



# Examining Our Faith

# THE COMBINED TEACHER'S GUIDE

**SPRING QUARTER 2024**

MARCH • APRIL • MAY

Christian Education Department  
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## **BASIC SUPPLIES**

Bible dictionary

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Christian videos and DVDs

crayons

digital camera

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writing paper

DVD recorder/player

milk crates

paper – letter, drawing, pencils, pens, markers

poster boards

robes, scarves

old clothing

scissors, glue, paste

video player

# **The Teacher's Guide - LF: Lesson 1 March 3, 2024**

## **Liberating Faith Studies Lessons**

**Spring Quarter: March – April 2024**

**Prepared by Rev. Lionel Merritt**

### **Sustaining Our Faith**

**Lesson Scripture:** Jude

**Focus Scripture:** Jude 17-25

**Key Verses:** Beloved, build yourselves up on your most holy faith; pray in the Holy Spirit; keep yourselves in the love of God; look forward to the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life. Jude 20-21

### **Key Terms**

- **Sanctified** – Specially set apart and dedicated to the service of God.
- **Tenets** – Views, principles, beliefs.
- **Infiltration** – To gain access and push deep into the body (usually with corrupt motives).
- **Eschatological Times** – The end of this world as we know it; dealing with the return of Christ.
- **Unbridled** – Without limits or restrictions.
- **Doctrine** – Core or fundamental belief or governing principle adopted to shape formal behavior or operations in a body (church).
- **Emotive** – Exciting or stirring up emotions.

**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Discern the factors that create tension when Christian values clash with societal values.
2. Deepen our trust in God's promise to restore us when we fall.
3. Build faithful practices that reflect God's restorative work in us.

### **Teaching Strategies**

The strategies below will reinforce the key principles in the lesson.

1. Give some background on the accepted author of Jude, touching on his connection to the birth family of Jesus, and why the influence of certain teachers troubled him. It is all in the text.
2. Examine the connection between Jude 17-18 and 2 Peter 3:2-3. Get the class to discuss the value to us of these repetitive reminders.
3. Provide a few examples of conflicts Christians today may face between their faith values and the faithlessness often exhibited in the nation and the world. Is there a way to deal with these conflicts of view without becoming confrontational?
4. Discuss actions that Christians may take to restore the church to faithful witness.
5. Suggest a hymn study that both calls Christians to faith and celebrates the faithfulness of God in Christ.
6. Study the **Key Verses**, concentrating on the verbs Jude uses in admonishing readers to live faithfully. Discuss actions participants can take toward practices in faithful living.

**Resources:** The text raised the issue of conflicts over doctrine in churches. It tarnishes the image of perfection in the early church, which some people painted in their minds. Since contentious issues

spring up occasionally, it is crucial that members know how to express their views and opinions.

With this in mind, encourage the class to learn and practice effective techniques of debating. WIKIHOW's "How to Perform Well in a Debate" is a useful and readily available resource on debating. Strong debating skills can take down emotions, enhance objectivity, and thereby prevent negative outcomes with vexing issues. Urge the class to talk about matters that concern them in a manner fitting for Christians.

## **LF: Lesson 2 March 10, 2024**

### **Testing Our Faith**

**Lesson Scripture:** 2 Corinthians 13:1-11

**Focus Scripture:** 2 Corinthians 13:5-11

**Key Verse:** Examine yourselves to see whether you are living in the faith. 2 Corinthians 13:5a

### **Key Terms**

- **Parochial** – Relating to the local (parish) church.
- **Gossiper** – A person given to spreading gossip (rumors).
- **Tenets** – Key principles and beliefs.
- **Salacious** – Exciting or arousing lust or desire.
- **Pious** – Religious and self-righteous.
- **Malignant** – Growing / expanding and deadly (disease).
- **Unwittingly** – Innocently and ignorantly.

**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Evaluate our concept of self-examination in the Christian faith.
2. Embrace critical self-reflection in the Christian faith.
3. Practice ongoing self-examination in the Christian faith.

### **Teaching Strategies**

Use the strategies below to reinforce the key points in the lesson.

1. Recall why Paul wrote letters to the young churches, giving particular attention to Paul's earlier association with the church at Corinth. Note that his letters often express a desire to visit a particular church soon. This exercise puts the whole lesson in its

right context.

2. In keeping with the tenor of the lesson, ask the class to list ways in which modern believers often fail to follow Christ's teachings. Then discuss how such failures affect our testimony of faith and our total outlook on life.
3. With the **Key Verse** in mind, examine why, as believers, we often fail to pass the test of faithful living. What does it mean to realize that Jesus Christ is in us?
4. Invite participants to list three or more ways in which they feel weak in their faith. Challenge them to find a way to overcome at least one such weakness through the power of Christ.
5. Provide suggestions for ongoing self-examination that emphasize our opportunities for growing in faith while helping others grow in their faith.

**Resources:** For this lesson, the only resource we recommend is the Bible text. Keep the lesson focused on the need for, and benefits of, self-examination. Ask participants to research the references in the **Case Study** section and identify the benefits. The class can also give suggestions on how and when is a good time to practice such self-examination.



## **LF: Lesson 3 March 17, 2024**

### **Defending Our Faith**

**Lesson Scripture:** 1 Peter 3:8-17

**Focus Scripture:** 1 Peter 3:8-17

**Key Verse:** It is better to suffer for doing good, if suffering should be God's will, than to suffer for doing evil. 1 Peter 3:17

### **Key Terms**

- **Paradox** – An apparent contradiction; opposing idea in the same thought.
- **Proverbial** – Like what is said in a well-known saying (proverb).
- **Sanctify** – To place in a special (separated) position of worship and adoration.
- **Linchpin (Lynchpin)** – The essential factor on which something works. The heart of an argument or position.
- **Expository** – Designed to explain (or expose) the meanings of scripture.

**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Comprehend how Christians are to react to suffering and challenges to their faith.
2. Value the challenge that Peter sets forth as a response to suffering for the faith.
3. Defend the faith when facing suffering for Christ.

### **Teaching Strategies**

1. Get the class to compare the sufferings of Jesus and many of the early Christians (including Peter) with the suffering people undergo from other sources (like politics). How does suffering for Christ differ from the other sufferings?
2. Invite participants to tell the class about the most intense suffering they have experienced or are currently experiencing. Explore with them their strategies for dealing with the pain of their experiences, and how the experience of suffering play a powerful role in testimonies of faith.
3. Suffering can come in various forms: physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Discuss with the class these various forms of suffering and the likely connections between them.
4. Highlight for the class that sometimes people suffer for doing the right thing. Do this by citing examples of people who have suffered for doing right. Contrast their suffering with that of people who have done wrong.
5. Suffering, although distressing, can serve a useful purpose, like promoting spiritual maturity. Encourage participants to use art or writing materials to express how God may have transformed their past sufferings into a blessing, for themselves or for other people.

**Resources:** The key to any suffering which Christians face is the attitude with which they approach the suffering. Believers must keep the sovereignty of God in mind during any suffering.

On bible.org (see full link below) is a useful post entitled “The Christian’s Response To Suffering For Christ (1 Peter 4:12-19)” which put this subject in perspective. It is a useful read.

<https://bible.org/seriespage/15-christian-s-response-suffering-christ->

1-peter-412-19

## **LF: Lesson 4 March 24, 2024**

### **Living in Faith**

**Lesson Scripture:** Acts 6

**Focus Scripture:** Acts 6:7-15

**Key Verses:** (Some) stood up and argued with Stephen. But they could not withstand the wisdom and the Spirit with which he spoke.

Acts 6:9-10

### **Key Terms**

- **Sedition** – An act of treason; an attempt to attack or overthrow the government.
- **Chronological** – Giving event details in the order they occurred.
- **Uganda** – A country in eastern Africa.

**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Consider ways that Stephen was strengthened when faced with false accusations and persecutions.
2. Acknowledge ways that the love of Christ and the Holy Spirit encourage and strengthen our faith.
3. Bear witness to our faith and trust in Christ in the face of threat and danger.

### **Teaching Strategies**

Use these exercises for reinforcement. You may adapt to suit the class and available resources.

1. Investigate the background of Stephen, based on Acts 6:1–8:1.

What makes him a model for living his faith?

2. Share a story of someone who was unjustly accused of wrongdoing in our lifetime, including how that person suffered and endured.
3. Suggest discussion questions to help participants dig into the possible consequences of sharing their faith in active ways. Is there always a risk of negative reactions?
4. Examine the long-term results of Stephen's faithful witness, including the possible influence his testimony had on those who persecuted him. What enabled Stephen to remain faithful when some opposed him? What might have been the connection between Stephen's service in "distributing food" and his testimony to Christ? How did Stephen's suffering affect Saul (Paul)?
5. Engage in a brief time of worship, including a hymn and a prayer, asking for power and strength to remain faithful when threatened with persecution for your faith.

**Resources:** We are living in some dynamic times where many traditional beliefs of the church are under scrutiny. Try as we may, we cannot forever sidestep all the thorny issues that confront us in this age. The stories of Daniel in the lion's den, Paul and Silas in jail, and Janani Luwum (1922-1977) in Uganda will play out before us many times. Sometimes, we will be the story, not some distant person.

Review the story of Janani Luwum on Wikipedia and discuss with the class the cost of standing firm for the Christian faith. Focus the discussion against the backdrop of Matthew 10:37-39, the all-or-nothing teaching of Christ. Speaking truth to power may become

more than a catchphrase we use in casual conversation.

## **LF: Lesson 5 March 31, 2024**

### **The Resurrection: Key to Faith**

**Lesson Scripture:** Mark 16

**Focus Scripture:** Mark 16:1-8

**Key Verse:** “Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here.”

Mark 16:6

### **Key Terms**

- **Reclusive** – Avoiding the company of other people; solitary, or lonely.
- **Meager** – Small and not enough for the purpose.
- **Supposition** – Something we suppose; a theory not proven.
- **Detractors** – People who deny or try to weaken your position.
- **Hallucination** – Illusion, something not real (but imagined).

**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Validate how the women pushed through their grief and fear to accomplish their task.
2. Value God’s presence and guidance in the midst of the difficult and unknown.
3. Move out in faith instead of fear as we confront challenges.

### **Teaching Strategies**

1. Read Mark 16:1-8 aloud and discuss the crossroads of faith that confronted the three women at the end of the account. What would have been the outcome if, out of fear, they had chosen to keep this

experience to themselves?

2. Ask participants to imagine that they had been with the women who had seen and heard the angel (“young man”). What would they have done with the strange, unexpected news that Jesus had been raised? What will they do with this news today? tomorrow?
3. Talk about the absence of male disciples at the tomb. Where were they? Why didn’t one or more of these men accompany the women that Sunday morning? Did the men have more to fear than the women, or did they simply regard anointing the dead as “women’s work”?
4. Invite participants to tell what they most fear about sharing news of Jesus’ resurrection with the world. What would it take for them to move beyond the tomb with faith?
5. Read or recite three favorite hymns/songs about Jesus’ resurrection. What about these gives participants hope? How are they encouraged by the words they sing?
6. Suggest that participants plan together how they will overcome their fears and go forth in their community and the world to share the good news of Jesus.

**Resources:** If you want to see real faith in action, watch the William Kamkwamba TED Talk (*How I Harnessed the Wind*). Consider all the obstacles he had to overcome. Only an enduring faith could have driven him to success.

(As a matter of faith in action, decide to help the church in Malawi and follow through on the decision. It is one of the most rewarding ways to practice your faith.)



## **LF: Lesson 6 April 7, 2024**

### **Faith of Four Friends**

**Lesson Scripture:** Luke 5:17-26

**Focus Scripture:** Luke 5:17-26

**Key Verses:** Some men came carrying a paralyzed man on a stretcher. They were trying to bring him in and lay him before Jesus, but, finding no way to bring him in because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and let him down on the stretcher through the tiles into the middle of the crowd in front of Jesus. Luke 5:18-19

### **Key Terms**

- **Corporate Faith** – The faith expression of a group.
- **Benign** – Not growing or spreading.
- **Instinctively** – Occurring as a matter of instinct or impulse.

**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Understand the importance of Christian friends in building up faith in Christ.
2. Value the encouragement and support that they can offer their friends in faith.
3. Seek to create habits of compassionate and faith-filled action.

### **Teaching Strategies**

1. Search for information about what ordinary homes looked like in the time of Jesus, including the way roofs were constructed. This information will put in its right perspective the actions of the four friends in opening the roof.

2. Consider the faith of the four friends and what it compelled them to do on behalf of the man who was paralyzed. Notice that Jesus was impressed by their faith and responded to it. This underscores the importance of corporate faith.
3. Discuss the two ways in which Jesus acted to help the man in need: (a) he forgave his sins; (b) he healed his body. Which act was more important to the man who was paralyzed? And which was more impressive to the friends? Contrast their outlooks to the reaction of the Pharisees and scribes who criticized Jesus for his words and actions.
4. Invite participants to identify people they know who may need to be “carried” to Jesus. What help might be needed in the situations they identify? To what lengths are they willing to go to bring their friends to Christ – the one who promises healing and forgiveness? What will they do when they are criticized or questioned?
5. Suggest ways to express thanksgiving to God for faithful friends who help us in our need.
6. Ask participants to recall a time when they were in need and share how friends or family intervened on their behalf.

**Resources:** In the NBC Black History Month feature ([www.nbclosangeles.com](http://www.nbclosangeles.com) > news > local black History Month: Former Homeless Man ... - NBC Los Angeles) we see key elements of the lesson text. We see the heart of someone who experienced the reality of homelessness, his gratitude, and the heart that wants to give back. It sets a good platform for this lesson.

## **LF: Lesson 7 April 14, 2024**

### **Faith of a Centurion**

**Lesson Scripture:** Luke 7:1-10

**Focus Scripture:** Luke 7:1-10

**Key Verse:** (The centurion said), "I did not presume to come to you. But only speak the word, and let my servant be healed." Luke 7:7

### **Key Terms**

- **Capernaum** – A village in Galilee; Jesus's hometown.
- **Commendation** – A high level of praise, usually recognized by an award.
- **Presumption** – To assume or form an opinion from related facts.
- **Resounding** – To hear repeated like an echo.
- **Status Quo** – Things as they are or appear to be.
- **Purveyors** – The pushers, spreaders, or promoters of something, usually evil.

**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Discover the factors that influenced the centurion's faith in Christ to heal the servant.
2. Confess our need for God in the face of feeling helplessness and hopelessness.
3. Engage a practice of prayer that can see us through helpless and hopeless circumstances.

### **Teaching Strategies**

Use the below exercises to reinforce the key points of the lesson.

1. Invite participants to use online resources and commentaries to investigate the relationship between Jesus and the village of Capernaum. Consider whether the location was significant to the outcomes in the story.
2. Consider the connection between our prayers on behalf of the sick and suffering and the centurion's plea to Jesus for help "from afar." Does this lend truth to the saying there is no distance in prayer?
3. Ask participants to recall a time when they felt helpless and hopeless when someone they loved and respected was in great need. Encourage them to draw or write about their feelings regarding such an occasion. What did they do about their helplessness?
4. Name some people who are usually considered outside the bounds of our responsibility (persons of other religions, different racial ancestry, greater or lesser economic status, etc.). In what ways can we respond to their needs? How can we broaden our sense of responsibility? How can we direct them to the help that Christ offers?

**Resources:** Research the life and work of George Liele, the Baptist minister in Jamaica (c. 1750-1828). Wikipedia has a reasonable posting on him. Look at how this man kept up a faith walk for many years. No obstacle seemed capable of stopping him.

Use his story to show that some faith walks are a long adventure and not a singular event. This is the reason the four qualities in the **Case Study** are so important.

## **LF: Lesson 8 April 21, 2024**

### **Faith of a Woman Who Loved Jesus**

**Lesson Scripture:** Luke 7:36-50

**Focus Scripture:** Luke 7:36-39, 44-50

**Key Verse:** (Jesus) said to the woman, “Your faith has saved you; go in peace.” Luke 7:50

### **Key Terms**

- **Screenwriters** – People who write stories and speeches for plays and movies.
- **Intriguing** – Exciting (especially to our curiosity).
- **Conjecture** – Not a fact, but an estimate or opinion.
- **Contrition** – Deep sorrow, especially for sin.
- **Hospitality** – Being kind and generous to guests or people we host.
- **Peripheral** – Not the main or most important; extra or side-show.

**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Analyze how the sinful woman rises above her shame to give honor to Jesus.
2. Recognize Jesus’ acceptance and unconditional love of us as we are.
3. Celebrate the complete acceptance and forgiveness we receive from God’s unconditional love.

### **Teaching Strategies**

The following exercises will help to achieve the lesson goals:

1. Describe the respect widely afforded Pharisees in Jesus' time and the rejection and humiliation of people considered hopeless sinners. Explore the extent to which such attitudes are still with us.
2. List ways in which the Pharisee failed to fulfill the customary acts of a host when a guest was in the home. How did the sinful woman fulfill those customs toward Jesus?
3. Consider what it cost the woman to approach Jesus. How did she even gain entrance to the Pharisee's house? Why did she seem unconcerned about the value of the ointment she used, or about the humiliation she risked, by approaching a man in the company of others?
4. Ask participants to think about the most humiliating circumstances they have experienced. What or who enabled or compelled them to see beyond their humiliation?
5. Suggest that members of the group act out today's scripture. Then encourage those who observed the drama to react to what they have seen.
6. Provide a modern two-team role-play situation that echoes the story about Jesus, the Pharisee, and the sinful woman. Let one team portray the rejection of the sinful person. Let a second team show acceptance.

**Resources:** Use the CBN report (noted in the **Sankofa**) on Pastor James MacDonald's experiment, or any similar event, to get a grasp on what visitors to our churches really see and feel. Granted, some of the signals we send to visitors are unintentional. Although we say we welcome them, what we put them through screams the contrary.

Just being aware of these things can automatically push us to improve our greeting and reception of visitors.

## **LF: Lesson 9 April 28, 2024**

### **Faith of a Canaanite Woman**

**Lesson Scripture:** Matthew 15:21-28

**Focus Scripture:** Matthew 15:21-28

**Key Verse:** Jesus answered (the Canaanite woman), “Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish.” And her daughter was healed from that moment. Matthew 15:28

### **Key Terms**

- **Marginalized** – Living or considered being on the margins (edges) of a group or society; outside the mainstream.
- **Gentiles** – Non-Jews.
- **Myopic** – Short-sightedness; having narrow views of a matter.
- **Repartee** – Wordplay; a crafty response.
- **Socio-economic** – Relating to (a person's) social and economic status.

**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Wrestle with the interaction between Jesus and the Canaanite woman.
2. Persist in faith when there is no assurance of a certain outcome.
3. Identify a person or group of people you have previously been reluctant to accept but could be persuaded to extend grace to.

### **Teaching Strategies**

These exercises will help the class to reach the lesson goals stated above.



1. Provide background on relationships between Jews and Canaanites (Gentiles) in the Roman world. Why was it unlikely that a Canaanite woman would approach a Jewish man under any circumstances?
2. Consider the woman's knowledge of Jesus before he entered the Gentile region where she lived. How would she have heard of him, and what did it mean for her to address him as "Son of David"? Also consider what she knew about the prophets who foretold the Messiah's advent, and how we can follow in her footsteps in acknowledging who Jesus is.
3. Identify the prejudices that exist among various social groups in the world today. Who are the people most likely to be rejected by the ruling majority, and what is most unfair about such rejection?
4. Notice that it was rare for Jesus to be traveling in a Gentile region and unheard of for him to engage in a verbal exchange with a foreign woman. Consider these aspects: what led this woman to approach Jesus; why did he respond to her with some hesitation; and what seems to have convinced Jesus to help the child of the woman?
5. Discuss the acts of courage shown by the woman in approaching and imploring Jesus and shown by Jesus in healing her daughter. How does one find courage to surmount cultural norms and rejection to make one's voice heard and heeded?
6. Encourage participants to list people who are not fully welcome in their community or church. Consider the barriers to their acceptance that exist and discuss ways that they can extend a welcome to those people.

**Resources:** Use the link in the **Sankofa** or other resources to research the life and successes of Madam C. J. Walker. Consider the quality of faith she employed to find success against all the odds that she faced. Further, reflect on how often we see this level of faith and drive in our people today.

## **LF: Lesson 10 May 5, 2024**

### **Justified by Faith in Jesus**

**Lesson Scripture:** Romans 3:21-30

**Focus Scripture:** Romans 3:21-30

**Key Verses:** For there is no distinction, since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; they are now justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Romans 3:22b-24

### **Key Terms**

- **Eternal Security Doctrine** – The teaching which says once a person truly repents and accepts Christ as Savior, that person's salvation is eternally secured and cannot be lost by subsequent sinful deeds.
- **Ascetic** – Punitive and severe, especially of rituals.
- **Psyche** – The whole being, the soul, or essence of life.
- **Propitiation** – Appeasement offering or gesture (offered to please God).
- **Testy** – Test as in belief, patience, etc.; irritating.
- **Patron** – Supporter, sponsor, donor of person or event, usually for a given cause.
- **Pedigree** – The true class (qualification) that gives a person rights to special honors.
- **Beneficiaries** – People who benefit from an act.

**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Compare being justified by the law and works with being justified

by faith in Christ.

2. Value one's faith in Jesus Christ.
3. Model a life based on one's faith.

### **Teaching Strategies**

Use the below exercises/strategies to reinforce the key points of the lesson.

1. Provide a summary of Romans 1–2 which gives the background for Paul's contention that all people (Jews and Gentiles) have sinned. Note that the law makes people aware of their sin but does not do away with sin's consequences.
2. Discuss the cost of sin in human life. Humans cannot atone for their sin, as only God can do away with sin. Traditional Christianity says Jesus Christ, God in human form, has paid the price for atonement. Discuss the value of God's gift of grace and justification.
3. Invite learners to identify the evidence of sin present in the world today. In what ways do we ignore or acknowledge the reality of sin and God's gift of grace to us and to the world?
4. Discuss our responsibility in response to the righteousness of God. Then explore how we can help others focus on the difference divine forgiveness can make in ourselves and in our communities.
5. Suggest that participants listen carefully to the prayers that are spoken in your church. After, consider how those prayers reflect our dependence on God for forgiveness.
6. Identify ways that believers live as people justified and redeemed by God. Then, brainstorm ways believers may boast of

achievements while inviting faith and trust in a God who offers grace and redemption.

**Resources:** Listen to the TEDx talk noted in the **Sankofa** (“Why Christianity Is Perceived as the White Man’s Religion”) and balance the sentiments in the talk against Paul’s declaration that Christianity is God’s way of salvation for all people (Jews and Gentiles). Pay special attention to the historical context framed in the talk.

## LF: Lesson 11 May 12, 2024

### Reckoned as Righteous

**Lesson Scripture:** [Romans](#) 4

**Focus Scripture:** [Romans](#) 4:13-25

**Key Verses:** (Abraham) grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, being fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. Romans 4:20-21

### Key Terms

- **Ascribe / Ascribing** – Giving credit for or assume (of a character trait).
- **Imprudence** – Reckless foolishness or carelessness.
- **Justification** – Considered right with or pleasing to God (saved, forgiven).
- **Scintillating** – Very exciting; stirring thrills in the mind and body.
- **Hermeneutics** – The theory and practice of interpreting scripture texts.
- **Hedonistic** – The practice of heathens; grossly, ungodly self-indulgence.

**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Examine why Paul considered Abraham a model of faith despite Abraham's shortcomings.
2. Desire persistence in faith if we waiver at times.
3. Celebrate God's blessing of grace through faith with loving

actions.

### **Teaching Strategies**

The following exercises will help us to reach the goals stated above.

1. Summarize the Abram/Abraham story as recorded in Genesis 17. Note that Abraham's righteousness in the sight of God preceded the establishment of the Jews as a chosen people, thus Paul speaks of Abram as the ancestor of both Jews and Gentiles.
2. Debate the effect Abraham's faith had on his response to God's promises. What physical circumstances could have led him to doubt? What truths about God may have helped him overcome these circumstances?
3. Mention that Abraham was not sin-free, but he trusted God to do what God had said. Against this background, consider how complete is our trust in God, and what we can do to show that we believe in God's promise to us in Christ.
4. Discuss the role of Sarah in the fulfillment of God's promises. In what way is her trust in God separate from Abraham's faith? Also, consider how did her responses demonstrate that her faith was not always mature.
5. Encourage participants to write a paragraph or short poem about the righteousness of God manifested in Abraham or in someone whom they know.
6. Since today is Mother's Day, discuss aspects of Sarah's life briefly.

**Resources:** Research Jesse Owens' story and consider any elements of faith present in the story. Pay close attention to the hurdles he overcame and consider if these triumphs signaled faith, even though they occurred outside a church situation or in religious

circles. What could this story teach us about natural faith or the expression of faith outside religious settings?



## **LF: Lesson 12 May 19, 2024**

### **Reconciled to God**

**Lesson Scripture:** Romans 5:1-11

**Focus Scripture:** Romans 5:1-11

**Key Verse:** Since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Romans 5:1

### **Key Terms**

- **Paradox** – A seemingly self-contradicting statement.
- **Tribulation** – A cause of great harm or suffering.
- **Circumvent** – Finding a way around an obstacle.
- **Eternal Security** – The doctrine that once saved, a person cannot lose that salvation.
- **Captivating** – Attracting and holding a person's interest.

**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Look at Paul's faith even when he endured weaknesses, challenges, and failures.
2. Acknowledge weaknesses and failures and appreciate how faith builds endurance.
3. Express gratitude for God's love and the Holy Spirit's help.

### **Teaching Strategies**

These exercises will assist your efforts in teaching the lesson effectively.

1. Tell a story from Acts based on Paul's missionary adventures that shows how his faith helped him triumph over persecution. Use for

an example his imprisonment in Philippi.

2. Talk about a Christian from the post-New Testament era who was not afraid to die for the sake of Christ but lived to share the faith.
3. Discuss the meaning of “boast” as it is used in verses 2-3 and 11. How can we boast of the Lord Jesus Christ without appearing to be self-righteous?
4. Ask participants to list people for whom they would be willing to die (The lists may be short!). Ask the class who would be willing to die for someone they consider “bad” or “evil.” Then compare the responses with the class’ understanding of why Jesus was willing to die for the sake of sinners (“bad” people)?
5. Suggest singing a hymn or song that expresses our faith and our call to live for Christ.

**Resources:** The text focuses on how people are reconciled to God simply by faith in Christ. Answering God’s call to salvation can sometimes bring about a dramatic transformation in the lives of believers.

Make this point using the life story of Stephen Lungu (the Billy Graham of Africa), noting his conversion and his work in Malawi. Lungu went from gangs and criminal activity to become a great evangelist and Christian leader. He endured many persecutions and threats of death because of his stance on Christian ideals.

## **LF: Lesson 13 May 26, 2024**

### **Who Has Believed?**

**Lesson Scripture:** Romans 10:1-21

**Focus Scripture:** Romans 10:1-17

**Key Verse:** If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. Romans 10:9

### **Key Terms**

- **Saved** – Salvation; redemption from sin.
- **Zeal** – A passion or enthusiasm for a belief (or thing).
- **Not According to Knowledge** – Not in line with the scriptures (or God's truth).
- **Abyss** – (verse 7, some versions) A literally bottomless pit; the grave.
- **Ignorance** – Not knowing truth; lack of knowledge.
- **Rituals** – Religious practices, prescribed services, and formalities; traditions.

**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Contrast expectations of salvation under the law vs. salvation by grace through faith in Christ.
2. Grow in gratitude for the gracious gift of salvation.
3. Celebrate salvation by confession and tangible commitment to God in Christ.

### **Teaching Strategies**

The following exercises help to achieve the lesson goals.

1. Review Paul's ongoing concern for Jews as well as Gentiles. Bear in mind that the Roman church included both Jews and Gentiles, as did other early churches. In the review, note that the **Focus Scripture** cites Moses and quotes from Deuteronomy 30:11-14. Consider how these quotes applied to both groups.
2. Concentrate attention on the **Key Verse** and the verses that follow it through verse 13. Discuss the relationship between the heart and the mouth, belief, and confession. How do we practice this as we exercise our faith?
3. Using doctrinal statements familiar to participants, discuss the meaning of justification. Why is justification best understood as a gift from God? Also, consider why we can't achieve justification on our own merits.
4. Study verses 14-15. What is your understanding of the step-by-step progression outlined by Paul of hearing, believing, and sharing the good news of salvation? Identify what is missing in this outline, and let the class consider their current position on the faith-action dynamic.
5. Challenge participants to practice open confession of their faith in Christ. What next steps is God calling them to take? End the session with a prayer that the group can pray aloud together.

**Resources:** Focus the lesson on the great joy believers should feel and share about their salvation in Christ.

Go to the *Science Daily*

(<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2011/06/110630131838.htm>)

and consider the factors that move people to share stories. Consider

how those factors play into the believer's story of salvation.

# **The Teacher's Guide - SR: Lesson 1 March 3, 2024**

## **Senior Lessons**

**Spring Quarter: March 2024 – May 2024**

**Prepared by Rev. Faith Waters**

### **Sustaining Our Faith**

**Lesson Scripture:** Jude

**Focus Scripture:** Jude 17 - 25

**Key Verses:** Beloved, build yourselves up on your most holy faith; pray in the Holy Spirit; keep yourselves in the love of God; look forward to the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life. Jude 20-21

### **Words to Know**

- **Apostles** – the chief disciples of Jesus Christ
- **Scoffers** – people who voice ridicule of those who choose to believe God and his Word
- **Devoid** – entirely lacking the indwelling of the Holy Spirit
- **Mercy** – undeserved compassion or forgiveness from God
- **Defiled** – to spoil something
- **Blemish** – a small mark or flaw

**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Discern the factors that caused Jude to question his faith.
2. Appreciate the strength God gives to us when we have doubts.
3. Build our faith in God to enable us to stand up for our beliefs when challenged.

## **Teaching Strategies**

1. Read Jude in its entirety before class and do background research.
2. Jude enables believers to discern between false and faithful teachers: anyone whose words and/or lifestyle mimics the surrounding culture and who instigates division within the church should not be accepted as a faith model by believers.
3. The faithful build their lives on the foundation of the Gospel, praying in the spirit, relying on God's love, looking forward to Christ's mercy and eternal life, offering mercy toward others, and rescuing others from the fire. Such living sets apart the faithful from those who are false.
4. Compare and contrast godly versus false teachers. Discuss the impact false teachers have on the church, now and in the future.
5. If time permits, role-play scenarios when the youth are faced with choices and then face the outcomes of their choices.
6. Give examples of demonstrating mercy towards others.

## **SR: Lesson 2 March 10, 2024**

### **Testing Our Faith**

**Lesson Scripture:** 2 Corinthians 13:1-11

**Focus Scripture:** 2 Corinthians 13:5-11

**Key Verse:** Test yourselves. Do you not realize that Jesus Christ is in you? 2 Corinthians 13:5b, c

### **Words to Know**

- **Examine** – to inspect in detail to determine their nature or condition
- **Truth** – agreeing with fact or reality; steadfastness
- **Authority** – the power or right to give orders, make decisions, and enforce obedience
- **Appeal** – to make a serious or urgent request to others
- **Peace** – a state of security and tranquility

**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Discuss the difficulties of staying true to Christian beliefs and values.
2. Strive to embody the Christian faith genuinely as a personal goal.
3. Consider and evaluate aspects of their personal life that may not align with Christian values. Take action by praying and repenting.

### **Teaching Strategies**

1. Be sensitive towards those who have a negative self-image due to bullying, abuse, or mental health issues.
2. If the class does not have cell phones, bring masquerading masks



and mirrors to complete the activity.

3. Discuss the similarities and differences between the issues of the Corinthian church versus today's church.
4. Give a summary of Paul's authority based on his defense in 2 Corinthians. Discuss the importance of godly leaders who are authentic in their ministries.

**Resources:** Masks, mirror

## **SR: Lesson 3 March 17, 2024**

### **Defending Our Faith**

**Lesson Scripture:** 1 Peter 3:8-17

**Focus Scripture:** 1 Peter 3:8-17

**Key Verse:** Who will harm you if you are eager to do what is good?  
1 Peter 3:13

### **Words to Know**

- **Humble** – to be meek, not proud
- **Deceit** – the practice of concealing or misrepresenting the truth
- **Righteous** – to act morally and by God's commands
- **Peace** – a state of security and tranquility
- **Intimidate** – to make someone feel frightened to coerce them to do what one wants
- **Sanctify** – to dedicate, make holy
- **Maligned** – to be spoken about in a spitefully critical manner

**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Understand how to respond when being persecuted because of their faith.
2. Value righteousness and humility as central to our faith in Christ.
3. Pray for help in defending our faith when suffering for Christ.

### **Teaching Strategies**

1. Go to [www.persecution.com](http://www.persecution.com) to research how Christians are suffering persecution for their faith. Share a world map and point

out countries where it is illegal to be a Christian. Read aloud a story of the faithful endurance of a believer despite their persecution.

2. Say to the class, "Let's delve into Peter's background and how he has experienced persecution." Then reveal the details of his life. His story is told in Matthew; Galatians 1:18 and 2:7 – 14; Acts; and 1 and 2 Peter.
3. Be sensitive towards those who live in chaotic families, households, and communities. They may not see peace at work in anyone's life.
4. Retaliation may be the norm for some youth because they are taught to defend themselves or be considered "soft."
5. The virtues Peter lists in 3:8 and the actions described in 3:10-12 (Psalm 34:12-16) are relational expressions of the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23): the mark of a faithful life reflecting God's character both inwardly and outwardly/relationally.
6. Peter alludes to the Abrahamic blessing (3:9; Genesis 12:1-3), reminding believers that they are Abraham's spiritual children, recipients of both his blessing and is calling.

**Resources:** Posterboard, construction paper, scissors, magazines, newspapers, glue, black markers or crayons

## **SR: Lesson 4 March 24, 2024 (Palm Sunday)**

### **Living in Faith**

**Lesson Scripture:** Acts 6

**Focus Scripture** Acts 6:7-15

**Key Verse:** They could not withstand the wisdom and the Spirit with which he spoke. Acts 6:10

### **Words to Know**

- **Grace** – undeserved favor from God, who pardons our sins
- **Wonders** – miracles; acts of God
- **Synagogue** – a place where Jews assemble for worship and teaching the law
- **Blasphemous** – to utter slanderous or profane words against God
- **Cyrenians** – pronounced: sai – REE – nih – uns
- **Cilicia** – pronounced: sih – LIHSH – ee – uh

**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Discover how Stephen persevered through unjust accusations and persecution due to his unwavering commitment to his faith.
2. Acknowledge how the love of Christ and the Holy Spirit strengthens our faith.
3. Express gratitude to God for being present with us during times of suffering and persecution.

### **Teaching Strategies**

1. Say to class: “We do not have to live in fear of being persecuted

and killed. We can rely on God's presence to be at peace."

2. Discuss the connection of obedience to God as seen by Stephen's martyrdom and Jesus' crucifixion.
3. Distribute palms and wave them as the class sings, "Hosanna!"
4. Be sensitive towards those who know of people who have been killed and consider them "martyrs" who gave all as they made others display honor and respect.
5. We should not glorify suffering. Although being faithful to God can result in suffering, not all suffering is caused by faith. Suffering can be caused by disease, pain, natural disasters, and other factors, but it is not God's intention for humans to suffer.

## **SR: Lesson 5 March 31, 2024 (Easter)**

### **The Resurrection: Key to Faith**

**Lesson Scripture:** Mark 16

**Focus Scripture:** Mark 16:1-8

**Key Verse:** “Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here.”

Mark 16:6

### **Words to Know**

- Sabbath – the Jewish day on which labor ceased and rest prevailed
- Anoint – to put oil or water on a part of the body, usually for religious reasons
- Alarmed – to be frightened or concerned that one may be in danger or that something undesirable may happen
- Crucified – to be put to death on a cross
- Salome – pronounced: suh – LO – mee
- Nazareth – pronounced: NAZ – uh – rehth
- Galilee – pronounced: GAL – ih – lee

**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Empathize and explore why the women who visited the tomb felt discouraged and fearful.
2. Experience the awe-inspiring power of the resurrected Christ, bringing hope and strength.
3. Live by faith, not giving into fear and discouragement when

challenged.

### **Teaching Strategies**

1. Work together with the Christian Education Department and YPD to get the props and other resources needed.
2. Mark subtly reinforces the finality of Jesus' death by identifying Mary in terms of her next surviving son: "Mary, the mother of James" (16:1).
3. Normally the anointing would have taken place before the burial, but in this case, the Sabbath began before Jesus' disciples could care for his body or even place it in his tomb (Mark 15:42; Deuteronomy 21:23; and Matthew 27:59-60).
4. Mark's story of the resurrection ends on a disappointing note: the women do not live out their faith but rather let fear control their actions (16:8). See Luke 24:1-12 for the rest of the story that shows the ultimately faithful response of Jesus' followers.
5. Be sensitive towards those who may question the eternal resting place of their beloved family and friends.
6. Be sensitive towards those who may be visiting a church for the first time and unfamiliar with the fundamentals of the Word.

**Resources:** Props, spices in jars, clothes

## **SR: Lesson 6 April 7, 2024**

### **Faith of Four Friends**

**Lesson Scripture:** Luke 5:17-26

**Focus Scripture:** Luke 5:17-26

**Key Verse:** When he saw their faith, he said, "Friend, your sins are forgiven you." Luke 5:20

### **Words to Know**

- **Paralyzed** – to have a partial or whole body that is incapable of moving
- **Faith** – to put complete trust in God
- **Forgiven** – to have sins pardoned
- **Blasphemies** – slanderous or profane words against God
- **Glorifying** – to honor and magnify God
- **Pharisees** – pronounced: FEHR – ih – seez
- **Judea** – pronounced: jhou – DE – uh
- **Galilee** – pronounced: GAL – ih – lee

**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Identify friends who can provide prayer, strength, and support during life's challenges.
2. Experience gratitude for supportive friends.
3. Express thanksgiving to God for supportive friends and seek to reciprocate the same for others.

### **Teaching Strategies**

1. Discuss the faith demonstrated by the friends and the risks they



took to get the paralyzed man to Jesus.

2. Say to the class, "Imagine you were in the house when his friends lowered this man inside. What would your reaction be? How do you think they felt?"
3. Discuss the most significant risk each has taken for a friend.
4. House roofs in first-century Palestine were flat and usually made of clay mixed with straw and supported by beams and branches of trees, much like adobe houses in the southwest USA. Tiles frequently were used in more affluent Palestinian homes.
5. The result of faithful and godly actions, whether individual or corporate, is to honor God as the focus of that faith (5:26). As in this story, our faithful actions today should encourage those around us to look to God (and not to us!).
6. Look at a New Testament map to locate the cities the religious leaders traveled from to be with Jesus in Capernaum.

**Resources:** New Testament map

## **SR: Lesson 7 April 14, 2024**

### **Faith of a Centurion**

**Lesson Scripture:** Luke 7:1-10

**Focus Scripture:** Luke 7:1-10

**Key Verse:** [The centurion said] “I did not presume to come to you. But only speak the word, and let my servant be healed.” Luke 7:7

### **Words to Know**

- **Centurion** – Roman military officer in charge of 100 men
- **Appealed** – to make a serious or urgent request
- **Worthy** – having or showing the qualities or abilities that merit recognition in a specified way
- **Presume** – be daring or courageous enough to do something:
- **Amazed** – to be astonished, awed
- **Capernaum** – pronounced: kuh – PERR – nay – uhm

**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Discover the factors that influenced the centurion’s faith in Christ to heal the servant and the compassion Jesus demonstrated.
2. Express our need for a compassionate God.
3. Display Christ-like compassion towards others in need.

### **Teaching Strategies**

1. Be sensitive towards those who have negative feelings about the term “slave” because of the atrocities blacks experienced.
2. Luke’s mention of Capernaum is a reminder that the centurion may have known of Jesus, who had made his home there earlier

(Luke 4:31, 38). The centurion's faith was grounded in a history of seeing Jesus in action and knowing his reputation.

3. The centurion's approach demonstrates humility and the sincerity of his respect for God's people. He honors Jesus by not demanding that he cross the Jew-Gentile boundaries when he (the centurion) was a social superior of a conquering people and had the right to make that demand.
4. Discuss what happens when people who are helpless and hopeless do not receive compassion.

## **SR: Lesson 8 April 21, 2024**

### **Faith of a Woman Who Loved Jesus**

**Lesson Scripture:** Luke 7:36-50

**Focus Scripture:** Luke 7:36-39, 44-50

**Key Verse:** “Hence she has shown great love.” Luke 7:47

#### **Words to Know**

- **Alabaster Jar** – a pink-colored soft mineral made into cups or boxes for holding expensive perfume
- **Anoint** – to pour oil upon one in appointing him or her to a particular office
- **Forgiven** – to be pardoned of sins
- **Peace** – a state of security and tranquility
- **Pharisees** – pronounced: FEHR – ih – seez

**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Analyze how the sinful woman rises above her shame to give honor to Jesus and be forgiven.
2. Accept God’s gift of forgiveness and love.
3. Forgive and love others like God does for us.

#### **Teaching Strategies**

1. Discuss how to live unashamed despite how others judge your life.
2. Tell the class, “Using your cell phone, search for ‘alabaster box.’” Let them describe its appearance. Ask, “What is the most valuable possession you own?” After they respond, say, “Would you give it

up in gratefulness to God? Why? Why not?"

3. Discuss who in society is considered "sinners" and our view of them.
4. Optional activity: bring small wooden boxes or glass jars to class and let the seniors decorate them with jewels from a hobby shop or Dollar Tree store. They can represent alabaster boxes or jars.
5. There is a distinction between "oil" and "ointment" in 7:46. Olive oil was typically used to cleanse and refresh traveling guests, but the woman brought a costlier and more valuable gift of ointment, likely scented with spices as an aromatic perfume.
6. Though being invited to the house of an honored member of society was itself an honor, Simon's lack of hospitality (a cause for shame in the first-century world) suggests some insincerity or ulterior motive in his invitation.

**Resources:** Glass jars, wooden boxes, glue, plastic jewels

## **SR: Lesson 9 April 28, 2024**

### **Faith of a Canaanite Woman**

**Lesson Scripture:** Matthew 15:21-28

**Focus Scripture:** Matthew 15:21-28

**Key Verse:** Jesus answered [the Canaanite woman], “Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish.” And her daughter was healed from that moment. Matthew 15:28

### **Words to Know**

- **Mercy** – compassion or forgiveness shown by God toward someone within God's power to punish or harm
- **Tormented** – experiencing or characterized by severe physical or mental suffering
- **Faith** – complete trust in God
- **Tyre** – pronounced: TAI – er
- **Sidon** – pronounced: SAI – duhn
- **Canaanite** – pronounced: KAY – nuh – nait

**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Examine the interaction between Jesus and the Canaanite woman.
2. Be aware of one's own biases.
3. Get involved in community groups that fight for justice for all.

### **Teaching Strategies**

1. Ask, “How did the woman know about Jesus to call him ‘Lord, Son of David’”? What does this tell us about Jesus and the woman?

Say, "That the woman names Jesus the 'Son of David' (15:22) is significant theologically, for Matthew believed that the Son of David is the prophesied Messiah. It is also culturally significant for Jesus and his disciples: she begins the dialog by confronting the ethnic and religious barriers between them."

2. Spend time discussing past and present race relations in the United States and the world.
3. Discuss how Richard Allen responded to the mistreatment of Africans in the Methodist Church because he believed we were all God's children and loved equally.
4. Be sensitive towards those who have experienced trauma based on their race, gender, faith, or sexual orientation.
5. Research the historical relationship between the Canaanites and Israel before class.

**Resources:** Bible commentaries

## **SR: Lesson 10 May 5, 2024**

### **Justified by Faith in Jesus**

**Lesson Scripture:** Romans 3:21-30

**Focus Scripture:** Romans 3:21-30

**Key Verses:** For there is no distinction, since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; they are now justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Romans 3:22b-24

### **Words to Know**

- Righteousness – being and doing right
- Justified – to be just in God's sight by receiving mercy and forgiveness of sins by having faith in Christ
- Grace – the kindness by which God bestows favors and blessings upon the ill-deserving, and grants to sinners the pardon of their sins
- Atonement – the process by which God and humans can once again become “at one”
- Forbearance – to hold back

**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Understand that personal works have no merit with God, only faith in Christ.
2. Appreciate that we are justified by faith in Christ.
3. Commit to praying and regular personal devotions in gratitude to Christ.

### **Teaching Strategies**



1. Paul had finished his work in the east, and he planned to visit Rome on his way to Spain after first taking the collection (offering) to Jerusalem for the poor Christians there (15:22-28).
2. Some ideas for spiritual practices: Bible Study, individual and corporate prayer, fasting, fellowship with other Christians, spiritual retreats, journaling.
3. The nouns *righteous* and *justice* are both English translations of the Greek *dikaiosune*, so God is both fully right (in holiness and justice) as well as the one who makes those trusting in God also in line with the complete standard of rightness (3:26).
4. The *sacrifice of atonement* (Greek *mercy seat*, Hebrews 9:5) refers to the ark of the covenant on which sacrificial blood was sprinkled on the *Day of Atonement* (Leviticus 16:14). The ceremony reminded Israel of the price of sin and was intended to serve as a symbol of their trust in God to forgive their sins and of their hope for a redeemer who could pay the price (Romans 3:25).

## **SR: Lesson 11 May 12, 2024**

### **Reckoned as Righteous**

**Lesson Scripture:** Romans 4

**Focus Scripture:** Romans 4:13-25

**Key Verses:** [Abraham] grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, being fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. Romans 4:20-21

### **Words to Know**

- Righteousness – being morally correct and justifiable
- Justification – to be just in God's sight by receiving mercy and forgiveness of sins by having faith in Christ
- Grace – the kindness by which God bestows favors and blessings upon the ill-deserving, and grants to sinners the pardon of their sins
- Adherents – people who support a particular person, group, or religion
- Barrenness – to be infertile
- Reckoned – to number, to account

**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Explore how Abraham modeled righteous faith despite his shortcomings.
2. Desire to grow in our faith.
3. Praise and give thanks to God for making us righteous.

### **Teaching Strategies**

1. Be sensitive towards those who do not have basic biblical knowledge and are unfamiliar with Abraham's story.
2. Paul argues that Gentiles (and Jews) do not need to submit to a checklist of diet, dress, or calendar to be or show themselves to be God's people. God's true people descended from Abraham (1 Samuel 16:7). Their lived-out faith in God in a broken world is sign and difference enough (1 Peter 3:15).
3. Paul wanted unity in the church and accomplished this by starting both Jews and Gentiles on the same footing in the past (sin; 3:9) and with the same basis for relationship with God now (faith, not law; 4:16; John 17:11; Ephesians 4:1-6.).
4. Ask, "Can you connect with Abraham's struggles? How?"
5. Activity – If some in the class do not create a psalm, let them use one from the book of Psalms. Cut posterboards into four equally sized parts to give one to each student.

**Resources:** Posterboard, markers

## **SR: Lesson 12 May 19, 2024 (Pentecost Sunday)**

### **Reconciled to God**

**Lesson Scripture:** Romans 5:1-11

**Focus Scripture:** Romans 5:1-11

**Key Verse:** Since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Romans 5:1

### **Words to Know**

- **Righteous** – to act morally and by God's commands
- **Justified** – to be just in God's sight by receiving mercy and forgiveness of sins by having faith in Christ
- **Grace** – the kindness by which God bestows favors and blessings upon the ill-deserving, and grants to sinners the pardon of their sins
- **Wrath** – violent anger
- **Reconciled** – to restore good relations between two people or groups

**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Examine Paul's faith as he endured weaknesses, challenges, and failures.
2. Feel at peace because of our faith in God.
3. Create innovative ways to demonstrate your unwavering faith in God amidst temptation.

### **Teaching Strategies**

1. Today is Pentecost Sunday. Read Acts 2 and use Bible

commentaries to research background info on its significance. Use the opportunity to make a connection with the lesson; then share it with the class.

2. Discuss how persecution of Christians has historically caused the spread of the Gospel.
3. Go to [www.persecution.com](http://www.persecution.com) to learn about the persecuted church and hear stories of faithful believers all over the world who are willing to sacrifice all for Christ.
4. Reciprocation and gratitude were significant elements of the first-century Mediterranean social fabric, and a gift within that social web (often called a “grace” in the first century) brought with it the question of how to appropriately express these. For Paul, there is no question of “returning the favor” with salvation but rather the appropriate response is to honor and accurately represent the giver (5:3-4).
5. In Roman culture, the highest ideal of friendship was the willingness to die for a friend. Paul shows how God transcends the highest ideals of the culture in God’s radical love for God’s enemies (5:6-10, and a subtle call to the suffering church to love those who persecute them; see Matthew 5:11, 39-42).

## **SR: Lesson 13 May 26, 2024**

### **Who Has Believed?**

**Lesson Scripture:** Romans 10:1-21

**Focus Scripture:** Romans 10:1-17

**Key Verse:** If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. Romans 10:9

### **Words to Know**

- Righteousness – to be morally correct and justified
- Zeal – passionate and active interest
- Abyss – a deep gulf, a chasm
- Confess – admit to committing sin
- Shame – dishonor, disgrace

**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Discover the superiority of righteousness offered through faith in Jesus.
2. Appreciate God's gracious gift of salvation is available to all humankind.
3. Witness to the gift of salvation made possible through Christ.

### **Teaching Strategies**

1. Bring Christian literature and tracts to class so the seniors can pass it out while witnessing. Also, remind the class that social media is the ideal place to share Christ. Create a TikTok video about Christ, text Bible verses and Christian videos, create a

poster and post it on Instagram, etc.

2. Remind the class that they can expect suffering and persecution as a witness for Christ.
3. Rehearse what to say when witnessing (use Romans 10:9).
4. Following the law brings righteousness, for the law is God's standard. But our actions are not up to God's standard and cannot address the sins committed against God (10:3-5) and thus cannot lead to restoration to God (salvation).
5. Teach the class simple prayers to say when someone accepts Jesus.
6. Following the law brings righteousness, for the law is God's standard. But our actions are not up to God's standard and cannot address the sins committed against God (10:5; see 10:3) and thus cannot lead to restoration to God (salvation).

# **The Teacher's Guide - INT: Lesson 1 March 3, 2024**

## **Intermediate Lessons**

**Spring Quarter: March – May 2024**

**Prepared by Dr. Kabrina Bass**

### **EXAMINING OUR FAITH**

#### **UNIT I: Faith-FULL Versus Faith-LESS**

##### **TITLE: Examining Our Faith**

Unit I, “Faith-FULL Versus Faith-LESS,” has five lessons drawn from Jude, Second Corinthians, First Peter, Acts, and Mark that invite learners to turn the challenges of life into opportunities for nurturing a vibrant faith instead of giving up, turning away from God, or rejecting faith. Jude appeals to us to contend for the faith that was once entrusted to the saints. The second letter to the Corinthians warns Christians to examine themselves to make sure they are living in the faith. Peter urges his readers to defend their faith with humility, gentleness, and reverence. Acts encourages the church to be obedient to the faith using Stephen as an example. In Mark, God raised Jesus from the dead and in so doing unlocks the door to Resurrection faith.

#### **Youth/Adult Unit I: Faith-FULL Versus Faith-LESS**

##### **Sustaining Our Faith**

**Lesson Scripture:** Jude

**Focus Scripture:** Jude 17-25

**Key Verses:** Beloved, build yourselves up on your most holy faith; pray in the Holy Spirit; keep yourselves in the love of God; look forward to the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life. Jude 20-21 (NRSV)



## Vocabulary

- **Remember** – to recall information from memory, but without necessarily the implication that persons have actually forgotten
- **Predictions** – to say, speak, utter definite words, and hence implying more than to say or speak
- **Apostles** – those sent, ambassadors
- **Indulging Lust** – desire; craving

**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Explore the sources of instability Jude identified and know how God is a source of strength.
2. Identify how personal spiritual growth relies on God's strength and promise.
3. Create a plan to implement actions to bring peace to places of unrest and challenge.

**Unifying Principle:** A “shortcut to success” may persuade some people to compromise their standards. **How do people remain true to their values in the face of enticing trends?** Jude writes to the community of faith, assuring them of God's promises: to keep us from falling and to make us stand without blemish in God's presence.

## Teaching Strategies

Welcome everyone to the new quarter. Inform them that the quarter compares and contrasts the faithful and the faithless. Share the unifying principle of the lesson and ASK participants to reflect *How do people remain true to their values in the face of enticing*

*social trends?* Students don't have to answer now but ask that they consider the question as we study today's lesson.

### **Introduction**

Invite participants to think about advice they've received from people. One question that could be asked is, "What is the best advice your parent, guardian, or relative has ever given you?" Allow participants time to share some of the advice received. Then ask, "Are there times when you are tempted to do something or say something that you feel deep down within you should not do or say? If so, how do you respond in these instances?" Allow those who wish to share to do so. If you have an example, please share. **Discuss** how we are taught values through our faith and advice from others. We are taught to love unconditionally which means we love people who may not necessarily love us. We are also taught not to harm others. **Explain** the lesson from Jude 17-25, a reminder to Jesus' followers to remember the teachings of Jesus Christ. Invite participants to explore today's lesson considering how today, we must remember the teachings of Jesus Christ.

### **Bible Study**

Ask for three readers – invite the first reader to read Jude 17-19; second reader 20-23; and third reader 24-25. After each reader finishes reading the scripture, ask the others what stands out from the readings. Listen attentively. Once the participants have shared, feel free to share what your studies provided for you. **Remind** the first readers that Jude instructs them to remember what the apostles had taught. **Ask:** Who are today's apostles who teach believers of Jesus' teachings? Allow time to respond. Discuss what participants have learned from the teaching of preachers and teachers at church.

After the last reader and reflections, invite participants to share.

### **Life Application**

Ask participants to identify ways to determine if something is true. Discuss a recent event that included information that was not true, but people were sharing it as if it was the truth. (Example, the Montgomery Boat Brawl in the U.S. – everyone said the person on the dock was a security guard doing his job, but he was an employee of the boat trying to dock.) Encourage the participants to share some misinformation they've received. Invite them to reflect on how misinformation can spread, and others perceive it as the truth.

Explain: It's crucial to demonstrate kindness and seek forgiveness when we've wronged someone. One way to do this is by apologizing and taking responsibility for our actions. Ask: How can we provide mercy to someone who has not been kind to us? Share examples: We can offer to help the person or be present to listen and support them. Small acts of kindness, such as apologizing or offering a kind word can go a long way in repairing relationships and showing that we value the other person's feelings.

### **Summary**

**Invite** participants with mobile phones or other devices to scroll through their feeds and share something they find from someone they follow or something which appears on their "For You" or "Home" page. **Discuss** how the media shapes our ideas about who we should be. Ask which filter is trending on their app. **Ask:** How can we remain true to our values in competition with social trends? **Allow** participants to respond.

**Alternative:** Have youth brainstorm a list of individuals who stood up for change and what opposition/support emerged for their cause. (The teacher should have their own list to present in case the youth can't identify examples on their own.) MLK – Civil Rights Act; Nadia

Murad (Iraq) – Sexual violence awareness; BLM Global – awareness of systemic racism; Marcus Garvey – United Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), black liberation; Nelson Mandela – End of apartheid, creation of the Democratic South Africa; Wangari Maathai (Kenya) – Green Belt Movement environmental conservation.

### **Closing Devotion**

**Ask:** Participants to share a one word takeaway from the lesson.

**Invite:** Each person to share their one word. Remind them, they can duplicate another person's word. **Ask:** Who would like to lead us in a closing prayer?

### **Testing Our Faith**

## INT: Lesson 2 March 10, 2024

### Discovering Our Deepest Values

**Lesson Scripture:** 2 Corinthians 13:1-11

**Focus Scripture:** 2 Corinthians 13:5-11

**Key Verses:** Test yourselves. Do you not realize that Jesus Christ is in you? 2 Corinthians 13:5b, c

### Vocabulary

- **Examine** – submit another to a test, to learn the true nature or character
- **Test** – to regard something as being worthwhile or appropriate
- **Perfect** – adequacy, completion, improvement
- **Authority** – jurisdiction, control, power, right to judge

**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Discuss challenges for living up to Christian faith and principles.
2. Internalize the desire to live as authentic representatives of Christian faith.
3. Engage in self-examination about the aspects of participants' lives that are not consistent with the principles of Christian faith, then pray and repent.

**Unifying Principle:** Everyone has principles they are challenged to uphold. ***How and where do we find the courage to live authentically, keeping true to our ideals?*** Paul challenges believers to examine themselves as they rely on the power of Christ in keeping the faith imparted to them.

## Teaching Strategies

Welcome students. Remind them that the quarter compares and contrasts the faithful and the faithless. Share the unifying principle of the lesson and ASK participants to reflect *How do people remain true to their values in the face of enticing social trends?* Participants don't have to answer now but ask that they consider the question as we study today's lesson.

### Introduction

**Invite** participants to consider a test that they have taken. **Ask:** How did it feel preparing for the test? How did it feel when they finished the test? **Explain:** There are many tests in life, and some are for academic purposes but there are other tests that challenge our conceptions of good and bad. Discuss ways you have experienced your faith being tested. Allow participants to share. **Introduce** the lesson for today. **Explain** how Paul wrote to the church in Corinth about examining themselves and following the teachings of Jesus Christ.

### Bible Study

**Invite** participants to read the scripture quietly. **Ask:** What is God saying through the scripture? Allow participants time to share. **Ask:** What does it mean to be "in the faith"? **Explain** faith in scripture is not about knowing you have faith but about a lifestyle of obedience (2 Cor. 13:7) born of trusting God fully both for present and for the future. **Invite** a reader to read 2 Cor. 13:8-9. **Explain:** Paul reminds the Corinthians about the contradictory nature of his ministry: his vocation as an apostle requires that he endure hardship for the sake of other believers so that more people can come to

Christ. He became weak, so the faith could be strong.

**Identify** a time when you made a bad choice – how were you able to examine yourself. **Invite** participants to reflect on those times when they were tested.

### **Life Application**

**Ask:** Has anyone ever planted vegetables or fruits? Allow time for students to share. **Explain** that a farmer must pull up the weeds before they can plant the seeds and get a good crop. Paul reminds believers that they too must identify the “weeds” in their lives that prevent their faith from growing.

Invite participants to think about individuals who mentor their lives and how their advice helped them when confronted with difficult decision. Invite the participants to share with the person(s) next to them. (Allow 2-3 minutes to share) **Ask:** What is one thing that you can do this week to strengthen your faith? Allow participants to share.

**Alternative:** Have participants consider the attributes of Jesus Christ as described in the chart and how would they use those attributes when confronted with making tough decisions. Example: How can I use patience when confronted with a difficult decision.

### **Summary**

**Discuss** the difference between building a brand-new building from the ground compared to remodeling an old building. A new building allows builders to be creative as there is nothing there and they are creating everything. An old building requires discovering what is working well and what needs improving. If we are examining ourselves, are we building a brand-new building or are we

remodeling something that exist? Explain your thoughts.

### **Closing Devotion**

**Ask:** Participants to share one word takeaway from the lesson.

**Invite:** Each person to share their one word. Remind them, they can duplicate another person's word. **Ask:** Who would like to lead us in a closing prayer?

### **Defending Our Faith**



## INT: Lesson 3 March 17, 2024

### Do Not Fear!

**Lesson Scripture:** 1 Peter 3:8-17

**Focus Scripture:** 1 Peter 3:8-17

**Key Verse:** Who will harm you if you are eager to do what is good?

1 Peter 3:13

### Vocabulary

- **Finally** – point of time marking the end; result of an event or process
- **Unity of Spirit** – likeminded, of one mind, harmonious, agree among yourselves
- **Love One Another** – formally, loving one's brother
- **Inherit** – gain possession, transfer land or possessions from a parent to a child or descendant

**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Understand how Christians are to react to suffering and challenges to their faith.
2. Explain what is right (things we must do) and wrong (things we should never do).
3. Pray and defend the Christian faith, even when suffering with Christ.

**Unifying Principle:** Adhering to dominant norms is a safe and convenient way to live. ***How do we voice objections to these norms without inviting conflict?*** In 1 Peter, Christians are encouraged to defend their faith through righteous and humble

actions even at the risk of suffering.

### **Teaching Strategies**

Welcome participants. Remind them that the quarter compares and contrasts the faithful and the faithless. Share the unifying principle of the lesson and ASK participants to reflect *How do people remain true to their values in the face of enticing social trends?* Students don't have to answer now but ask that they consider the question as we study today's lesson.

### **Introduction**

**Invite** youth to consider a time when someone did something terrible and caused them harm. **Ask** how they felt about what happened. Allow time for them to share; then **Ask** how they felt about the person who caused the harm. Allow time for them to share. **Discuss** the importance of demonstrating love to others even when they aren't demonstrating the same love toward you.

**Introduce** the lesson of 1 Peter 3. **Inform** participants that Peter was a faithful follower of Jesus Christ and wrote two letters to the believers. Today, participants are called through Peter's letter to defend their faith. Remind them, as we read the scriptures and reflect on today's lesson, that we should be intentionally kind to others.

### **Bible Study**

**Ask** participant to read the scriptures alternating between male and females; or alternate from one side of the room to the next side of the room. After the reading of the scripture **Ask** participants to observe the scripture. Instruct participants to share what stands out most for them through the scriptures.

**Explain** that while doing the right thing usually draws praise from others (3:13), sometimes the godly thing to do draws criticism or negative consequences (3:14): remembering that it is God who is our absolute priority (3:15; see also Isaiah 8:12-13) helps strengthen our resolve.

### **Life Application**

Discuss times when participants were challenged and had to make a hard choice. Invite them to write down happenings from a typical day.

Invite participants to consider today's lesson and identify at least one main takeaway.

### **Summary**

**Explain:** There was a time when many people would ask, “WWJD” – What Would Jesus Do. The theme was used to remind believers to consider if Jesus were in the same position they were in, what would Jesus do? In today's lesson, Peter writes to tell believers what they should do when they encounter evil, suffering, or disappointments. He reminds them to demonstrate love and to do good. **Invite** participants to compare how Jesus would respond and how would they respond.

### **Closing Devotion**

**Ask:** Participants to share one word takeaway from the lesson. **Invite:** Each person to share their one word. Remind them, they can duplicate another person's word. **Ask:** Who would like to lead us in a closing prayer.

### **Appendix**

What Would Jesus Do – What Would You Do?

Think about today's situations and how would Jesus respond (WWJD). Consider how you would respond with today's situations (WWYD)?

Someone	Jesus' Response	Your Response
Gossip		
Stealing		
Spreading Misinformation		
Bullying		
Questioning Identity		

**Ask:** Is there a difference between how Jesus would respond and your responses?

## **INT: Lesson 4 March 24, 2024, Palm Sunday**

### **Living in Faith**

#### **Stephen, the Spirit-Full Hero!**

**Lesson Scripture:** Acts 6

**Focus Scripture:** Acts 6:7-15

**Key Verse:** They could not withstand the wisdom and the Spirit with which he spoke. Acts 6:10

### **Vocabulary**

- **Spread** – grow, extend, increase one's status
- **Disciples** – followers, believers; pupils, those tutored
- **Priest** – to serve and perform religious rites and duties on behalf of others
- **Wonders** – miracles, portents, unusual signs, especially in the heavens, serving to foretell impending events

**Synagogue** – assembly, a meeting, congregation of Jews

**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Explore how Stephen endured while being falsely accused and persecuted for living a life of faith.
2. Be spiritually attentive to how the Holy Spirit provides believers with grace, power, and wisdom.
3. Express gratitude that, as Christians, God is present with us during times of suffering and persecution.

**Unifying Principle:** People who are falsely accused and persecuted often feel that the entire world is against them. **What**

**sustains us in the face of injustice and persecution?** The testimony of Stephen encourages us to be obedient to the faith inspired by the grace, power, and wisdom of the Holy Spirit.

### **Teaching Strategies**

Welcome participants. Remind them that the quarter compares and contrasts the faithful and the faithless. Share the unifying principle of the lesson and ASK participants to reflect on *How do people remain true to their values in the face of enticing social trends?* They don't have to answer now but ask that they consider the question as we study today's lesson.

### **Introduction**

**Invite** participants to think about some people who were falsely accused. In the U.S.A., consider the Central Park 5 and/or Henry and Leon McCollum; or in South Africa, Amy Fakude; or in Canada, David Milgaard.

**Discuss** how people are wrongfully accused of things they did not do and when evidence is presented to free them, many continue the fight for others to keep them from their experience.

**Explain** that today's lesson is about a person who was accused by others and how he kept his faith. **Introduce** Stephen as a biblical hero whose story is shared as an example of a person living out their faith.

### **Bible Study**

**Ask** participants to listen as Acts 6:7-15 is read. Invite them to complete the following as you read the scripture – underline any words that describe Stephen, circle those words that accuse Stephen of doing something, and place a rectangle or square around

those areas in the scripture that leaves you with questions. Read the scripture slowly, allowing participants time to complete the exercise of circling, underlining, and drawing.

**Discuss** the words that described Stephen as a man full of grace and power (v.8), and wisdom (v.9). What was Stephen accused of doing? “Speaking blasphemous” (v.11) and some heard him say “Jesus would destroy the place and change the customs of Moses” (v.14).

### **Life Application**

**Discuss** “What Would You Do” – there are times when we have made tough decisions. In today’s lesson, there are several scenarios to consider your responses. **Explain** how in the coming week you will interact with different people and face some tough decisions. **Invite** participants to share how they will respond to challenges these weeks, learning from today’s lesson.

**Alternative:** Discuss parallels of bullying with Stephen’s experience.

### **Summary**

**Explain** that Stephen was a man of grace and power. He did nothing wrong, yet others falsely accused him before people of authority. We are called to live by our faith. There are times when people will use your faith to challenge your decisions and each of us must learn to stay faithful to what we’ve learned from our preachers, teachers, and other leaders.

### **Closing Devotion**

**Ask:** Participants to share one word takeaway from the lesson.  
**Invite:** Each person to share their one word. Remind them that they

can duplicate another person's word. **Ask:** Who would like to lead us in a closing prayer? **Invite** them to circle in prayer and express gratitude for the Holy Spirit's presence and empowerment in their lives.



## INT: Lesson 5 March 31, 2024, Easter

### The Resurrection: Key to Faith

**Lesson Scripture:** Mark 16

**Focus Scripture:** Mark 16:1-8

**Key Verse:** “Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here.”

Mark 16:6

### Vocabulary

- **Sabbath** – seventh day of the Jewish week, a ceremonial day of rest
- **Anoint** – pour on, smear oil or ointment on the head or body for healing or even embalming
- **Tomb** – a burial place for dead; built as a memorial
- **Crucified** – executed by being nailed to a cross

**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Explore the feelings of discouragement and fear the women at the tomb experienced.
2. Experience awe at the power of the resurrected Christ that brings hope and strength.
3. Overcome feelings of discouragement to live as authentic people of faith.

**Unifying Principle:** Feelings of dread and apprehension confront many people as they navigate life's uncertainties and tragedies. ***Where can we find a source of hope that can calm our fears and allay our apprehensions?*** The women who came to the

tomb did not let their grief hinder them, and their faithfulness was rewarded with the good news of Christ's resurrection from the dead.

### **Teaching Strategies**

Welcome participants. Remind them that the quarter compares and contrasts the faithful to the faithless. Share the unifying principle of the lesson and ASK participants to reflect on *How do people remain true to their values in the face of enticing social trends?* They don't have to answer now but ask that they consider the question as we study today's lesson.

### **Introduction**

Invite participants to share the best news they heard this week. *Allow 2-3 minutes for volunteers to share.*

Discuss the reason the information was good news for you. And who did you tell? And how did they respond to your news?

Explain that Jesus' resurrection was good news. Pilate proved Jesus was dead, so for his body to be missing was good news to the believers. Jesus told his disciples that he would return, and they believed.

### **Bible Story**

Ask a volunteer to read the printed scripture.

Ask the others in the class to listen carefully and be prepared to tell the story in their way to a person who knows nothing about Jesus or the resurrection.

*Allow time for individuals to prepare to share their stories.* Explain that it was customary for the family to clean the deceased's body. Discuss who went to the tomb. Ask participants what is essential about the people who went to the tomb. *Allow participants to share.* Explain that women were not of high status in society, and

for the women to be the first to witness the resurrection brings attention to the story.

### **Life Application**

**Ask**, “What keeps you from sharing the *Good News* with others?”  
*Allow participants to share.*

**Explain** that FEAR is one of the major factors which keeps individuals from sharing the Gospel with others. The women who saw the empty tomb were fearful to go and tell others. They were eyewitnesses and yet they were afraid. **Discuss** what happens if no one ever tells anyone about Jesus’ life, ministry, death, and resurrection. **Ask**, “Does it matter?” *Allow time for participants to share.* Reflect on how our lives would be different if we didn’t know the law or if the law didn’t exist. If there were no laws, society would be lawless, and we would respond in our own best interest and disregard others. We would no longer have a desire to “love our neighbor.”

### **Summary**

**Invite** participants to share what the world would look like without the story or belief of Jesus Christ, his life, death, and resurrection. **Explain** that Jesus’ life was an example of what it looks like to live in obedience to God’s laws and love. The women left without telling others about Jesus; however, in other scripture, the story doesn’t end at verse 8 but continues and share how Jesus appeared and people believed and shared the *Good News* of the resurrection.

### **Closing Devotion**

**Ask** participants to share a one word takeaway from the lesson.  
**Invite:** Each person to share their one word. Remind them, they can

duplicate another person's word. **Ask:** Who would like to lead us in a closing prayer?

## **INT: Lesson 6 April 7, 2024**

### **Faith of Four Friends**

#### **Our Faith Can Heal Others**

**Lesson Scripture:** Luke 5:17-26

**Focus Scripture:** Luke 5:17-26

**Key Verse:** When he saw their faith, he said, "Friend, your sins are forgiven you." Luke 5:20

#### **Vocabulary**

- **Pharisees** – a political Jewish party at the time of Jesus and the apostles
- **Power** – ability, to perform an activity, mighty deed
- **Scribes** – expert teachers in the law; a conservative group in the Jewish social and religious life
- **Blasphemies** – malicious talk, slander, reviling
- **Amazement** – astonishment, bewilderment, a trance

**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Explore the values and attributes of a friend.
2. Examine the response of the scribes and Pharisees.
3. Identify how your faith impacts your friendships.

**Unifying Principle:** People need a support system when trying to overcome life's obstacles. **How can our friendships lend strength and support to others who are in crisis?** Jesus celebrates the faith and tenacity of the four friends who helped a friend find healing and wholeness.

## Teaching Strategies

Welcome participants to the new quarter. Inform them that the quarter compares and contrasts the faithful to the faithless. Share the unifying principle of the lesson and ASK participants to reflect on *How do people remain true to their values in the face of enticing social trends?* They don't have to answer now but ask that they consider the question as we study today's lesson.

### Introduction

Explain the difference in the Gospel books and why today's lesson is based on the book of Luke. (Luke is the Gospel in which the writings are geared toward the depiction of Jesus as human. The relationships of humans toward one another are a factor of human nature.) Discuss: have you ever witnessed something and others around you saw the same thing yet the perspective of the event that occurred differed from person to person? (Allow participants time to share some events – 3 min.) Explain: the Gospels are perspectives of Jesus' life from different viewpoints, as explained in the introduction. Today's lesson is based on Luke's account of Jesus experience with the paralyzed man and his friends.

### Bible Study

Divide the class into three groups – *Pharisees/Scribes*, *Jesus*, and *the friends*. Have the class read the scripture and have each group identify what the scriptures state about their role in the scripture. After allowing the groups 5 minutes to discuss and create a list of their actions, gather back for a whole group discussion. Allow 5 minutes for discussion of the whole group.

Pharisees/Scribes	Jesus	Friends

Came from everywhere to hear Jesus' teaching. Started reasoning after they heard Jesus forgive sins. Accused Jesus of blasphemy.	Teaching and healing people. Saw the friends placing their friend through the roof. Recognized their faith. Forgave sins. Perceived the thoughts of the Pharisees and scribes. Began teaching the Pharisees and scribes. Healed the man.	Brought their paralyzed friend to Jesus. Decided to take the friend to the roof and lower him down. Glorified God.
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### Life Application

Social media has changed so much of our common language and concepts of relationships. Prior to social media, a friend was someone we knew and had direct contact with. How important is it to know the difference between a virtual-friend and in-person friend, or is there a difference? (Allow students to share.) Discuss the difference between followers and friends. (Allow students to share.) Reflect on how often we become consumed by the number of views, comments, and engagements of social followers and miss the value of authentic friendships of those who care for your well-being.

### Summary

Explained: Jesus healed the man with palsy and recognized his friend's faith. The Pharisees and scribes questioned Jesus' words to forgive sin. Invite participants to share how the faith of the friends was important to the healing of the man? (Allow time for them to share.) Remind them that the man would not have been healed had not the friends been persistent to get him to Jesus because they believed.

### Closing Devotion

**Ask:** Participants to share one word takeaway from the lesson.

**Invite:** Each person to share their one word. Remind them, they can

duplicate another person's word. **Ask:** Who would like to lead us in a closing prayer?



## INT: Lesson 7 April 14, 2024

### Faith of a Centurion

### Words of Healing

**Lesson Scripture:** Luke 7:1-10

**Focus Scripture:** Luke 7:1-10

**Key Verse:** [The centurion said] “I did not presume to come to you. But only speak the word, and let my servant be healed.” Luke 7:7

### Vocabulary

- **Capernaum** – a city of Galilee, located on the western shore near the Sea of Galilee
- **Centurion** – a Roman officer, a person in command of about one hundred men, a captain
- **Authority** – ability to rule; a state of control over someone; power, freedom of action
- **Servant** – a state of being completely controlled by someone or something

**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Create an extended version of the dialogue between Jesus and the centurion that helps them identify with Jesus' compassion.
2. Admit their need for a compassionate God.
3. Extend Christlike compassion toward someone who is in a difficult circumstance.

**Unifying Principle:** There are times when the enormity of our problems diminishes our capacity to move forward. ***How should or do we respond to seemingly impossible problems?*** When a

centurion whose servant was close to death responded in great faith, Jesus was amazed and miraculously restored the man to full health.

### **Teaching Strategies**

Welcome participants. Remind them that the quarter compares and contrasts the faithful to the faithless. Share the unifying principle of the lesson and ASK participants to reflect on *How do people remain true to their values in the face of enticing social trends?* They don't have to answer now but ask that they consider the question as we study today's lesson.

### **Introduction**

Invite participants to think about how they would feel if their favorite celebrity announced they were coming to visit them at their home. (Allow time for responses.) **Ask** what they would do first and who would they tell. **Discuss:** Does it matter if the celebrity looks like you, believes like you, speaks like you, or even eats the same foods as you do? Explain. (The point is that we get excited when people we admire from afar move closer to us and enter our space.) **Explain:** A Roman soldier knows Jesus is visiting the area where he lives, and the soldier sends word to have Jesus come to his home to heal his servant who is ill.

### **Bible Study**

Ask for four volunteers to read scripture, assign as such – narrator reads vs. 1-3, 4a, 6a, and 9a; the elders read vs. 4b-5; the friends read vs. 6b-8; and Jesus reads vs. 9b-10; the narrator is reading before the other readers in every stanza. Allow everyone to read the scripture silently, Luke 7:1-10, then have the readers read accordingly. Instruct participants to consider the centurion's faith first

– **Ask** “How did the centurion demonstrate his faith?” **Explain:** The story depicts the essential link between action and faith: the centurion’s faith drives his actions, with the result that his actions demonstrate his faith (7:4-8). Then **Ask** “How did the centurion show respect for Jesus?” (Allow answers, see vs. 6-8.); how does he show respect for the Jews (vs. 4)? What about the centurion’s faith was different? **Explain:** While Jesus certainly encountered faith within Israel, the centurion’s faith was unique in its humility and recognition that Jesus’ authority comes directly from God and thus is absolute.

### **Life Application**

**Ask** participants, “Have you met someone and was shocked to discover that they were a Christian?” If yes, why were you shocked? (allow time to explain) – If not, **Ask**, “Have you met someone and was shocked to discover they liked the same artist you liked? If yes, why were you shocked? (Allow time to explain.)

**Share** how the centurion shocked Jesus as he was a Roman soldier and not a Jew, yet he believed.

**Ask** how often we judge people before we’ve had an opportunity to talk with them and get to know them. How often have you discovered that someone is just like you and share some of the same values, likes, and interest as you?

Today’s lesson reminds us that faith has no boundaries. The centurion had unwavering faith in Jesus, and he wasn’t a Jew or of Israel descent. **Explain** that Jesus did not hesitate to respond to the centurion’s request and was amazed by the centurion’s faith. How should or do we respond to impossible problems from individuals we do not know but ask for help?

## Summary

Discuss the power dynamics in showing and receiving compassion to/from others. **Ask** participants how they can extend (and receive) compassion.

## Closing Devotion

**Ask:** Participants to share a one word takeaway from the lesson.  
**Invite:** Each person to share their one word. Remind them, they can duplicate another person's word. **Ask:** Who would like to lead us in a closing prayer?

## **INT: Lesson 8 April 21, 2024**

### **Faith of a Woman Who Loved Jesus**

#### **Expressing Love and Faith**

**Lesson Scripture:** Luke 7:36-50

**Focus Scripture:** Luke 7:36-39, 44-50

**Key Verse:** Hence she has shown great love.” Luke 7:47

#### **Vocabulary**

- **Alabaster Jar** – round vase with handles, holds perfumes
- **Perfume** – strongly aromatic and expensive ointment
- **Anointing** – pour on, smear oil or ointment on head or body, embalming

**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students should be able to:

1. Discuss how one may experience forgiveness of sins and restoration by the mercy of God.
2. Accept God's gift of forgiveness and deliverance from shame.
3. Express gratitude to God by forgiving and loving others.

**Unifying Principle:** The humiliation of our public failures can make it difficult for a fresh start. **How do we overcome the weight of judgment and scrutiny from those who refuse to see past our mistakes?** Luke teaches about a woman whose great faith helped her rise above the rejection of others so that she might express her gratitude for Jesus' love and forgiveness.

#### **Teaching Strategies**

Welcome participants. Inform them that the quarter compares and contrasts the faithful to the faithless. Share the unifying principle of the lesson and ASK participants to reflect on *How do people remain true to their values in the face of enticing social trends?* They don't have to answer now but ask that they consider the question as we study today's lesson.

### **Introduction**

**Invite** participants to recap the previous lessons from Luke's Gospel. **Discuss** that in the previous lesson, Jesus encounters individuals who were on the outside of society – the paralyzed man, the centurion officer, and today the women. **Explain** that we will encounter individuals who others may have judged as undesirable and unworthy of our time. Introduce in today's lesson how Jesus meets a woman in the Pharisee's house who expresses her love toward Jesus by washing his feet.

### **Bible Study**

**Ask** participants to read the scripture in pairs. **Instruct:** as you read the passage discuss with your partner what stands out in the passage. **Explain:** Within the honor-shame culture of first-century Galilee, a spiritual leader like the Pharisee would have been highly honored, while a woman, particularly one known to sin sexually, would have been at the bottom of the ladder, deeply shamed and avoided. Also share that crossing the social boundaries was taboo, particularly for one who was dishonored; the courage shown by the woman must have been driven by deep conviction. **Ask:** What does Jesus' response reveal about Jesus' character?

*Alternative:* Invite participants to consider what the character's in

today's lesson were thinking.

Scripture	Pharisee	Woman	Jesus
Luke 7:36-38			
Luke 7:39			
Luke 7:44-47			
Luke 7:48-50			

(Complete the chart based on your responses.) Allow 4-6 minutes for the exercise.

### Life Application

**Ask** participants to describe incidents where they forgave and/or asked for forgiveness. Discuss which is harder: forgiving or asking for forgiveness.

**Discuss** How does Jesus' encounter with the sinful woman challenge societal norms? Explain: Even today, the woman's actions would be deeply uncomfortable (7:38) and considered inappropriate in a public context, but Jesus ignores social norms in favor of responding to (accepting) the woman's sincere gratitude and love (7:47-48).

**Reflect** In what ways can we apply the lessons from this passage to our lives?

### Summary

**Explain:** The woman showed her love with humility; Jesus forgave her sins; but the onlookers judged both. Ask: How would you react to this situation? How would you change this encounter?

### Closing Devotion

**Ask:** Participants to share one word takeaway from the lesson.

**Invite:** Each person to share their one word. Remind them, they can duplicate another person's word. **Explain:** that we must allow grace and love of Jesus to fill our hearts as we carry the message of forgiveness and compassion with us. Let's step into our days with the assurance that we are forgiven, loved, and called to share that same forgiveness and love with others. **Ask:** Who would like to lead us in a closing prayer?



## **INT: Lesson 9 April 28, 2024**

### **Faith of a Canaanite Woman**

### **Bread Crumbs for the Woman**

**Lesson Scripture:** Matthew 15:21-28

**Focus Scripture:** Matthew 15:21-28

**Key Verse:** Jesus answered [the Canaanite woman], “Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish.” And her daughter was healed from that moment. Matthew 15:28

### **Vocabulary**

- **Canaanite** – a person from Canaan
- **Shouting** – call out, cry out, exclaim
- **Tormented** – wrongly, inaccurately, severely, or dangerously possessed
- **Fair** – fine moral character, fine value, good, proper

**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Understand the relationship between the Canaanites and the Jews in Jesus’ time.
2. Deepen awareness of one’s own biases.
3. Create a plan for community outreach to those experiencing injustice.

**Unifying Principle:** There are systemic problems in society that unfairly restrict access to resources for some, while privileging others. How do we overcome the prejudice and hatred that denies some people equal access to resources that protect a decent

standard of living? The Canaanite woman understood that Israel's Messiah would one day bring God's reign to all people and, by faith, pressed Jesus to extend that blessing to her even before he'd completed his work among the people of Israel.

### **Teaching Strategies**

Welcome participants. Remind them that the quarter compares and contrasts the faithful to the faithless. Share the unifying principle of the lesson and ASK participants to reflect on *How do people remain true to their values in the face of enticing social trends?* They don't have to answer now but ask that they consider the question as we study today's lesson.

### **Introduction**

**Explain:** The lesson places us in a unique place during a unique time in society. The lesson takes us to Tyre and Sidon; these were ancient Phoenician port cities located along the Mediterranean coast, in what is now modern-day Lebanon. These cities were renowned for their maritime trade, seafaring skills, and economic prosperity. The Phoenicians, including the inhabitants of Tyre and Sidon, were known for their cultural achievements, including shipbuilding, trade networks, and the development of the Phoenician alphabet.

**Explain:** Canaan referred to the land that encompassed parts of present-day Israel, Palestine, Lebanon, and Jordan. It was a region of significant historical and biblical importance. The Canaanites were an indigenous people who inhabited the land before the arrival of the Israelites. Canaanite culture, religion, and practices were distinct from those of the Israelites.

In our lesson today, we will be introduced to a woman who has overcome some obstacles to get to Jesus. The woman is a Canaanite and Jews did not have encounters with Canaanites. They have diverse cultural and religious beliefs, and they also have many land disputes.

### **Bible Study**

**Ask** for volunteers to take the role of the characters in the scripture. You'll need a Canaanite woman, Jesus, the disciples, and a narrator. **Invite** the class to read the scripture silently. **Invite** the volunteer readers to read the scripture with their roles. **Instruct** class to reflect on what happened and **Ask**, "What stands out most in the scripture?" **Ask**, "How would you feel as the woman when Jesus initially responded?" What did the woman say that indicated she knew who Jesus was even as a Canaanite?

**Explain:** That the woman names Jesus the "Son of David" (15:22) is significant theologically, for Matthew believed that the Son of David is the prophesied Messiah. It is also culturally significant for Jesus and his disciples. The woman begins the dialog by confronting the ethnic and religious barriers between them.

### **Life Application**

**Discuss:** People usually divide their societies to insiders and outsiders. Who is the insider and the outsider in this encounter? What insider/outsider dynamics do the youth experience in their own lives? **Ask:** Who are the insiders / outsiders in school? Does the church have insiders/outsiders? Explain. **Reflect:** Jesus' encounters with individuals like the Canaanite woman and the Roman centurion displayed a broader understanding of faith and the breaking down of

barriers between diverse groups.

What are some actions you can take to break down barriers at school, home, or the church?

Invite youth to create a community plan to address an injustice in the community.

### **Summary**

**Explain:** The woman's responses accept that Israel is special to God and the focus of Jesus' ministry (15:26-27) but also demonstrate that she recognizes that God is not limited to just Israel: even the leftovers of God's gifts to Israel are enough to "feed" the rest of the world (15:27). **Review:** The questions from the student guide - how did the woman's faith and persistence influence Jesus' response? Why do you think Jesus initially did not respond to the woman? (Allow students time to respond.)

### **Closing Devotion**

**Ask:** Participants to share one word takeaway from the lesson. **Invite:** Each person to share their one word. Remind them, they can duplicate another person's word. **Explain:** Be intentional to remember the Canaanite woman's example through the week. Embrace unwavering faith, persevere in prayer, and approach God with humility. **Ask:** Who would like to lead us in a closing prayer?

## **INT: Lesson 10 May 5, 2024**

### **Justified by Faith in Jesus**

#### **Boasting or Faith?**

**Lesson Scripture:** Romans 3:21-30

**Focus Scripture:** Romans 3:21-30

**Key Verses:** For there is no distinction, since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; they are now justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Romans 3:22b-24

#### **Vocabulary**

- **Grace** – kindness, favor toward someone
- **Redemption** – a ransom, a release
- **Atonement** – means of forgiveness
- **Demonstrate** – sign, proof
- **Forbearance** – patience, tolerance
- **Uncircumcised** – the state of removal of foreskin of the male member, an act that had been a sign of obedience to a covenant

**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Explain why personal accomplishments have no value in God's economy.
2. Appreciate that we are not justified by works, but by our faith in Christ.
3. Engage in active prayer and devotion to God to demonstrate our gratitude for being forgiven.

**Unifying Principle:** People want to secure their fate based on demanding work and a well-earned reputation. Do we all get what we deserve? Paul tells the Roman believers that that their boasting will be excluded in God's economy and that a person is justified by faith apart from work.

### **Teaching Strategies**

Welcome participants to the new quarter. Inform them that the quarter compares and contrasts the faithful to the faithless. Share the unifying principle of the lesson and ASK participants to reflect on *How do people remain true to their values in the face of enticing social trends?* They don't have to answer now but ask that they consider the question as we study today's lesson.

### **Introduction**

**Discuss** the extracurricular activities in which the youth are involved. Ask them how "competition" impacts interaction with their opponents and teammates. How does this competitiveness make them feel? How do they perceive themselves through their involvement with this group?

### **Bible Study**

**Present** a short background on Romans, Paul, and the major ideas in chapters 1–2. Invite the youth to read the text and make a list of the major ideas. **Ask:** Do any of our achievements have any value for God? What does Paul say about boasting and being competitive? How are we justified?

**Explain:** Paul has established that Jews and Gentiles are equally guilty of sin before God (Romans 1–2, but see also 3:9), since the law only identifies sin and does not have the power to erase it (3:20).

## Life Application

**Explain** that our relationship with God is not based on our own efforts or honorable deeds but on the faith we have in Jesus Christ. There is nothing we can ever do to “earn” God’s love or approval. Recognize that God loves us just as we are, and God’s love is not dependent on our actions or our achievements; his love is unconditional. **Discuss:** We are extremely competitive in our society. What do you believe is the driving force behind our competitiveness? Today, many are trying to create the best content to get that viral moment in social media. Some are working on rap music or other genres to be discovered by music producers. What is driving our competitive spirit? Allow youth to share. **Reflect:** If Paul were writing to the church today, what would be the warning related to our faith and our boast? Would our boast be in the Lord or in our competitive drive?

## Summary

**Explain:** We are justified through faith. God wants to have a relationship with us and will be there through all our failures. **Encourage** the youth to work in small groups to brainstorm and commit to spiritual practices such as prayer, devotion, or meditation. Conclude by reminding them that there is no competitiveness required in this practice, only faith in Jesus and trust in God’s love.

## Closing Devotion

**Ask:** Participants to share one word takeaway from the lesson. **Invite:** Each person to share their one word. Remind them, they can duplicate another person’s word. **Ask:** Who would like to lead us in a closing prayer?

## **INT: Lesson 11 May 12, 2024**

### **Reckoned as Righteous**

### **God Blessed Abraham**

**Lesson Scripture:** Romans 4

**Focus Scripture:** Romans 4:13-25

**Key Verses:** [Abraham] grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, being fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. Romans 4:20-21

### **Vocabulary**

- **Offspring** – the kernel part of a plant or fruit; that which propagates; children; implying that it was imparted
- **Promise** – consent, approval
- **Heir** – receiver, one who gets the inheritance; for another
- **Wrath** – anger, state of fury, punishment
- **Persuaded** – be fully assured, convinced; make happen, fulfill; proclaim fully

**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Explain Paul's description of how Abraham modeled righteous faith.
2. Explore how we grow in faith and receive strength from God.
3. Celebrate Jesus' gift of justification with praise and thanksgiving.

**Unifying Principle:** People want to be rewarded for their good efforts. **What successes do we hope to earn from our hard work?** Paul tells the Roman Christians that the blessing God gave to



Abraham was “reckoned to him as righteousness” and that, on account of Christ, God does the same for us.

### **Teaching Strategies**

Welcome participants. Remind them that the quarter compares and contrasts the faithful to the faithless. Share the unifying principle of lesson and ASK participants to reflect on *How do people remain true to their values in the face of enticing social trends?* They don't have to answer now but ask that they consider the question as we study today's lesson.

### **Introduction**

**Invite** participants to define faith. Discuss Genesis 12:1-3 – The Lord had said to Abram, “Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you. <sup>2</sup>“I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. <sup>3</sup> I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.” **Explain:** Faith is the growth of trust in God. Abraham is the example of faith and Paul uses his legacy to explain it to the Jews and Gentiles in Rome.

### **Bible Study**

**Ask** for three volunteers to read Romans 4:13-25; 1<sup>st</sup> Reader – Romans 13-15; 2<sup>nd</sup> Reader – Romans 4:16-22; and 3<sup>rd</sup> Reader – Romans 4:23-25.

**Explain:** The gist of Paul's argument is that Gentiles (and Jews) do not need to submit to a checklist of diet, dress, or calendar to be or show themselves to be God's people; even God's true people descended from Abraham (1 Samuel 16:7 - But the Lord said to

Samuel, “Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.”). Their lived-out faith in God in a broken world is a sign and different enough (1 Peter 3:15 – But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. Be sure to do this with gentleness and respect.).

### **Life Application**

**Ask** if anyone has had someone break a promise they had made to them. *Allow individuals to share.* Invite participants to explain how it feels when individuals break a promise. *Allow individuals to share.* If you have an appropriate example, share. **Discuss:** What are promises God has asked humankind to keep? How successful has humankind been in keeping their promises to God? **Reflect:** On the difficulties of keeping a promise and more importantly how to live righteously.

### **Summary**

**Explain:** Paul wanted early believers to know that Abraham's faith was not based on obedience to the law but on the promise God had provided.

### **Closing Devotion**

**Ask:** Participants to share one word takeaway from the lesson. **Invite:** Each person to share their one word. Remind them, they can duplicate another person's word. **Ask:** Who would like to lead us in a closing prayer?

### ***Appendix***

## Abraham's Journey Through Paul's Writings

As a way of summarizing today's lesson, trace Abraham's journey of faith by outlining today's scripture lesson.

Abraham

1. Abraham had faith (v. 16)
  - a. *The promise came to Abraham by faith (v. 16)*
  - b. *The faith of Abraham gave us all access to the promise (v. 16)*
  - c. *Abraham became the father of us all (v. 17)*
2. Abraham believed (v. 18)
  - a. *Became the father of all nations (v. 18)*
  - b. *Although he was old, he believed he would have a son (v. 19)*
  - c. *Gave God glory even when the promise hadn't been fulfilled (v. 19)*

## **INT: Lesson 12 May 19, 2024, Pentecost Sunday**

### **Reconciled to God**

### **Christ Sets Us Right With God**

**Lesson Scripture:** Romans 5:1-11

**Focus Scripture:** Romans 5:1-11

**Key Verse:** Since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Romans 5:1

### **Vocabulary**

- **Justified** – right
- **Suffering** – distress, oppression, tribulation
- **Demonstrates** – come into existence, stand with, recommend
- **Reconciled** – to reestablish relations after disrupted or broken
- **Boast** – brag about, rejoice in, glory in

**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Discuss why Paul could remain confident in God when facing weaknesses, challenges, and failures.
2. Experience a sense of hope, assurance, and peace because of our faith in Christ.
3. Share innovative and creative ways one can demonstrate confidence in God during times of temptation.

**Unifying Principle:** People feel guilty if they are unable to overcome their weaknesses and failures. How can we remain strong and confident even when we encounter failure? In the letter to the Christians in Rome, Paul instills hope and assures us that we are

justified, not by works, but by faith in Jesus Christ.

## Teaching Strategies

Welcome participants. Inform them that the quarter compares the faithful to the faithless. Share the unifying principle of the lesson and ASK participants to reflect on *How do people remain true to their values in the face of enticing social trends?* They don't have to answer now but ask that they consider the question as we study today's lesson.

## Introduction

**Invite** participants to define the concepts of peace and truce. *Allow time to respond.* Invite them to use their phone or other device to look up the concepts. **Explain:** Peace is a state of reconciliation; a truce can be a cease-fire before hostilities take over. **Discuss** the examples of peace and of truce.

**Explain:** Truce results in a cease-fire when two sides – Yemen in 2014 and the Sudan in 2023. Peace treaties are found in the U.N. **Introduce:** Paul wrote to the believers about having peace in God and being reconciled, to be brought into a right relationship.

## Bible Study

**Ask** participants to read the scripture in silence. **Invite** them to circle the words that are difficult to understand. Walk through the scripture, verse by verse. Explain what it means to be “justified by faith,” “have access by faith,” “glory in tribulation” and explain the progression from tribulation to patience, to experience to hope. Invite participants to reflect on verses 1-5 and ask them to share what it means to reach hope? What has an individual been through if they have discovered hope? (It's in vs. 3-4.)

**Explain:** Reciprocation and gratitude were significant elements of the first-century Mediterranean social fabric. They were also gifts within that social web (often called a “grace” in the first century) which brought with it the question of how to appropriately express these. For Paul, there is no question of “returning the favor” with salvation but rather the appropriate response is to please and accurately represent *The Giver* (5:3-4). Discuss vs .6 “YET” without strength – what does it mean to be without strength and that Christ died for the ungodly? Who are the ungodly? **Ask:** What does verse 8 say about Christ? About us? (Allow participants to share.) **Explain:** Christ died while we were sinners; we are still sinners today, yet Christ still died for us. **Share:** In Roman culture, the highest ideal of friendship was the willingness to die for a friend. Paul shows how God transcends the highest ideals of the culture in God’s radical love for God’s enemies (5:6-10, and a subtle call to the suffering church to love those who persecute them; see Matthew 5:11, 39-42).

### **Life Application**

**Ask** participants what it look like to experience peace. **Explain** to youth that having faith can provide a sense of inner calm and security even during challenging time. Discuss historical individuals who faced adversity and came out of it strong. **Reflect** on a challenge you faced and how you managed it. Discuss the aspects of obtaining hope through the challenge.

### **Summary**

**Ask** the youth to name persons of faith from previous lessons in the quarter. Examples: Stephen, Abraham, the Canaanite woman, the centurion. **Ask:** What about each of these stories indicate these believers had peace with God through Jesus? *Allow participants to*

respond.

### Closing Devotion

**Ask:** Participants to share one word takeaway from the lesson.

**Invite:** Each person to share their one word. Remind them, they can duplicate another person's word. **Ask:** Who would like to lead us in a closing prayer?

### Appendix

Using your own experience and our scripture lesson for today, Romans 5:1-11, define *Peace*, *Hope*, and *Assurance* in the spaces provided below.

Peace	Hope	Assurance
<i>Example</i> <b>Peace</b> is the inner tranquility and reconciliation with God through faith in Jesus Christ.	<i>Example</i> <b>Hope</b> is the confident expectation of experiencing God's glory in the future, grounded in the love of God poured into believers' hearts by the Holy Spirit.	<i>Example</i> <b>Assurance</b> is the firm conviction and confidence that comes from knowing one has been justified, saved, and reconciled with God through the sacrificial love of Jesus Christ.

Explain peace in God and peace on earth. Is there a difference between the two peace? Explain.

Example:

*The passage begins by stating, "Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Romans 5:1, NRSV). This verse emphasizes that through faith in Jesus Christ, believers are justified, meaning they are declared righteous and reconciled with God. This reconciliation leads to a*

*state of peace with God.*

*This “peace in God” is the inner assurance and tranquility that comes from knowing that, through faith in Jesus, believers have been forgiven of their sins and are in a right relationship with God. It is a spiritual peace that arises from a deep sense of being accepted, loved, and forgiven by a higher power.*

*Peace on earth involves living in a way that reflects the teachings of Jesus, which include principles of love, compassion, justice, and reconciliation.*

*The teachings of Jesus encourage believers to be peacemakers, to love their neighbors, and to seek justice for the oppressed. Peace on earth is beyond personal faith to a collective responsibility to promote peace and well-being in the world.*

*The ultimate goal for Christians is not only to experience personal peace in their relationship with God but also to actively contribute to creating a more peaceful and just society.*

How does peace happen?

Example:

*Peace, as described in Romans 5:1-11, happens through faith in Jesus Christ, leading to justification, access to God’s grace, a confident hope in God’s glory, endurance through trials, character development, the pouring of God’s love into believers’ hearts, and ultimately, reconciliation and restored relationship with God. Paul demonstrated that peace is not dependent on circumstances but is rooted in the unchanging love and grace of God.*

Describe what it feels like to have peace with God.



Example:

*It depends on each individual; but, to have peace with God can include having tranquility – an inner calmness; it could be the assurance of being loved by God; a freedom from guilt and shame; having a trust in God's plan that you have no fear; peace leads to a feeling of gratitude and thankfulness.*

*The experience of peace with God can evolve over time and may be influenced by a person's beliefs, experiences, and personal journey.*

## **INT: Lesson 13 May 26, 2024**

### **Who Has Believed?**

### **Confessing Our Faith**

**Lesson Scripture:** Romans 10:1-21

**Focus Scripture:** Romans 10:1-17

**Key Verse:** If you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. Romans 10:9

### **Vocabulary**

- **Saved** – deliverance, the experiences of salvation
- **Knowledge** – to possess information; the content of what is known
- **Righteousness** – what is right, justice; be in a right relationship with; practices required by a religion
- **Culmination** – point of time marking the end of an event or process

**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Compare and contrast the difference between living by the law and living by faith.
2. Appreciate God's gracious gift of salvation available to all humankind.
3. Commit to share your faith in Jesus as the pathway to God and salvation.

**Unifying Principle:** People want to follow prescribed steps that

allow them to climb a guaranteed ladder to success. **How do we react when others are offered a path to success that seemingly bypasses the rules we've carefully followed?** In his letter to the Romans, Paul wrestles with the insufficiency of the zeal for God that comes through the law versus the new path to God that comes through faith in Christ.

### **Teaching Strategies**

Welcome participants. Remind them that the quarter has compared and contrasted the faithful to the faithless. Share the unifying principle of the lesson and ASK participants to reflect on *How do people remain true to their values in the face of enticing social trends?* They don't have to answer now but ask that they consider the question as we study today's lesson.

### **Introduction**

Invite participants to share the AME Church's mission or vision: *The mission of the AME Church is to minister to the social, spiritual, and physical development of all people. The vision: At every level of the Connection and in every local church, the AME Church shall engage in carrying out the spirit of the original Free African Society, out of which the AME Church evolved: that is, to seek out and save the lost, and to serve the needy. It is also the duty of the church to continue to encourage all members to become involved in all aspects of church training.* If no one knows the mission or vision, please share it with them. Once someone has shared the mission and/or vision, **discuss** why it is important to know the church's mission or vision.

**Explain:** Paul wanted believers to know what it meant to be saved

and why they should seek salvation. Introduce today's lesson, "Confessing Our Faith" and **Ask**, "Who has believed?"

### **Bible Study**

**Ask** for seven volunteers to read Old Testament scripture; if you don't have seven volunteers, have volunteers read more than two verses. Old Testament scriptures: Leviticus 18:5 (Keep my decrees and laws, for the person who obeys them will live by them. I am the Lord.); Deuteronomy 30:12 (It is not up in heaven, so that you have to ask, "Who will ascend into heaven to get it and proclaim it to us so we may obey it?"); Deuteronomy 30:13 (Nor is it beyond the sea, so that you have to ask, "Who will cross the sea to get it and proclaim it to us so we may obey it?"); Isaiah 28:16 (So this is what the Sovereign Lord says: "See, I lay a stone in Zion, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone for a sure foundation; the one who relies on it will never be stricken with panic.); Joel 2:32 (And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved; for on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there will be deliverance, as the Lord has said, even among the survivors whom the Lord calls); Isaiah 52:7 (How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, "Your God reigns!"); Isaiah 53:1 (Who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?). **Invite** participants to align the Old Testament scriptures with Paul's statement in Romans. Leviticus 18:5 (10:5), Deuteronomy 30:12 (10:6), Deuteronomy 30:13 (10:8), Isaiah 28:16 (10:11), Joel 2:32 (10:13), Isaiah 52:7 (10:15), Isaiah 53:1 (10:16). **Explain** Paul's quotation of Deuteronomy 30:14 (10:6-8) is meant to remind believers that Christ has already completed his ministry of our reconciliation with the Father (from incarnation to resurrection), and all that is left to do is trust him for a process he's already completed.

### **Life Application**

**Explain:** Paul says we must hear and believe. **Ask:** How does

Paul say we “hear” the Word of God? *Allow time to respond.* **Ask:** What is the next step after hearing and believing? *Allow time to respond.* Invite participants to consider their faith journey and discover what does it take to live for God – hearing and believing – is there anything else? *Allow them to share.*

**Alternative:** Divide the youth into groups of 3-4. Make sure at least one youth has a cell phone and is permitted to take photos. Each group should walk out and take five photos of “God’s gracious gift of salvation.” These could be of objects, colors, shapes, or any creative composition. After they return, they must share with you these photos. Project these photos on the screen and let the youth share why they took that particular photo.

**Invite** the youth to share these photos with friends or/and families and use the opportunity to talk about faith in Christ and God’s love.

### **Summary**

**Explain** that we have studied lessons about following the law, confessing faith, and Abraham’s faith. **Ask:** What have we discovered from the previous lessons?

### **Closing Devotion**

**Ask:** Participants to share one word takeaway from the lesson. **Invite:** Each person to share their one word. Remind them, they can duplicate another person’s word. **Ask:** Who would like to lead us in a closing prayer?

# **The Teacher's Guide - JR: Lesson 1 March 3, 2024**

## **Junior Lessons**

**Spring Quarter: March – May 2024**

**Prepared by Rev. Monica C. Jones, Ph.D.**

## **God Who Keeps Us**

**Lesson Scripture:** Jude

**Focus Scripture:** Jude 17-25

**Key Verses:** But you, beloved...keep yourselves in the love of God.  
Jude 20-21

## **Word Power!!!**

- **Jude** – The brother of Jesus who wrote one of the shortest letters of the New Testament.

**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Be willing (always) to defend their faith.
2. See that respect for other faith traditions should be mutual.
3. Understand Jude's overall message to the church.
4. Understand that God will give them confidence and strength when they need it.
5. Understand the connection between the Bible narrative and the contemporary story.

## **Teaching Strategies**

### **Emphasis**

1. Stress the importance of being prayerful when our faith is challenged.
2. Make the connection between Jude's message of building up

ourselves in the faith and Bobbi's story.

3. Stress maintaining courage in the face of conflict and how God is our friend.

### **Questions**

1. How do you think God's love will help you in your everyday life?
2. Is there something that you believe would help if you found yourself in a situation like Bobbi's? Why or why not?

**Resources:** Bibles or Bible apps should be made available for each class, pens and pencils

## **JR: Lesson 2 March 10, 2024**

### **Meeting the Test**

**Lesson Scripture:** 2 Corinthians 13:1-11

**Focus Scripture:** 2 Corinthians 13:5-11

**Key Verse:** Finally, brothers and sisters, farewell. Be restored; listen to my appeal; agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you. 2 Corinthians 13:11

### **Word Power!!!**

- **Examine** – To look at or to study; to think about how something or someone functions.
- **Paul** – An apostle of Jesus Christ who was converted to Christianity and who wrote most of the New Testament letters.

**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Understand the importance of being concerned about others.
2. Visualize what it is like to pray for one another.
3. Understand the importance of living peacefully and avoiding conflict.
4. Comprehend the parallels between Paul's advice to the church and the story of the class preparing for examinations.

### **Teaching Strategies**

#### **Emphasis**

1. Encourage interceding for one another through prayer.
2. Compare the story of the elementary school and Paul's suggestions in the letter regarding peace and prayer.

#### **Questions**



1. Have you ever been away from school for a long time after studying at home? If so, how did you feel?
2. What is an example of someone not living in peace with another individual of which you can think?
3. What do you think it means to intercede for someone else?

**Resources:** Pens, pencils

## **JR: Lesson 3 March 17, 2024**

### **Suffering for Doing Good**

**Lesson Scripture:** 1 Peter 3:8-17

**Focus Scripture:** 1 Peter 3:8-9,13-17

**Key Verse:** Have unity of spirit, sympathy, love for one another, a tender heart, and a humble mind. 1 Peter 3:8

### **Word Power!!!**

- **Sympathy** – A feeling of concern and love for someone who is hurting or sad.
- **Humble** – Being kind and modest; not boasting about accomplishments.
- **Peter** – A leading disciple of Jesus Christ who became an apostle and leader of Christian disciples.

**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Understand what it means to allow Jesus to resolve problems and issues for them rather than taking revenge on others.
2. Understand the message of Peter to the church regarding unity.
3. Relate to the concept of a Good Samaritan.
4. Identify AME polity in the lesson.

### **Teaching Strategies**

#### **Emphasis**

(Note: **Exercise key: 2,2,1**; be sure to discuss learners' choices)

1. Stress the importance of being humble.
2. Compare the lessons Peter teaches with that of avoiding fights

and violence.

3. Use everyday examples of weapons and destructive behavior in the schools to clarify living in unity with other people.
4. Familiarize learners with the church's *Doctrine and Discipline* – share during discussion and Intro to God's Word.

### **Questions**

1. What does it mean to be humble, and what do you think is important about not boasting?
2. How have you felt about seeing other children being victims of violence in schools?
3. How do you think using some of what Peter talks about in his letter would help in stopping fights or other kinds of conflicts?

**Resources:** Video recording of the song or other device for playing “We Are Family,” paper and writing tools or other supplies for recording lyrics, copy of *The Doctrine and Discipline*

## **JR: Lesson 4 March 24, 2024**

### **Stephen, A Man Filled With Power**

**Lesson Scripture:** Acts 6

**Focus Scripture:** Acts 6:5, 7-15

**Key Verse:** Stephen, full of grace and power, did great wonders and signs among the people. Acts 6:8

#### **Word Power!!!**

- **Martyr (mar'-ter)** – A person who gives his or her life for a cause or belief.

**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Understand the relevance and concept of Palm Sunday.
2. Comprehend what the word *martyr* means.
3. Make the connection between Stephen's act of courage and examples of heroes and heroines of today.
4. Give examples of ways to assist persons who are in trouble.

#### **Teaching Strategies**

##### **Emphasis**

1. Give recognition to Palm Sunday and what it means in addition to explaining the lesson for today.
2. Review the season of Lent and what it means to the church.
3. Compare the story of Stephen with that of modern-day individuals who have died for what they believe – Dr. King may be one but try to provide other examples.
4. Be sure everyone understands the definition of *martyr*, and how Jesus Christ is the ultimate example.

5. Provide opportunities for learners to ask questions about death and dying for a cause.

### **Questions**

1. Do you understand the Lenten season and fasting?
2. What do you think about individuals who are willing to die for what they believe in?
3. Other than Dr. King, are there heroic people that you have been taught about in school? Is there someone that you know personally who died to save someone else?
4. What are some groups or organizations that you think help to protect the rights of black people and others who are victims of discrimination?

**Resources:** Provide Bibles or Bible apps each week, pens, pencils, music app, video maker or device (optional)

## **JR: Lesson 5 March 31, 2024**

### **Filled With Amazement**

**Lesson Scripture:** Mark 16

**Focus Scripture:** Mark 16:1-8

**Key Verse:** “Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here.”  
Mark 16:6

### **Word Power!!!**

- **Nazareth (nae'-zah-reth)** – The home of Jesus.

**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Celebrate again the victory of Jesus' resurrection.
2. Commit their lives to the resurrected Jesus.
3. Explore the process of sharing the good news of salvation to others.

### **Teaching Strategies**

#### **Emphasis**

1. Provide examples of how to witness to others about the love of Jesus.
2. Explain how we can use artistic ability to illustrate the resurrection story.
3. Stress the importance of recognizing *Resurrection Day* as a holy day and not just a day to receive gifts and baskets.

#### **Questions**

1. What does *Resurrection Day* mean to you?
2. Even though you may like to receive presents and candy during

this season, do you understand why putting Jesus first is more important?

3. Would you like to read the part in the play that you wrote?

**Resources:** Pens, pencils, markers, or crayons

## **JR: Lesson 6 April 7, 2024**

### **Jesus Heals a Paralyzed Man**

**Lesson Scripture:** Luke 5:17-26

**Focus Scripture:** Luke 5:17-26

**Key Verse:** “Friend, your sins are forgiven you.” Luke 5:20

#### **Word Power!!!**

- **Empathy** – To feel concern; to have interest in someone else’s condition.

**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Understand the concept of empathy and showing concern for others.
2. See parallels between the scriptural narrative and sacrificing to help someone who is in need.
3. Imagine what they would do if they had to assist an ill person, or someone struck by tragedy.

#### **Teaching Strategies**

##### **Emphasis**

1. Define empathy and give relevant examples from current events or situations.
2. Use demonstrations and mock activities during the class to stress the importance of sacrificing for others.
3. Explain how the faith of the friends of the paralyzed man in the story was critical to his healing.

##### **Questions**



1. What is an example of something you have done to help someone else, even though it was inconvenient for you?
2. How do you think Jesus felt when he saw what the four men had done for their paralyzed friend?

**Resources:** Pens, pencils, paper or devices for recording details, private space for rehearsing if possible

## **JR: Lesson 7 April 14, 2024**

### **Faith in Jesus**

**Lesson Scripture:** Luke 7:1-10

**Focus Scripture:** Luke 7:1-10

**Key Verse:** “I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such faith.”  
Luke 7:9

### **Word Power!!!**

- **Centurion** (sen-tur'-eon) – An officer in the Roman army during the time of Jesus.

**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Understand the concept of having total faith in Jesus.
2. Visualize the miracles that Jesus performed for persons who had faith in his power.

### **Teaching Strategies**

#### **Emphasis**

1. Focus on how total, blind faith is something that we must have when we expect miracles from the Lord.
2. Explain how the Roman soldier's position of power was secondary to that of the power of Jesus Christ and how the soldier recognized that fact.
3. Provide real, everyday examples of how faith works.
4. Introduce learners to Hebrews 11:6, as reference to the lesson point regarding having faith in order to please God.

#### **Questions**

1. What do you think was so special about the Roman soldier having

faith in Jesus as opposed to one of Jesus' own disciples?

2. Has there been something in your life that you had faith in Jesus about? What happened?

**Resources:** Hebrews 11:6, dictionary or app, provide colored construction paper, crayons, or pens, glue, poster board, scissors, and other art supplies as needed

## **JR: Lesson 8 April 21, 2024**

### **A Sinful Woman's Faith**

**Lesson Scripture:** Luke 7:36-50

**Focus Scripture:** Luke 7:36-39, 44-50

**Key Verse:** [Jesus] said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace." Luke 7:50

### **Word Power!!!**

- **Alabaster** – A fine white mineral that was of immense value and very expensive in biblical times.

**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. See parallels between the Bible story and how people who are mistreated by others should be loved instead.
2. Understand that making mistakes is a part of being human.
3. Visualize how humility is illustrated by washing another person's feet as noted in the lesson.

### **Teaching Strategies**

#### **Emphasis**

1. Retell the story of the alabaster box and how the mineral was important during Christ's time.
2. Explain the tradition of foot washing and why churches practice it.
3. Examine the way others ridiculed the woman and how Jesus defended her.
4. Make a connection between the mistreatment of the woman and how we may mistreat each other today.
5. Tye Tribbet's song "We Gon' Be All Right":

<https://youtu.be/U0TaADfUxPw>.

### **Questions**

1. Do you feel guilty about something that you have done? Did you apologize for it? What could you do now if you did not?
2. Do you think the people in this story who were being mean to the woman are similar to bullies today?

**Resources:** Devices to view or listen to Tibbet's song, pens, pencils, markers, or crayons

## JR: Lesson 9 April 28, 2024

### A Child Is Healed

**Lesson Scripture:** Matthew 15:21-28

**Focus Scripture:** Matthew 15:21-28

**Key Verse:** Jesus answered her, “Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish.” And her daughter was healed from that moment. Matthew 15:28

### Word Power!!!

- **Canaanite** – A particular group of people who were disliked and considered ungodly by Jews; they were not well-received into the Jewish community during biblical times.

**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Understand why it is wrong to reject other people who are different or who come from different cultures.
2. Have a grasp of what Canaanite culture meant to Jews.
3. See parallels between the biblical narrative and contemporary story.

### Emphasis

1. Emphasize how cultural differences can become points of conflict if we are not tolerant of others; explain *tolerance* if necessary.
2. Encourage creativity and careful thought as learners work on their scenes for the subway story.
3. Solicit examples of persons either in the church or at the schools that learners attend who are different from them and how they are treated.

### Questions

1. Do you think the situation that happened in our story could happen in real life?
2. What are some examples of what you could say and things you shouldn't say that you produced in your practice time?
3. Even though Jesus did not do so right away, he did grant the woman what she requested. Do you think that because she was willing to ask again, this convinced Jesus to help her?
4. What would you do if you saw someone making fun of someone else at school?

**Resources:** Pens, pencils, markers, and crayons

## **JR: Lesson 10 May 5, 2024**

### **Forgiveness Is a Gift**

**Lesson Scripture:** Romans 3:21-30

**Focus Scripture:** Romans 3:21-29

**Key Verses:** For there is no distinction, since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; they are now justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Romans 3:22b-24

### **Word Power!!!**

- **Justified** – When we have the right relationship with God and as God favors our lives, we are justified.

**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Understand that accepting Jesus helps us be forgiven by God.
2. Identify with the character in the story about the difficulty of understanding the crucifixion.
3. Be willing to forgive others.

### **Teaching Strategies**

Note: Having a clergy person or other knowledgeable individual visit with the class to talk about the crucifixion may be helpful here.

### **Emphasis**

1. Stress how the crucifixion as well as other parts of the Jesus story are miraculous and must be accepted by faith.
2. Review the scriptural text and be clear that all persons are offered forgiveness regardless of who they are.
3. Give ample time for questions or concerns about the story and use the main character, Kaylah, as a teaching tool.



4. Explain sacrifice in the context of Old vs. New Testament

### **Questions**

1. Do you understand what it means when the text says *fallen short*?
2. Have you had the same questions before as Kaylah?
3. How would you explain how we are forgiven or what we must do to be forgiven when we have made a mistake?

**Resources:** Assorted popsicle sticks, paint or markers, fabric, glue, glitter, and other materials for decorating, a recording of “Alas, and Did My Savior Bleed” (AMECH #139)

## **JR: Lesson 11 May 12, 2024**

### **Strong in Faith**

**Lesson Scripture:** Romans 4

**Focus Scripture:** [Romans](#) 4:13, 16-21

**Key Verse:** Hoping against hope, [Abraham] believed that he would become “the father of many nations.” Romans 4:18a

### **Word Power!!!**

- **Sarah and Abraham** – The mother and father of the nation of Israel. God blessed them for their faith.

**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Explain how our faith is strengthened in God.
2. Feel joy in knowing that God blesses us because of our faith.
3. Visualize how New Testament writers used Old Testament stories to teach lessons.

### **Teaching Strategies**

#### **Emphasis**

1. Stress the relevance of Jesus fulfilling prophecies that were made in the Old Testament.
2. Retell the story of Abraham and Isaac and the faith that Abraham exhibited.
3. Give other examples of how writers in addition to Paul use the Old Testament to explain or teach.

#### **Key**

**GOD creates us**

**Jesus prays for us**

## **The Holy Spirit comforts us**

### **Questions**

1. Why is Abraham such a great hero for the Jewish people?
2. What example can you give in the New Testament that is similar to the faith that Abraham had in the Old Testament?
3. Is there something in your life right now that you think will require a lot of faith in order to achieve?

*(Encourage students to ask questions regarding the Old Testament)*

**Resources:** The book of Genesis, devices, or Bibles

## JR: Lesson 12 May 19, 2024

### Faith Gives Us Peace

**Lesson Scripture:** Romans 5:1-11

**Focus Scripture:** Romans 5:1-11

**Key Verse:** Since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord

Jesus Christ. Romans 5:1

### Word Power!!!

- **Pentecost** – The holy day that our church celebrates when the Holy Spirit came to earth and filled worshipers and followers of Christ.

**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Know the story of the church in Rome and why Paul wanted to encourage the Christians there.
2. Understand the story of Pentecost and its relevance in the church today.
3. Visualize what it means to have true peace, relating it to their everyday lives.

### Teaching Strategies

#### Emphasis

1. Emphasize Pentecost and its symbols in detail; explain the miracle of the people who were able to understand other languages that were spoken.
2. Look at the Holy Spirit as a part of the *Trinity* and explain how the Holy Spirit comforts us and gives us peace.

3. Explain exercises and activities in today's lesson in a way that circles back to the Pentecost story.

### **Questions**

1. Do you understand why fire is used as one of the symbols of Pentecost?
2. When you have peace, it means that you are not worried or anxious. Is there something that still gives you a problem that you think you should pray about?

**Resources:** Crayons and markers

## **JR: Lesson 13 May 26, 2024**

### **A New Path to God**

**Lesson Scripture:** Romans 10:1-21

**Focus Scripture:** Romans 10:5-13

**Key Verse:** “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.” Romans 10:13

### **Word Power!!!**

**Salvation** – The greatest gift of all that Jesus gave us by dying on the cross and then being raised from the dead.

**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Learn the stories of Paul and his encouragement to Christians in Rome.
2. Celebrate diversity and the love of Jesus for all humankind.
3. Recall prior lessons of salvation, redemption, and the love that we should have for one another.
4. Talk about what it means to accept the Lord as their Savior.

### **Teaching Strategies**

#### **Emphasis**

1. Review prior lessons and explain specific points that Paul has made in his writings including today’s lesson about forgiveness and redemption.
2. Encourage a celebration or celebratory atmosphere for today’s lesson; use the graphic to emphasize diversity.
3. Make mention of examples of everyday people who made mistakes then changed their way of life.

4. Key:

### **Questions**

1. Do you believe that the Lord will forgive you for mistakes you have made?
2. After looking at our prayers this quarter, which one would you say is your favorite? Have you memorized one?
3. Did you complete your puzzle?
4. What was your favorite activity this quarter?

**Resources:** Recording or video of “Jesus Loves the Little Children of the World”; play and teach it, or have the children sing along with a video or recording