rest of the verse easily.* Encourage volunteers to say the entire verse just looking at the key words on the board. Add that the last line is easy for us to remember. Relate the line: *Love your neighbor as you love yourself*. Then ask: *That's what we do in church, isn't it?*

Teaching Guide

Lesson 6: Welcoming Strangers into Our Lives

Lesson Focus

As Christians, we are to show hospitality to strangers who come into our lives.

Bible Text

Deuteronomy 10:17-19; Matthew 25:34-40; Luke 14:12-14; Hebrews 13:1-2

Memory Verse

“Keep on loving each other as Christian brothers. Do not forget to be kind to strangers and let them stay in your home. Some people have had angels in their homes without knowing it.” (Hebrews 13:1-2)

Connect with Life

1. Advise the class that you would like to read them the story at the beginning of the study guide. Instruct them to follow the story in the study guide as you read. Point out that the couple in the car had no children with them, but the Dallas family had at least two daughters. Say: *The couple in the car was thankful for the hospitality. The daughters saw the charity of their parents toward strangers. Identify the title of this lesson as “Welcoming Strangers into Our Lives.”*

Guide the Study

2. Refer to the first subtitle in the study guide, “God Reveals Himself to Us.” Question the class as to what this section says about God. Encourage them to read out loud some of the words or sentences that describe God, such as *great, powerful, personal*, etc. You may want to jot down a few of these on the board as they are called out.

Allow someone from the class to read Deuteronomy 10:17-19 from the Bible text. Summarize to say that God does what is right for people who have no means of support; that is, women whose husbands have died (widows), children who have no parents (orphans) and strangers.

Say: *Those are the three examples that are given. But this passage has more to say about strangers.* Reread verse 19.

3. Explain that the next set of verses have Jesus talking about what will happen when He returns to earth. Describe the scene as set forth in Matthew 25:31-33 (not a part of the Bible text): *Jesus is sitting on His throne of greatness. All the angels are with Him. All the nations are gathered before Him. Jesus divides the nations. Some He puts on the left side. Some He puts on the right.*

Advise the class that you will now read Matthew 25:34-36 from the Bible text and begin reading. As you finish reading verse 36, remind the class that this was Jesus telling how it will be when He does return.

Finish reading Matthew 25:37-40 from the Bible text. Question the class as to what verse 40 means. Summarize responses to say that anytime you help a stranger in need, you help Jesus—it’s as simple as that.

4. Explain to the class that Luke 14:11 is not part of the Bible text but it will help us understand what Jesus is talking about in the verses that follow it. Present the verse written on poster board or newsprint, or simply read it, as follows:

Whoever makes himself look more important than he is will find out how little he is worth. Whoever does not try to honor himself will be made important. - Luke 14:11

Question the class as to how often the words of that verse prove to be true. Remind them to keep this verse in mind as we read from the Bible text. Let someone then read Luke 14:12-14.

Mention that the host of this meal was a proud religious law-keeper (Pharisee) and that the guests all thought of themselves as important. Explain that they were falling all over themselves with everyone trying to get the most important seats around the table. Say: *Jesus just pointed out to the host the foolishness of it all.*

Suggest that if the proud religious law-keeper had followed Jesus’ suggestion, the poor, the people who could not walk, and the blind would have been happy to have any seat in the house.

5. Enlist a class member to read “Jesus Teaches Us to Welcome Strangers” from the study guide.

Encourage Application

6. Refer to the last two verses in the Bible text, Hebrews 13:1-2. Recall the story at the beginning of the study guide about the couple stranded in Dallas after the Texas Baptist Evangelism Conference. Observe that this is exactly what these two verses are talking about. Point out that these are also the memory verse selection. Read the verses as a closing admonition to welcome strangers.

Supplemental Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

- Call attention to the first two questions from Things to Think About in the study guide. Say: *Both are about strangers. The first asks about a time you helped a stranger. The other talks of when a stranger helped you.*

Encourage class members to mention any time they or anyone in their family has helped a stranger or has been helped by a stranger. If needed, offer a story about you or someone in your family who gave or received help from a stranger.

Guide the Study

- Talk with the class about differences in the treatment of strangers between the world today and Israel in the first century. Describe how in Biblical times, travelers usually walked long distances along dusty paths wearing sandals. There were few safe places to stay for the night, especially for Christians. A man with a tent and family would often invite a traveling stranger to stay for the night. The man would bring a pan of water and wash the traveler's feet. They would talk. It was a good thing for the man to show hospitality to the stranger. Explain how there were stories of how sometimes the stranger turned out to be an angel who blessed the man and his family.

Contrast the way we think of strangers today. We teach our children not to speak to strangers. We are wary when a stranger comes to our door. Point out that in controlled circumstances, like at the Texas Baptist Evangelism Conference, where the story in the study guide took place, we are more likely to help a stranger.

Note that our Bible text verses today do not seem to limit the need to help a stranger to safe situations. Point out also that in our cities today, we usually have places to help people who are hungry and homeless. Emphasize that we, as Christians, can help to support such places, but we are still told by the Bible text to help the stranger who comes into our lives.

Teaching Guide

Lesson 7: Forgiving Others

Lesson Focus

Total forgiveness of others by us clears the way for God to forgive us.

Bible Text

Matthew 6:12, 14-15, 18:21-35; Colossians 3:12-14

Memory Verse

“Forgive us our sin as we forgive those who sin against us.” (Matthew 6:12)

Connect with Life

1. Inform the class that this lesson is about forgiving others. Use the word list and try to determine what knowledge the class as a whole has about the concept of forgiveness.

Next, mention that there is a good story of forgiveness in the study guide introduction. Observe that it has some difficult words and is fairly long, so you will read the story to them. First, identify Auschwitz as a place where the Germans held the Jews during World War II. Explain that many Jews died there. Read the story, pausing as needed to explain some of the difficult words or ideas. Bring out the feelings of the German officer who felt the need to repent, as well as those of Mrs. Kor who showed mercy and no longer wanted revenge against the Germans.

Guide the Study

2. Identify the first verse of the Bible text as being from the model prayer in which Jesus taught His followers how to pray. Note that it is also the memory verse for this lesson. Identify it as a very important verse. Request a class member to read Matthew 6:12 from the Bible text.

Question someone in the class about the verse.

Ask: *If I forgive just a little bit, can I be forgiven just a little bit; too? Or do I have to forgive all wrongs done to me before God will forgive any of my sins?*

Encourage responses, and then suggest that it seems to you the answer is “all or nothing at all.” To affirm this, read Matthew 6:14-15 from the Bible text.

Present thoughts from “Asking God to Forgive Me” in the study guide, especially the idea that God’s forgiveness is not something that can be earned.

3. Observe that Peter, one of Jesus’ twelve followers, always seemed to have a way of asking the wrong question. Let someone read Matthew 18:21-22 from the Bible Text.

After the reading, say: *Peter wanted to know how many times he should forgive. Seven seemed a good number to him. He thought seven was a lot of times to forgive someone. So, how many times did Jesus say Peter should forgive?*

Acknowledge or provide the answer: *seven times seventy*. Explain that would mean 490 times is how often that one should forgive. (Note that seven and seventy were numbers that stood for perfection or completeness in Bible times.)

4. Proceed to Matthew 18: 23-27 and read that portion of the Bible text yourself. Say: *I wish we could end the story there—with a happy ending. But, sadly, there is more to the story.*

Call on a class member to read the next part of the story as told in verses 28-30. Allow a short pause after the reading as you stand in disbelief. Ask: *Can this story get any worse?*

Go directly to the terrible ending and read verses 31-35 from the Bible text. Affirm that God is willing to pardon our sins but that He also expects us to show mercy and pardon those who do wrong to us. Use “God’s Forgiveness Does Not End” in the study guide to develop additional thoughts on forgiveness.

5. Say: *If you were asked to describe a Christian, how would you answer?* Suggest that the next set of verses in the Bible text paints a good word-picture of a Christian.

Call on a class member to read Colossians 3:12-14 from the Bible text. Use the section “Forgiving Is the Christian Thing to Do” in the study guide to bring out the main points. Note especially that we are to “forgive each other” (v.17), as well as the idea that “love holds everything and everybody together” (v. 14).

Encourage Application

6. Remark that this has been a good lesson on forgiving others. Say: *We've learned five good words about forgiveness from the word list.. We heard a good story about the woman who forgave the German army officer. We've learned that we must forgive those who have done wrong against us.*

Then assert that we have learned how, when we forgive others, God forgives our sins against Him. Lastly, lead the class in reading the memory verse as a closing prayer.

Supplemental Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

- Observe that all of the words in the word list today are tied together in some way. Present this scenario: *I have said something about you that was not true. I realize that I have done wrong to you. I repent and call you up to say that I am sorry for what I said about you. You show mercy and forgive me. You feel that trying to get revenge would only make matters worse. You pardon me because I have said I'm sorry. You are a good person. I will never lie about you again.*

Guide the Study

- Recall how Jesus taught believers to be gentle, kind, and forgiving. Suggest that people of the world sometimes think of such things as being weaknesses. Present “Forgiving is the Christian Thing to Do” in the study guide to bring out that the opposite is true.

Say: *It takes far more courage and strength to apologize or to forgive than not to do so.* State that kindness, gentleness, mercy, and forgiveness are strong points of the Christian faith, not weaknesses.

Encourage Application

- Say: *This lesson teaches the importance of forgiving others. That there will be disagreements, hurt, and anger between people is certain. The longer these feelings are held, the more the pain is felt. The problems can be solved by forgiveness.* Make these additional points:

- Forgiveness of others is an important part of Christian life.
- Broken relationships hurt both parties.
- Forgiveness helps both parties.
- Forgiveness of others makes it possible for God to forgive our own sins against Him.

Stress that we must always be ready and willing to forgive or to seek forgiveness. Ask the class to think this week about someone from whom they may need to ask forgiveness. Lead the class in a prayer for courage and strength to make these relationships right as far as it depends on them.

Teaching Guide

Lesson 8: Spending Money Wisely

Lesson Focus

Christians living in a material world must keep a proper balance between their worldly and spiritual needs.

Bible Text

Luke 12:15-31; 1 Timothy 6:6-10, 17-19

Memory Verse

“The love of money is the beginning of all kinds of sin. Some people have turned from the faith because of their love for money. They have made much pain for themselves because of this.” (1 Timothy 6:10)

Connect with Life

1. Say: *When I first looked at the title of this lesson, I thought, “Wow! This is going to be a fun lesson. It’s about spending money. And then I saw that third word in the title: wisely. That third word changes things, doesn’t it?*

Question the class as to what it means to spend money wisely. Bring out such ideas as: think before you spend, do not spend foolishly, be careful how you spend, be smart in spending, use it for the things you need—not want, etc.

2. Comment that children sometimes have wisdom beyond their years. Refer to the story on the first page of the study guide of a seven-year-old girl. Read the first two sentences to the class. Pause and remark that it sounds like she has some greed to “want to own all the money in the world.” Say: *But let’s hear the rest of the story.*

Continue reading the remainder of the story. Pause as you finish the story, then ask: *Did this person, as a seven-year-old girl or as a woman, show any signs of greed?* Note that all of the ways she promised to spend the money were to help others, not herself. Observe that if she did own “all the money in the world,” she would surely have spent it wisely.

Guide the Study

3. State that we have heard this story of a woman who learned as a child about spending money wisely. Advise the class that we will now hear the picture-story of a man filled with greed. Forewarn the class that this man’s story does not have a happy ending.

As background for the story, explain that Jesus was teaching the twelve followers and “thousands of people gathered together” (Luke 12:1). Let a class member read Luke 12:15-21 from the Bible text. Use the “The Story of a Rich Man” from the study guide and thoughts from the Bible text to bring out how this man thought only of himself. Note how many times he uses *I* and *my* or other words describing himself and his great success. Then describe how the man talked to his own soul and told his soul what an easy life they would have together.

Say: *Go back to the story of the seven-year-old girl. She had big plans of how to spend her money...helping other people. As a woman, she spent her money wisely.* Observe that the rich man, on the other hand, had his soul taken from him that very night and left all his wealth for someone else to spend.

4. Advise the class that Jesus had been talking to the crowd when He was telling the story of the rich man. State that, in the next part of the Bible text, He turned to talk to the twelve followers. Explain that Jesus knew the followers were worried about where their food and clothing and other needs would come from as they traveled about. Mention that the people of that day were mostly farmers who grew their own food; thus, if His followers weren’t farming, or fishing, or working somehow to produce food, it was quite natural for them to be concerned about such things.

With this background, let someone read Luke 12:22-31. Lastly, read or draw comments from “A Story of the Birds and the Flowers” in the study guide.

5. Say: *The special follower, Paul, wrote a letter to his young friend, Timothy. Paul had some advice for Timothy about how to spend money wisely.*

Ask one person to read 1 Timothy 6:6-8 from the Bible text. Summarize this to say that we enter and leave this world with nothing. Add that we should be happy with what God provides for us while we are here.

Then, ask someone else to read 1 Timothy 6:9-10 from the Bible text. Point out that these verses talk about people who are greedy. Say: *As consumers, they want more money and more “stuff.”*

Call attention to verse 10, the memory verse. Emphasize that it is not money itself, but the love of money that causes people to sin. Use “The Dangers of Too Much” in the study guide for further comments on how to spend money wisely.

Encourage Application

6. Remark that the last part of the Bible text speaks mostly to people who are rich. Suggest that it applies to all of us though, according to how much money and wealth we have. Read 1 Timothy 6:17-19 to the class. Remind them of the study guide story about the seven-year-old girl and how she wanted “to own all the money in the world” so that she could spend it wisely to help others.

Supplemental Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

- Call attention to the memory verse printed in the study guide. Read the entire verse, and then focus on the first line only. Observe that in most Bibles, this reads: *The love of money is the root of all evil.*

Ask: *Does this mean that money is a bad thing?* Quickly point out that money itself is not bad. Assert that money does as much good as it does evil. Stress that money spent wisely and in a way that pleases God is good.

Say: *But sometimes people have greed. They love money more than God or other people. They begin to do bad things to make more money. They turn away from God and think only of themselves and how to make more money. They cause much pain for themselves because of their greed.*

Guide the Study

- Say: *When we see one of our neighbors get a new car, we want a new car. When a neighbor gets some new clothes, we want some new clothes, too. Whatever one of our neighbors gets new, we often want for ourselves.*

Remark that our neighbors may be buying things they can't afford. Go on to say that we probably can't afford to buy all those things either. State that we call this “keeping up with the Joneses.” Explain that the Jones family is a make-believe family. Say: *When we try to buy things just because “The Joneses” bought them, we are probably not spending our money wisely.*

Encourage Application

- Comment that money and things we own have a strong power over our lives. Explain that they can make us happy, comfortable and safe, or they can result in worry, debt and troubles. Say: *As Christians living in a material world, we must learn to keep a proper balance between our worldly and spiritual needs.*

Teaching Guide

Lesson 9: Doing the Right Thing at Work

Lesson Focus

God wants us to think and act like Christians where we work.

Bible Text

Proverbs 11:1; Micah 2:1-3; 6:8-15

Memory Verse

“O man, He has told you what is good. What does the Lord ask of you but to do what is fair and to love kindness, and to walk without pride with your God.” (Micah 6:8)

Connect with Life

1. As class members arrive, engage them in conversation about their place of work. Inquire as to the type of work they do, the company for which they work, do they enjoy the work, how many workers the company employs, do they work indoors or outdoors—just anything to keep them talking about work. Avoid being pushy and be sensitive to anything they seem to be reluctant to talk about. Involve others, of course, as they arrive.

2. To begin the session, advise the class that the lesson today is about work. Say: *Actually, it’s about “Doing the Right Thing at Work.”* Ask: *What do you think doing the right thing at work means?* Listen to responses and work towards the idea from the lesson focus that “God wants us to think and act like Christians where we work” just as we do at church and at home.

Guide the Study

3. Initiate a discussion of scales for weighing people and things. Talk about the different kinds of scales—the kinds that weigh people (doctor’s offices, bathroom scales, platform scales), the scales used at grocery stores to weigh produce and meats, even the kinds used by state police to weigh big trucks and trailers.

State that during Bible times, there was only one kind of scale. Explain that this was a simple balance scale. Describe this scale as having two pans, one

hanging on a chain from each side of the scale. Tell how the thing being weighed is placed in one pan, then stones or metal bars of known weights are placed in the other pan until the two pans balance at the same level. Point out that this type of scale could be “fixed” by a dishonest merchant so that the thing being weighed would show a false weight and would cost the buyer more money.

With this explanation, let someone read Proverbs 11:1 from the Bible text. Point out that this verse says the same thing in two ways: “The Lord hates a false weight,” (negative) but “a true weight is his joy” (positive). Use “Where We Are, God Is Also There” in the study guide to affirm that God wants us to show nothing but truth, honesty, and fairness in all that we do where we work.

4. Comment that the people in this next part of the Bible text are not workers like most of us are. Explain that they were probably rich people who loaned money to ordinary citizens so that they could buy land to farm and build houses in which to live.

Say: *The rich people charged very high interest rates that the people could not repay. These rich people planned how they could take back the houses and farms, leaving the people with nothing.*

With this background, call on a class member to read Micah 2:1-3 from the Bible text. Use “God Watches Our Actions” in the study guide to emphasize that God is aware of everything we think and do where we work.

5. Say: *I want to tell you about something that happens very often. A family has a dog. The dog is in the back yard playing. The family members are all in the house. The dog somehow gets under the fence and decides to stray off into the neighborhood. The dog gets lost and can’t find its way back home.*

State that the prophet, Micah, wrote about how the people of Israel had chosen to stray away from God. Instruct the class to follow in the Bible text as you read Micah 6:8-15.

After the reading, return to the story of the stray dog. Suggest that sometimes a dog that strays away finds its way back home. State that the dog’s owners are happy to have the dog back. Observe that it is the same with believers who stray away from God. God will always welcome them back when they return to follow Him. Use the study guide section “God Saves Us from

Ourselves” to describe how God should be a part of our lives during the work week as well as on Sunday.

Encourage Application

6. Refer to Question 3 from Things to Think About. Read the question aloud. Affirm any responses. Then observe that the memory verse says it well. Read the verse, then encourage the class to go and remember that verse every day as they return to their places of work next week.

Supplemental Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

- Read the introduction at the beginning of this lesson in the study guide. Explain that this is a stage play about a man who had little education but had been able to own a factory. During World War II, his factory made parts for airplanes. Some of the parts were bad. They caused twenty-one planes to crash, killing all twenty-one of the pilots. Stress that this man was morally responsible for the deaths of these pilots. His greed (refer to last week’s word list) caused much trouble with his family as well. (Note: More details of the play, *All My Sons*, can be found in Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, and elsewhere on the Internet.)

Guide the Study

- If you or someone you know has an old or decorative balance scale, bring it to class to demonstrate how such a scale works and how easily it could be “fixed” so as to show the item being weighed as heavier (and more costly) than the actual weight. If an actual scale is not available, perhaps a photo or illustration will help—or just draw a rough sketch of one on the board.

Encourage Application

- Call attention in Micah 2:1-2 to the story of those who make plans to do wrong, lying awake at night thinking of something sinful to do wanting what belongs to others. Note that we often refer to these kinds of people as the *bad guys*.

Involve the class in listing some words on the board that would be expected of a Christian businessman or worker. Lead them to name such words as *fair*, *honest*, *truthful*, *caring*, *helpful*, *cheerful*, etc. List these on the board as they are named. Ask: *Whom would you rather do business with?*

Teaching Guide

Lesson 10: Keeping Wedding Promises

Lesson Focus

God wants a husband and his wife to live together with peace, love, and joy for life.

Bible Text

Genesis 2:18-25; Hebrews 13:4

Memory Verse

“Marriage should be respected by everyone. God will punish those who do sex sins and are not faithful in marriage.” (Hebrews 13:4)

Connect with Life

1. Before the class begins, consider the sensitivity of your class members. Be aware that some of them may not have the ideal family relationships pictured in the lesson. You may want to make a general statement to begin the lesson or at appropriate times during the lesson to cover the situations mentioned here. Some class members may be single adults who have never married. Observe that nowhere in the Bible does it say that everyone should get married. Some class members may be divorced or remarried. Do not condemn such relationships but rather present marriage of one woman and one man as God’s perfect plan from the beginning.

Stress that when Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden, things changed. Explain that all kinds of sin came to be, including sex sins. Say: *God will forgive our sins if we ask for His forgiveness. Then we must put our full trust in Him and sin no more. We must live in a way that is pleasing to Him.*

2. To begin the class, at the top left corner of the board, write the single word *Adam*. Stand, looking at the board for a moment. Then say: *Adam looks so lonely there all by himself*. Comment that God saw Adam standing in the Garden of Eden...alone.

Ask someone to read Genesis 2:18 (just that one verse) from the Bible text. Repeat: *I will make a helper that is right for him.*

Say: *That is the challenge people face today when they begin to look for a husband or a wife—the challenge to find the spouse who is right for them.*

Guide the Study

3. Focus on the word helper in verse 18. Emphasize that this does not mean that the woman is any less important in a marriage. Observe that God’s intent was for the man and the woman to be equals. State that the original Hebrew language in which this was written makes it clear that the man and the woman were equally important and that each was to be a helper to the other.

Note also that in Hebrews 13:6, just after today’s memory verse (but not a part of the Bible text for this lesson), the writer states that “the Lord is my Helper. I am not afraid of anything man can do to me.” Say: *The Lord is certainly not a helper to any human in the sense of being a servant. So, then, the woman as a helper to her spouse is not a helper in the sense of being a servant to him.*

4. Request a volunteer to read Genesis 2:18-21. Reread verse 18 for the class. As usual, of course, encourage all class members to follow the reading in the Bible text printed in the study guide.

Advise class members to find the section of the study guide entitled “God’s Purpose in Marriages.” State that you will read the first five paragraphs of that section as a review. Proceed to read those paragraphs without comment. Pause, and then reread the last sentence with emphasis on the first word, *together*.

5. Enlist someone else to read Genesis 2:22-25 from the Bible text. Following the reading, refer again to “God’s Purpose in Marriages” in the study guide. Advise the class to skip over the first five paragraphs, which you have already read, to the paragraph beginning “Eve was to be Adam’s wife.” Direct the class to read through the rest of that section silently. Instruct them as they read to watch for words or phrases that describe God’s thinking about marriage and the relationship He wanted between a husband and wife. Help them to name things like *companion, faithful, joyful, one unit, and forever*.

As they call out these words or phrases, write them on the board. Say: *God did not want marriage to be trouble. He wanted a husband and wife to have love. He wanted them to have joy in their marriage.*

6. Refer the class to “God Expects Respect within the Marriage” at the end of the study guide. Question them

about the meaning of the word *respect*. Be aware that respect is used as both a noun and a verb in this section, which may result in some confusion. Explain that we show respect to someone who is a person of honor, value, or special importance to us.

At this point, request someone to read Hebrews 13:4 from the Bible text. After the reading this verse, note that this is the memory verse. Read the first line of the verse again, and then draw comments from the study guide to emphasize the main points. Further define purity in marriage as staying true to one's spouse at all times.

Encourage Application

7. Say: *The Bible text we have studied is quite clear about God's plan for marriage. God wanted a husband and his wife to live together with peace, love, and joy for life.*

Advise those who are married to remember their marriage vows. Reread those traditional vows, as printed in the introduction of the study guide, beginning with "to have and to hold, from this day forward..." Close with a prayer for purity in our marriages and that God's beautiful plan for marriage will be respected by everyone as stated in the memory verse.

Supplemental Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

- Recall the lesson title, "Keeping Wedding Promises." Ask: *What promises, or vows, did you make when you got married?*

Encourage class members to recall as many of their wedding vows as they can. Involve any unmarried persons in the class by noting that they have probably been to weddings of family members or friends, and invite them to name the vows they recall from those. If responses are slow in coming, advise class members to look at the standard statement of vows on the first page of the study guide. Comment that it is easy enough to make these vows at the wedding. Say: *What's difficult is to keep the vows after the wedding is over.*

Guide the Study

- Call attention to Genesis 2:24. Read the verse and then point out that God's plan calls for the husband and wife to be joined together in a beautiful relationship that the Bible calls "one flesh."

Say: *This one-flesh relationship involves every aspect—every part, every detail—of the lives of the husband and wife.* Observe that the sexual relationship of a husband and wife is an important part of this one-flesh

relationship. Stress that Christians honor the gift of sexual relations in marriage only. Affirm that they recognize the purity, dignity, and rightness of this relationship between a husband and his wife.

Then point out the memory verse, Hebrews 13:4, and the instruction that "marriage should be respected by everyone." Emphasize the warning in that verse the "God will punish those who do sex sins and are not faithful in marriage."

Teaching Guide

Lesson 11: Leading Children to God

Lesson Focus

Children are a God-given treasure to be cared for and guided.

Bible Text

Psalm 128; Matthew 19:13-15; Ephesians 6:1-4

Memory Verse

“See, children are a gift from the Lord. The children born to us are our special pay.” (Psalm 127:3)

Connect with Life

1. Before the class begins, write the memory verse on the board. Without reference to the verse, begin asking individuals what memories they have from their childhood. Encourage as many as will to share a story from their childhood—their first memories, what games they played as children, their favorite TV programs, or an event that they especially remember.

Then fast forward to the present and ask how many of them now have children of their own. Encourage some stories of their children. Ask about their children’s first words, funny stories about the kids as they’ve grown up, or anything that brings out the joy of having children. When a number of these have been shared, point to the verse on the board and speak the words as if you were making an original statement.

Guide the Study

2. Direct the class to look at Psalm 128 in the Bible text. Read the psalm verse by verse, commenting on each, as follows:

Verse 1: When you honor God and walk in His ways, you will be happy. A Christian family that trusts in God is like a house built on a strong foundation. It will stand up against the storms that life sends its way.

Verse 2: You will have food and other things you need because of the work you do with your hands. Life will go well for you and your family.

Verse 3: Like a healthy vine that produces much fruit, your wife can bring children into the family.

Verses 4-6: Good things will happen to the family that honors God. The city (Jerusalem) and the country (Israel) will benefit as well when its families honor God. And you may get to see your grandchildren as well.

3. Refer to “God Rewards Faithful Parents” in the study guide. Have someone read the first paragraph regarding the changes that occur when children come into a home. Remark that parenting is not easy. Say: *It takes patience, hard work, and lots of love to be parents.*

Instruct class members to read the rest of that section silently, but encourage them to comment or ask any questions that come up as they read.

4. Let a class member read Matthew 19:13-15 from the Bible text. Encourage class members to form a picture in their minds of Jesus with all the little children gathered around Him. Say: *The followers are trying to turn the children and their parents away. But Jesus calls the children to His side and blesses them.* Encourage the class to keep this picture in their minds. Then request someone to read (or read yourself) “Jesus Loves the Little Children” from the study guide.

5. Comment that both parents and children have responsibilities to make a family work as God intended. Select two people to read from the Bible text. Let the first read Ephesians 6:13. Use the first three paragraphs of “Good Parenting” in the study guide for brief comments on the responsibilities of children in a home.

Then ask the second person to read Ephesians 6:4 to the class. Observe that this verse warns parents against being too hard on their children. Say: *God is pleased when there is a good balance between children who obey their parents and parents who are good role models for their children.* Note that the lesson writer has touched briefly on the broken homes of today’s world, and that some general guidelines are suggested for those difficult situations.

Encourage Application

6. Question the class as to what lessons they have learned from this study about parenting children. Encourage responses, and then refer them to the three questions in Things to Think About from the study guide. Read the questions aloud for the class members to

consider privately. Finally, present one more question for thought: *Should you expect your children to honor their father and mother if you do not honor God?*

Supplemental Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

- Question class members as to how many brothers and sisters they had in their childhood families. Try to determine who had the largest family as well as the average size of the families. Then follow the same process to determine the largest number of children in their own families and the average size of those families. Very likely the average size of their own families will be smaller than that of their parents' families. Observe that in early American families it was not uncommon for a man and his wife to have twenty or more children. State that, today, four or five children is considered a large family. Observe that our lesson today is about children and the blessing they are in a family that trusts in God.

- Enlist a children's choir group or preschool Sunday school class to sing at the beginning of your class time. Any children's song will do, but the tune *Jesus Loves the Little Children* would be perfect for the lesson topic and could be tied to the Bible text from Matthew 19:13-15 and the study guide section with that same title.

Guide the Study

- Watch for opportunities, as in Step 1 of these procedures, to quote the memory verse to affirm any reference to the joys children bring into a family.

Encourage Application

- Refer to the analogy that children are like bowls as presented in the next-to-last paragraph of "Good Parenting" in the study guide. Read that paragraph aloud. Ask: *What are you putting into your children's bowls?* Express hope that it is love, kindness and joy, not anger, hate and selfishness. Say: *In a home that honors God, parents can be proud of their children. And children can be proud of their parents.*

Teaching Guide

Lesson 12: Being Sick and Getting Well

Lesson Focus

We can trust God when we pray for healing.

Bible Text

Psalm 116; Luke 4:38-40; James 5:13-16

Memory Verse

“The prayer given in faith will heal the sick man, and the Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven.” (James 5:15)

Connect with Life

1. Say: *Think of a time you were very sick or hurt. Where were you? What was the problem? How long were you sick? How badly did you feel? Did you think you might never get better?* Allow volunteers to tell their stories.

2. Refer to the lesson title, “Being Sick and Getting Well,” and state that we will talk about how prayer can help us to go from being sick to getting well. Comment that there is a story at the beginning of the study guide about how friends and even people who did not know her prayed for Helen, a missionary who had a heart attack. Read or relate the story and then stress that God hears many prayers, as in Helen’s story, or just one prayer spoken from the heart—perhaps yours.

Guide the Study

3. Say: *Let’s hear from someone else who was very sick, prayed for his own health, and God healed him.* Request a class member to read Psalm 116:1-4 from the Bible text. Point out that the psalmist was thankful to the Lord because the Lord listened to his prayers (verses 1-2). Next, mention that the psalmist was so ill that he felt he might die (verse 3). Finally, note that he begged the Lord to save his life (verse 4).

4. Have someone read Psalm 116:5-11 from the Bible text. After the reading, comment that the psalmist sounds as if he was jumping with joy because God had healed him. For verses 7 and 8, note that the section “Everyone Will Die” from the study guide describes how the body

and soul are separated at death. Stress that it is a person’s soul that lives into eternity.

5. Read the last part of Psalm 116, verses 12-19, to the class. Mention that the psalmist, while he was sick, had made some promises to God. Say: *He was thankful that God had healed him. He wanted to honor God. To do this, he planned to go to the holy place in Jerusalem. He would give a gift of thanks before God’s people there.*

6. State that the next part of the Bible text tells an interesting story. Ask the class to follow the story as you read from the Bible text, beginning with Luke 4:38. Read the first two sentences of that verse, and then pause.

Say: *Think about that situation. Jesus had been teaching in the Jewish place of worship. It was lunch time. Simon’s mother-in-law was home sick. Did Simon know she was sick? We are not told. But she was in bed. Some Bibles say she had a high fever. Certainly she did not feel like having guests. But here came Simon, her son-in-law, with guests for a meal! How do you think this went over with Simon’s mother-in-law?*

Observe that there is a happy ending to the story, though. At this point, reread the last part of verse 38, beginning with “Simon’s mother-in-law was in bed...” Continue reading through Luke 4:40.

Refer to “Jesus Heals Simon Peter’s Mother-in-Law” in the study guide. Skip over the first three paragraphs (which have already been covered above). Either let a class member read the rest of that section or simply comment to relate the lesson writer’s thoughts.

7. Enlist someone to read James 5:13-16 from the Bible text. Either read or draw comments from “A Prayer for Healing” in the study guide.

Encourage Application

8. Request a class member to read the memory verse from the study guide. Paraphrase this to say that a prayer given in faith will not only heal the person but his or her sins will be forgiven as well. Emphasize that this person’s body (sickness) will be healed—if it is God’s will—but his soul will be healed as well when his sins are forgiven.

9. Suggest that the only proper way to end a lesson *about prayer* is *with prayer*. Try to identify any class members known to be sick or any family members of those in attendance who need prayer. Then lead in a prayer mentioning those named and for the class in general.

Supplemental Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

- Ask the class if any of them have ever tried to start a car when the battery was dead or turn on a lamp that wasn't plugged in or use a flashlight that had no batteries in it. Comment that these things just will not work without a source of power.

Say: *Prayer is like that. Prayer won't work without being connected to a source of power.* Identify God as the source of power in prayer and Jesus as the plug that makes the connection to God. Emphasize that prayer connects us with God through Jesus Christ and that it is God who has the power to heal.

Guide the Study

- Note that James 5:14 mentions the custom of pouring oil on a sick person in the name of the Lord. Explain that the kind of oil mentioned here was thought by the people of Israel to have healing power. Point out that the Bible text, then, is talking about using medicine as well as prayer for healing purposes.

Encourage Application

- Say: *Suppose that someone very close to you is sick. He or she has been sick for a long time. You have prayed for this person. Your family and friends have prayed for healing. The church has prayed for her or him. The person does not get better. And then this person dies.*

Question the class as to why God did not heal this person with so many people praying. Ask if it was because the person who was sick did not have enough faith in God. Or, did all the people praying lack faith?

Continue to ask questions and encourage discussion of such a situation. Refer to the lesson writer's comments from "Everyone Will Die" in the study guide. Explain that we do not understand why God sometimes heals someone for whom many pray but at other times does not. State that we must continue to pray for healing one who is sick as long as there is hope.

Teaching Guide

Lesson 13: Hope in Dying

Lesson Focus

With God's help, we can face the reality of death.

Bible Text

John 11:17-26; Romans 8:38-39; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

Memory Verse

“For I know that nothing can keep us from the love of God. Death cannot! Life cannot! People cannot! Any other power cannot! Hard things now or in the future cannot!” (Romans 8:38)

Connect with Life

1. Ask: *What are some of the things people are most afraid of?* Involve the class in naming some of the common fears people have, such as:

- Fear of flying in an airplane
- Fear of high places
- Fear of darkness
- Fear of not being liked by other people
- Fear of spiders or snakes
- Fear of failure
- Fear of speaking to a large group of people
- Fear of being all alone
- Fear of being closed in (claustrophobia)
- Fear of being burned or badly hurt
- Fear that your spouse will die
- Fear of your own death

Comment that most of us have some fear of these things. Point out that the fear of death is often one of the things people fear most. State that today's lesson should help us as Christians to have hope for life after death and to be more prepared for death when it does happen.

2. Read the story of Hugh Kennedy at the beginning of this lesson in the study guide. Observe that Romans 8:38, to which Hugh Kennedy pointed in the story, is the memory verse for this lesson. Let someone read that verse to the class. Mention that we will come back to

this verse later in the lesson. Say: *For now, just remember that nothing can keep us from the love of God.*

Guide the Study

3. Set the scene for the story of Jesus' raising of Lazarus from the dead. Identify Lazarus as the brother of Mary and Martha. State that Mary, Martha, and Lazarus lived in Bethany, about two miles from Jerusalem. Mention that Jesus stayed at their house sometimes when He was in that area. Assert that Jesus had become a very close friend of Lazarus and his sisters.

With this background established, explain that Jesus had gone to the other side of the Jordan River away from the Jews who were making it hard for Him and his followers. Describe how the sisters, Mary and Martha, had sent word to Jesus telling Him that Lazarus was ill.

Say: *Jesus, however, did not come right away. Lazarus died and was buried. Jesus waited until Lazarus' body had been in the grave for four days. There was no doubt that Lazarus was dead.*

4. Enlist a class member to read John 11:17-26 from the Bible text. After the reading, refer the class to “Jesus Raises Lazarus from the Dead” in the study guide. Skip over the first four paragraphs and read the rest of that section to the class, beginning in the fifth paragraph with “Lazarus died....”

5. Say: *I promised earlier that we would come back to the memory verse. Let's do that now.* Ask a class member to read Romans 8:38-39 from the Bible text.

Direct the class to look at these two verses again and to call out the things that cannot come between us and the love of God. As these are named, write them on the board, beginning with *death, life, angels*, etc. When the list is complete, stand back and look at it for a moment. Say: *I believe that covers just about everything.*

Then use “Faith Overcomes the Fear of Death” from the study guide for further comments regarding these two verses. When you get to the last verse, acknowledge that—as the lesson writer says—sin is the one thing that can come between us and God. Quickly qualify that point to explain that what the memory verse is saying is that nothing can keep us from the *love* of

God. Emphasize that not even sin can come between us and God's love.

7. Remark that all of this talk about death and dying makes us sad. Say: *But this last part of the Bible text gives us comfort. Listen....*

Advise the class that you are reading the last part of the Bible text, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18. After the reading, browse through "The Coming of the Lord" from the study guide. Be especially sure to explain the concepts of the *Second Coming* and the *rapture*. Stress that only God knows the timing of these events and that we will simply have to wait and see whether they occur in our lifetime or afterwards.

Encourage Application

8. Ask someone to read the memory verse, or perhaps let the entire class read it in unison; that is, all reading it together as one. Challenge class members to learn the verse by memory. Say: *But if you can't remember the verse, at least remember the idea that nothing can keep you from the love of God.*

Supplemental Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

- (Alternate Step 1) Enlist three volunteers to be tested for their acting ability. Stand them at the front of the class. Explain that you will name some feelings that actors or actresses sometimes have to express when acting on stage or filming a movie. State that, to test their readiness for Hollywood or Broadway, you will mention one such feeling at a time. Encourage each of the participants to do his or her best in acting out that feeling, all three at the same time. Call out various emotions such as joy, anger, humor, fear, happiness, sadness, pain, and grief (or great sorrow). You may want to take a quick straw vote to see which of the three did the best job of acting. Then advise the class that the lesson today is about the sadness and sorrow of death.

- Hold up a 25¢ coin and point out that the coin has two sides. State that the two sides of the quarter are different but that they are still part of one coin. Suggest that life and death are a lot like the quarter. Say: *They are two sides of the same coin. Life is a cycle that includes death.*

Emphasize that we cannot avoid death, but we can have "hope in dying" like the lesson title states. Observe that we cannot escape going from earthly life to earthly death, but by putting our full trust in God, we can go from earthly death to life in heaven.

Guide the Study

- Involve three class members in doing a dramatic reading of John 11:17-26. Prepare name tags for the reader (narrator), Jesus, and Martha, using pieces of poster board with strings to hang around their necks. Also prepare three scripts—copies of the Bible text for John 11:17-26—with the individual parts highlighted for each reader. Highlight the reader's part through verse 21a only, to introduce the conversation between Martha and Jesus. Use a black marker to black out the introductory phrases of 23a, 24a, and 25a, as the speakers are identified by their name tags. Advise the three to stand before the class and read their highlighted parts at the appropriate times. Ask the class to follow the reading in the Bible text.