

**Adult
Bible Study in
Simplified
English**

Teaching Guide

Help for All the Times of Our Lives

WRITER

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Adult Bible Study in Simplified English Teaching Guide

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Adult Bible Study in Simplified English

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Help for All the Times of Our Lives

Introduction for Teachers

Welcome!

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

The Teaching Guide begins with listings of the Lesson Focus, Focal/Background Text, and Memory Verse, all of which provide the premise for the lesson. This information is followed by a teaching plan under headings of Connect with Life, Guide the Study, and Encourage Application. At the end of each lesson, Extra 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.

Which Bible translation does this material use?

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 New Life Version is also available online at www.biblegateway.com and www.studylight.org.

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.

Pray and prepare

Prayer is 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.

About the Writer

Jennifer Carson and her husband, Mark, are members of Oakwood Baptist Church in New Braunfels, Texas, and the parents of six children. She is a graduate of Baylor University in Waco. She was an English teacher in Fort Worth before becoming a stay-at-home mom, and now she teaches English (and everything else) as she homeschools their five oldest children. She has been a long-time editor in the Simplified English curriculum, as well as a Bible study teacher in the various churches where they have served in ministry.

Help for All the Times of Our Lives

Suggestions for Teaching

General Suggestions

1. Provide language edition Bibles so students can read the focal passage in their native languages.
2. Beginning students may require three sessions to complete one lesson.
3. Review the Word 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.

Adult Bible Study in Simplified English Teaching Guide

Procedure

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

Lesson Expansion

If the setting and circumstances permit, use these ideas:

- Sequencing pictures (a set for each pair of students) while listening to you or to a taped voice tell the story
- Picture sequencing without hearing the story told
- Matching pictures and sentences
- Scrambled sentences to arrange in order (writing numbers or letters in front of sentences to show sequence; cutting up sentences and moving around to position correct order)
- Strip story (cutting up sentences, issuing one strip per student, asking students to arrange themselves in order, having them retell the story by contributing the

portion on their paper strip)

—Cloze (supplying a written copy with every nth word blank; students work in pairs to fill in the missing words)

—Dictation (teacher or student telling the story while students write what they hear)

—Provide a copy of the sentences for each student. Ask that they read the story to a partner.

—Ask students to write the story in their own words.

Bible passage as content for reading

Procedure

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

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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.

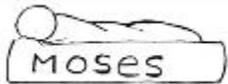
Online Resources and Study Helps

- **EasyEnglish** is a form of simple English developed by Wycliffe Associates (UK). Their website: (www.easyenglish.info) contains Bible commentaries, Bible translations, Bible studies, and other materials written in simple English. They are free for you to download and use.
- Additional teaching help is provided in the Internet edition of the Baptist Standard www.baptiststandard.com. Go to the website, then to Resources, then Bible Study.
- 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.

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Help for All the Times of Our Lives

Bible Timeline: Overview of Old Testament People and Events

before 1750 B.C.	about 1750-1350 B.C.	about 1350-1250 B.C.	about 1300-1200 B.C.
<p>1 <u>Creation and Early Records</u> Book: Genesis 1-11 People Who Lived in This Time: Adam, Eve, Cain, Abel, Noah</p>	<p>2 <u>The Patriarchs</u> Book: Genesis 12-50 People Who Lived in This Time: Abraham, Sarah, Lot, Isaac, Rebekah, Jacob, Leah, Rachel, Joseph Joseph  (Lesson 3)  (Lesson 7)  (Lesson 9)  Rebekah (Lesson 4)</p>	<p>3 <u>The Exodus</u> Books: Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers 1-12 People Who Lived in This Time: Moses, Aaron  Moses (Lesson 12)</p>	<p>4 <u>Wandering in the Wilderness and Entering the Promised Land</u> Books: Numbers 13-36, Deuteronomy, Joshua People Who Lived in This Time: Caleb, Rahab, Joshua  Caleb (Lesson 8)</p>
about 1200-1020 B.C.	1020-922 B.C.	922-721 B.C.	
<p>5 <u>The Judges</u> Books: Judges, Ruth, 1 Samuel 1-12 People: Deborah, Barak, Gideon, Samson, Ruth, Hannah, Samuel  Samson (Lesson 2)  Hannah (Lesson 5)  Ruth (Lesson 6)  Samuel (Lesson 11)</p>	<p>6 <u>The Kingdom</u> Books: 1 Samuel 12-31, 2 Samuel, 1 Kings 1-12, 1 Chronicles 10 through 2 Chronicles 9 People Who Lived in This Time: Saul, Jonathan, David, Bathsheba, Nathan, Solomon  David (Lesson 10)</p>	<p>7 <u>The Divided Kingdom</u> Books: 1 Kings 12-22, 2 Kings 1-17, Amos, Hosea, Isaiah 1-39, 2 Chronicles 10-28 People Who Lived in This Time: Kings of Israel and Judah, Elijah, Elisha, Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Micah</p>	
721-587 B.C.	597-539 B.C.	539-333 B.C.	About 55 A.D.
<p>8 <u>Only Judah</u> Books: 2 Kings 17-25, Isaiah 1-39, Micah, Jeremiah, Zephaniah, Nahum, Habakkuk, 2 Chronicles 29-36 People Who Lived in This Time: Kings of Judah, Hosea, Isaiah, Micah, Hezekiah, Josiah, Huldah, Jeremiah</p>	<p>9 <u>The Exile</u> Books: Ezekiel, Isaiah 40-66, Obadiah, 2 Chronicles 36, Daniel People Who Lived in This Time: Ezekiel, Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego, Esther  Daniel (Lesson 1)</p>	<p>10 <u>Return from Exile</u> Books: Ezra, Haggai, Zechariah, Nehemiah, Malachi, 2 Chronicles 36 People Who Lived in This Time: Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, Malachi</p>	<p>11 <u>Paul writes letters to church in Corinth</u>  (Lesson 13)</p>



Teaching Guide

Adult Bible Study in Simplified English

*Help for All the Times
of Our Lives*

Lesson 1: Daniel and His Friends: Choose to be Faithful

Lesson Focus

Daniel and his friends chose to stay loyal to God even when they were taken away to Babylon where no one else was worshipping the one true God.

Focal Text

Daniel 1:1-21

Memory Verse

"If you do not have wisdom, ask God for it. He is always ready to give it to you and will never say you are wrong for asking." (James 1:5)

Prior Preparation

◆ For this unit of study, you will find a helpful timeline of Old Testament people and events included at the beginning of the Study Guide (page 6) and in this Teaching Guide (page 7). Enlarge this timeline as a large poster or banner either by hand (poster/markers), by using your computer/printer, or by using your church copy machine or local print shop. Display it throughout this series of lessons.

(For this lesson, see Bible Timeline: Box 9)

◆ Opening activity: Bring a large world map and push pins.

◆ If you use the map activity at the end (Extra Teaching Ideas / Guide the Study), decide if you will simply enlarge the map or make color copies for everyone. Make sure the vastness of the Babylonian Empire shows up clearly (orange area) and that the cities of Jerusalem and Babylon are clearly marked.

◆ For Extra Teaching Ideas/ Connect with Life, you will need to bring a large candy jar filled with exactly 605 pieces of small candy.

◆ Under Extra Teaching Ideas / Encourage Application, you will need to ask a member ahead of time to share about the changes they faced in coming to the United States.

Connect with Life

1. Place a large map of the world on a corkboard. As class members enter today, hand each one a push pin. Ask them to identify their homeland (city or country) by pinning that location on the map. When everyone has completed this activity, observe the various locations identified by class members. Comment aloud about any interesting observations like who is living farthest from home or if several members are from the same area.

Then begin the lesson by discussing the questions from this lesson's introduction (first paragraph). These questions are very applicable since most class members in this context are living far away from their home country.

—*Has there been a time in your life when you were far from home with people who did not know you?*

—*Did you sometimes wonder what God wanted you to do?*

—*Did you always do the right thing?*

—*Do you know how to stand up for yourself, your values, your faith, your God, even in difficult times?*

Say: *Today, we will learn about a young man in the Bible who had to answer these questions for himself. His name is Daniel.*

Encourage Application

2. Read aloud Daniel 1:1-5. Ask class members to listen for words that described Daniel and his friends. Ask for responses and jot these on the board (or a poster).

3. Ask a good reader to read Daniel 1:6-10 aloud. Then summarize the last two paragraphs of the Study Guide section entitled "Israel's Treasures Taken to Babylon." Be sure to point out the word *cuneiform* from the Word List.

4. Draw a chart similar to the one below. Ask members to assist you in completing it as everyone considers the changes that awaited Daniel when he arrived in Babylon. (To spark discussion, list the items in the left column, then encourage the class to make the comparisons in his life as they fill in the answers in the middle and right columns.)

Changes for Daniel		
Where he lived...	<i>Jerusalem</i>	<i>Babylon</i>
What language he spoke...	<i>Hebrew</i>	<i>Learned to read, write, speak Assyrian (language of Babylonians)</i>
What he ate...	<i>Vegetables, water</i>	<i>Pressured to eat the king's food and drink wine</i>
His name...	<i>Daniel</i>	<i>Beltshazzar</i>
What he studied...	<i>Jewish history</i>	<i>Babylonian history and astronomy</i>

5. Referring to the Study Guide, discuss the meanings of these four young men's Hebrew names. Point out the meaning of their new Babylonian names. It may be helpful to list the names and meanings on the board.

Point out that names were very significant to the Hebrew people. A name was carefully chosen to tell something meaningful about a person's identity or the conditions of his birth. Make the connection that changing their names was part of an overall attempt to change their identity. Further explore the idea that even though Daniel and his friends were forced to make these changes, they refused to allow their hearts to be changed. They faithfully obeyed God with their thoughts and their actions.

6. Ask a member to read Daniel 1:11-14. Further explore the chart from above by discussing questions #2 and #3 from Things to Think About.

7. Read aloud Daniel 1:15-21 to the class. Ask class members to listen for ways that God blessed Daniel and his friends' obedience. (*He made them strong and healthy, and He gave them understanding and wisdom about many things. Daniel had special understanding of dreams. These men became special helpers to the king and were influential leaders in a foreign land.*)

Encourage Application

8. Review this week's Memory Verse with the class. Say it aloud several times, breaking it into manageable phrases as the class repeats after you.

9. Discuss questions #5 and #6 from Things to Think About. If they are willing, ask class members to share any issues in their lives where they are in need of wisdom. Maybe share an issue like this from your life.

Say: We often have the chance to compromise our values in order to make things easier for us. Daniel and his friends show us what it means to obey God when things are hard. Let's pray that God will give us wisdom to live like Daniel.

Point out the definition of *compromise*.

10. Close the class in prayer that God will grant wisdom and bravery for class members to know and obey Him like Daniel.

Extra Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

◆ In introducing the context for today's story, fill a large jar or other container with 605 pieces of small candy. Upon entering the class, have members guess how many pieces of candy they think are in the jar. Record each

member's answer. When everyone has guessed, announce the actual number of pieces (605) and award the jar of candy as a prize to the class member whose guess was closest to the actual number.

Then, explain to class members that today's Bible story took place 605 years before the birth of Jesus. Ask several good readers to help read the Study Guide section entitled "Israel's Treasures Taken to Babylon."



Source: www.keyway.ca/gif/babylon.gif

Guide the Study

◆ Use a map like the one above to show the location of Babylon in relationship to Jerusalem. The Babylonian Empire is the orange area. Jerusalem and Babylon are marked with yellow stars. (

Encourage Application

◆ Ask a class member ahead of time to share about the changes they faced in coming to the United States. Ask them specifically to talk about difficulties learning a new language, eating new foods, and studying new things.

Say: Many of you can relate to Daniel and his friends. Many of their challenges are the same ones that you are facing. God took care of Daniel and his friends. God can take care of you, too. Let's pray and ask God to give you wisdom in the challenges you face.

Close the class in prayer that members will seek God and follow Him in the midst of changes—just like Daniel did.

Teaching Guide

Adult Bible Study

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*Help for All the Times
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Lesson 2: Samson: Trust God, Not Self

Lesson Focus

God blessed Samson, but Samson wasted God's blessings by relying on his own strength instead of relying on God's strength.

Focal Text

Judges 16:4-9, 15-30

Memory Verse

"Good understanding wins favor, but the way of the sinful is hard." (Proverbs 13:15)

Prior Preparation

◆ For this unit of study, you will find a helpful timeline of Old Testament people and events included at the beginning of the Study Guide (page 6) and in this Teaching Guide (page 7). Enlarge this timeline as a large poster or banner either by hand (poster/markers), by using your computer/printer, or by using your church copy machine or local print shop. Display it throughout this series of lessons. **(For this lesson, see Bible Timeline: Box 5)**

- ◆ For the opening activity, find a *Help Wanted* sign.
- ◆ For Guide the Study #2, prepare highlighted "scripts."
- ◆ For Encourage Application #7, prepare bookmarks.
- ◆ Under Extra Teaching Ideas / Guide the Study, print out the color picture of the idol Dagon to use as a visual.

Connect with Life

1. Go to your local hardware store (or the hardware department of your local superstore) and find a *Help Wanted* sign like the one shown below.



Ask class members if they know what this sign means. Make it clear that this sign lets

others know when someone wants help—usually at a place of business.

Say: *Today we are going to learn about someone who refused God's help. Samson trusted himself. He did not want God's help.*

Guide the Study

2. Enlist a few volunteers to help act out Judges 16:4-9. One person will read Delilah's words, another will read Samson's words, and an additional 1-3 people can read the Philistine leaders' words. The teacher can read the remaining words in the role of a narrator. Copy the verses from the Bible text for each participant. Highlight each player's words on the separate copies. Use this as a script.

Make sure class members can answer these questions after acting out the verses:

- Which people in this story are working together?
- How does Samson feel about Delilah?
- Did Samson tell Delilah the truth? How do you know?

2. Read Judges 16:15-17 aloud to the class. Use a chart like the one below to further explain what it meant for Samson to be a Nazirite. While the list describes things that Samson could *not* do, emphasize the idea that being a Nazirite was really more about complete devotion to God.

What is a Nazirite?

Numbers 6:1-8

Do not drink wine or strong drink (vv. 3-4)

Do not cut hair (v. 5)

Do not touch dead bodies (vv. 6-8)

Say: *Samson seemed to be following the Nazirite rules on the outside, but his actions show us that his heart isn't really devoted to God. He is in love with a Philistine woman who does not worship the one true God. He seems unconcerned about the fact that Delilah has already tried to betray him three times. Still, Samson seems to want her love more than he wants to please God. Samson seems to think that he doesn't need God's strength or help.*

3. Ask a good reader to read Judges 16:18-22. Lead the class to identify the consequences of Samson's bad choices and list them on the board. (*Delilah betrayed him, his hair was cut, the Lord left him, his strength was gone, the Philistines put out his eyes, he became a prisoner, he was forced to do women's work.*)

4. Write these words on the board:

Our Choices Will Affect Us

Point out that this was true for Samson and is also true for us. Use this idea to guide a discussion of #1 and #2 from Things to Think About.

5. Read Judges 16:23-30 for the class. Ask the class to listen for ways Samson has changed since the beginning of this story. Be sure to point out that Samson seems to have learned from his mistakes. (*Samson turned his heart back to God. He prayed and asked God for help. He wanted to show God's power to others. Note that God answered Samson's last prayer.*)

Encourage Application

6. Say: *Many of us are like Samson. We have made mistakes. We have trusted ourselves instead of God. The Bible tells us about another man who made mistakes. In Luke 15:11-32, we learn about the Prodigal Son.*

Read or summarize the story of the Prodigal Son for class members. Then discuss #5 from Things to Think About.

7. Conclude by reading the following statement from the Study Guide entitled, "What We Can Learn from Samson": *Experience is what we have when we learn from our own mistakes. Wisdom is what we have when we learn from others' mistakes.*

(Additional idea: Make a laminated bookmark or note card with this statement to give each class member.)

8. Close the class with prayer that class members will choose to gain wisdom from the lives of people in the Bible instead of having to learn from their own hard experiences.

Extra Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

◆ Share the following information which is paraphrased from the mainstream curriculum's Teaching Guide in order to help class members better understand the history surrounding today's lesson:

The time of the judges (about 1200-1020 B.C.) was a bad time for Israel. They did the same wrong things over and over. They ignored God's instructions. Then God would punish them. After being punished, they would return to God. Each time they returned to God, He helped them. During these bad times for Israel, God sent a series of judges to help lead the people back to God. Israel never seemed to stay close to God for very long. In Samson's time, things were worse than ever. Israel looked more like her pagan neighbors than a people who belonged to the one true God.

Guide the Study

◆ Dagon was the main idol of the Philistines. They believed he had power over grains, fish, and fertility. Show the class a picture like the one here and give a brief explanation about this idol.

You may also want to share or summarize 1 Samuel 5:2-25 with class members. This is another passage where Dagon is mentioned. In that story, the Philistines had captured the ark of God and placed it beside the idol of Dagon in the temple in Ashdod. The next day the people of Ashdod discovered that the Dagon idol had fallen prostrate before the ark. They set it back up, but the next day the idol was again fallen before the ark of God, only this time the idol's head and hands were cut off and lying on the threshold.



Point out that in other parts of the world, many people still worship false gods like Dagon. Ask class members (who have come from other countries) if this is true of their home countries. You may ask several to share their experiences with the class. Affirm that Christians only worship the one true God.

Source: www.bible-history.com/sketches/ancient/dagon-2.jpg

Teaching Guide

Adult Bible Study in Simplified English

Help for All the Times of Our Lives

Lesson 3: Joseph: Gain Wisdom

Lesson Focus

Joseph faced many trials as a young man, but he grew into a mature person who was faithful to God.

Focal Text

Genesis 37:2-6, 10-14, 18-21, 26-28; 39:1-7, 11-12

Background Text: Genesis 37:2-14, 18-28, Genesis 39:1-12

Memory Verse

“The Lord was with Joseph, and all went well with him....”
(Genesis 39:2*a*)

Prior Preparation

◆ For this unit of study, you will find a helpful timeline of Old Testament people and events included at the beginning of the Study Guide (page 6) and in this Teaching Guide (page 7). Enlarge this timeline as a large poster or banner either by hand (poster/markers), by using your computer/printer, or by using your church copy machine or local print shop. Display it throughout this series of lessons. **(For this lesson, see Bible Timeline: Box 2)**

◆ For the opening activity, bring pictures of yourself as a baby, child, teen, young adult, etc., highlighting photos that show yourself at different ages/levels of maturity.

◆ For Extra Teaching Ideas / Guide the Study, enlarge or make copies of the chart of “Jacob’s 12 Sons.”

◆ For Extra Teaching Ideas / Encourage Application, decide if you will make copies of the worksheet, “Are You Maturing in Christ?” or use the information on a large poster for class discussion.

Connect with Life

1. Locate some pictures of yourself as a baby, child, teen, young adult, etc. Try to find pictures from your life that show different ages and levels of maturity. Share those photos with the class while introducing today’s lesson.

Point out the word *mature* from the Word List.

Discuss the meaning of this word by using your pictures to

illustrate the concept. Use the lesson introduction and questions #1 and #2 from Things to Think About to help guide the discussion.

Conclude by saying: *All of us will mature physically. We will grow from babies to mature adults. God wants all of us to mature spiritually, too. He wants our obedience to Him and our love for Him to grow. In today’s lesson, we will learn about a young man who became mature through facing many hard things.*

Guide the Study

2. Read Genesis 37:2-6 and 10-14 for the class. Ask class members to listen for clues about Joseph’s relationship with his family.

Drawing from the Study Guide section entitled “Only in My Dreams,” discuss these questions:

—*How did Jacob (Israel) feel about Joseph?* (He loved Joseph more than his other sons. He made Joseph a special coat. Even so, he seemed angry about Joseph’s dream.)

—*How did Joseph feel about his brothers?* (He told his father all the bad things they did to get them in trouble. Thinking he was more important than them, he bragged to them about his dream.)

—*How did the brothers feel about Joseph?* (They were jealous. They hated Joseph and could speak no kind words to him.)

3. Select two good readers. Ask the first to read Genesis 37:18-21 and the second to read Genesis 37:26-28.

Point out two important ideas. First, the brothers thought that they could stop Joseph’s dream from coming true if they got rid of him. They wrongly thought they could put an end to God’s plan for Joseph’s life.

Second, point out that Reuben tried to stand up for his brother. This is an example for us to follow. It is important to stand up for what is right—even if everyone else is doing wrong. Because of Reuben, Joseph’s life was spared. We need to stand up for others who may not have enough power to overcome difficulties on their own. God used Reuben to spare Joseph’s life. Later, we will learn how God used Joseph to save many others. None of that would have been possible without Reuben’s willingness to stand up for Joseph against his brothers.

4. Read or summarize Genesis 39:1-7 and 11-12 for the class. Write the following phrase on the board to begin a chart. Identify this phrase as coming from this week’s Memory Verse. Ask the class to repeat the Memory Verse aloud with you before moving on.

The Lord was with Joseph...

5. Ask class members to think back over Joseph’s story and identify all the hard things in Joseph’s life that happened. Complete the chart started in #4 by listing those hard things on the board. (Sample chart follows.)

The Lord was with Joseph...

- ◆ In the dry well
- ◆ When he was sold as a slave
- ◆ When he was separated from his family
- ◆ When he worked for Potiphar
- ◆ When Potiphar’s wife lied about him

Review the chart and remind class members that God was with Joseph in each situation. Say: *God had a plan for Joseph’s life. And God has a plan for your life.*

Encourage Application

6. Suffering is always a dangerous opportunity for Christians. We can move forward in spiritual maturity or backward toward immaturity.

Ask a staff member from your church to come and share a short time of testimony about a significant trial they have faced. Ask them to talk specifically about how God used that time of suffering to grow them and make them more mature.

Extra Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

◆ Have class members write down a few things about how they, at age 17, thought their life would be for them at their current age. Ask for volunteers to share their responses.

Say: *For most of us, life has not turned out exactly as we thought it would when we were 17. Today, we will learn about a young man whose life suddenly became very different than he expected. His name was Joseph and these hard, unexpected things helped him mature.*

Guide the Study

◆ Share a chart like the one on this page which tells about Jacob’s 12 sons. (Source: www.scripturestudies.com/Vol4/D5/D5_Images/d5_ot_tab.gif)

Encourage Application

◆ Encourage class members to think about their spiritual maturity with the checklist at right (“Are You Maturing in Christ?”). Make a poster-size list to use for general class discussion/application or make copies to distribute as a handout. This could be a take-home piece for them to work through this week in their devotional time.

Jacob’s 12 Sons		
Name	Name means...	Other details...
Reuben	“Behold! A Son!” Also sounds like, “He has seen my misery”	Leah’s first son; “The Lord has seen my (Leah’s) misery”
Simeon	“favorable hearing” (perhaps “good news”)	Leah’s second son; “Because the Lord has heard that I am not loved”
Levi	“a joining” or “attach”	Leah’s third son; “Now at last my husband will become attached to me”
Judah	“praise”	Leah’s fourth son; “This time, I will praise the Lord”
Dan	“he has vindicated”	First son of Bilhah (Rachel’s servant); “God has vindicated me”
Naphtali	“struggle” or “wrestling”	Second son of Bilhah; “I have a great struggle with my sister”
Gad	“good fortune”	First son of Zilpah (Leah’s servant); “What good fortune!”
Asher	“blessed” or “happy”	Second son of Zilpah (Leah’s servant); “How happy I am! The women will call me happy”
Issachar	“reward”	Leah’s fifth son; “God has rewarded me”
Zebulun	“gift”	Leah’s sixth son; “God has presented me with a precious gift”
Joseph	“may He add”	Rachel’s first son; “May the Lord add another son”
Ben-Oni, renamed Benjamin by Jacob	“son of sorrow” and after renaming, “son of my right hand”	Rachel’s second son; she died following a difficult childbirth

Are You Maturing in Christ?

Mark the areas where you feel you are growing to be like Christ:

- ___ speak truth (John 8:45)
- ___ feel and show loving-pity for others (Matthew 15:32; Mark 6:34)
- ___ obey God (Luke 22:42; John 8:29)
- ___ forgive others (Luke 17:3-4; 23:34)
- ___ serve others with no pride (Luke 22:27)
- ___ show thankfulness (John 11:41)
- ___ get along with those who are different (John 4:4-26)
- ___ suffer and give up what you want for others (Luke 17:25)
- ___ be generous (Matthew 10:8)
- ___ trust God and encourage and others (John 14:1)
- ___ be at peace when alone (Matthew 14:13)
- ___ grow in wisdom and get along with others (Luke 2:52)
- ___ work well and be responsible (John 9:4; 17:4)
- ___ keep heart, thoughts, and language pure (Luke 6:45)
- ___ respect and obey authorities (Mark 12:17)

Teaching Guide

Adult Bible Study in Simplified English

*Help for All the Times
of Our Lives*

Lesson 4: Rebekah: Find Love

Lesson Focus

God used Jewish marriage customs from long ago to help guide Isaac to a loving wife named Rebekah.

Focal Text

Genesis 24:34-51, 58-67

Background Text: Genesis 24 (the whole chapter)

Memory Verse

"Then I bowed low and worshiped the Lord. I gave honor and thanks to the Lord." (Genesis 24:48a)

Prior Preparation

◆ For this unit of study, you will find a helpful timeline of Old Testament people and events included at the beginning of the Study Guide (page 6) and in this Teaching Guide (page 7). Enlarge this timeline as a large poster or banner either by hand (poster/markers), by using your computer/printer, or by using your church copy machine or local print shop. Display it throughout this series of lessons. **(For this lesson, see Bible Timeline: Box 2)**

◆ For the opening activity, contact several marriage church members and ask them to bring a wedding photo to class. Ask them to be prepared to share a little about how they met and the marriage customs of their home country.

◆ For Extra Teaching Ideas / Guide the Study, consider enlarging or duplicating the color map showing the journey Abraham's servant (Eliezer) made to find Rebekah.

◆ Consult Extra Teaching Ideas / Connect with Life and decide if you will ask additional couples from outside of your study group to share their wedding stories.

◆ For Extra Teaching Ideas / Encourage Application, decide if you will use the article referenced. You will need to print out the article and make copies or, depending on the language level of your class, simplify the article by way of summarizing.

Connect with Life

1. Identify some married members of your class, particularly if some members are from other countries. Arrange ahead of time for one or more of them to bring a photo of their wedding to class, if possible. Ask them to share a bit about how they met their spouse and how they married. Ask them to share specifically about the customs of dating and marriage in their home countries. It may be helpful for you to share your own story, too.

Conclude the time of sharing by commenting the many different ways couples may meet—school, parents, work, the Internet, mutual friends—and how interesting it is to learn about marriage customs in other countries. End with these words from this lesson's introduction: *How does God help us find the one to marry? The story of Isaac and Rebekah gives us some lessons.*

Guide the Study

2. Use the Old Testament timeline to point out when this story happened in the history of God's people. Show the relationship between the people in today's lesson (Abraham, Isaac, Rebekah) and the people in last week's lesson (Jacob/Israel, Joseph). Explain that Isaac is the father of Jacob and the grandfather of Joseph. You may want to draw a diagram like the one below to make it clear.

The Patriarchs

Abraham was the father of



Isaac, who was the father of



Jacob (Israel), who was the father of



Joseph

3. Read the Study Guide section entitled, "The Search Begins" to summarize the verses leading up to the verses in today's focal Bible text. Read aloud and call on stronger readers to help you work your way through this section. Do not read the last paragraph. Ask class members to listen specifically for words or phrases in this reading that describe Rebekah. List their responses on the board. Possible answers include: *beautiful, young, kind to strangers, active, full of energy, humble, polite, generous.* Also note that Rebekah's family worshipped the one true God—unlike the women in Canaan.

Point out that while the condition of Rebekah's heart was not visible just by looking at her, Abraham's servant

could tell what was in her heart by observing her actions. Say: *The things you do show others what is really in your heart.*

4. Today's Bible text is lengthy. Break it up or read selected parts if it's too long for your class to take in all at once. Make sure class members understand the passage by asking the following questions:

- Why did Abraham's servant come to Haran? (to find a wife for Isaac)*
- Did Rebekah's father and brother give permission for her to marry Isaac? (yes)*
- Did Rebekah agree to marry Isaac? (yes)*
- Why was this marriage especially hard for Rebekah's family? (She would move far away and likely never see them again.)*
- Describe Isaac and Rebekah's marriage relationship. (Isaac loved Rebekah. She was a comfort to him.)*

5. Draw from the Study Guide comments to give further explanation of this passage. Discuss questions #4 and #5 from Things to Think About.

Encourage Application

6. Refer back to the list of Rebekah's qualities from the board. Ask class members to consider question #3 from Things to Think About. Add their responses.

7. Close in prayer that class members will experience and follow God's guidance in their dating and marriage relationships. Pray that they will invite God into the process of these and other important decisions in their lives.

Extra Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

◆ To connect your class with others, invite staff members, older couples, church leaders or newly married couples to share stories of meeting and marrying their spouses. This provides a way to share about marriage customs in the U.S.

Guide the Study

◆ Use a map like the one here to illustrate the journey that Abraham's servant took in finding Rebekah. Point out that this is a journey of about 600 miles each way. It took an estimated four months to complete the journey. Ask:

- Why did Abraham go to such great lengths to find a wife for Isaac in Haran? (He did not want Isaac to*

marry a woman from Canaan because the Canaan people did not worship the one true God.)

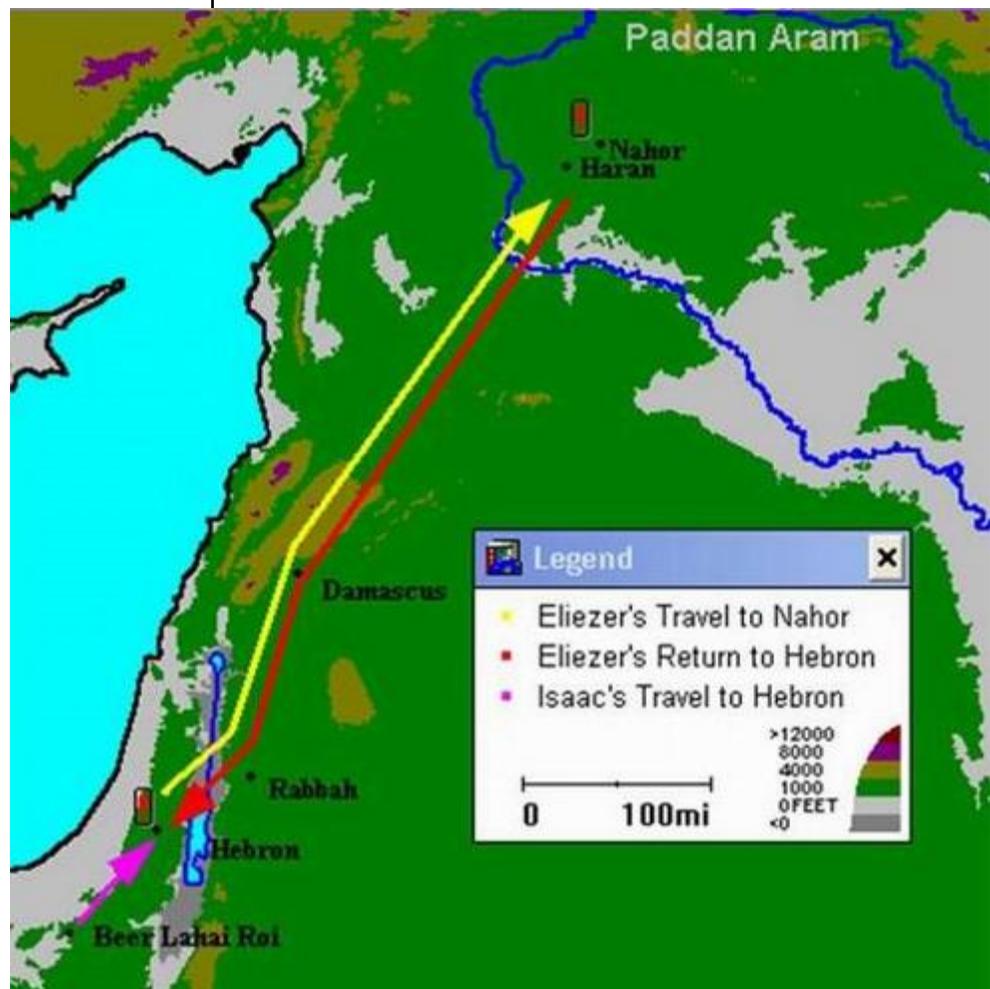
—*How important is it today for a Christian to marry a person who also worships the one true God? (Remind members of the trouble that Samson got into when he became entangled with women who were Philistines and did not worship the one true God.)*

Encourage Application

◆ Consider sharing this insightful article: "It Matters Whom You Marry" from this website: <http://thechristianpundit.org/2012/08/15/it/> If you feel the language is too difficult, rewrite it in simpler language, possibly in the form of a letter which offers advice. Or provide a written summary of the main points.

◆ Consider and discuss this Case Study from the mainline Study Guide: *You're helping in the church nursery with a single woman from your congregation and notice that she seems troubled. When you ask her what's wrong, she confesses that she just learned another one of her friends is engaged. She's happy for her friend, but she wonders when it will be her turn. Sometimes she feels discouraged and wonders whether God has forgotten about her. How could you encourage her?*

Source: <http://biblestudy.home.insightbb.com/IsaacGetsRebekah.JPG>



Teaching Guide

Adult Bible Study in Simplified English

*Help for All the Times
of Our Lives*

Lesson 5: Hannah: Pray for a Child

Lesson Focus

God blessed Hannah and with a child she had desperately wanted for a long time.

Focal Text

1 Samuel 1:1-20

Memory Verse

"Then Eli answered, 'Go in peace. May the God of Israel do what you have asked of Him.'" (1 Samuel 1:17)

Prior Preparation

- ◆ For this unit of study, you will find a helpful timeline of Old Testament people and events included at the beginning of the Study Guide (page 6) and in this Teaching Guide (page 7). Enlarge this timeline as a large poster or banner either by hand (poster/markers), by using your computer/printer, or by using your church copy machine or local print shop. Display it throughout this series of lessons. **(For this lesson, see Bible Timeline: Box 5)**
- ◆ Make copies of the worksheet, "Hannah's Story: Why Did That Happen?" before class.
- ◆ Decide how you will present the activity using the traffic light—by enlarging the artwork here or by drawing your own and taping a red/yellow/green circle cut from construction paper.
- ◆ If you use the Encourage Application idea under Extra Teaching Ideas, you will need to ask a class member or other church member ahead of time to share about a time when they desperately looked to God to answer their prayers. That activity lists the questions to give them prior to the class session.

Connect with Life

1. Call attention to the word *longing* from today's Word List. Explain that there are some things that we want, but that there are other things so important that we *long* for them. Give each class member a small sheet of paper and

ask them to respond to this question: *What things in your life are you longing for?*

You may allow class members to share some things on their list. Say: *In today's lesson we will learn about a woman named Hannah who desperately longed for a child with her husband, Elkanah.*

Guide the Study

2. Write the names *Hannah* and *Penninah* on the board.

<i>Hannah</i>	<i>Penninah</i>
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Then ask a good reader to read aloud 1 Samuel 1:1-8 or read it yourself. Tell class members to listen for a description of these two women listed on the board. After finishing the verses, lead class members to complete a chart that includes a description of the two women. Your chart might include the information like the one offered here.

<i>Hannah</i>	<i>Penninah</i>
First wife of Elkanah	Second wife of Elkanah
No children	Many children
Given double portion of meat at offering	Given a single portion of meat at offering
Elkanah loved her greatly	Was jealous of the love Elkanah had for Hannah
Deeply sorrowful and cried over having no children	Tried to make Hannah angry about her inability to have children

3. Read 1 Samuel 1:9-18 for the class. Pass out a worksheet like the one here to each class member. Make copies of the small worksheet here to enhance class members' comprehension by identifying the cause-and-effect relationship between what happens in this story. Discuss the first thing that happened (Penninah made Hannah angry...) and discuss what happened next and why it happened.

Hannah's Story: Why Did That Happen?

- v. 7: Penninah made Hannah angry... then Hannah _____.
- v. 10: Hannah was troubled, then Hannah _____.
- v. 14: Hannah cried with sorrow, then Eli _____.
- v. 17: Eli blessed Hannah, then Hannah _____.

Here are some answers that can be gleaned from these verses:

- v. 7: ...then Hannah wouldn't eat.
- v. 10: ...then Hannah prayed to the Lord.
- v. 14: ...then Eli thought she was drunk.
- v. 17: ... then Hannah was no longer sad.

4. Complete and review the chart with class members. Point out how Hannah's sadness and pain pushed her closer to the Lord. This is the opposite of Penninah's sadness over a lack of love from Elkanah. Penninah's pain drove her to lash out at (to show anger toward) Hannah.

Also point out how Eli's compassion and blessing serve to encourage and comfort Hannah. Note that both examples are ones for us to follow. Hannah's example applies to us when we are in pain. Eli's example applies to us when we know of others who are suffering.

5. Discuss questions #2 and #3 from Things to Think About.

6. Ask a good reader to read 1 Samuel 1:19-20. Guide class members to identify one final cause-and-effect relationship in Hannah's story. Say: *Because God answered Hannah's prayer by giving her a son, Hannah dedicated him to the Lord.*

Encourage Application

7. Be sure to remind class members that God answers our prayers in many ways. The answer is not always *yes*. It may be helpful to categorize God's answers to us in this way, using a traffic light to illustrate. Enlarge the artwork below or draw it on the board using large red, yellow, and green circles cut from construction paper. Tape the colored circles in the right space as you explain:



Red light

Sometimes God says *no*

Yellow light

Sometimes God says *wait*

Green light

Sometimes God says *yes*

8. Discuss question #4 from Things to Think About.

9. Close with prayer. Conclude your prayers using words from the Memory Verse: *Go in peace. May the God of Israel do what you asked of Him.*

Extra Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

◆ Share the following information from the mainstream BaptistWay curriculum to help put this lesson in context:

Just like Samson (from Lesson 2), Hannah lived during the period of the Judges (1200-1020 B.C.). You can find her listed on the Old Testament timeline for this unit. Her experiences—which were hard and painful—show us the impact that a godly mother can have not only on her own family, but on an entire nation. The closing verses of the Book of Judges tell us that Israel was a nation with many problems. Israel had no king, and every one did what was right in their own eyes (Judges 21:25). It was during this time that Hannah prayed for a son. When Samuel was born, she dedicated him to God's service. Samuel became one of Israel's leaders. His leadership brought good things to Israel. He led the nation during a time of change. He helped Israel select its first king. He helped David become king, and Israel prospered under King David. Today we will learn how it all began with Hannah's prayers for a son.

Encourage Application

◆ Ask a class member or other church member to share about a time when they desperately looked to God to answer their prayers. Ask them to share specifically:

- what they were longing for
- how it drove them to God
- how they waited on God for an answer
- how God answered them
- how it impacted their faith.

It may be easier to conduct this time of sharing more like an interview by asking pointed questions regarding each idea above. Be sure to share your list of questions ahead of time with the person who will be sharing. That way he will have enough time to think through his answers.

◆ Some of your class members may be facing infertility or have family/friends who are trying to birth or adopt a child. Here are a few resource links for additional information: —Overview of infertile women of the Bible and how God used their situations to build their faith and for His kingdom purposes: www.infertilitysurvivalguide.com/issues/chapter13.htm

—How to truly help when someone you know is infertile: www.infertilitysurvivalguide.com/issues/chapter14.htm

Teaching Guide

Adult Bible Study in Simplified English

*Help for All the Times
of Our Lives*

Lesson 6: Ruth: Find Love After Loss

Lesson Focus

Ruth finds joy and great blessing after a painful loss when she chooses to follow God.

Focal Text

Ruth 1:1-19a; 3:6-13; 4:13-17

Memory Verse

"But Ruth said, 'Do not beg me to leave you or turn away from following you. I will go where you go. I will live where you live. Your people will be my people. And your God will be my God.'" (Ruth 1:16)

Prior Preparation

◆ For this unit of study, you will find a helpful timeline of Old Testament people and events included at the beginning of the Study Guide (page 6) and in this Teaching Guide (page 7). Enlarge this timeline as a large poster or banner either by hand (poster/markers), by using your computer/printer, or by using your church copy machine or local print shop. Display it throughout this series of lessons.

(For this lesson, see Bible Timeline: Box 5)

◆ For the opening activity, bring a grocery list or to-do list as an illustration. Also, make copies of Matthew 1:2-16 from the New Life Version (www.biblegateway.com).

◆ For Extra Teaching Ideas / Connect with Life, find a local map on which you can plot your current location and find other towns/points of interest 56 miles away.

Connect with Life

1. Bring to class some type of list. A grocery list or a to-do list would be perfect. Share your list with the class, and ask class members what kinds of lists they make. Allow time for them to share their responses.

Say: *Most of the time, we think of lists as*

uninteresting or boring. Lists are normally not very exciting. But there is a long list in the Bible that can be quite interesting. It is a list of Jesus' ancestors. We find that list in Matthew 1:2-16.

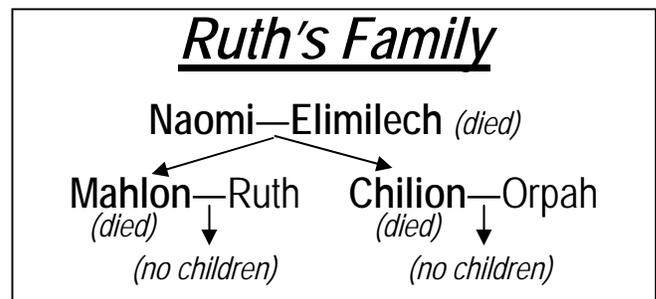
Pass out a copy of these verses to the class and allow them to work in groups to find any names they recognize from previous lessons. They will find Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Israel) at the beginning of the list. Point these out, and ask a good reader to read Matthew 1:5-6.

Say: *Today we will learn about some of the people in the list of Jesus' family members. The story of Ruth and Boaz can encourage us to hope in God when we face great losses in our life.*

Guide the Study

2. Explain that Naomi and Ruth lived during the time of the Judges just like Hannah and Samson from previous lessons. Use the Old Testament timeline to point this out. Then, read Ruth 1:1-19 for the class.

3. On the board, draw a diagram like the one below to help class members have a clear understanding of the relationship between the characters in these verses.



Be sure to point out the serious consequences of Ruth's decision to stay with Naomi:

—*Widows in Israel lived a hard life. Ruth was giving up all the security and familiarity of home for a future that would most likely include poverty and deprivation.*

—*For Ruth, it was particularly risky because she was from Moab. Moab and Israel were enemies, and Moabites were excluded from the assembly of the Lord (Deuteronomy 23:3-4).*

—*Israelite men were forbidden to marry pagan women (Deut. 7:1-4).*

—*Ruth gave up her family, her hope of marriage, and her social and religious background to embrace Naomi and Naomi's God. It was an unprecedented act of faithful love.*

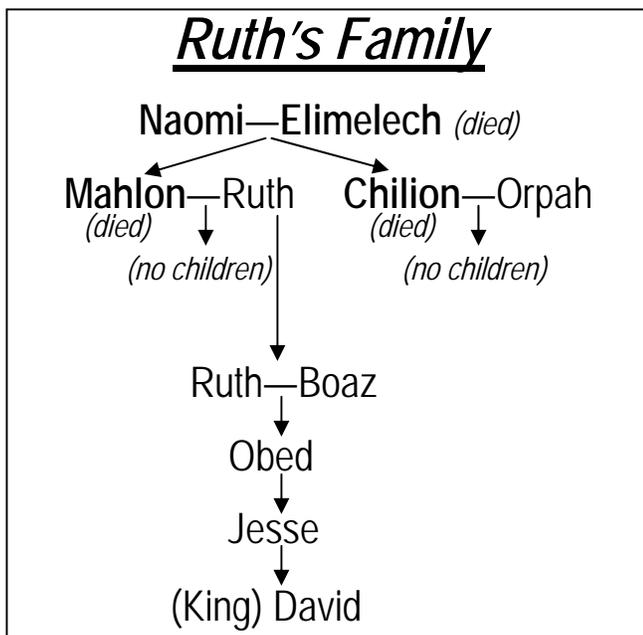
4. If possible, have a strong reader read Ruth 3:6-13 while class members follow along. To make sure they understand these verses, ask the following questions:

—*Who told Ruth to go to Boaz?* (Her mother-in-law, Naomi)

—*Did Boaz know that Ruth was there at first?* (No, she went in secret)

- How did Boaz react when he discovered Ruth? (He was surprised.)
- In verse 9, what did Ruth ask Boaz to do for her? (“Spread your covering over me.” This is a request for Boaz to take Ruth as his wife. Marriage customs of the time included the husband throwing a garment or a covering over his new bride. Boaz would have understood this request.)
- In verse 11, how did Boaz react to Ruth’s request? (He agreed.)

5. Ask a class member to read aloud Ruth 4:13-17. Explain that Ruth’s story has a happy ending. Boaz and Ruth are blessed with a son named Obed. Return to the diagram of Ruth’s family from #3 above. Add to the diagram in order to complete Ruth’s story.



Encourage Application

6. Read or summarize the comments from the Study Guide section entitled, “What We Can Learn from Ruth.” Point out that each of us probably know someone like Ruth—someone who is facing a great loss. Ruth lost her husband, but there are many other kinds of loss. Ask class members to brainstorm as many kinds of loss as they can think of. Record responses on the board. Possible answers include:

- death—the loss of a person*
- divorce—the loss of a marriage*
- unemployment—the loss of a job*
- foreclosure/bankruptcy—the loss of a home or money*
- retirement—the loss of a career or purpose*
- sickness/severe injury—the loss of mental or physical abilities*
- rebellious children—the loss of a dream*

7. Guide class members through a discussion of the

different ministries at your church or in your community which can help people who are walking through these kinds of losses. Are there specific needs from your list that are not currently being met? What could your class do to minister to a person in that situation? Plan a way for your class to participate in an existing ministry or to perform some other type of ministry to bring hope to one of the groups of hurting people you have identified.

8. Close in a prayer that includes the words from Romans 8:28 and a reminder that God is a real source of strong hope in the midst of any loss we face.

Extra Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

◆ Show class members a map. Point out your location and then point out another location about 56 miles away. With your location at the center, plot a line 56 miles north, south, east, and west. Help the class to understand all the points of interest within a 56-mile distance from where you are.

Say: *Fifty-six miles probably doesn’t seem like a long way to travel in this day and age. Today, though, we are going to learn about a woman who moved 56 miles away from her home and how God used that move to change her life. Her name was Ruth.*

Guide the Study

◆ Call attention to the Word List for this lesson. Note the term *kinsman-redeemer*. Read to class members this paraphrase of an article about the role of the kinsman-redeemer from the mainstream BaptistWay material:

In the Book of Ruth, Boaz serves as Ruth’s kinsman-redeemer. According to the Old Testament law, the kinsman-redeemer had several responsibilities (roles or tasks). One main role of the kinsman-redeemer was to get back any property that a family member had been forced to sell because of poverty. The kinsman-redeemer was also to redeem family members who had sold themselves into slavery (Leviticus 25:25-28, 47-55). The law also provided for a relative to marry a widow in the family so she could have sons and carry on the family name (Deut. 25:5-10). Boaz fulfilled this custom for Ruth.

After you have read this, encourage discussion as members comment on these customs, most of which seem very unusual to our times. Family members do not often buy back property that has been lost by other family members. Certainly, they don’t marry the widows so she can have sons and carry on the family name. Talk about the pros and cons of these kinds of laws in Old Testament times.

Teaching Guide

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*Help for All the Times
of Our Lives*

Lesson 7: Joseph: Use Abilities to Serve Others

Lesson Focus

God worked in Joseph's life as he matured and gave him great abilities which Joseph used to serve others.

Focal Text

Genesis 41:28-30, 35-57; 45:4-8

Memory Verse

"God sent me before you to make sure that your people will keep living on the earth. Now many of you will be saved."
(Genesis 45:7)

Prior Preparation

- ◆ For this unit of study, you will find a helpful timeline of Old Testament people and events included at the beginning of the Study Guide (page 6) and in this Teaching Guide (page 7). Enlarge this timeline as a large poster or banner either by hand (poster/markers), by using your computer/printer, or by using your church copy machine or local print shop. Display it throughout this series of lessons. **(For this lesson, see Bible Timeline: Box 2)**
- ◆ Decide if you will use the DVD segments from *Joseph: King of Dreams*, during Guide the Study #2 and #5. Arrange to have a DVD and TV in the room.
- ◆ For Encourage Application #6, bring a gift-wrapped box.
- ◆ For Extra Teaching Helps / Encourage Application, decide if you will have any special demonstrations from group members. Also, consider sharing the website address (about an online spiritual gifts inventory) given in this item's instruction with the class.

Connect with Life

1. Lead class members to discuss what they remember about the life of Joseph from Lesson 3. Record their responses on the board.

Say: *Today we are going to learn more about the way that God worked in Joseph's life. When we first learned about Joseph, he was a young man of about 17. Today, we will learn more about his life as an adult at about the age of 30.*

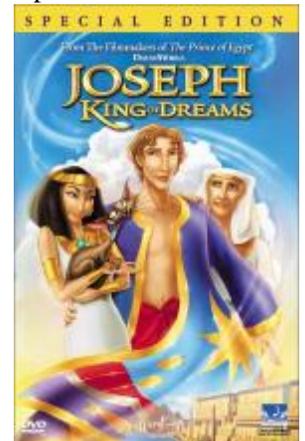
Remembering Joseph

- ◆ Youngest child of Jacob (Israel)
- ◆ 10 half-brothers (same father, different mothers), 1 full-blood brother
- ◆ His father's favorite
- ◆ Coat of many colors
- ◆ Jealous brothers
- ◆ Sold into slavery
- ◆ Ended up in Egypt
- ◆ Servant in Potiphar's house
- ◆ Potiphar's wife lied about him
- ◆ Sent to jail

Guide the Study

2. Briefly summarize the events that lead up to the verses from today's Bible text. Begin with Potiphar's wife's accusation which landed Joseph in prison. Describe what happened with the cup-carrier and the baker. Then describe Pharaoh's two dreams and their one meaning.

You may find that some selected scenes from the DreamWorks DVD, *Joseph: King of Dreams* (2000), are helpful throughout this lesson, but particularly as a way to summarize the events mentioned above.



3. Ask a good reader to read Genesis 41:28-30. Tell the class that God gave Joseph a plan to help Egypt during the famine. Ask them to listen for Joseph's plan while you read Genesis 41:35-46 aloud. Ask them to state the plan.

4. Read Genesis 41:47-57 for the class. Return to the list from today's introduction.

Begin making a new list next to the first one. Lead class members to identify changes that

Changes for Joseph

- ◆ 2nd highest leader in Egypt
- ◆ Favored by the Pharaoh
- ◆ Married
- ◆ Two sons
- ◆ Recognized for his abilities as a leader and administrator
- ◆ A hero in Egypt and beyond

have happened in Joseph's life since Lesson 3.

Remind class members that even though many things have changed for Joseph, one thing has stayed the same: God's presence in his life. The Lord was with Joseph in prison, and the Lord was with Joseph in Pharaoh's palace.

Say: God is always with us no matter what our circumstances look like.

5. Have a class member read Genesis 45:4-8. (This scene is excellently portrayed in the DVD, *Joseph: King of Dreams*.) Explain that Joseph wanted to know if his brothers were sorry for what they had done to him. He tested them to see what was in their hearts. Joseph was wise to test his brothers. He knew that if their hearts were not sorry toward him, his forgiveness would not help them. When Joseph saw that his brothers were sad in their hearts for how they had treated him, Joseph told them who he was and offered them his forgiveness. He shared with them how God had used their wrong actions to save many people.

Encourage Application

6. Place a wrapped present in front of the class. Explain that God gave Joseph many gifts through the hard times he suffered. God used those hard times to develop in Joseph:

Wisdom

Understanding

Honesty

Kindness

God used these things to make Joseph an excellent leader.

Say: God gives each of us many gifts. Sometimes, though, the gifts He gives us are not wrapped in pretty paper like this one here. Often, He imparts these gifts to us while we are going through hard and ugly things. That is how it was for Joseph. Joseph used his gifts to help others—even the people who had hurt him.

7. Discuss questions # 2 and #5 from Things to Think About as they relate to the above illustration.

8. Ask class members to identify the gifts and abilities that they see in the lives of other class members. Jot them on the board, making sure that no class members are overlooked and everyone is affirmed in some way. Then comment about the wonderful variety and incredible amount of gifts that the members of your group possess. Remind class members that this is not by accident, but by God's design. Close in prayer that they will see their skills and abilities as gifts from God and seek His direction about how they, like Joseph, can best serve others with their gifts.

Extra Teaching Ideas

Guide the Study

♦ Write the names of Joseph's sons on the board along with their meanings.

Manasseh means *forget*

Ephraim means *fruitful*

Explain to class members—if you haven't before—how names were very significant to the Hebrew people. Names weren't chosen just because they liked the way they sounded. Names told something important about a person's character or the circumstances of their birth. Lead the class to discuss how the names of Joseph's sons might relate to what was happening in his life.

Manasseh's name may express Joseph's desire to forget the memories of the bad things that had happened to him and move on in his life. Ephraim's name may recognize that God had brought Joseph through many hard things and now made him fruitful. Note that both names acknowledge the ways in which God had worked in Joseph's life.

Encourage Application

♦ Ask class members to tell any special skills or abilities they have. Allow them to share with the group. It could even be a group demonstration arranged ahead of time. After a time of sharing, ask: *Do any of you know what your spiritual gifts are?*

Point them toward one or more of the passages which describe Spirit-given gifts (Ephesians 4:11-13, Romans 12:6-8 and 1 Corinthians 12:4-11). Lead the class in a discussion about this topic, seeking to help them identify their own Spirit-given gifts. It may be helpful to give class members a good spiritual gifts inventory. You can find an online version at the following website:

<http://firstbaptistnashville.org/resources/spiritual-gifts-inventory/>

Teaching Guide

Adult Bible Study

in Simplified English

*Help for All the Times
of Our Lives*

Lesson 8: Caleb: Become a Wise and Brave Leader

Lesson Focus

Caleb was a wise and brave leader because he followed God with his whole heart from the time he was a young man until his later years.

Focal Text

Numbers 13:17-20, 23-30; Joshua 14:6-11
Background Text: Numbers 13:1-2

Memory Verse

"So Moses promised on that day, 'For sure the land where your foot has stepped will be a gift to you and your children forever. Because you have followed the Lord my God with all your heart.'" (Joshua 14:9)

Prior Preparation

◆ For this unit of study, you will find a helpful timeline of Old Testament people and events included at the beginning of the Study Guide (page 6) and in this Teaching Guide (page 7). Enlarge this timeline as a large poster or banner either by hand (poster/markers), by using your computer/printer, or by using your church copy machine or local print shop. Display it throughout this series of lessons. **(For this lesson, see Bible Timeline: Box 4)**

- ◆ For the introductory activity, print out photos of local, state, and national leaders.
- ◆ For Extra Teaching Helps / Connect with Life, prepare a "Promised Land" snack to share as class starts (grapes, pomegranates, figs, milk, honey, and bread for dipping).
- ◆ For Extra Teaching Helps / Guide the Study, enlarge the Canaan map to poster-size, use a map you already have, or make copies of the map to distribute to class members.

Connect with Life

1. Use the Internet to collect some photos of prominent local, state and national leaders. Print out the pictures and

bring them to class. Affix the pictures to the marker board with magnets (or if you have a chalkboard, bring tape) before class members enter today. Begin the lesson by asking class members if anyone can identify the people on the board. Help class members identify the people and their role as a leader.

Say: Our leaders play an important role and have a strong effect on us. The same was true for God's people. Their leaders had a strong effect on them. Today we are going to learn about the life of a man who was a wise and brave leader in Israel. His name was Caleb, and he lived during the time when God's people had fled Egypt and were wandering in the desert for 40 years.

Guide the Study

2. Use the Bible Timeline to point out that Caleb lived about 100 years before the judges began to rule over Israel. This means that Caleb lived in the time before Samson, Hannah, and Ruth.

3. Explain that at the beginning of today's Bible text, the Israelites were exploring a good land that God had promised to give them after He led them out of slavery in Egypt. God's people had once lived there over 400 years ago.

Read Numbers 13:17-20 and 23-29. Ask class members to listen for words that describe what this land in Canaan was like.

When you are finished reading, write their responses in a list on the board. Here are suggested key points:

What They Found in the Land of Canaan

- ◆ Large, abundant fruit—grapes, pomegranates, figs (v. 23)
- ◆ Flowing with milk and honey (v. 27)
- ◆ Inhabited by strong people (v. 28)
- ◆ Cities with large walls (v. 28)
- ◆ Children of Anak, Amalekites, Hittites, Jebusites, Amorites, and Canaanites lived there—these were known to be fierce warriors (v. 29)

Note that some of these observations are encouraging (positive) and others are discouraging (negative). Help class members identify which facts contribute to a feeling of fear and which ones contribute to an attitude of bravery.

Discuss Question #6 from Things to Think About.

4. Ask a strong reader to read Numbers 13:30-33. Point out verse 30. Identify Caleb as a strong leader who is not afraid to speak out against the majority.

Discuss #4 and #5 from Things to Think About.

5. Read the Study Guide section entitled "Choosing the

Promise.” Ask members to summarize the events that happened after the 12 spies returned.

6. Read Joshua 14:6-10. Let the class know that these words were spoken between Joshua and Caleb nearly 40 years *after* the 10 spies discouraged Israel with a bad report. Explain that God rewarded Joshua and Caleb’s faith by allowing them to enter the Promised Land.

7. Ask a strong reader to read Joshua 14:11. Comment to class members that Caleb is the kind of leader whose example we should follow. He followed God with his whole heart as a young man, and—at age 85—he was still ready and excited to trust God in leading the Israelites to take the strongest city in Canaan. He remained a leader who was loyal to God and bravely trusted His promises.

Encourage Application

8. Return to the pictures of the leaders you shared during the lesson introduction.

Say: *Let’s close today by praying that our leaders will be like Caleb.* Then close in prayer that our leaders will be wise enough to trust God and brave enough to stand up for what is right even when they are outnumbered.

Extra Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

◆ Prepare a “Promised Land” snack to share with class members today. Provide an assortment of items including grapes, pomegranates, figs, milk, honey (and bread for dipping). Lay the snack out for class members as they enter today. Let them know that in today’s lesson, we will talk about a place where all these things were found.

Guide the Study

◆ Use a map like the one here to show how the land of Canaan (the Promised Land) was divided between these groups when the Israelites took the land God promised them.

Ask class members if they remember the 12 sons of Jacob (Israel) from Lesson 3. Explain that these 12 sons and their descendants were the 12 family groups (tribes) who made up the nation of Israel. Present the following:

- Point out the land assigned to the tribe of Judah.
- Add Hebron (19 miles south of Jerusalem) and identify it as the city which Caleb set out to conquer.
- Tell class members that this is the land that Caleb—who was from the tribe of Judah—led his family to conquer. The people of Judah remained faithful to God for many years.
- Sometimes it gets a bit confusing to keep up with all those family groups! Here is some helpful information: Jacob had twelve sons by his wives, Leah and Rachel, and servants, Bilhah and Zilpah (Gen. 35:23-26). Adopting

Joseph’s sons (48:5) totaled 14. Yet when the tribes settled in Canaan, only 12 received expanses of land. So what happened?

The tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, Joseph’s sons, both received a portion of land; therefore, it wasn’t necessary to allot a portion of land to Joseph.

Because of their priestly role, Levi’s sons (Levites) received 48 cities throughout Canaan with residences and pasture lands (Deut. 18:1-2; Num. 35:6-7) where they instructed the tribes regarding God’s covenant and (later) encouraged loyalty to God’s anointed kings. Thus...

12 (sons) + 2 (grandsons) – 1 (Joseph) – 1 (Levi) = 12!



This free Bible map came from [ebibleteacher.com](http://www.ebibleteacher.com). Consult this site if you want to print it directly from their site: <http://www.ebibleteacher.com/sites/default/files/images/1/Twelve%20Tribes%20of%20Israel%201024.JPG> or if you would like to find other reprintable maps and resources.

Teaching Guide

Adult Bible Study in Simplified English

Help for All the Times of Our Lives

Lesson 9: Joseph: A Good Son and a Good Parent

Lesson Focus

During Joseph's middle years, he pleased God by caring for his entire family in Egypt—especially his aging father, Jacob.

Focal Text

Genesis 47:27 to 48:2, 8-19; 49:33 to 50:6

Memory Verse

"Honor your father and your mother, so your life may be long in the land the Lord your God gives you." (Exodus 20:12)

Prior Preparation

◆ For this unit of study, you will find a helpful timeline of Old Testament people and events included at the beginning of the Study Guide (page 6) and in this Teaching Guide (page 7). Enlarge this timeline as a large poster or banner either by hand (poster/markers), by using your computer/printer, or by using your church copy machine or local print shop. Display it throughout this series of lessons. **(For this lesson, see Bible Timeline: Box 2)**

◆ For Encourage Application #7, print the Memory Verse in phrases on separate strips of paper (or magnetic paper).

◆ For Extra Teaching Helps / Guide the Study, print three copies of the Bible text; highlight the sections for readers.

◆ For Extra Teaching Helps / Guide the Study, make a larger version of the timeline shown on the next page.

Connect with Life

1. Begin the class by sharing the following case study with them:

Dorothy is the only daughter in a family with three brothers. After their father passed away, Dorothy became the primary caregiver for their aging mother, Evie. Although Evie doesn't yet live with her, Dorothy takes responsibility for helping Evie with appointments, shopping, and similar matters. Her brothers help as they

can, but Dorothy's challenge is to balance her time between her husband, work, church, and mother's needs in Alabama and her only child's family in Colorado.

2. Discuss questions #1 and #2 from Things to Think as a way of opening up discussion regarding this case study.

You may also find these questions helpful:

—How do your parents care for your grandparents?

—How did they care for you and your siblings?

—Are there similarities between the two jobs?

...differences?

—How do you care for your parents?

—How do you care for your children?

—How are your ways and your parents' ways similar?

...different?

In the course of discussion, try to draw out different cultural attitudes toward the elderly that class members have experienced in their native lands. Make any obvious comparisons between their native cultures and American culture.

3. Say: *Today, we are going to hear more of Joseph's life story. In Lesson 3, we met him as a teenager. In Lesson 7, we saw him as a young man of about 30. Now he is in his middle years—probably in his 40s. We find him in Egypt caring for his entire family: his wife, his sons, his brothers and their families, and his aging father.*

Guide the Study

4. Ask a strong reader to read Genesis 47:27-31. Read or summarize the last paragraph from the Study Guide section entitled "A Promise Made."

5. Read Genesis 48:1-2 and 8-19 for the class. Explain that it was customary among the Hebrew patriarchs (one of the founding fathers of the Hebrew people—Abraham, Isaac, Jacob) for a father to offer his children a formal blessing before he died. It was a time where meaningful words were spoken about the future for each child. It was expected that the oldest son would receive a special blessing—more honor than the others. This special blessing was given by extending the right hand. That is why Joseph was confused by what Jacob did in placing his right hand on Ephraim. Note that even today, Jewish people have a beautiful custom of blessing their children every Sabbath by saying, "May God make you like Ephraim and Manasseh."

6. Read Genesis 49:33-50:6. Read or summarize the comments from the last paragraph in the Study Guide section entitled "A Promise Kept." Further explain that Jacob's request to be buried in Canaan was important for the nation of Israel. The Israelites came to live and flourish in Egypt because of Joseph's leadership there. As one of the last great patriarchs, Jacob wanted to make sure

that his life and burial would keep them connected to the land of Canaan, which was the land God had promised them. It would be over 400 years until the people of Israel would come to dwell there again.

Encourage Application

7. Point out the Memory Verse for this lesson. Comment that Joseph honored his father by keeping his promise to have him buried in Canaan with his ancestors. Say the Memory Verse out loud, then ask the class members to repeat it with you. Break the phrase down into manageable phrases as suggested below. For more advanced speakers, you could combine these phrases into three longer ones:

*Honor your father and your mother,
so your life may be long
in the land the Lord your God gives you.*
Exodus 20:12

Print these phrases on strips of paper (or magnetic paper if you are using a marker board) and affix them to the board as you work on the Memory Verse. As an added activity, scramble the phrases to see if class members can rearrange them in the proper order.

8. Practically apply today's Memory Verse by summarizing the following tips on how to care for parents, no matter their age.

Caring for Mom and Dad

How can children help take care of their parents who are getting older?

- Talk about who needs to do what before there is a problem. Caregivers need help from brothers and sister, even they live far away.
- Changes are a natural part of life. The journey may be hard, but caring, loving, and sharing can bring joy.
- Talk about money and learn where important papers are kept.
- Get medical information and history.
- Stay together as a family and keep talking.
- Allow yourself and others to work through the stages of grief.
- Keep talking with those needing care. Ask questions about things that matter to them as long as possible. You might learn something precious and valuable.
- Laugh along the way.

Close the class in prayer that God would give each one the desire and strength to honor their parents especially during the middle stage of life.

Extra Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

- ♦ Note the term *sandwich generation* from the Word List. Share this article from the mainstream Study Guide:

The Sandwich Generation

Psychologist Erik Erikson studied the different stages of life. In the 1960s, he did research on middle adulthood. He and R.J. Havighurst discovered the following common ideas in middle adulthood:

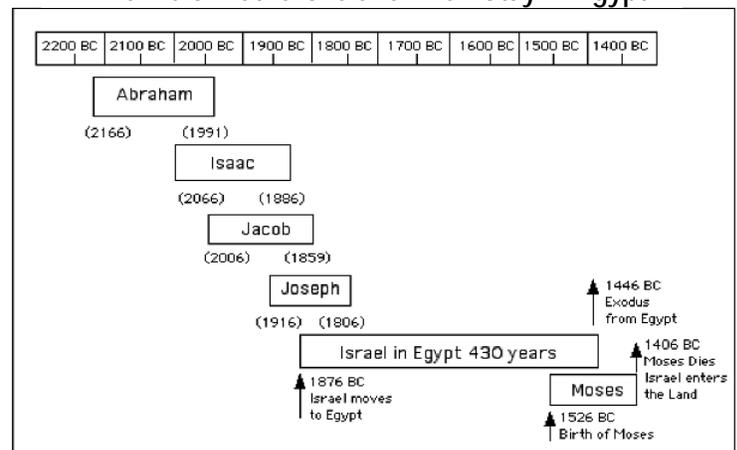
- ♦ Becoming responsible citizens and neighbors
- ♦ Making a stable living for their families
- ♦ Passing on personal values
- ♦ Raising children
- ♦ Developing adult hobbies and interests
- ♦ Adjusting to changing roles at work and home
- ♦ Relating to a spouse
- ♦ Accepting and adjusting to physical changes
- ♦ Adjusting to aging parents, a task that challenges loyalties as demands from children and parents arise

Guide the Study

♦ Depending on the language ability of class members, today's Bible Text might be an excellent opportunity for a dramatic reading. Three readers are needed: one to read Jacob's words, one to read Joseph's words, and another to read the other portions as a narrator. Print three copies of the Bible text and highlight the appropriate sections for each reader to use as a script.

♦ Use the Old Testament timeline to point out that Jacob and Joseph lived during the time of the patriarchs. Explain that the patriarchs are the heads of the families which are the ancestors of Jesus. Display a chart like the one here to help class members better understand the relationship between the patriarchs they have been studying throughout these lessons.

Timeline of Patriarchs and Their Stay in Egypt



http://bible.org/assets/pagegraphics/decanio_pentateuch-1.gif

Teaching Guide

Adult Bible Study in Simplified English

*Help for All the Times
of Our Lives*

Lesson 10: David: Family Troubles

Lesson Focus

Even though David loved God, he faced many problems in his family because of some foolish choices.

Focal Text

2 Samuel 13:1-2, 20-22, 30, 32-33, 37; 14:23-24; 15:7-14;
18:6-15, 33

Memory Verse

"A wise son makes a father glad, but a foolish son is a sorrow to his mother." (Proverbs 10:1)

Prior Preparation

◆ For this unit of study, you will find a helpful timeline of Old Testament people and events included at the beginning of the Study Guide (page 6) and in this Teaching Guide (page 7). Enlarge this timeline as a large poster or banner either by hand (poster/markers), by using your computer/printer, or by using your church copy machine or local print shop. Display it throughout this series of lessons.

(For this lesson, see Bible Timeline: Box 6)

◆ An alternative opening activity is listed in Extra Teaching Helps / Connect with Life. Bring newspaper articles (or articles printed from the Internet) that focus on families with problems.

◆ For Extra Teaching Helps / Encourage Application, contact a local Christian counselor or Christian counseling center.

Connect with Life

1. Read the following statements to the class, asking whether they think these statements are **always true**, **sometimes true**, or **never true**. Discuss each one for a bit after hearing class members' responses.

—*Those who follow God are guaranteed to not have trouble in their families.*

—*Children of bad parents are responsible for their children's behavior.*

—*Parents need the guidance and grace of God.*

2. Read the introduction from the Study Guide from today's lesson. If possible, ask a few good readers to take turns reading this aloud for the class.

Guide the Study

3. Read Samuel 13:1-2, 20-22, 30-32, 37 aloud for the class. Ask:

—*How did David (and Absalom) fail Tamar?*

David (and Absalom) failed to protect his daughter's honor by refusing to confront Amnon.

—*What were the consequences?*

Tamar suffered great shame. Absalom hated Amnon in his heart. Absalom killed Amnon. David lost a son and Absalom left.

4. Ask a good reader to read 2 Samuel 14:23-24. Ask:

—*How did David fail Absalom?*

David failed to reconcile with Absalom.

—*What were the consequences?*

Absalom was separated from David.

5. 2 Samuel 15:7-13; 18:6-15, 33. Ask:

—*How did Absalom fail David?*

He did not forgive David.

—*What were the consequences?*

Because Absalom nurtured bitterness in his heart, he planned a rebellion. This ripped apart the kingdom. Eventually, Absalom died in battle against his father's army.

Encourage Application

6. Create a chart like this one on the board. Say: *Here is some good advice if we want to avoid the consequences of foolish choices like the ones that David made in his family.*

Advice for Families

- ◆ Be sure to set a right example.
- ◆ Take time to see problems clearly.
- ◆ Address family problems wisely.
- ◆ Understand that children are ultimately responsible for their own actions.

Ask the class:

—*What if David had done these things instead?*

—*Do you think it would have made a difference in his family?*

—*How might his family have been different?*

Discuss these questions. Be sure to remind class members that there are no perfect families. There are no families without problems and struggles. Even so, we can ask God for help in our families.

7. Share the contemporary Christian song, “Lead Me” by Sanctus Real with your class members. Be sure to give them a copy of the lyrics or display a copy large enough for everyone to see. You might consider using a laptop or projector to share a music video with lyrics for class members. A good one can be found on the Internet at this web address:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tp9dRoeVp8A

(Note that this particular link has a good introduction where the songwriter explains why he wrote this song and what it is about. There are many other suitable videos for this song which may also be found on YouTube.)

8. Close in prayer that each one will look to God for wisdom in the midst of problems or struggles in their families. Pray that class members will learn from David’s failures and will seek to be godly models for their own families and for other families they may know.

Extra Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

◆ Collect several articles from the newspaper or Internet which report on broken family relationships. You might include articles about domestic abuse situations, child abandonment or abuse, the state of marriage, etc. Bring these articles to class. Ask students to work in groups to summarize a few of the articles for the class. Then conclude this activity by reading the introduction to today’s lesson from the Study Guide.

Guide the Study

◆ Point out that David’s life is one of the most interesting stories in all the Bible. It is especially interesting because we have an almost complete account of his days as a shepherd boy until his death as Israel’s greatest king. We read about his life in 1 Samuel and 2 Samuel. We may know more about him than nearly any other person talked about in the Bible.

Ask class members if they are familiar with any other parts of David’s life. Lead them to identify events from David’s life and record their responses on the board. A suggested list of highlights in David’s life is included in the chart on this page as supplementary information.

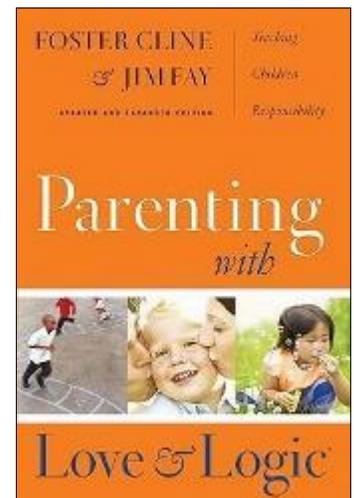
Who Was David?

- ◆ Youngest son of Jesse
- ◆ Shepherd boy
- ◆ Killed a giant (Goliath)
- ◆ Best friend was Jonathan
- ◆ Was a mighty warrior
- ◆ King Saul chased him for many years
- ◆ Great King of Israel
- ◆ Committed sex sins with Bathsheba
- ◆ Killed Bathsheba’s husband
- ◆ Dreamed of building the Temple

Encourage Application

◆ Make contact with a local Christian counselor or Christian counseling center. If your church does not have these ministries, find a church nearby who does. Invite a counselor to come and share with your class. Ask them to tell a little about what they do, how God led them to this profession, and what kinds of help are available for families through their ministries.

◆ Be sure that class members are aware of any good family resources like the book *Parenting with Love and Logic*. Make a trip to your church’s library in order to find this and gather any other resources that might be helpful on the topics of marriage, family, and parenting. Bring them to class and create a display table so that class members can identify any tools that might be use to them.



Teaching Guide

Adult Bible Study in Simplified English

*Help for All the Times
of Our Lives*

Lesson 11: Samuel: Make Way for a New Leader

Lesson Focus

Samuel was a good and honest judge for Israel, but he faced many changes in his life when Israel wanted him to stop being a judge so they could have a king.

Focal Text

1 Samuel 8:1-10; 12:1-5

Memory Verse

"They said, 'You have always been honest with us. You have not made it hard for us, or taken anything from any man's hand.'" (1 Samuel 12:4)

Prior Preparation

◆ For this unit of study, you will find a helpful timeline of Old Testament people and events included at the beginning of the Study Guide (page 6) and in this Teaching Guide (page 7). Enlarge this timeline as a large poster or banner either by hand (poster/markers), by using your computer/printer, or by using your church copy machine or local print shop. Display it throughout this series of lessons. **(For this lesson, see Bible Timeline: Box 5)**

◆ For Extra Teaching Helps / Connect with Life, bring a supply of notecards.

◆ For Extra Teaching Helps / Guide the Study, make copies of the Judges Time Span bookmark.

Connect with Life

1. Begin today's lesson by reading Sharon's story from the first paragraph of lesson introduction.

Say: Sharon chose to stop working. She was pleased with her choice.

Today, we are going to learn about another man who stopped doing his job. This was not entirely his choice.

His name was Samuel. After a lifetime of service to God and to Israel as a judge, his life changed dramatically.

2. Refer back to the Old Testament timeline for this unit. Tell class members that Samuel lived during the time when judges ruled over Israel. Point out that we have studied several other men and women who lived during this same time—Samson (Lesson 2), Ruth (Lesson 6), and Hannah (Lesson 5). Ask class members if they know how Hannah and Samuel are related. Confirm that Samuel is the child Hannah prayed for in the Temple and the one whom she dedicated to the Lord's service.

Guide the Study

3. Read 1 Samuel 8:1-10. Make sure class members can answer the following questions. Point them to the appropriate verses if they have trouble answering.

- What was the reason that Samuel was going to stop being a judge?* (v. 1a)
- What was Samuel's plan for new leaders?* (v. 1b)
- What was the problem with Samuel's plan?* (v. 3)
- What was Israel's plan for new leaders?* (v. 5)
- What was Samuel's reaction to their plan?* (v. 6)
- What was God's response?* (v. 7-9)

4. Discuss Things to Think About, questions #3 and #5. Talk about how this may have applied to Samuel and the nation of Israel.

5. Ask a strong reader to read 1 Samuel 12:1-5. Explain that this is Samuel's farewell speech to Israel, the nation of God's people whom he loved and served his whole life. Instruct class members to listen to the speech and remember any words which describe the kind of man Samuel was.

Samuel's Characteristics

- ◆ Old, white hair
- ◆ Life-long leader of Israel
- ◆ Honest (never taken their animals for himself)
- ◆ Kind (not made it hard for anyone)
- ◆ Fair (not taken any bribes)

Point out the wisdom and grace Samuel showed in his decision to yield to God's leadership and grant Israel's request. He did not insist on his own way, but rather did what God told him to do. Even though this change affected Samuel's life in a big way, Samuel trusted that God had a plan for the next part of his life. Note that Samuel gives us an example here of how we should conduct ourselves at every stage of life.

Encourage Application

6. Help class members to understand the reasons why Israel wanted a king and the reasons why God thought it was a bad idea. Use a chart like the one below to guide the discussion.

Israel Wants a King...	But God Does Not
Why did Israel want a king? They wanted a man to lead them, instead of God.	Why did God want Israel to have no king? He wanted them to rely on Him.
They wanted a leader they could see.	He wanted them to keep their identity as God's special and unique people.
They wanted to be like other nations.	A king could abuse his power and take what they owned.
They wanted someone other nations could admire.	A king would require their children to serve in his army. A king would make them slaves to him. God wanted what was best for them.

7. Point out that Israel thought they knew better than God, but they were wrong. Instead of trying to convince them they were wrong, God gave them what they asked for. He knew that the only way they would learn the lesson He wanted them to learn was by suffering the consequences of their own bad choices. It was not easy for God to let His chosen people do something He knew would hurt them.

Ask these questions and allow class members to share their responses:

- Have you ever had to learn something “the hard way?”
- Have you ever had to let your children learn something “the hard way?”

8. Recall these words from a previous lesson:

*Wisdom is when we learn from the mistakes of others.
Experience is when we learn from our own mistakes.*

Extra Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

◆ To help class members better understand today's lesson, introduce the words from the Word List in today's lesson using this activity. Take a number of index cards so that each class member can have one. Write the word *retire* on 1/3 of the cards. Write the word *bribe* on 1/3 third of the cards. Write the word *anoint* on the last 1/3 of the cards.

Write the words and definitions on the board for every one to see before class members enter. When you begin class, randomly pass out one of the prepared index cards to each class member. Go over the new words and their definitions aloud. Then erase or cover up the words and definitions on the board.

Say to the class: *I am going to say a definition of one of the words we have just learned. If you have that word written on your index card, I want you to hold up the card when you hear the definition.*

Go over the definitions for each words a couple of times. To make it more challenging, you may even have class members trade cards after the first round.

Guide the Study

◆ Use a bookmark like the one below to help class members learn more about the period of the judges. Make copies of the bookmark for the class members to reference.

Encourage Application

◆ Discuss the characteristics of effective leaders as we have seen throughout these lessons. Consider the following points. Ask class members what other traits they may include.

- Effective leaders can be young or old.
- Effective leaders can be male or female.
- Effective leaders plan for changes and problems.
- Effective leaders speak with wisdom, truth and grace.
- Effective leaders must listen to God and trust Him.



Teaching Guide

Adult Bible Study in Simplified English

Help for All the Times of Our Lives

Lesson 12: Moses: A Life Lived Well

Lesson Focus

God's servant, Moses, lived a life devoted to God, and he died in the very presence of God on Mount Nebo.

Focal Text

Deuteronomy 32:48-52; 34:1-12

Memory Verse

"Moses was 120 years old when he died. But his eyes were not weak, and his strength had not left him." (Deuteronomy 34:7)

Prior Preparation

- ◆ For this unit of study, you will find a helpful timeline of Old Testament people and events included at the beginning of the Study Guide (page 6) and in this Teaching Guide (page 7). Enlarge this timeline as a large poster or banner either by hand (poster/markers), by using your computer/printer, or by using your church copy machine or local print shop. Display it throughout this series of lessons. **(For this lesson, see Bible Timeline: Box 3)**
- ◆ For the opening activity, locate pictures of heroes from magazines, newspapers, or from the Internet.
- ◆ For Extra Teaching Ideas / Connect with Life, bring an invitation as an opening illustration.
- ◆ For Extra Teaching Ideas / Encourage Application, find out if your church has GriefShare or if another local church has such a program.

Connect with Life

1. Use the Internet or magazines and newspapers to obtain pictures of several "heroes." Try to select pictures you think class members might be able to easily identify. These pictures might include sports heroes, national leaders, cultural icons, firemen/policemen, etc. Maybe even include some favorite children's heroes like Superman. Show these to the class and help them identify each one.

Say: *The people in these pictures all have something in common. These people are examples of heroes.*

Ask:

—What is a hero?

—Who are some of your heroes?

—In your opinion, what characteristics make someone a hero?

Explain that a hero usually embodies the characteristics that a group of people admire. Say: *There are many heroes in the Bible. Today, we will learn about one of the most famous heroes from the Bible. His name was Moses. Much of Israel's history was wrapped up in the life of Moses. Moses lived well and died well.*

Encourage Application

2. Deuteronomy 32:48-52 is an important background text for today's lesson. Be sure to read or summarize these verses for class members. You may consider assigning this task to a good reader in your class ahead of time and allowing her to summarize these verses for the class today.

3. Ask a class member to read Deuteronomy 34:1a. Explain that this is a familiar scene in the life of Moses. He had often met with God on mountaintops. Use a chart like the one below to explore other instances in Moses' life where he spent time with God on the mountain.

Moses on the Mountaintop

Verses	Location	Significance
Exodus 3:1-12	Mount Horeb	the burning bush
Exodus 19:20 and 24:12-18	Mount Sinai	10 Commandments
Exodus 32:50	Mount Nebo	Moses views the Promised Land and dies in God's presence

Point out that each of these examples was a time when something significant happened in the life of Moses. These were experiences that changed his life. State that Christians today refer to similar times with God that are rich with meaning as *mountaintop experiences*. These are moments, days, or even longer periods of time in which we are aware of the presence of God like no other times. These spiritual experiences energize and inspire us to follow God in real life. They are special because they happen at the invitation of God. We cannot demand God meet with us like this whenever we want. When He calls us, though, to meet with him, we must be like Moses and come at His invitation.

4. Read Deuteronomy 34:1b-4 aloud for the class. Tell class members that these verses show how God kept His promise to Moses. Say: *God had punished Moses for an act of disobedience in Numbers 20:2-12. God told Moses that because of his disobedience, he would never enter the Promised Land. Many people think it is sad that Moses was punished like this. But God shows His faithfulness and goodness even in punishment. If Moses had been on the ground, leading the Israelites into the Promised Land, he could never have seen all of it at once like he did on the mountaintop with God. On the mountain, he could see the greatness of all God was giving them. Moses also was spared from having to fight the battles that would be required in order for Israel to inhabit this land. Neither would he have to endure the rebelliousness of God's people if he was on top of the mountain. Even in punishment, God had planned good things for Moses at his death. Best of all, God was with Moses. Moses died in the presence of God.*

5. Read Deuteronomy 34:5-9. Ask class members to listen carefully for Israel's reaction to Moses' death. Ask for their observations and point out that Israel did two important things. They went through a period of grief and mourning. That time came to an end, and they began to follow Joshua. Help class members understand that both things are important when we lose someone we love. It is important to grieve, and it is important to move on. It is not healthy to move on without grieving. It is also not healthy for us to live the rest of our lives in grief and mourning without moving forward again.

Encourage Application

6. Point out that Moses died well because he lived well. Having good relationships is important in living well. A person who has healthy relationships is well-prepared when it comes time to die. Explore the sidebar entitled "Four Things That Matter Most" from the Study Guide. Discuss how these four points can help us develop strong relationships and live a life with no regrets. It might be helpful to use #3, #4, and #5 from Things to Think About to guide the discussion.

7. Read the final Study Guide section entitled, "What We Can Learn from Moses" and close with prayer that we will follow Moses' example in life and death.

Extra Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

◆ Show class members an invitation. This might be an invitation to a shower, a party, a wedding, a reception, etc. Help them identify an invitation as a special request to go somewhere.

Say: *Today we will learn about a man in the Bible*

who got a special invitation from God. His name was Moses. In fact, there were several times in Moses' life when God invited Moses to meet Him on a mountaintop. Today, we will learn about the special invitation God gave Moses at the end of his life.

Guide the Study

◆ Locate some pictures that show what Moses would have seen from his perspective atop Mount Nebo. The photo below was taken from the top of Mount Nebo looking across the Dead Sea into Israel.



Source: <http://www.padfield.com/jordan/mount-nebo/>

◆ Use a map like the one here to illustrate the important locations which are outlined in Deuteronomy 34:1-9.

Source: www.harleypinon.com/changing_the_leadership_to_joshu.htm



Encourage Application

◆ Determine if your church has a GriefShare group. This is an effective ministry which helps people walk through the stages of grief when someone they love dies. If your church does not have a group like this, contact a group near you. Ask someone from the group to come and share about GriefShare and about their experience with this ministry.

Teaching Guide

Adult Bible Study

in Simplified English

*Help for All the Times
of Our Lives*

Lesson 13: Christ Gives the Best Life

Lesson Focus

Because Jesus rose to life again, Christians can find hope in all the times of our lives because we will also rise to life again through Jesus.

Focal Text

1 Corinthians 15:3-20, 35-44, 50-57

Memory Verse

"I am different now. It is all because of what God did for me by His loving-favor. His loving-favor was not wasted. I worked harder than all the other missionaries. But it was not I who worked. It was God's loving-favor working through me."
(1 Corinthians 15:10)

Prior Preparation

◆ For this unit of study, you will find a helpful timeline of Old Testament people and events included at the beginning of the Study Guide (page 6) and in this Teaching Guide (page 7). Enlarge this timeline as a large poster or banner either by hand (poster/markers), by using your computer/printer, or by using your church copy machine or local print shop. Display it throughout this series of lessons. **(For this lesson, see Bible Timeline: Box 11)**

- ◆ For Extra Teaching Ideas / Connect with Life, decide if you will assign duties to class members ahead of time.
- ◆ For Extra Teaching Ideas / Guide the Study, the bean sprout activity will require several days to grow before class. Plan and prepare as needed.
- ◆ For Extra Teaching Ideas / Encourage Application, prepare the notecards as shown on the next page.

Connect with Life

1. Start off the class with this discussion question: *Think of the people in your life whom you love the most. What would you say to them if you thought this was the last time you*

would see them?

Allow class members to share their thoughts. Draw out the idea that in this situation, we would communicate the things that were most important to us. Tell class members that today we are going to learn about Paul and the thing that was most important to him...the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Guide the Study

2. Say: *In this unit of study, we have learned about people in many different stages of life—from the boy Daniel to the dying Moses. Today, we are going to examine how we can find hope at every stage of life. We'll read the words of one of Jesus' special followers. His name is Paul.*

Refer to the Old Testament timeline from this unit, pointing out several of the Bible characters previously studied in this series of lessons. Then continue by saying: *Paul lived about 1,800 years after God promised to make Abraham's family into a great nation. Jesus changed Paul's life, and Paul spent the rest of his life telling others about how Jesus died and rose again so that others could be changed, too!*

3. Read 1 Corinthians 15:3-8. Instruct class members to listen carefully for all the people who saw Jesus after he rose from the dead. Record their responses on the board. Be sure to mention, too, that other Scriptures tell of many other people who saw the resurrected Jesus and were eyewitnesses at the time Paul wrote these words. Note the importance of eyewitnesses to prove that something is legally true—especially in Paul's time.

Living Proof: People Who Saw Jesus

- ◆ Peter and the 12 followers (v. 5)
- ◆ 500 followers at once (v. 6)
- ◆ Mary Magdalene (John 20:11-18)
- ◆ Two men on Emmaus Road (Luke 24:13-32)
- ◆ Paul on Damascus Road (Acts 9:1-19)

4. Share this question and then have class members listen carefully for the answer as you read 1 Corinthians 15:9-20: *What would be the results if Jesus was not raised from the dead?*

What If?

If Jesus had not been resurrected...

- Preachers are wasting their time (v. 14)
- Christians will be disappointed (v. 14)
- Jesus was a liar (v. 14)
- Christians are bearing false witness (v. 15)
- There is no forgiveness of sin (v. 17)
- Christians have no future in eternity (v. 18)
- God's promises about eternity make no sense (v. 19)
- People should feel sorry for Christians for trusting in a God who can't keep His promises (v. 19)

Using their responses and drawing from the Study Guide materials, lead the class in making a chart to help them see what the results would be.

5. Read 1 Corinthians 15:35-44. Make these verses clear by reading the Study Guide section entitled “Bury a Physical Body, Receive a Spiritual Body.”

6. Read 1 Corinthians 15:50-57. Remind class members of the conversation about final words from the beginning of class today. Explain that Jesus’ final words from the cross are a lot like the final verses of this passage. Point them to Jesus’ final words in John 19:30. Write these words on the board. Further explain this idea by reading the final paragraph from the Study Guide.

It is finished.

7. Consider question #4 from Things to Think About in the Study Guide.

Encourage Application

8. Help class members meditate on Jesus’ resurrection with a song selection. Choose a contemporary Christian song like Matt Maher’s “Christ is Risen from the Dead” or Chris Tomlin’s “I Will Rise.” Or select a song from the hymnal like “Up From the Grave He Arose” or “Christ the Lord is Risen Today.” Play a recording, use your laptop to share a music video from YouTube, invite a guest to perform the song, or sing from the hymnal. Whatever you choose, be sure to make the lyrics for the song available to class members with a handout or on a large screen. Play the song once, letting class members hear and see the lyrics. Play it a second time inviting them to join in singing as a group.

9. Close in prayer that those who have not embraced the truth of Jesus’ resurrection will do so and that those who have given their lives to Jesus will live in a way which shows how Jesus’ resurrection has changed them.

Extra Teaching Ideas

Connect with Life

◆ Use Acts 9:1-19 to introduce class members to Paul and his experience with Jesus on the Damascus Road. You may want to assign this task to a strong reader ahead of time. Then ask him to summarize this event for class members today as you introduce Paul at the beginning of the lesson. If you have artistic class members, you might consider making this a team assignment which would both summarize and illustrate Paul’s conversion.

Guide the Study

◆ If class members are interested in studying the circumstances around the resurrection more fully, refer them to either the book or documentary entitled, *The Case for Christ* by Lee Strobel. The video is on Netflix.

◆ Use a bean sprout to illustrate the concept of a seed dying to give new life. Beans sprout and grow quickly. You can use any regular pinto beans or red beans from your pantry. Wrap one in a wet paper towel and place it in a clear plastic cup. In days, you will see the seed coat has been shed, the seed has died, and the plant has sprouted. Take photos each day and use them to share the process with the class. Plant the sprout in soil and bring it to show the class. Give each class member a bean like the one you started with and encourage them to try it at home.

Encourage Application

◆ Complete #1 from Things to Think About. Use cardstock or large index cards to create cards for each class member like the one below. Pass them out and encourage class members to keep it in their Bible or in a place they can see it often to remind them of the truth of Jesus’ resurrection.

Front of Card:

1 Corinthians 15:13-19

If the dead are not raised, then Christ was not raised from the dead. If Christ was not raised from the dead, then what we preach to you is worth nothing. Our faith in Christ is worth nothing. That makes us all liars because we said that God raised Christ from the dead. But God did not raise Christ from the dead if the dead do not come to life again. If the dead are not raised, then not even Christ was raised from the dead. If Christ was not raised from the dead, your faith is worth nothing and you are still living in your sins. Then the Christians who have already died are lost in sin. If we have hope in Christ in this life only, we are more sad than any one else.

Back of card:

1 Corinthians 15:20

But it is true!
Christ has been raised from the dead!
He was the first One to be raised
from the dead and all those
who are in graves will follow.