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**Adult  
Bible Study  
in  
Simplified  
English**

**Teaching  
Guide**

**WRITER**  
Bob Coder



**Psalms**  
*Songs from the  
Heart of Faith*

# Adult Bible Study in Simplified English Teaching Guide

## Psalms

### *Songs from the Heart of Faith*

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# Introduction for Teachers

**T**he 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 lawkeeper (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 for Teaching Simplified English Audiences

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 List before beginning the study. Provide Study Guide pages 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 blank paper 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 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 n<sup>th</sup> 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.

## Online Resources and Study Helps

- **EasyEnglish** is a form of simple English developed by Wycliffe Associates (UK). Their website: ([www.easyenglish.info](http://www.easyenglish.info)) contains Bible commentaries, Bible translations, Bible studies, and other materials written in simple English. They are free for you to download and use.
- Use the following free helps: Additional adult Bible study comments by Dr. Jim Denison, “Teaching Plans,” and “Teaching Resource Items” available for each lesson online at [www.baptistwaypress.org](http://www.baptistwaypress.org).
- Additional teaching help is provided in the Internet edition of the Baptist Standard [www.baptiststandard.com](http://www.baptiststandard.com). Go to the website, then to Departments, then Bible Study.

# Teaching Guide

## Lesson 1: Lord of All

### Lesson Focus

It is not good to work against the Lord, for the Lord has power over all things.

### Focal Text

Psalm 2, 110

### Memory Verse

“He said to Me, ‘You are my Son. Today I have become your Father.’” (Psalm 2:7b)

### Connect with Life

1. Lead the class to brainstorm all of the things in a modern home that get their power from electricity. For example: lights, radios, televisions, refrigerators, computers, clocks, hair curlers, razors, microwaves, vacuum cleaners, washers, dryers, dishwashers, etc.

Comment that we **depend** on electricity for so many things in our homes and our work places. Explain that those things we depend on are things we think we can’t do without. Say: *We expect the things we depend on to be there when we need them. If the electricity that we depend on so much goes off for a while, life comes to a sudden stop! We don’t know what to do.*

Next ask a class member to read aloud the first paragraph of the Study Guide introduction. Use the last two paragraphs of that introduction to compare how God’s unseen power is far greater and more important than electricity. Assert how we depend on that power for life itself.

2. Write the word *Psalms* on the marker board. First, question the class as to the pronunciation of the word and explain how the first letter is silent (has no sound, or is not spoken). Relate how in the early Hebrew language the word *psalms* meant praise. Thus, psalms were used to praise and honor God. Compare this to how today we sing hymns and praise songs to honor God but simply read the psalms much as we would read poetry. Observe that early Hebrew poetry was not like our English poetry today. Emphasize that where today’s poetry uses words that sound alike (rhyme) and have a regular beat (rhythm) for effect, Hebrew poetry used thoughts or

ideas written and then repeated two or three times in slightly different ways.

3. Mention that we will be studying the book of Psalms for all thirteen lessons of this quarter (unless you plan to use the special Easter lesson). Suggest that this will be an exciting and interesting study because Psalms is so different from other books of the Bible. Stress that Psalms contains many real-life stories about God’s people in both good times and bad times.

### Guide the Study

4. Read or relate in your own words the last paragraph of the Study Guide introduction. Then ask a class member to read Psalm 2:1-6 from the Bible Text to the class. Refer to the title of the first Study Guide section, “Going Against God and God’s Answer.” Ask the question raised in the first sentence. Then describe the game of Red Rover as related in the first paragraph. Recall, if any, the memories you may have of playing this game as a child. You may even want to do a quick demonstration of how the game works with class members.

Note the words in verse 3: “Let us break the chains.” Compare this to breaking the other team’s chain in the Red Rover game. Let someone read the last two paragraphs of this section from the Study Guide.

5. Read Psalm 2:7-12. Explain from verse 12 that the kiss was a formal way of greeting people. This was a simple peck on the cheek or neck, much as we shake hands or hug to greet or honor someone today. Next, use the Word List to define an **inheritance** as land, money, or things received from one’s father, mother, or other relative who dies. Then request a volunteer from the class to read from the Study Guide the section entitled “The Kingly Agreement and Wise Words.”

6. Direct the class to look at Psalm 110, the last part of the Bible Text. Point out the first verse and explain that *The Lord* (who is God the Father) is speaking to *my Lord* (who is Jesus). Identify Zion in verse 2 as one of the four hills on which Jerusalem was built, a special place to God. Show a picture of Mount Zion or a map of Jerusalem to the class. Use the Internet to locate a picture like the one on the following page. Then ask a good reader to read all of Psalm 110 for the class.



<http://www.700mountains.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/Mount-Zion.jpg>

7. Move on to the last section in the Study Guide entitled “At the Lord’s Right Side.” Request a class member to read the first paragraph of that section to the class, but suggest that they skip over all the biblical references in parentheses. Read the last paragraph yourself, with emphasis on the last sentence and relating the last three words back to the lesson title.

### Encourage Application

8. Refer to the questions from Things to Think About in the Study Guide. Lead the class to discuss as many of these questions as can be covered in the time available. Relate questions 4 and 5 to the Memory Verse.

9. Recall the discussion at the beginning of the class about electrical power and how that power sometimes goes off. Emphasize that God’s power, however, will never fail. Quote the last line of Psalm 2:12 for the class: *Happy are all who put their trust in Him.*

### Supplemental Teaching Ideas

#### Connect with Life

◆ Provide an explanation of why the letter *p* in Psalms is sometimes capitalized and sometimes not. The first letter is capitalized when we speak of a specific psalm, as Psalm 23, or when talking about the Book of Psalms. However, when speaking of a single psalm or of psalms in general, the word is not capitalized.

### Guide the Study

◆ Present these interesting facts about Psalms for the class on a chart like the one here:

:

## Fun Facts

### *from the Book of Psalms*

- ◆ Psalms were written to be sung.
- ◆ The Psalms were written over a very long period of time—about 1,000 years.
- ◆ Many psalms were written by David, the shepherd boy who killed the Philistine giant, Goliath, and went on to become Israel’s greatest king. Other psalm writers are included in the Book of Psalms as well.
- ◆ The Book of Psalms tell stories about the deep feelings of the writers in real-life situations during times of joy, sadness, and fear.
- ◆ They tell how the writers looked *inward* toward themselves, *outward* toward other people, and *upward* toward God.

### Encourage Application

◆ Ask class members about the living conditions in their home countries. Inquire specifically as to whether or not most people from their countries have electrical power in their homes.

*Say: We in America have learned to depend on electrical power. We think we cannot live without it. But there are many people in the world today who do not have electricity in their homes. They have not learned to depend on electrical power. In the same way, there are people who have not heard about God. They live in countries that do not allow teaching about the true God. But Jesus is Lord of all. We should pray that they learn to put their trust in Jesus. Then they, too, can have life that lasts forever.*

# Teaching Guide

## Lesson 2: God's Shining-Greatness

### Lesson Focus

God's shining-greatness is seen in all that God created, including the place He gave to human beings..

### Focal Text

Psalm 8

### Memory Verse

"O Lord, our Lord, how great is your name in all the earth." (Psalm 8:9)

### Connect with Life

1. As class members arrive, give them a copy of the Study Guide and ask them to study the words defined in the Word List. Be prepared to help them as needed with understanding the words.
2. Advise the class to look at the Study Guide and follow along as you read the introduction. After the reading, pause and then say: *Psalm 8 is on the moon. It is also our Bible Text for today's lesson.*
3. Say: *Imagine that you are outside in the darkness of night. The moon is bright. The stars are shining. It is quiet all around. The world is at peace. Or picture a warm, sunny day in the spring, with a cool breeze blowing and the birds happily singing. What a wonderful place God gave us in which to live! Such scenes remind us of God's shining-greatness. And that's the title of our lesson today, "God's Shining-greatness."*

Note: You may want to display some beautiful pictures of various landscape scenes as you say this to the class. Images like this can be easily located on the Internet.

### Guide the Study

4. Comment that today's Bible Text is like a sandwich. Describe a sandwich as two slices of bread with pieces of meat or some other tasty filling between them. You may want to ask briefly what their favorite kind of sandwich is. Go on to explain how the Bible Text for this lesson is like a sandwich; that is, the first and last

sentences are exactly the same. Identify verses 1a and 9 as the two slices of bread for our "sandwich." Describe the middle part of the psalm as the tasty filling for the sandwich. Direct the class to look at the Bible Text and note the first and last sentences of this psalm. Say: *Now let's look at the middle part of the psalm to see what kind of filling the psalmist put into his sandwich.*

5. Choose a class member to read verses 1 and 2 of the Bible Text. Refer in the Study Guide to the section entitled "No Greater Name." Read or comment from the first three paragraphs to bring out the lesson writer's comments on these two verses. Relate the lesson writer's personal story of her grandchildren at Christmas time, as told in the fourth paragraph. Tell also the story of Jesus and the religious leaders as described in Matthew 21:15-16 from the last paragraph of "No Greater Name" in the Study Guide.

6. Request a class member to read verses 3 and 4 of the Bible Text. Then ask: *Isn't it amazing that God loves all people? Say: Think about that as we look at the next part of the Study Guide. How do you think God will answer the question on the title asking Him "You Think About Me?"* Pause briefly, and then read the three paragraphs under that subtitle.

7. Let a volunteer read the last part of the Bible Text, verses 5-9, to the class. Then relate how mankind has a "Special Place of Honor and Duty" in God's world, which is the title for the final section of the Study Guide. Walk through the lesson writer's comments, reading or explaining the Scriptures and stressing mankind's special place of honor and duty.

### Encourage Application

8. Say: *"O Lord, our Lord, how great is your name in all the earth!" That's the Memory Verse for today. Say it with me.* Refer the class to the Memory Verse in the Study Guide and lead them in repeating the verse two or three times including the Scripture reference to Psalm 8:9. Then say: *What a perfect verse for today's lesson on God's Shining-greatness!*

## Supplemental Teaching Ideas

### Connect with Life

◆ Write on the board or a poster the lesson title, “God’s Shining-Greatness.” Ask: *What does God’s shining-greatness mean?* Listen to and affirm any responses. Use the marker board to record responses on a word web like the one here:



Then suggest that there really are no words in any language to fully describe God’s shining-greatness. Observe that we have the word *glory* which is much shorter and means about the same thing. Mention that *shining-greatness* includes such things as fame, honor, and being perfect in all things. Say: *And God in His shining-greatness has all of these and more.*

### Guide the Study

◆ Ask a class member to read Psalm 8:1-2 from the Bible Text. After the reading, involve the class in thinking of how they see God’s shining-greatness in His creation, or in life. Lead them to identify first the things of creation. Remind them of things such as, the largeness of space in the skies, the beauty of the mountains and valleys, the brightness of the sun, the twinkling of the stars at night, the largeness of the oceans, and so on. Then involve them in naming ways they feel or sense God’s shining-greatness in life, for example, when good things happen without explanation (miracles), when good people help

those who are hungry or have no home, when God helps you through some kind of difficulty, when God works through someone to help you, or when God works through *you* to help someone else know about Jesus. Allow a few class members to briefly share about these kinds of experiences in their own life.

◆ There are several quotations or similar wordings in the New Testament which are taken from Psalm 8 and

referenced in the Study Guide for this lesson. While these are not a part of today’s Bible Text, they have been printed along with the Bible Text for easy reference purposes. Use these as you see fit to tie the Old Testament to the New Testament and to confirm the truths of the Bible Text.

### Encourage Application

◆ Comment that the psalmist wrote the words of our Bible Text long before there were telescopes, rocket ships, X-ray machines, or astronauts. Suggest that we are learning more and more about space. Add that doctors are learning more and more how to help people live long and healthy lives. Ask: *Do you think man will ever find Heaven? Do you think people will ever come to live forever in their human bodies?*

Say: *I don’t think so! And certainly not in our lifetimes.* Encourage class members to think of themselves as one tiny little speck on earth and the earth as one tiny little speck in space. Then say: *And God in His shining-greatness knows you are there and loves you.*

◆ Review Question 1 from Things to Think About. Assign a class member or two to count how many times the psalmist used the word *You* in the Bible Text for today’s lesson. Ask another person to count how many times the word *Your* is used. Confirm the correct count. Then lead the class to answer the second part of the question as to why the *Y* in every *You* and *Your* was capitalized. Confirm or explain that the capital letters were used because the psalmist was speaking directly to God. He was praising God.

# Teaching Guide

## Lesson 3: It's a Wonderful Life

### Lesson Focus

The person who trusts in the Lord can be happy in the Lord's good supply for his or her needs.

### Focal Text

Psalm 16

### Memory Verse

"Keep me, O God, for I am safe in You." (Psalm 16:1)

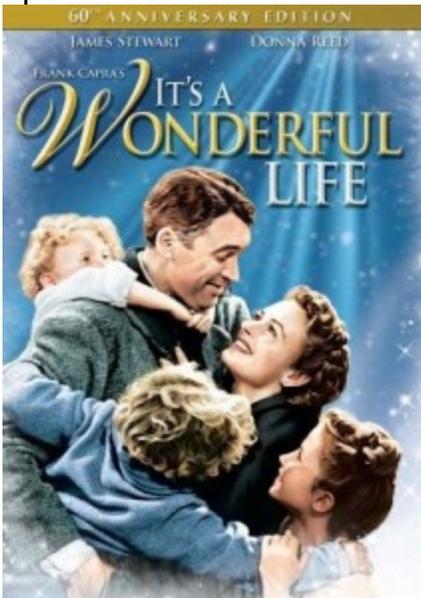
### Connect with Life

1. Briefly question the class asking who goes to the movies or watches television, especially around Christmas time. Ask if anyone has ever seen the movie, *It's a Wonderful Life*. Explain that this was a very popular movie first shown in 1946. Tell how people still like to watch it on TV at Christmas time every year. Show a picture from the movie or bring a copy of it to class for members to examine. Give a brief summary of the movie and even show your favorite clip from the movie if possible.

Say: *It's a popular movie because it has such a happy ending!*

Then call attention to the title of this lesson.

Say: *The lesson has that title for a reason. The person who wrote the psalm felt that it was indeed a wonderful life. He was happy. This psalm is a happy psalm of praise.*



<http://blog.swagbucks.com/wpcontent/uploads/2011/11/image24037-213x300.jpg>

### Guide the Study

2. Say: *Life is what you make of it. You can be happy or you can be sad. You can be angry or you can be glad.*

*Think about it. What is your own life like? Do you feel good about it? Or are you troubled? How you feel about life makes a difference in how you live your life. There are two examples of this in the Study Guide.*

Point out that the first example is told by the lesson writer. Advise the class to listen as you read her story from the Study Guide introduction. Then ask: *Do you see what a difference trust in the Lord made for this woman?*

3. Before telling the second story, introduce and define the words *homeless* and *guided* from the Word List. Then read the story of David from the second paragraph of the Study Guide introduction. State that David wrote the Psalm 16, our Bible Text for today's lesson. Observe that this psalm tells how David put his trust in Jesus in the same way that the lesson writer's mother did.

4. Call on a class member to read Psalm 16:1-2 from the Bible Text. After the reading, identify the Memory Verse. Then mention the fact that the psalm begins with a prayer. Explain that David asks God to keep watch over him and guard him. Let someone read the comments from the Study Guide section entitled "Prayer for God's Help." Express how the main point of this psalm is that God will never leave or forget a person who trusts in Jesus. Add that David, as a boy, had been a shepherd. Describe how a shepherd's job was to watch over and protect his flock. Say: *David saw God as the Good Shepherd watching over and keeping His flock safe.*

5. Now read verses 3 and 4 from the Bible Text to the class. Note that verse 3 talks about those who belong to God, or Christians. Refer to the section entitled "Joy in God's People" from the Study Guide. Use the first two short paragraphs of that section to talk about the joy of being with others who put their trust in God. Use the lesson writer's story of the joy she has singing with the church **choir** as an example.

Say: *In verse 4, the psalmist, David, tells how "Those who have traded for another god bring many troubles on themselves."* Note that the psalmist will have nothing to do with those people. Request someone to read the last paragraph from the Study Guide section "Joy in God's People."

6. Recall that in Lesson 1 of this unit, one of the words in the Word List was *inheritance*. Remind the class that an inheritance is the land, money, or things that someone who dies—usually the father or mother—leaves to other family members.

Say: *David doesn't use this word, but he is talking about his inheritance from God in the next part of the Bible Text. Listen to what David says. . . .*

Read to the class verses 5-8 of the Bible Text. First, use the Word List to define *control*. Then, to explain these verses, have a class member read the comments under from the Study Guide section entitled "God Gives and Guides."

7. Look directly at one class member and call this person by name. Ask: *What proof do you have that you are alive?* Use whatever response you get and the Word List definition to explain the meaning of the word *proof*. Then direct the class' attention to the last Study Guide section entitled "God Saves."

Recall how in verse 8, David said that he had placed himself in a position near the Lord from which he would not be moved. Point out that he continued with that thought in verse 9. Let someone read verses 9-11. Say: *In verse 10, David said these words: "And you will not allow Your Holy One to return to dust."* Refer to the first paragraph of "God Saves" in the Study Guide and the references to Acts 2 and Acts 13. Point out that these verses are not really part of the Bible Text, but they are printed in the Study Guide to show this important connection. Call attention especially to Acts 2:27 and Acts 13:35.

## Encourage Application

8. Pause momentarily, then with an evangelistic thrust, read the last two paragraphs of the Study Guide section entitled "God Saves." In conclusion, say: *It's a Wonderful Life!*

## Supplemental Teaching Ideas

### Connect with Life

♦ Call attention to the lesson title. Ask: *What are some of the things that help us to have a wonderful life?* Lead the class to identify such factors as good health, a happy family life, a family that loves God, good friends and neighbors, enough money to live comfortably, a good home to live in, a good education, a good job, etc. Then question them as to which of these things we can control. Comment that King David is believed to have written the psalm in today's lesson, Psalm 16, yet during his lifetime, David did some very bad sins. Emphasize,

however, that whatever he did, David always trusted in God.

## Guide the Study

♦ Say: *In verse 4, David spoke of "those who have traded for another God."* Ask: *Who or what are these other gods David is talking about?*

Point out that as Christians we believe there is only one God, spelled with a capital *G*. State that all the other gods, spelled with a small *g*, are anything that we love more than the one true God. Express how some people think there are many gods. Others make money, power, drugs, alcohol, and other such things their gods. Explain that these are false gods and that they live only in people's minds. Point out how, in verse 4, the psalmist (David) said he would take no part in their "altar gifts of blood" and would not even speak the name of these false Gods.

♦ Pass out a stack of old magazines to class members. Encourage them to look through the ads in the magazine. Instruct them to browse through the ads looking specifically for things people worship in our culture today. Ask class members to share the pictures they find with the class, possible tearing them out and posting them on the marker board with magnets or tape.

## Encourage Application

♦ Express how David, in this psalm, thanked God for his inheritance—not of land or money or things, but of God's love and the gift of life that lasts forever. Ask: *What will your inheritance be? Can you be happy like those who shout, "It's a Wonderful Life!"?*

# Teaching Guide

## Lesson 4: Trusting God in the Darkest Hour

### Lesson Focus

Even when we face our darkest hour, we can find help in God.

### Focal Text

Psalm 22

### Memory Verse

“They cried to You and were set free. They trusted in you and were not ashamed.” (Psalm 22.5)

### Connect with Life

1. Write on the board or simply call attention to the last three words of the lesson title.

## The Darkest Hour

Ask: *What is the darkest hour?* Guide any responses to the conclusion that the darkest hour, as it is used here, is not midnight or some other very dark hour of the night, but is instead a time of great sorrow, sadness, and fear. Suggest that it is a word picture of a very bad time in the psalmist’s life. Say: *In this case, the psalmist is worried because God doesn’t seem to be helping him with his troubles.*

### Guide the Study

2. Say: *Let’s go straight to the Bible Text, Psalm 22.* Pause for a moment as the class members find the Bible Text in the Study Guide. Call attention to the question in the first verse. Comment that this is a question any Christian might ask in her darkest hour. Point out that even Jesus asked a question like this just before He died on the cross. He said, “My God, My God, why have you left me alone?” (Matthew 27:45-46).

3. Comment that the Bible Text today is very long. To begin, read all of Psalm 22:1-11 to the class at one time. At this point, present an outline of these verses prepared

in advance, as follows:

### *Psalm 22: 1-11*

|             |                        |
|-------------|------------------------|
| Verses 1-2  | The Cry for Help       |
| Verses 3-5  | Faith of His Ancestors |
| Verses 6-8  | Those Who Laughed      |
| Verses 9-10 | Life of Faith          |
| Verse 11    | Asking for Help        |

4. Refer the class to the Study Guide section entitled “Trusting God in Our Past.” (Note that the first four points of the outline compare to the four paragraphs of this section of the Study Guide.) Cover each point as you read each of the four paragraphs in this Study Guide section. Then, reread verse 11 from the Bible Text and say simply that David was asking God to be close by when help was needed.

5. Comment that in verse 11, David said that trouble was near. Note that in verses 12-21 of the Bible Text, he described the dangers around him as involving all sorts of wild animals. Say: *The danger did not really involve wild animals. These were just word-pictures of the danger David faced. His enemies who were trying to kill him were acting like animals.*

Let someone read the first paragraph only of “Trusting God in Our Prayers” from the Study Guide. Note that even in his darkest hour, David still prayed. Say: *David still trusted God.*

6. Continue in the Study Guide section entitled “Trusting God in Our Prayers” by let someone read the last paragraph of that section Describe the situation to explain that David may have been running from his enemies for many days. Picture him as being tired, hungry, and weak.

Say: *In verse 18, David talked about his enemies taking his clothes and drawing names to see who got them.* Remind the class that this same thing happened when Jesus died on the cross. Explain that clothes had much value then. Emphasize that, because David still prayed, we know that he still trusted God.

7. Comment that a soldier in the army must learn to do what is called an “About Face.” Explain that the soldier stands straight facing one way, puts his right toe behind his left heel, then turns quickly on his toes to face the opposite way. Comment to say that in the Bible Text, David does an “About Face” in his story. Say: *He turns quickly in the opposite direction. He goes from crying out to God in fear to praising God for His help.* Direct the class to follow as you read verses 22-31.

8. Refer to the final section of the Study Guide entitled “Trusting God in Our Praise.” Reading the first two sentences, say: *Something happened. Everything changed.*

Permit a class member to read the rest of that first paragraph. Call on another reader for the next two short paragraphs.

### Encourage Application

9. Read or comment on the final section in the Study Guide yourself, omitting the Scripture references for simplicity. Add any final thoughts and close with the customary prayer.

### Supplemental Teaching Ideas Connect with Life

♦ Say: *As the people of God, Jesus is the One we look up to as our example to follow. We want to be like Jesus. But there were times in Jesus’ life when He faced great danger. The Jewish religious leaders wanted to kill Him. They caused Him much trouble. There must have been times Jesus wanted to cry out, “God, I need help! Where are You?”* Go on to explain that our story today is about David when he was in danger. Explain that David cried out to God but God did not seem to hear him.

### Guide the Study

♦ (Alternate Step 2) Remark that you are going to read from the first part of the Study Guide. Before you begin, provide help as needed to be sure that everyone has found the story. Emphasize also that this story is being told by the lesson writer. Then read just the first paragraph of the introduction.

Say: *Look at God. You might want to use that same phrase when something good happens within your circle of friends.* Direct the class to look at the first verse of the Bible Text. Allow a moment for them to find the verse, then read only Jesus’ question: *My God, my God, why have you left me alone?* Then ask a class member to read the second paragraph of the lesson

## Checklist for Troubled Times

\_\_\_\_\_ Look up to God in prayer.

\_\_\_\_\_ Be willing to talk openly with God.

\_\_\_\_\_ Be honest with God and yourself.

\_\_\_\_\_ Worship God

\_\_\_\_\_ Study the Bible to learn how God does answer prayer.  
(Sometimes the answer is *no.*)

\_\_\_\_\_ Know that God is at work, even in your darkest hour.

### Encourage Application

♦ Review this checklist of helps for “Trusting God in the Darkest Hour.” (See “Checklist for Troubled Times” above.)

# Teaching Guide

## Lesson 5: Trusting in the Lord

### Lesson Focus

People who trust God with their lives will find Him faithful to care for them and to free them from their sin.

### Focal Text

Psalm 31

### Memory Verse

“But as for me, I trust in You, O Lord. I say, ‘You are my God.’” (Psalm 31:14)

### Connect with Life

1. Say: *Fame is when almost everyone knows who you are and what you do. If you have fame, you are famous. Movie stars are often famous. The best players in sports are famous. People who sing or play the best music are famous. Leaders of countries may be famous.*

Comment as to how that defines one of the words in the Word List today. Question the class to be sure they understand completely the meanings of the other three words in the Word List and help them as needed to define those words. You may want to mention that *useless* means of no value and *worthy* means of great value. Explain that they are opposite in meaning.

2. Direct the class to look at the lesson introduction in the Study Guide. Emphasize that these are the lesson writer’s words and then read or comment on the introductory thoughts and comments.

### Guide the Study

3. Appoint two members of the class as readers, the first to read verses 1-4 and the second to read verses 5-8 from the Bible Text. After the readings, comment on how the psalm seems to talk of danger and then of being in a safe place. Remind the class that psalms were like poetry and were to be sung in worship. Suggest that, just as psalms sound strange to us today, our hymns and praise songs today would have sounded strange to the early Christians—especially if they were just reading the words on a page. Recall from an earlier lesson that psalms used repeated ideas rather than repeated or

rhyming sounds as our hymns do today. Read—or let a class member read—the Study Guide section entitled “Saying ‘Yes’ to Trusting in God.”

4. Request a volunteer to read verses 9-18 from the Bible Text. (If time is short, instruct the reader to read only through verse 14.) Use the commentary from the section entitled “Keep Trusting in God” to briefly relate how David continued to put his trust in God. Identify verse 14 as the Memory Verse for this lesson and note how David clearly tells of his trust in God.

5. Ask: *What is praise?* Use whatever responses you get to say that *praise* means saying good things about someone. It is a way to honor someone with words. Refer to the last section of the Study Guide entitled “The Best Part of Trusting in God.” Question the class as to what they think the best part of trusting God is. Some sharp class member will likely read that first sentence from this section and answer the question. If that is the case, allow that sharp class member to read the first paragraph only. Otherwise, select a class member at random to read that first paragraph.

6. In continuation of Step 5 above, read verses 19-24 from the Bible Text, urging class members to follow along in their Study Guides. After that reading, comment that these verses tell us to have courage and to love God. Point out how verse 23 tells us that the Lord keeps the faithful safe.

### Encourage Application

7. Suggest that you hope everyone in the class has put their trust in Jesus or is at least thinking about doing that. Then call attention to Question 5 from Things to Think About in the Study Guide. Affirm that Christians can go to God in prayer, and God will provide help or comfort. Ask: *But if people do not trust in God, where do they go or what do they do for help or comfort?* Encourage the class to think about that and, if they haven’t yet put their trust in Jesus, to think about doing it today.

### Supplemental Teaching Ideas

#### Connect with Life

♦ To begin, say: *Jesus’ last words before He died on the cross were, “Father, into Your hands I give My spirit.”*

(Luke 24:46). Mention that it is possible this was not the first time Jesus had said those words. Suggest how He may have spoken that same prayer as a child saying His prayers every night. Explain that we run across the prayer in our lesson today, spoken long before Jesus' birth by David, who wrote Psalm 31.

Say: *Perhaps those words may have been the closing of a prayer that Jewish children, including Jesus, said every night at bedtime. Thus, Jesus may have left His life in God's hands as a habit each night from childhood. It was the natural thing for Him to do, then, as His life came to an end, to place Himself in God's care.*

◆ Alternatively, play a game as class members enter the room by using the famous people and famous last words from the lesson introduction. Write each famous person's name on a strip of paper. Use magnets or tape to attach these to one side of the marker board in random order. Write the famous last words of each person on separate strips of paper and attach them to the other side of the marker board in random order. Or provide a handout like the one below. Allow time for class members to complete this activity. If anyone matched all the items correctly, offer a small prize.

words.” Suggest that the last words people say sometimes prove to be true or interesting in some way, especially when the person who speaks the words is famous. Point out that the lesson writer gave some examples of these in the Study Guide introduction. Comment that these are real words from real people. Refer to Question 1 from Things to Think About in the Study Guide. Comment that we sometimes use the term *famous last words* in a joking manner.

Say: *We do this when a person says something that later comes back to cause that person trouble.* Ask the class about similar sayings in their first language as mentioned in the question from Things to Think About.

### Encourage Application

◆ Comment that sometimes God saves us from suffering and sometimes He chooses to help us through suffering. Suggest that either way, God teaches us to trust in Him. Recall that God allowed Jesus to suffer on the cross. Say: *Jesus and David are examples of trusting God in both life and death. Our words to God should be those of David and of Jesus. These are the words quoted in Psalm 31:14, the Memory Verse for this lesson. “But as for me, I trust in You, O Lord. I say You are my God.”*

## Who Said That?

### *Famous Last Words*

President Franklin D. Roosevelt

“I have a terrific headache.”

Author Edgar Allan Poe

“I have tried so hard to do the right.”

President Grover Cleveland

“Lord help my poor soul.”

### Guide the Study

◆ Note that the hyphenated word *loving-kindness* is used twice in today's Bible Text. Identify this as the term used in the New Life Version of the Bible where most other translations use the word *mercy*. Explain that this term is used often in the Bible and that we need to understand both words. State that both words mean to have love and be kind and also to be willing to forgive other people.

◆ Remark that we sometimes talk about “famous last

# Teaching Guide

## Lesson 6: The Joy of Forgiveness

### Lesson Focus

Joy in life comes from being forgiven. Forgiveness comes from taking responsibility for your sin and not trying to hide it from God!

### Focal Text

Psalm 32

### Memory Verse

“How happy he is whose wrong-doing is forgiven, and whose sin is covered.” (Psalm 32:1)

### Connect with Life

1. Bring to class a small bottle of hand sanitizer. Maybe even give small sample sized bottle to each class member if you can purchase them inexpensively. Offer a squirt from it to class members as they arrive and, if necessary, explain its purpose (to kill germs and keep them from getting into your body). Question the class about where you might find such sanitizers, for example in such places as restrooms, hospitals, restaurants, kitchens, or wherever being clean is important for good health. Explain the importance of keeping your hands clean and germ free.

2. Say: *Today we are going to go a little deeper into the subject of making ourselves clean. We will not be talking about having clean hands or clean bodies, although these are certainly important to good health. What we will be talking about is another way of being clean; that is, having a clean mind, a clean heart, and a clean soul. In the same way that germs cause people to be sick and unhealthy, evil thoughts and actions cause us to sin against God.*

### Guide the Study

3. Mention that the very first verse of the Bible Text today is our Memory Verse. Refer to it in the Study Guide and ask someone to read it aloud. Point out that the verse could just as easily begin like this: *How happy she is. . .* Then say: *Women can have their sin forgiven just as well as men...and (jokingly) perhaps maybe even*

*a little quicker!*

Advise the class that you are going to read a story from the Study Guide introduction that is very sad. Make it clear that this is the lesson writer, who is a woman, telling her story. Then begin reading the entire introduction to the class.

4. Pause a moment to allow this story to soak in. Then say: *This woman has been forgiven of her sin. The Bible tells us that, if we ask God to forgive us, He certainly will!*

Remind the class that we are still studying the Book of Psalms. Then say: *And guess what! There is a psalm which tells us that God forgives sin. That psalm just happens to be our Bible Text for today.*

Call on a class member to read Psalm 32:1-2 from the Bible Text. Remind the class again that where the psalm says *happy is he*, or *happy is the man*, it is true of women as well as men. Say: *And the lesson writer who told of her sin and asked God to forgive her has surely been forgiven.*

Finally, ask a class member to read the brief comments from the Study Guide section entitled “Start at the End.” After the reading, say: *And the lesson writer wants everyone to know the joy of having her sins forgiven completely.*

5. Comment that the lesson writer told the story about herself. Say: *Now we will learn how David told a story about himself.* Refer to the Study Guide section entitled “A Story about Himself.” Read that story to the class, with the class following along in the Study Guide. Mention that we will now listen as David speaks in Psalm 32. With that introduction, ask someone from the class to read verses 3-5 from the Bible Text. As the reader finishes the reading, echo (repeat) that last line, saying: *And you forgave the guilt of my sin.*

6. Comment that the best way to sell something is to let someone who has used it tell others about it on television or in the newspapers. Suggest how the idea is that a happy user of that product will make others want to try it. You may even want to use an Internet site like YouTube to show a brief clip from an infomercial that includes customer testimonials like the ones described above. State that David wanted to make others happy about being forgiven, so he told others the good news so

that they too could be forgiven for their sins. Let a class member read verses 6-7 from the Bible Text. After the reading, ask: *Did David make you want to ask God for forgiveness?* Then direct the class to follow in the Study Guide as you read the section entitled “A More Useful Way.”

7. Instruct the class to look now at the final part of the Study Guide entitled “A Willing Teaching.” Choose someone from the class to read just the first two paragraphs of that section. Say: *David is the teacher now. He has learned his lesson. He knows that it is wrong to sin. He knows it is wrong to be **stubborn** in telling God about your sin. He wants you to know how good it feels to have God’s forgiveness.*

## Encourage Application

8. Read to the class the last paragraph under “A Willing Teaching” in the Study Guide. Comment that there are many true stories that tell about God’s forgiveness. Mention that we heard the lesson writer’s story, and we have talked about David’s story of forgiveness in the Bible Text. Say: *Don’t be stubborn like a horse or a donkey. Let your story be one that tells about the joy of forgiveness, too!*

## Supplemental Teaching Ideas

### Connect with Life

◆ Before class, prepare a symbolic enactment of the lesson title. Enlist a helper to play the part of the forgiving God. Write the word *God* on a sheet of paper, and ask her to hold it or wear it around her neck using a string. Prepare a similar name tag for yourself. Write the word *sinner* on a sheet of paper. Set up a barrier between you, the sinner, and the actor playing God. The barrier can be a row of chairs, a rope tied between two chairs, or a narrow table. Use another sheet of paper labeled with the word *sin* to identify the barrier.

Begin by calling attention to the set-up, identifying yourself as one who has sinned, separating you from God. You may want to comment in a loud whisper, “I am not going to tell you what my sin is.” Pause, then bow your head and pray to God, confessing your sin but, still non-specific, asking for forgiveness of your sin. The actor playing God should then remove the barrier along with the *sin* sign. Tell her to say these words: *You are forgiven. Go and sin no more.* You may then do a little dance, raise your arms in joy, or somehow demonstrate your happiness. Say: *Oh joy! Joy! I am forgiven!* Pause momentarily and then identify today’s lesson title.

## Guide the Study

◆ Conduct a brief review of words in the Word List, using the words in sentences related in some way to the lesson. You may want to use a handout or chart like the one below leaving blanks in each sentence. Then guide the class members to fill in each blank with the correct word for each sentence.

### Word List Lesson 6

- ◆ You cannot (**deny**) that it feels good to know God has forgiven your sin.
- ◆ Just because something is (**legal**) under the law doesn’t mean it isn’t a sin.
- ◆ Even Christians can be (**stubborn**) about asking God to forgive them.
- ◆ The (**subject**) of this lesson is the joy of having God’s forgiveness.

## Encourage Application

◆ Ask this question: *Can you hide your sins from God?* Disclose that God knows everything about you and that you simply can’t keep Him from knowing everything you say, think, or do. Comment that you can perhaps keep secrets from the people around you, but God knows of your sin immediately.

Ask: *Why, then do you try to hide your sin if God already knows about it? Why not go ahead and tell God what He already knows. Be honest with God and He will forgive you.* Suggest that, if you do that, you can sing along with the psalmist the Memory Verse for this lesson.

Close with these words: *How happy he is whose wrong-doing is forgiven, and whose sin is covered!*

# Teaching Guide

## Lesson 7: Wanting Life and Finding the Maker

### Lesson Focus

Faithfulness to God and God's teaching is the source of true life.

### Focal Text

Psalm 34

### Memory Verse

"Give great honor to the Lord with me. Let us praise His name together." (Psalm 34:3)

### Connect with Life

1. On the board or newsprint write this simple acrostic:

Jesus  
Others  
Yourself

Explain that this is a simple word-picture of the way Christians should think and live. Identify this kind of word-picture as an *acrostic*. Say: *As Christians, you should always put Jesus first, others next, and yourselves last. Do this and you will have great joy.*

State that our psalm for today, Psalm 34, is in the original Hebrew language an acrostic of the 22 letters in the Hebrew alphabet. Refer to the Bible Text in the Study Guide and note that there are 22 verses, the same number as there are in the Hebrew alphabet. Thus, each of the original verses started with a different letter of the Hebrew alphabet. Compare this to the 26 letters we have in the English language, none of which were found in the old Hebrew alphabet.

### Guide the Study

2. Give some attention to the words in the Word List. State that to brag is usually to try to make yourself look important. Suggest that it is okay, though, to brag on

your grandchildren or your Bible Study class when you are not bragging about yourself. Clarify the meanings of the words *glorify*, *imagine*, and *sermon* as needed.

3. Observe that there is one more definition in the Word List. Direct the class to look at the introduction to the Study Guide. Note how the first sentence tells us that the lesson writer is a substitute teacher. Question the class as to what a substitute teacher does. Be sure to brag about anyone who answers correctly that a substitute teacher just takes the place of a teacher who is sick or on vacation. With that explanation, read the introduction to the class.

4. Select someone in the class to read Psalm 34:1-3 from the Bible Text. Then let another person read the two paragraphs from "Glorify the Lord" in the Study Guide. After these readings, ask: *Did you notice what David bragged about? Did he brag about himself? Did he brag about his family? Did he brag about the great things he had done in his life? No! He bragged about God. Like David, we need to glorify God.*

5. Advise the class to listen as you read the next part of the Bible Text, verses 4-7. Read verse 4 and then pause to say: *The psalmist (David) talks in this verse about three things: First, He asked God for help. Second, He told how God answered him. Third, He told how God took away his troubles. T*

Then continue reading verses 5-7. Point out how David talked first about himself (verse 4), then about others who trusted in the Lord (verse 5), about himself again in verse 6 (talking about "this poor man"), then about how the Lord helps all of those who trust in Him (verse 7). Use "Look to the Lord" from the Study Guide for additional comments.

6. Mention that we have a saying about trying something new to eat. Say: *Sometimes we will offer some of it to a friend and say, "Try it. You'll like it!"* With that introduction, advise the class to follow in the Bible Text as you read verse 8 of the Bible Text.

Pause and ask a class member to read the first paragraph only from the Study Guide section entitled "Fear the Lord." Suggest that what David is saying about what God offers is really this: Try it. You'll like it!

Next comment that the next few verses of the

Bible Text talk a lot about fear. Then read verses 9-14 of the Bible Text to the class.

## Encourage Application

7. Advise the class that you will read the last few verses. Ask them to follow in the Bible Text as you read verses 15-22. Let a member of the class then read the first three paragraphs from the Study Guide section entitled “Honor the Lord.” Point out that the last paragraph contains a story written by the lesson writer. Then read that story to conclude the lesson.

## Supplemental Teaching Ideas

### Connect with Life

◆ Remind class members that Psalms contains many real-life stories about God’s people in both good times and bad times. Explain to the class that we can read about what was happening to David when he wrote this psalm in 1 Samuel 21-22. To help the class understand the story behind this psalm, relate the following story about David’s life from this commentary by Gordon Churchyard:

*Saul was King of Israel. He wanted to kill David. David ran away. Saul followed him. David went to Gath, which was a Philistine city. The king of Gath was Abimelech. He was not a friend to David. David became afraid. He should have trusted in the LORD. He did not, but made a plan of his own. He made Abimelech think that he, David, was crazy. For this reason, Abimelech did not kill David. In those days they thought that it was wrong to kill crazy people. Abimelech sent David away. He went to a cave in Adullam, which was a few miles away. 400 people went to the camp that David made in Adullam. They were running away from a difficult life in Judah. Today we would say that they were refugees. The story is in a Part of the Bible that we call I Samuel, chapters 21 and 22 (see below). In Psalm 34 David thanked God that he was safe.*

The complete commentary for this psalm is very helpful and can be found at <http://www.easyenglish.info/psalms/psalm034-taw.htm>

◆ The Study Guide introduction mentions the alphabet song often used in schools to help little children learn the ABC’s. If you know this little tune and have a singing voice, you might teach the class the tune. Perhaps even more effective would be to bring a laptop computer or other electronic device to class and use the Internet to share a music video from a site like YouTube with the class.

## Guide the Study

◆ Involve the class in a Word List activity to test their knowledge and understanding of the new words. First, ask them to turn their Study Guides over so that the definitions are hidden. Then read, in no particular order, part or all of one of the definitions, or give your own definition for one of the words from the Word List. If this proves too difficult, allow them to turn their Study Guides face up and use them to help identify the words.

◆ Ahead of this week’s lesson, ask an artistic student to create a picture of an angel. As an alternative, you may locate a picture on the Internet or bring a painting from home. Use the artwork to call attention to the idea of angels in verse 7. As you discuss this with class members, these additional comments from Gordon Churchyard’s commentary (which can be found at <http://www.easyenglish.info/psalms/psalm034-taw.htm>) may be helpful:

*The angel of the LORD is often a name for God himself in the Bible. Some Christians think that it was the angel Michael. He was the special angel of Israel. Jesus said that we all have an angel when we are children. Our angel may give us help. Many Christians believe that our angel stays with us all our life.*

## Encourage Application

◆ Comment that the main point of this Bible study has been to show that those who trust in God are happy. Emphasize that the Memory Verse. Say: *I am going to give great honor to the Lord. Won’t you join me? Lead the class in saying, “Let us praise His name together.” To conclude, say: Be happy!*

# Teaching Guide

## Lesson 8: Thanking God for Help

### Lesson Focus

Thanking God for His help is shown by doing God's will for your life.

### Focal Text

Psalm 40

### Memory Verse

"He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God" (Psalm 40:3a)

### Connect with Life

1. Begin by reading this little poem to the class. Ahead of class, you may want to print out several copies of this poem on small sheets of decorative paper and have them laminated for class members to keep.

#### **ALWAYS**

Life isn't always easy,  
Life isn't always fair,  
Life isn't always full of joy,  
But God is always there.

2. Talk about the poetic effects of the poem. Point out the repetition of the phrase *life isn't always*. Mention the rhyming words *fair* and *there*. Note the rhythm of the poem in general. Comment as well on how the truth is told of how God is always with us in both good times and bad times.

3. Point out that the psalms in the Book of Psalms did much the same as the little poem. Say: *The person who wrote Psalm 40 talked to God about his troubles. He asked why God let him suffer. He admitted his sins. But he knew that God was always there.*

### Guide the Study

4. Ask: *Did you ever want to just stop, throw your hands in the air, and cry out, "Help!"?* Comment that we've all had such moments when everything seemed to go wrong at once.

Call attention to the Study Guide introduction where the lesson writer tells of just such a time in her life recently. Ask a class member to read the first paragraph of the introduction. After the reading, say: *Oh, if we could just have a quick fix for our problems...no hard rains pouring down...just a fresh little shower now and then to keep the grass green. But that isn't the way life is, is it?*

Recall the little poem from the beginning of your class time and repeat it with emphasis on the last line. Stress that we need to thank God for being there to help us through the troubles that come our way.

5. Encourage the class to follow in their Study Guide as you read the last paragraph of the introduction. After reading the last sentence, comment that blessings are God's little ways of helping us and making life easier and more enjoyable for us. Describe blessings as being like those little showers of rain that make the air fresh, the grass green, and people happy in the Spring.

6. Invite the class to look now at the first part of the Bible Text, verses 1-5 of Psalm 40. Let one person read verses 1-3, and another read verses 4-5. First, use the Word List to explain the meaning of *rescued*. Then read or draw comments from the Study Guide section entitled "So Thankful for God's Blessings."

7. Advise the class that you will read the next part of the Bible Text, verses 6-8. Read that passage, and then ask a member of the class to read the first three paragraphs of "Serving God" from the Study Guide. Reverse that order for the next presentation. Allow a class member to read verses 9-10 of Psalm 40. Then direct the class to find the third paragraph from "Serving God" in the Study Guide. As you begin to read, note the word *substitute* in the first sentence. Recall from last week's Word List how it means that Jesus dying on the cross took the place of all the animal gifts so that those gifts are no longer necessary. When you come to the word *author*, in the next sentence, simply explain that an author is a person who writes something.

8. Instruct the class to now read silently verses 11-12 of the Bible Text. Tell them that, as they read with their eyes only, to look for what David knew and said was the cause of his troubles. Allow time for the reading, and then see if anyone can tell what David knew and said caused his troubles. Use any responses to confirm or explain that David was well aware that the cause of his troubles was his own sins. Note verse 12. Emphasize that it was David's own sin that had brought these troubles to him.

9. On the marker board or a poster, write the following words in bold on an outline:

10. Ask a class member or helper to read the verse

## Psalm 40

- ◆ Verse 13 Request for help.  
(*Save me. Help me.*)
- ◆ Verses 14-15 Request to punish his enemies.  
(*Troubled. Turned away.*)
- ◆ Verse 16 Request to honor those who trust God.  
(*Honor. Trust.*)
- ◆ Verse 17 Request for help.  
(*Remember the Lord.*)

references and comments one by one. (Advise the reader to pause for your response after verses 13, 15, and 16) Then, as the reader pauses after each reading, point to the item on the board and speak the words or phrases in parentheses. Note that you may want to prearrange and practice this with the reader before the class starts.

## Encourage Application

11. Enlist a class member to read the last part of the Study Guide section entitled "Sure That God Saves." After the reading, remind the class that this was the author of today's lesson thanking God for helping her through her troubles.

Say: *He can help you through your troubles, too. Remember our poem: Life isn't always easy. Life isn't always fair. Life isn't always full of joy, but God is always there. He will help you get rid of your troubles. Or He will help you work through those troubles.*

## Supplemental Teaching Ideas Connect with Life

◆ Say: *Life isn't always fair and easy. Some days we are happy and everything goes well. But other days we have troubles or sadness. For some people, life is just plain hard...every day. Ask: Why does God allow bad things to happen in our lives?*

Write this on the board in large letters: **SIN**. State that sin is the reason that bad things happen to good people as well as to really bad people. Explain that our lesson today is from Psalm 40, a psalm of praise written by David. Invite the class to listen with you to David's story of praise.

## Encourage Application

◆ Explain that "Show and Tell" is something little children do at school. Describe how they bring a book, toy, or something special to them to stand before the class to show and tell about. Suggest that most of them probably brag a little about whatever they bring to show and tell about. Say: *As adult Christians, we should always be ready to show and tell others about our wonderful God...and maybe even brag a little about Him, too!*

# Teaching Guide

## Lesson 9: No One Does Good

### Lesson Focus

Not trying to seek and follow God results in God's judgment.

### Focal Text

Psalm 53

### Memory Verse

"They have all turned back. They have all turned to sin. There is no one who does good, not even one." (Psalm 53:3)

### Connect with Life

1. Comment that people think about God in different ways. Create a small handout like the one below and distribute to the class. Ask class members to place a check beside any statement that represents how they feel about God.

#### Attitudes About God

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes, there is a God and I'm doing everything I can to honor Him.

\_\_\_\_\_ I'm not sure whether there is a God or not, but I would like to find out.

\_\_\_\_\_ I don't care whether there is a God or not. I'm going to live my life to please me.

\_\_\_\_\_ There is no God, but who cares?

\_\_\_\_\_ There is no God and I will do everything I can to prove that there isn't!

2. Remark that the lesson writer for the Study Guide today has a story about one person who fits into that last group on the handout, those who fight against God. First, identify anyone who does not believe there is a God as an atheist. Then ask a class member to read the Study Guide introduction to the class. When the reader reaches the last paragraph, interrupt her or him to explain that the word *ignore* means to pay no attention to or, as it is used here, to act as if God is not there. Call attention the definition in the Word List. Then apologize for the interruption and allow the reader to continue reading the last paragraph.

### Guide the Study

3. Identify Psalm 53 as our Bible Text for this lesson. Direct the class to look at verse 1 of that text in the Study Guide. Ask someone what the first two words of that verse are. When the words *the fool* have been correctly identified, ask what the word *fool* means. Affirm any reasonably accurate definitions mentioned and then say this: *But that is not what the word fool in the Bible Text means.*

Instruct the class to locate the heading Study Guide section entitled "The Foolish Person." Enlist a member of the class to read just the first paragraph of that section to the group.

4. Say: *Well, we've gotten past the first two words of the Bible Text. Let's see what else the psalmist had to say.* Let a member of the class read verses 1-4 of the Bible Text and, of course, encourage everyone else to follow the reading in their Study Guides.

At this point, introduce the word *perfect* from the Word List. Call on someone in the class to read the Word List definition. Emphasize that a perfect person would think, say, and do everything in a way that would always be right with God. Question the class to see if anyone in the room thinks they are like that, or if they know anyone who is perfect in every way.

5. Advise the class that we are still reading from the Study Guide section entitled "The Foolish Person." Begin with the second paragraph, and read or comment on the final paragraphs of that first section of the Study Guide.

6. Mention that we are still talking about those who do wrong as mentioned in verse 4. Then let a class member read verse 5 only from the Bible Text. Stress that one of the greatest blessings we have from knowing and trusting God is that we have a feeling of peace and comfort inside us even during times of trouble. Comment that those who work against God do not have that peace. Say: *Verse 5 talks about those fools who say there is no God.* Remark that they were in fear when there was nothing to be afraid of. Say: *Those poor fools!*

7. Direct attention to the next part of the Study Guide entitled “God Punishes the Foolish.” First, enlist two class members to be ready to read when called on. Then read the first paragraph yourself. As you finish that paragraph, request the first person to read the second paragraph to the class. As that reader finishes, ask the second person to read the third paragraph.

### Encourage Application

8. Advise the class to follow in the Bible Text as you read the last verse, verse 6. Read that verse and then relate the contents of “God Rescues His People” by reading or drawing comments from the Study Guide.

### Supplemental Teaching Ideas Guide the Study

◆ State that Psalms 53 and 14 tell the same story. Explain that both psalms say the same things all the way through. Note, however, that a few of the words or phrases in the two psalms are worded a little differently, but still have the same meaning. Say, for example, that Psalm 53 uses the word for *God* while Psalm 14 uses the word for *Lord*. Suggest that the original psalm may have been copied and changed slightly to be used sometime later for a different purpose.

◆ Note that Psalm 53:1 tells us how the fool has said in his heart that there is no God. Describe the heart as the organ that pumps the blood that flows all through our bodies to keep us alive. State that we also think of the heart as the center of a person’s deepest feelings or thoughts. Say: *The heart is where we store our deep, personal feelings. These feelings become a part of us. Our goal as Christians, then, is to keep God and His words of life in our hearts. We want His love flowing like blood through every part of our minds and bodies.*

### Encourage Application

◆ Recall how at the beginning of the class we named five

different ways that people think about God. First, state that you are going to read that list again. Explain that you will read the list, slowly. Suggest that, as you read, you would like for each person to decide which group he or she fits into. Emphasize that they should not tell which group they think they belong in, but keep it to themselves. Read the list carefully, pausing briefly between each point. Repeat the list again, if needed. Suggest that you hope everyone present fits in one of the first two groups.

◆ Refer back to the handout one more time. This time as you read through the descriptions on the list, ask class members to think of people they know who are in each of the groups described. After reading through the list, close the class in prayer for the people we know who are not in the first two groups. Ask God for opportunities to share with others who would like to know about Him. Ask God to work in the hearts of friends and family who do not believe in God, don’t care about Him or who are fighting against Him.

# Teaching Guide

## Lesson 10: A Cry for Help

### Lesson Focus

In deep trouble and sadness, the writer of this psalm cried out to God for Help.

### Focal Text

Psalm 69

### Memory Verse

“Do not hide Your face from your servant, for I am in trouble. Hurry to answer me.” (Psalm 69:17)

### Connect with Life

1. Carefully point out that the story you are about to tell is a real-life experience of the writer of this teaching guide. Here is the story:

*When I was a little boy of about ten-years old, I could not swim. I was in a city swimming pool splashing water around and having a good time. I was in the part of the pool that was not very deep. The water was up to my neck but I could still breathe okay. I did not know I was at the point where the bottom of the pool began to drop down quickly. Suddenly, the bottom was no longer under my feet! I splashed around and tried to get my feet back onto the bottom, but couldn't. I went under once, then a second time. I had heard that if you go down three times, you drown. Fear was in my heart. I wanted to cry out, “Save me, O God, for the waters have almost taken my life!” (Psalm 69:1). God did guide my feet to finally touch the bottom again. I quickly got back to where my head was well above the water...to stay!*

2. Say: *Our lesson today is titled: A Cry for Help.* Question the class to see if any of them has a story like the one above. If so, allow one or two to tell their stories.

### Guide the Study

3. Comment that our Bible Text for this lesson is about another cry for help. Observe also that the Bible Text for this lesson is very long; therefore, we will be reading more than usual. Say: *This cry for help came from the psalmist who wrote Psalm 69. We are not sure that David wrote this psalm, but it was written either by*

*David, in the way David wrote, or about David. So it will be easier if we just talk as if David wrote it.*

4. Introduce the words *crisis*, *pattern*, and *silently* from the Word List. Use the following suggestions to illustrate the meanings of these words. First comment that our lesson today is about the crisis David faced and his cry to God for help. Next, observe that most of us follow the pattern of having breakfast, lunch, and dinner at about the same time every day. Finally, explain that when we read a book at the library, we read silently so that we do not disturb others who are reading. You may also want to be sure everyone understands that the word *complain* means to say that you are not happy about something. Then ask someone to read the lesson introduction at the beginning of the Study Guide.

5. Read verses 1-4 from the Bible Text. Then request one class member to read the first paragraph of the Study Guide section entitled “A Complaint.” Ask another person to read the second paragraph of that section to the class.

6. Read verses 5-12 of the Bible Text yourself. Note that in verse 5 David admits his sin, but in verse 6 and following he was more concerned that his sin would cause others to turn away from God. Say: *He wanted to be a good example. He wanted to set a pattern for others to follow that would lead them to trust in Jesus.* Ask a class member to read the final comments in the last paragraph of the Study Guide section entitled “A Complaint.”

7. Again, read verses 13-21 yourself and, of course, request that the class follow the reading in the Study Guide. After the reading, call on a class member to read the commentary from the section entitled “A Cry for God’s Help” in the Study Guide. Impress upon the class that God does answer prayer but not always when we expect it and often not in the way we expect it. Note that Psalm 69:17 is the Memory Verse for this lesson. Lead the class to recite the verse with you a time or two.

8. Ask: *Do you ever get really angry—I mean really angry?* Suggest that people sometimes get so mad that they say things they don’t really mean. Say: *They may be sorry later for saying those things. You can say you are*

sorry. *But once you have said those angry words, you cannot take them back.*

Explain that in the next part of the Bible Text, David gets angry like that. Say: *David wanted God to punish his enemies. He wanted really bad things to happen to them. Listen to David's angry words.*

With that introduction, read verses 22-29 of the Bible Text. After the reading, pause, then remind the class that psalms were written to be sung. Ask: *Can you imagine singing those angry words?* Encourage any comments or discussion by the class. Then request a class member to read the brief commentary in the Study Guide from the section entitled "A Cry for God's Punishment."

9. Comment that with verse 29 of the Bible Text, David turned from his anger to asking for God's help. Ask the class to follow in the Bible Text as you begin by reading verse 29 again and then continue on through verse 36.

### Encourage Application

11. Say: *David had his moment of anger. But he never lost faith in God. He was angry at people, not God. His words suddenly changed from a cry for God's punishment of his enemies to a song of praise.* Request a volunteer from the class to read the comments under "A Song of Praise" in the Study Guide. Close with a prayer of thanks for David's example of lasting faith, even in times of serious troubles.

### Supplemental Teaching Ideas

#### Connect with Life

♦ Write the word *complain* on the board or a poster. Question the class about the meaning of the word. Use any responses to explain that to complain is to say that you are not happy with something. Say (jokingly): *If you don't like the way I teach, you can go home and complain about it to your family.*

Ask class members to list common things that people complain about frequently. List possible responses on the board like the ones listed here as examples.

Comment that in today's lesson, David will complain to God. Then he will turn right around and praise God. Say: *Listen to the story...*

### Guide the Study

♦ Review briefly David's two major sins: committing sex-sins with Bathsheba, Uriah's wife, and then setting up Uriah to be killed in battle so that David could have Bathsheba to himself (2 Samuel 11). Read Psalm 69:5. Note that David knew how foolish he had been to sin, and he knew that God was well aware of his sins.

### Encourage Application

♦ Practice the Memory Verse with the class. Divide the class into two groups. Then divide the memory verse into four phrases on the marker board as shown below. Practice the verse with Group A saying the first and third lines, while Group B says the second and fourth lines. Then have the groups switch parts. Finally, have the entire group say the whole verse together.

Do not hide Your face  
from your servant,  
for I am in trouble.  
Hurry to answer me.  
(Psalm 69:17)

### What's Bothering You?

- ♦ Jobs
- ♦ Money
- ♦ Problems
- ♦ Unfairness
- ♦ Sickness or Pain

# Teaching Guide

## Lesson 11: Telling About God's Sure Rescue

### Lesson Focus

God gives us help and safety in times of trouble so that God's people need to have no fear.

### Focal Text

Psalm 91

### Memory Verse

"He who lives in the safe place of the Most High will be in the shadow of the All-powerful." (Psalm 91.1)

### Connect with Life

1. State that today's lesson is about how God helps us to get out of trouble and into a place where we can feel safe. Question the class as to how safe and secure they feel in the world today. Ask: *Do you think we can manage on our own? Or, do you think we could use some help from God?*

2. Recall that psalms were like poems. Say: *But they were written to be sung, much like we sing hymns and choruses in our churches today.*

Call attention to the Study Guide introduction and ask for a volunteer to read that paragraph. You may need to explain that a phrase is a group of words in a sentence that tell about just one thought. Give an example like this: *Today is Sunday*. Identify that as a sentence with only one phrase. Then say: *Today is Sunday but tomorrow is Monday*. Point out the two separate phrases of that sentence: *today is Sunday* and *tomorrow is Monday*.

### Guide the Study

3. Call on a class member to read Psalm 91:1-4 from the Bible Text. Remind all other class members to follow the reading in their Study Guides. After the reading, direct the class to find the section entitled "God is Your Refuge" in the Study Guide. First, be sure they understand a refuge as a place where you are safe and away from danger. Stress that God then, as our refuge, is where we can feel safe.

4. Use the Word List to define the words *circumstance* and *presence*. Observe that in verse 1 of the Bible Text, that He who lives in the safe place of the Most High is close enough to be in the shadow of the Most High. This means being in the presence of God. Note that in verse 4, God protects His people in the same way that a mother bird with its wings protects its baby birds.

5. With all of the explanations complete, enlist three readers from the class to each read one paragraph from the Study Guide section entitled "God is Your Refuge." Compliment the readers on their reading skill, if appropriate, then add any additional comments you wish to make.

6. Move to the next section of the Study Guide, "Have No Fear." Ask the questions and present the arguments in the first paragraph. Pause, and ask a class member to read verses 5-8 from the Bible Text. Then, move to the second paragraph of "Have No Fear." Explain that a sovereign is the king, queen, or ruler of a land or country. Suggest that God is Sovereign over the earth, the sun, the moon, and all that there is in space. Read or relate in your own words the final paragraphs of the section.

7. Request a class member to read verses 9-13 of the Bible Text. After the reading, caution the class members against walking through a lion's den or stepping on a snake. Suggest that God might not want to help anyone so foolish as to do that on purpose. Use the reasoning under from "God Will Protect You" in the Study Guide to explain these verses.

8. Observe that in verses 14-16 of the Bible Text, God is the speaker. Advise the class to listen and follow along in the Study Guide as you read those verses. After the reading, return to the Study Guide section entitled "Because You Love Him." Read the first two paragraphs only under that title but omit the Scripture references in parentheses

### Encourage Application

9. Point out how the lesson writer provided Scripture references, in parentheses, in that last section of the Study Guide so as to provide proof of God's promises.

Encourage the class members to take their Study Guides home and look up those references in a Bible. Then read to the class the last paragraph from the section entitled "Because You Love Him."

## Supplemental Teaching Ideas

### Connect with Life

◆ Write the letters of the alphabet on the board as a rhyming poem as shown here.

#### **THE ALPHABET POEM**

*(can be sung to the tune of  
"Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star")*

ABCDEF G,  
HIJKLMN OP,  
QRSTUV,  
WXYZ

*Now I know my ABC's!  
Next time won't you sing with me?*

First, point to the poem and ask: *What do we have here?* Lead them to the conclusion that this is a poem that includes all of the letters of the English alphabet. Read the poem as poetically as you can with a slight stress on the last letter of each line. Note that these last letters have the same ending sound. Explain that this is called rhyme and that in English poetry certain lines of most poems rhyme.

You may want to further illustrate this concept with some simple sight word flash cards containing words with only about three to five letters. Hold up a card and see how many rhyming words the class can think for each flash card.

## Guide the Study

◆ Comment that in the English language, we have commas telling us where to pause, periods to tell us when to stop at the end of a thought, and exclamation points telling us when to show surprise. Explain that in early Hebrew poetry, they did not have such helpful signs, nor did they use words that rhymed as we do in poetry today.

Say: *Instead, they used rhyming ideas. They would say something using one word or phrase and then say about the same thing using a different word or*

*phrase.* Refer to Psalm 91:1 (the Memory Verse for this lesson) in the Bible Text and in which there are three such rhyming thoughts. Break this verse into phrases on the board, as follows:

## **God's Sure Rescue**

He who lives...  
in the safe place...  
of the Most High...

will be...  
in the shadow...  
of the All-powerful.

Psalm 91:1

Notice the repeated structure of each idea. Suggest that each line is worded in a similar pattern. It says, in effect: *Someone...in the safety...of God...* Lead the class to identify other examples of these types of rhyming ideas as they scan through the rest of Psalm 91.

## Encourage Application

◆ Comment that the Memory Verse will be easy to learn if you just read it phrase by phrase as in the example above. Read the verse together in unison two or three times, then ask if anyone can say the verse from memory. To remember the scripture reference, advise the class to simply think of the number to call in an emergency, 9-1-1.

# Teaching Guide

## Lesson 12: Worship and Obey

### Lesson Focus

Real worship of God cannot occur unless we honor and obey God.

### Focal Text

Psalm 95

### Memory Verse

“Come, let us bow down in worship. Let us get down on our knees before the Lord Who made us.” (Psalm 95:6)

### Connect with Life

1. As class members arrive, greet them and try to find something you can praise about each person or couple. Comment on how well they are dressed, how they are always on time, that you appreciate how they take part in the class, that you can always depend on them being there, etc. Be generous with your praise, but be sincere in what you say.

2. Say: *To worship is to praise God, to thank God, and to honor God. As we continue our study in the Book of Psalms, we will look today at Psalm 95.* Direct attention to the Bible Text and read the first verse aloud. Note how the psalmist seems to be very happy and feeling very good about life.

Say: *This is a psalm of praise!* Refer to the lesson title and note that after worship, there is a second thing we must do. We must obey. Question the class about what it means to obey. Lead them to understand that to obey is to do exactly as one is told to do.

### Guide the Study

3. Say: *Before we get into the lesson, let’s talk about the words in the Word List.* Write the words from the Word List on slips of paper and hand them to the strongest readers in the class. Ask each one of them to read the definition for the class and to use the word correctly in a sentence. It may be fun to ask each person helping with this activity to share how they would say the same word in their native language.

4. Mention that we can praise other people as well as God. Say: *As you came into the room this morning, I said some words of praise to a few of you for the good things you do here in the class. You deserve praise just for coming to class. You are learning how to speak better English. And you are learning about God. But the most important thing is that we are giving praise to God. The real purpose of praise is to tell what is true about someone. We praise God because what the Bible says about God is true.*

5. Ask someone to read Psalm 95, verses 1 and 2, from the Bible Text. As the reader finishes, you may want to echo these words: *sing with joy...come before Him giving thanks...make a sound of joy to Him with songs.*

Say: *That is praise!* Note how verse 1 uses the word picture of the Lord as a rock who saves us. Suggest that we think of a large rock as being very heavy and hard to be moved, especially in Bible times when there was no heavy machinery with which to move it. Allow a class member to read the comments from the Study Guide section entitled “Ways to Praise.”

6. Comment that verses 1 and 2 of the Bible Text talk about how to praise God. State that verses 3-5 tell us why we should praise God. Instruct the class to follow in the Bible Text as you read verses 3-5. Assert that God made everything out of nothing, including people. Suggest that you are glad God did create people, as we would not be here talking about this if He had not done so. Then ask a class member to read the two short paragraphs under “Reasons to Praise” in the Study Guide.

7. Read verses 6-7 of the Bible Text yourself, but read only through the first part of verse 7, ending with “...and the sheep of His hand.” Ask a class member to read just the first paragraph of “The Act of Worship” in the Study Guide.

After the reading, say: *We can worship a little or we can worship a lot.* Stress that real worship is when you put your heart, your soul, your mind, and all that is within you—your whole self—into praising and honoring God. At this point, ask another class member to read the last part of this section. Stress that kneeling or bowing does show respect and honor to God, but it is how we feel in our heart that is important.

8. Choose one of your best readers to read the last part of the Bible Text. Instruct the reader to begin with the last part of verse 7, “If you hear His voice today...” and continue through verse 11. Be prepared to help the reader with the pronunciation of Maribah and Massah and to explain that these were places where the people of Israel worked against Moses and God as they wandered in the desert. To conclude, read or comment from the first three paragraphs of the Study Guide section entitled “A Warning.”

### Encourage Application

9. In continuation from Step 8, instruct the class to think about the last paragraph of the Study Guide. Ask the first question. Pause, and then ask the second question. Pause again, and then read the final sentences. To conclude, read the words from the Lesson Focus. Say: *Real worship of God cannot occur unless we honor and obey God.*

### Supplemental Teaching Ideas Connect with Life

◆ Before class, write the Memory Verse on the marker board. To begin the class, call attention to the verse on the board. Ask what it means to bow down or get down on your knees. Talk about the different postures of worship people use to express their hearts to God. Use the Internet to locate some images of people worshiping in different postures to illustrate these ideas. Emphasize that real worship happens in our heart, not in the other parts of our body. Different postures of worship are just a way to show what someone feels inside. There is nothing magical about raising your hands or bowing down. Suggest that if a psalmist were to write a psalm of praise like this, he would say simply, “Come, let us bow down in worship. Let us honor and praise the Lord Who made us.”

<http://revivecommunity.files.wordpress.com/2012/01/worship12.jpg>



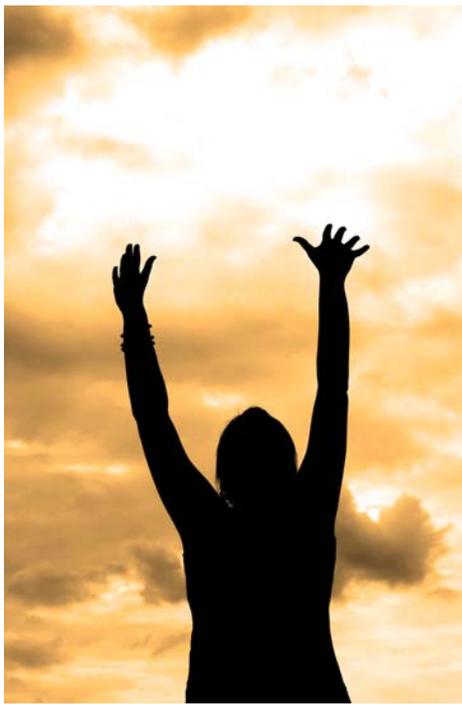
### Guide the Study or Encourage Application

◆ Observe that Question 3 from Things to Think About asks you to name at least three reasons for which you praise God. Ask: *Can you name just one thing for which you can praise God?* Encourage as many as will to share just one such praise of a general (not too personal) nature. Ask the class to look back at the introduction on the first page of the Study Guide. Reread that short paragraph with emphasis on the last sentence. Say: *Love God. Praise God. Worship God. And obey God.*

### Encourage Application

◆ Comment that worship is a habit. Explain that a habit is something you do on a regular basis. Say: *Most of us have the habit of eating three meals a day. Or we get up every morning at the same time. Perhaps we have the habit of taking a nap after dinner.* Explain that if you don't make worship a habit, you may one day forget to worship. Then you forget again, and again, and soon you don't worship at all. Encourage the class to worship daily by reading the Bible or their Study Guide, praying, inviting friends to church and doing anything that will honor God.

<http://destinychapel.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/imageworship.jpg>



# Teaching Guide

## Lesson 13: Give Thanks for God's Loving-kindness

### Lesson Focus

The psalmist's experience with the strong love of the Lord provided many reasons for giving thanks to Him.

### Focal Text

Psalm 118

### Memory Verse

"Give Thanks to the Lord, for He is good. His loving-kindness lasts forever. (Psalm 118:1)

### Connect with Life

1. Announce that this is the last week of study from the Book of Psalms. Direct the class to follow along in the Bible Text as you begin by reading Psalm 118:1-4. As you read, stress each usage of the phrase *His loving-kindness lasts forever*. Recall that in earlier lessons we talked about how the writers of psalms would say the same thing three or four times but change the wording somehow each time. Note how, in this psalm, the writer called for Israel (the king), the house of Aaron (the religious leaders), and all those who fear the Lord (the people of the church) to give thanks to the Lord. Say: *As people of the church, then, we should give thanks for the Lord's faithful love!*

2. Recall that in Lesson 2 of this study we talked about how Psalm 8 was like a sandwich. Remind them that a sandwich is simply two pieces of bread with something tasty between them. Observe that in Psalm 118, our psalm for today, verse 1 and verse 29 at the end of the psalm are exactly the same. Suggest then that we have another interesting "sandwich" to enjoy today. It might be fun to bring some finger sandwiches for the class to enjoy during today's lesson. Fill them with tasty things like egg salad, hummus, chicken salad or even good old peanut butter and jelly!

### Guide the Study

3. Use the brief introduction to the Study Guide lesson to describe how psalms were used by God's people for

worship. Recall that they were sung much as we sing hymns and praise songs in our worship services today. Point out that the ways of worship, singing, and music have changed since then, but we still worship the same God.

4. First, read Psalm 118:1-4 from the Bible Text. Then say: *We still worship the same God because His loving-kindness lasts forever. That is the title of the first part of our lesson for today.* Choose someone from the class to read just the first paragraph from the Study Guide section by that title. Comment that God's great love is beyond our understanding. Then read the second paragraph of the section yourself. You may also want to quote Ephesians 3:18 which says, "I pray that you will know the love of Christ. His love goes beyond anything we can understand. I pray that you be filled with God Himself." Use the third paragraph to explain the references to Israel and the house of Aaron. Lastly, ask a class member to read the call to give thanks in the last two sentences.

5. Question the class as to whether they ever have any problems or troubles in their lives. Confirm that we all have such troubles at times. Say: *The question is how do we deal with them?* Comment that the psalmist in our Bible Text has the answer. Ask someone to read verses 5-9 from the Bible Text. Then, use the Study Guide section entitled "The Lord is My Helper" to summarize the wisdom of requesting God's help when you have troubles.

6. Note that a strange thing happens in the next set of verses. Before reading, set the scene by stating that the first four verses (10-13) followed a pattern. Recall this word from the Word List in Lesson 10. Advise the class to listen for that pattern as you read verses 10-14. After the reading, question the class to see if anyone heard the pattern. Use any responses to explain the pattern. Lead class members to describe the pattern in this way: The first line of each verse tells of danger they faced. Then the second part of each verse tells that God helped and saved them. Explain that in verse 14, the psalmist then sings about how God saved Israel. With that analysis, let a class member read from the Study Guide section entitled "In the Name of the Lord."

7. Say: *Verses 15-18 praise God for giving His people the victory.* Have a class member read those verses from the Bible Text. Use the discussion from the section entitled “Proclaim His Goodness” for comments. Also, describe how God punished, or made life hard for the king, because he had done wrong in some way. Say: *But the king was saved from death because he chose to ask for and depend on God's help.*

8. Call one person from the class to come with you to a corner of the classroom for a private meeting. Stand facing the corner and talk in low voices to explain to this person that you are just showing what a private meeting is like. Then dismiss this person to rejoin the class. Explain to the class that the two of you were having a private meeting. Suggest that something done in private is done alone or with a small group of friends. Stress that it is not something you want everyone to know about. With that explanation, read the first paragraph under from the section entitled “Give Thanks” in the Study Guide. Then let a class member read verses 19-21 of the Bible Text. Finally, read the last paragraph of “Give Thanks” from the Study Guide.

## Encourage Application

9. Let a volunteer read the short paragraph from the Study Guide section entitled “Rejoice!”. Then read the final part of the Bible Text, verses 22-29, to the class. Before reading the last verse, recall the discussion at the beginning of the class as to how this Bible Text is like a sandwich. Comment that the first verse, which is also the Memory Verse, is exactly like the last verse. Invite the class to read the words of those verses with you. Then invite the class to do what those verses call for and give thanks to the Lord.

10. Close with a time of praise and thanksgiving as class members share the good things God has done and is doing in their lives. Lead the class in a time of prayer.

## Supplemental Teaching Ideas

### Connect with Life or Guide the Study

◆ Write the word *cornered* on the board or a poster. Question the class to see if anyone has heard that word or can guess what it means. Use any responses or simply explain that it means to be caught in a corner, as of a room, from which there is no way of escape. Say: *In our lesson today, the person who wrote Psalm 118 seems to have been cornered in some way. There seemed to be no*

*way for him to escape. But God was with him. God helped him escape. He was no longer cornered. In our psalm for today, Psalm 118, the writer of this psalm is praising God and thanking Him for His help.*

## Guide the Study

◆ The New Life Version (NLV) is used in all of the Bible Texts for this lesson series. Because the vocabulary of the NLV is so limited, a few hyphenated words are used to avoid adding another word to the simplified NLV vocabulary. One such word, *loving-kindness*, is used in today's lesson. Loving-kindness is used instead of the more common word *mercy*, which is found in most other translations. The combination of *love* and *kindness* aptly describes what mercy means, but it is a little bit cumbersome to those of us more familiar with the English language. Feel free to use either term, mercy or loving-kindness, according to your class members' understanding.

## Encourage Application

◆ Remind the class of the Things to Think About questions in the Study Guide every week. Observe that these are often questions of a personal nature. They are for you to answer in private. Suggest that each class member make it a habit to take their Study Guide home each week. Encourage them to read all of the Study Guide aloud to practice their English, and then to think about these questions in private.

# Teaching Guide

## Lesson 14: Knowing, Believing, Telling

### Lesson Focus

Jesus' resurrection confirms His identity and mission and calls us to follow Him and tell others about Him.

### Focal Text

John 20:1-18

### Memory Verse

"Mary Magdalene went and told the followers that she had seen the Lord. She told them the things He had said to her." (John 20:18)

### Connect with Life

1. Say: *Let me tell you about Mary. Mary was from Magdala, a small town on the Sea of Galilee. She was called Mary of Magdala, or Mary Magdalene. Jesus did much of His work around Galilee. Luke 8:2 tells us that some women who had been healed of demons and diseases were with Jesus and that Mary Magdalene, who had had seven demons put out of her was one of them. Because of what Jesus did for her, Mary followed Jesus to Jerusalem. She saw Jesus die on the cross. She was very troubled. The One who had helped her was now dead.*

Explain that Jesus died late in the afternoon on Friday. Add that no one could go to the place where He was buried on Saturday because that was the Sabbath, the Jewish holy day. Our Bible Text today tells us what happened early Sunday morning.

### Guide the Study

2. Say: *Here are the circumstances. This is what was happening at the time this story begins.* Then, after directing the class to follow along in the Bible Text, present the circumstances by reading John 20:1-4.

3. To provide more of the circumstances of today's story, ask someone to read the lesson introduction (but suggest that the reader skip over all the biblical references in parenthesis). After the reading, comment that those are the circumstances—or that was the way things were—at the beginning of this story.

4. State that we will now look deeper into the circumstances of the story. Refer the class to the section entitled "Seek God Right Away" in the Study Guide. Choose one person to read the first two paragraphs of that story and a second person to read the last paragraph to the class. As the first reader finishes, review the circumstances by using the marker board to create a timeline chart like the one below. Then call for the second reader to read the last two paragraphs of the story

### What's Going On?

*John 20:1-4*

- ◆ Mary went to the tomb as soon as she could.
- ◆ She arrived while it was still dark.
- ◆ She saw that the grave had been opened.
- ◆ She ran and told the followers.

5. Request a volunteer from the class to read verses 5-7 from the Bible Text. Then let someone else read the section entitled "The Linen Cloths" in the Study Guide. Ask: *What would you have thought if you had seen those burial cloths neatly folded and placed on a shelf in the tomb?* Use any responses to conclude that whatever took place had not been done in a hurry.

6. Read verses 8-10 from the Bible Text as the class members follow in their Study Guides. Comment that the other follower was likely John. Suggest that Peter and John were now beginning to see the light. Say: *Although they were beginning to understand that something unusual had happened, they were still troubled. So they went home to think about it...leaving Mary alone at the grave.*

7. Comment that in our language we have a saying that "seeing is believing." Explain that we often want proof before we will believe something. State that we want to see it with our own eyes. Go on to say that proof helps us know if something is real or is true. Ask: *Can something be true if there is no proof?*

Direct the class to look for the Study Guide section entitled "Believing Without Seeing." Quickly read through that section, pausing only at the end of the

second paragraph to comment that the reference from John 20:29 includes you and me.

8. Say: *But let's get back to Mary Magdalene. We left her standing by the empty grave...alone...and crying.* Talk about Mary's persistence, how she did not give up her search for Jesus' body. Describe how she persisted—just kept on trying—to find her Jesus. Say: *And her persistence paid off! Here's what happened.* Read verses 11-15 from the Bible Text. Then assign a class member to read the section entitled “Persistence” in the Study Guide.

9. Use the chart from Step 4 to recall the circumstances, or what had been happening, at that particular time. Say: *Mary was crying. Jesus appeared to her. She thought He was the man who cared for the garden. Jesus spoke her name. She knew it was Jesus. Those were the circumstances.* With that introduction, let a class member read verses 16-18 from the Bible Text.

## Encourage Application

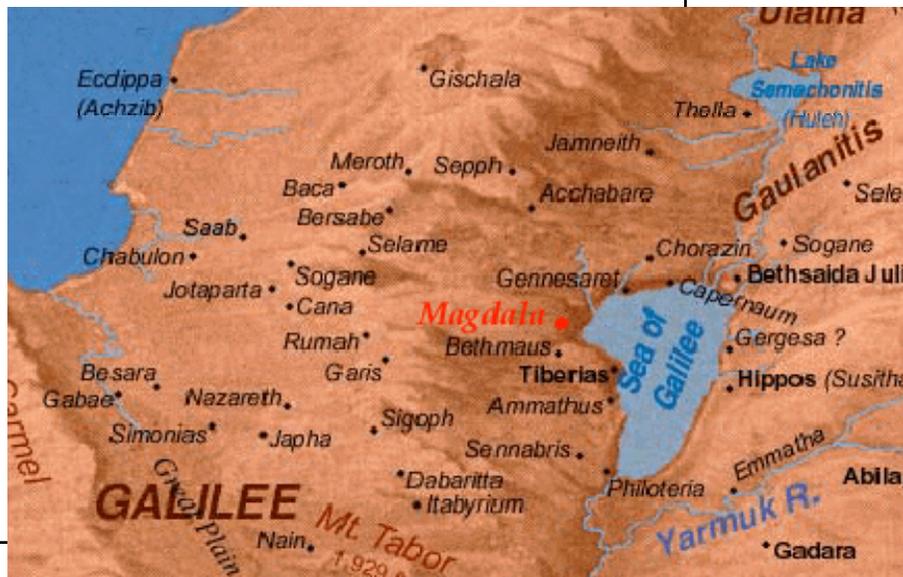
◆ Read or comment from the section entitled “He Calls Us by Name” in the Study Guide.

## Supplemental Teaching Ideas

### Connect with Life

◆ Use a map like the one below to locate Magdala for the class. Explain that in today's lesson, we will learn about a woman from this town. Also use the map to point out the Sea of Galilee and Jesus' hometown of Nazareth. Mention that Jerusalem lies to the south near the Dead Sea.

[http://heroinesofhistory.wikispaces.com/file/view/map\\_of\\_magdala.gif/243589009/map\\_of\\_magdala.gif](http://heroinesofhistory.wikispaces.com/file/view/map_of_magdala.gif/243589009/map_of_magdala.gif)



## Guide the Study

◆ Ask: *How many of you have a watch on your wrist?* Use any responses to point out how many people today wear watches so that we may know what time it is wherever we go. Comment that in Bible times the word *watch* had a different meaning. Explain how the early Romans divided the night into four parts called watches. Describe these watches as lasting three hours each, with the fourth, or last watch being from 3:00 a. m. to 6:00 a. m.

Say: *So Mary Magdalene came to the tomb during the fourth watch, while it was still dark. She came sometime before 6:00 a. m.* Question the class as to how often they are up and away from the house by 6:00 a. m. and how awake they are at that time in the morning. Suggest that Mary Magdalene probably hadn't slept well because of her sorrow and weeping, so she probably was not very alert.

◆ Explain how in Bible times, families had tombs that were used for more than just one burial place. Tell how a family would make a cave in a hillside. When someone in the family died, they would be buried in the cave. A large stone would be rolled across the opening of the cave to protect the body from wild animals or grave robbers. The body would be left there until only the bones remained. Those bones would be removed when someone else in the family died. At that time, the bones would be taken out of the cave. The new body would then be buried there. This cycle could be repeated many times. Emphasize that Joseph's tomb, in which Jesus was buried, had never been used before, so no bones were there to be removed.