



DISCIPLES & THE EARLY CHURCH

Unit 1 • Discipleship

UNIT DESCRIPTION

"For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ" (John 1:17). "Two things we should be sure not to do, which yet are constantly done, namely, to judge by the New Covenant those who lived under the Old, and to live under the Old Covenant, we whose lot is cast under the New.

"The Old Covenant was preparative, but the New is executive. The Old tells us what not to do, but the New tells us what Christ can and will do for us. The Old holds us in bondage, but the New brings us into freedom. The Old involves a curse, but the New imparts a blessing. The Old shows us what we are, but the New shows us what we may become. The emphasis of the Old is on doing, but of the New it is on being. The Old creates expectation, but the New brings to realization. The Old stirs longing in the human heart, but the New leads to satisfaction. In the Old man seeks God, but in the New God seeks man. By the Old man is condemned as a sinner, but by the New he is delivered from his sin. In the Old God says 'you cannot', but in the New Christ says, 'I can'. The Old Covenant is really bad news, but the New Covenant is Good News, that is, Gospel.

"In Act II [the New Covenant] there are Two Scenes. The First Scene presents The Introduction of Christianity into the World by Jesus the Messiah; and the Second Scene shows The Progress of Christianity in the World to the Close of the First Century A.D. The first of these covers a period of about 35 years; and the second, a period of about 65 years, and of course, the Second Scene is still in progress.

"The first century of the Christian Era is, beyond all dispute, the greatest in the history of the world. Everything that preceded it led up to it, and everything that has followed has been the consequence of it."^[1] Last year we covered Scene I, namely, the Introduction of Christianity into the World by Jesus the Messiah. This year our theme is that of Scene II, the Disciples and the Early Church. The first unit focuses on discipleship and the often erroneous "Old Covenant" ways in which individuals relate to Jesus. The four lessons are taken from the gospels. In these lessons we have identified stories that contrast Old Covenant with New Covenant thinking.

[1] Scroggie, W. Graham, *The Unfolding Drama of Redemption*, © 1994, Kregel Publications, pp. 73-75.



INTRODUCTION

Disciples & Early Church • Intro 1st-3rd Grade • June 2, 2024

Concept

Christianity is a personal relationship with God.

Goal

Students will be introduced to the teachers, learn the class rules and be given an overview of the coming year. Through learning about the early church and the disciples, they will learn about how God's promises also apply to them.

Passage

1 John 3:1

Key Verse: "See how much our heavenly Father loves us, for he allows us to be called his children...!" 1 John 3:1a (NLT)

Planning Ahead

Lesson Supplies	Craft Supplies
<p>Learning Activity #1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>3 balls, any size</i>• <i>3 sets of "_____ is my favorite" cards</i>	<p>Activity Station:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Varied stampers</i>• <i>Stamp pads of various colors</i>• <i>Shape hole punches</i>• <i>Dry erase marker</i>• <i>Dry erase eraser</i>• "The New Testament Bookshelf," 1/student• Construction paper, 1 sheet/child• Markers

*TEACHERS PLEASE NOTE

For clarity, the italicized areas in the Planning Ahead section indicate supplies that are in—and should be returned to—your classroom SHARED SUPPLY bag.

Background Information (for the teacher)

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This year is the culmination of the three-year cycle of curriculum. The first year we took the students on a journey through the Bible focusing on God's Incredible Plan of redemption, His plan for the entire universe. This Incredible Plan is the fantastic unity that ties the entire Bible together.

Last year we studied the life and ministry of the person, Jesus Christ, through whom that plan of redemption was fulfilled. From before creation God knew of the great sacrifice He would make to redeem all mankind. His love is so great for those He has created in His image that He became a man and came to this earth to suffer and die for us!

This year we will look at the disciples and the early church as we study the epistles. Because Christ died and was resurrected, we can live a fulfilled life on this earth followed by an eternal life beyond all our wildest imagination. Grace upon grace has empowered and freed all believers to live a life of obedience and dependence that honors and glorifies God.

As you begin the awesome privilege and responsibility of teaching and modeling the Christian life to your students this year, consider God's commitment to empower YOU to effective service for Him. Take time to understand and know in your hearts Christ's amazing provision for you. As you do, by example you will pass on to your students the truth that God is sovereign and desires only our good. He will transform our lives as we cooperate and participate in His work for His kingdom.

Activity Stations

- **New Testament Bookshelf**
 - **Instructions:** Give each student a copy of the printed sheet. Challenge them to learn the names of the New Testament books and be able to name them all by memory. To make it easier, they can learn by category. As they have the books in one category memorized they can move on to the next.
- **Craft – Name Mosaic**
 - **Instructions:** Give each child a piece of paper and have them write their name in big letters. Use markers and stampers to make a design on or around their name.
- **Game – “Connect-a-Name”**
 - **Instructions:** This get-acquainted activity uses only the white board and a marker. As students arrive, form groups of 4-6 students. For round one, at a signal the group attempts to connect every member's first name in one crossword puzzle (see diagram below). For round two, add other students and play again. Teachers, be prepared to help the students with placement of the names.

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      K Y L E
      E
E V A
      I           J
      N E L L I E
                L
                L A N C E
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Discipline and Procedure Plans

Instructions: Each teacher will introduce him/herself by telling a story about a time when he/she was about 5 years old. Follow the story with your perspective of the situation as a Christian adult, i.e., what you wish you had done differently, how it helped you to learn more about God, how it led you to seek God, etc. Ham it up, make it dramatic and have some fun! Suggestions: briefly give your testimony, what you thought about God when you were a child, why you decided to be an Oasis teacher, etc.

We will focus on classroom management using the tools and resources found at <http://www.loveandlogic.com>. Love and Logic® is a philosophy of working with students that was developed in 1977 by Jim Fay and Foster Cline, M.D. (some men who were desperately trying to figure out how to deal with kids who don't want to be in school). Love and Logic provides many tools that promote healthy parent/teacher and teacher/student relationships and positive classroom discipline. It is important that together your team develops a short list of expectations, describing how you will run your classroom. When developing this list, be certain that you can actually enforce these expectations. In other words, avoid making threats that you cannot back up, such as "Keep your hands to yourself" or "Be quiet when I'm teaching."

Introduction Continued

Use what is termed "Enforceable Statements" (<http://www.loveandlogic.com/documents/turn-your-word-into-gold-school.pdf>) to set these Love and Logic limits and expectations in your classroom. This will take some time to think through, but will be well worth it in the weeks to come if it is established now rather than in response to the frustration of chaos in your classroom!

To add some humor and clear understanding to your presentation, you can role-play appropriate and inappropriate behavior. As a team, be prepared to consistently follow through. Once the expectations have been presented to the children, it is their responsibility to abide; it is your responsibility to fairly and consistently follow through.

God has amazing things to teach us all this year. We have a short time together each week and, as your teachers, He's given us the privilege of sharing some things He has taught us. We want each of you to get all that God has for you; therefore, we will expect you to listen while others are talking, to cooperate in all activities and to participate.

Transition

Now that you know who we are and what we expect, we want to know you. We're going to get into small groups and play a game!

Learning Activity#1 Lg. Group

Game – "My Favorite"

Instructions: Divide the students into groups with a teacher in each. Have students sit in a circle on the floor and place the cards face down in a pile on the floor in the middle of the circle. A teacher will throw the ball to a child. The student will say, "My name is _____" and draw a card from the pile in the middle of the circle (see attached cards). The teacher will read the statement on the card and the child will fill in the blank. When finished, the student will throw the ball to another student. Continue until all the students have answered a question. If there is time you can go a second round.

Transition

Everyone sit together so we can give you a preview of this year's lessons.

Lesson Lg. Group

The disciple, John, wrote in 1 John 3:1a, "See how much our heavenly Father loves us, for he allows us to be called his children...!" The Bible tells us very plainly that Jesus came to earth to make God's love evident and available to all people. Because Jesus came to earth, suffered and died for our sins, we can have a friendship with Him unlike that of the people who lived before Jesus was here on earth. We can have a friendship with Jesus because His death on the cross paid the penalty we owe God for our sins. When we tell God we want Jesus' death to pay for our sins, He forgives us, the Holy Spirit comes into our lives and we begin a friendship with God. And we then know that we will be with Jesus forever in heaven after we die.

Lesson Continued

After Jesus died, was resurrected back to life and left the earth, the Holy Spirit came to live in all the people who believed in Jesus and the Christian church began. This year we will study about the Christian church as it began and grew. We will learn that the first Christians had many of the same problems and fears that we have today.

We will learn how much we are like those early Christians and how God taught them. God used people like Paul, Luke, Peter and John to write letters to the new Christians. Those letters are included in the New Testament in the Bible. They apply to us as much today as they did to the early church. We have a lot to learn this year.

Transition

We have one other important part of class – our small group time. Let's get into small groups.

Learning Activity# 2 Sm. Groups

Instructions: Divide the class into small groups (about 5-7 students per group). Every week we are going to have a small group time for you to talk about our teaching, to get to know each other and to pray.

Missions Prayer: Talk about and pray for the Oasis Giving Campaign.

Let's pray. We can thank Him that He came to this earth to die for us so that we can have a friendship with Him forever. Let's ask Him to help us get to know Him more so that we can love others as He loves us.

Transition

Let's play a game to help us learn each other's names.

Learning Activity# 3 Lg. Group

Game -- "I'm Going on a Trip"

Instructions: Everyone sits in chairs in a big circle. Choose one student to begin. That student says, "My name is <<Betty>>, I'm going to Indonesia and I'm taking a <<backpack>>." (The item the student chooses can begin with the same letter with which his/her name begins or it can be a favorite possession.). The next person says, "My name is <<John>>, I'm going to Indonesia and I'm taking a <<jumpsuit>>, Betty and her backpack." The next person says, "My name is <<Susie>>, I'm going to Indonesia and I'm taking scissors, Betty and her backpack and John and his jumpsuit." Continue on around the circle. See if the students can make it around the circle remembering everybody's name and item.