

Bible Studies for Children

A C T S

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The first Children's Bible Quiz, created by Rev. William (Bill) Young, was introduced with three demonstration teams from the Kansas City District – Kansas City First, Kansas City St. Paul's, and Overland Park – at the 1968 General Nazarene Young People's Society Convention in Kansas City, Missouri (USA).

welcome!

Welcome to *Bible Studies for Children: Acts!* In this collection of biblical studies, the children learn about how Jesus' disciples spread God's love to the whole world! The Book of Acts was written by a doctor named Luke who travelled with Paul on his journeys. The Book of Acts tells about Jesus' resurrection and ascension, the gift of the Holy Spirit and the beginning of the Church. It even tells when and where the word Christian was first used. Acts tells us how Christians today can continue to spread the good news about God's love.

Bible Studies for Children: Acts is one of six books in the *Bible Studies for Children* series. These studies help children to gain an understanding of biblical chronology and the meaning of biblical events. As the children learn about the lives of the people in these studies, they discover God's love for all people and their place in his plan. God sometimes uses miracles to achieve his purpose. He often works through people to accomplish what he wants to do.

The philosophy of *Bible Studies for Children* is to help the children to understand what the Bible says, to learn how God helped the people, and to grow in their relationship with God. This includes biblical study, biblical memorization, and application of biblical teachings in real life situations.

Bible Studies for Children uses the New International Version of the Bible.

BOOKS

The following is a short description of the books in this series and the way that they interact with each other.

Genesis provides the foundation. This book tells how God created the world from nothing, formed a man and a woman, and created a beautiful garden for their home. These people sinned, and they experienced the consequences for their sin. Genesis introduces the plan of God to reconcile the broken relationship between God and the people. It introduces Adam, Eve, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God made a covenant with Abraham and renewed that covenant with Isaac and Jacob. Genesis ends with the story of Joseph who saves civilization from famine. The famine compels the people of God to move to Egypt.

Exodus tells how God continued to keep his promise to Abraham. God rescued the Israelites from slavery in Egypt. The Lord chose Moses to guide the Israelites. The Lord set up his kingship over the Israelites. He led and ruled the Israelites through the establishment of the priesthood and the Tabernacle, the Ten Commandments and other laws, and the prophets and the judges. At the end of Exodus, only a part of the covenant of the Lord with Abraham is complete.

Joshua/Judges/Ruth tells how God completed his covenant to Abraham that began in Genesis. The Israelites conquered and settled into the land that God promised to Abraham. The prophets, the priests, the Law, and the worship rituals declared that God was the Lord and the King of the Israelites. The 12 tribes of Israel settled into the Promised Land. This study emphasizes these judges: Deborah, Gideon, and Samson.

In **1 and 2 Samuel**, the Israelites wanted a king because the other nations had a king.

These books tell about Samuel, Saul, and David. Jerusalem became the centre of the combined nation of Israel. This study shows how the people react differently when someone confronted them with their sins. While Saul blamed others or made excuses, David admitted his sin, and he asked God for forgiveness.

Matthew is the focal point of the entire series. It focuses on the birth, the life, and the ministry of Jesus. All the previous books in the series pointed to Jesus as the Son of God and the Messiah. Jesus ushered in a new era. The children learn about this new era in several events: the teachings of Jesus, his death, his resurrection, and the mentoring of his disciples. Through Jesus, God provided a new way for the people to have a relationship with him.

At the beginning of **Acts**, Jesus ascended to heaven, and God sent the Holy Spirit to help the Church. The good news of salvation through Jesus Christ spread to many parts of the world. The believers preached the gospel to the Gentiles, and missionary work began. The message of the love of God transformed both the Jews and the Gentiles. There is a direct connection between the evangelism efforts of Paul and Peter to the lives of the people today.

CYCLE

The following cycle of using this series is specifically for those who participate in the optional Quizzing aspect of *Bible Studies for Children*. You will find more information about this in the section called “Children’s Bible Quizzing” (page ###).

* Acts (2012-2013)

Genesis (2013-2014)

Exodus (2014-2015)

Joshua/Judges/Ruth (2015-2016)

* 1 & 2 Samuel (2016-2017)

Matthew (2017-2018)

*Indicates a World Quiz Year

SCHEDULE

Each book in the series has twenty studies. Allow one to two hours of class time. The following schedule is a suggestion for each study.

- 15 minutes for Activity
- 30 minutes for Biblical Lesson
- 15 minutes for Memory Verse
- 30 minutes for Additional Activities (optional)
- 30 minutes for Quizzing Practice (optional)

TEACHER’S PREPARATION

Thorough preparation of each study is important. The children are more attentive and gain better understanding of the study if you prepare it well and present it well. **Bold text** in each study indicates suggested words for you to say to the children. The following steps will help you prepare.

Step 1: Quick Overview. Read the Memory Verse, Biblical Truth, and Teaching Tips.

Step 2: Bible Passage and Biblical Commentary. Read the verses in the Bible study passage and the information in the Biblical Commentary, and any Words of Our Faith.

Step 3: Activity. This section includes a game or other activity to prepare the children for the biblical lesson. Become familiar with the activity, the instructions, and the supplies. Bring any necessary supplies to the class with you. Set up the activity before the children arrive.

Step 4: Biblical Lesson. Review the lesson and learn it so that you tell it as a story. An easy-to-read version of the scripture passage is included at the end of this book to help you prepare. The children want the teacher to tell the story rather than to read it from the book. Use the Words of Our Faith from each lesson to provide additional information as you tell

the story. After the story, use the review questions. They will help the children to understand the story and to apply it to their lives.

Step 5: Memory Verse. Learn the memory verse before you teach it to the children. A list of the memory verses and suggested memory verse activities are on pages ###-###. Choose from the activities to help the children to learn the memory verse. Become familiar with the activity that you choose. Read the instructions and prepare the supplies that you will bring to class.

Step 6: Additional Activities. The additional activities are an optional part of the study. These activities will enhance the children's biblical study. Many of these activities require additional supplies, resources, and time. Become familiar with the activities that you choose. Read the instructions and prepare the supplies that you will bring to class.

Step 7: Quizzing Practice. Quizzing is the competition part of *Bible Studies for Children*

and you will find more information in the section called "Children's Bible Quizzing" (page ###). Quizzing is an optional part of the study. If you choose to participate in quizzing, spend time with the children in their preparation. There are practice questions for each study. The first ten questions are for a basic level of competition. The questions are simple, and there are three possible answers for each question. The next ten questions are for an advanced level of the competition. There are four possible answers for each question, and these questions are more comprehensive. Children, with the guidance from their teacher, choose their level for the competition. Based on the number of children and the resources that are available, you may choose to offer only the basic level or only the advanced level. Before you ask the practice questions, read the scripture passage to the children.

MEMORY VERSE

“We are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him” (Acts 5:32).

BIBLICAL TRUTH

The Holy Spirit is God’s gift to us.

TEACHING TIP

- As you lead the Bible study, explain to the students that we can learn to recognize guidance from the Holy Spirit. We can witness to others by obeying the Holy Spirit.

STUDY ONE

ACTS 1:1-11; 2:1-8, 12-21, 36-47

THE PROMISED GIFT

BIBLICAL COMMENTARY

Luke’s book, Acts of the Apostles, invites readers to continue the mission of Christ until his return.

For forty days, Jesus prepared his followers to continue his mission. “Forty” reminds us of those who were tested before they began their ministries: The Israelites as they wandered in the desert, Moses on Mt. Sinai, Elijah as he fled to Horeb.

Jesus echoes the prophecy of Isaiah 32:15. It is the Spirit who enables believers to effectively witness to the entire world.

Jesus’ followers were baptized with the Holy Spirit on Pentecost. Originally, Pentecost (also known as the Feast of Weeks) celebrated God’s gift of the Ten Commandments to Moses and the people of Israel, fifty days after the Exodus from Egypt. For Christians today, Pentecost is a celebration of God’s gift of his Spirit to all believers, fifty days after Easter Sunday.

God poured out his Spirit on the community of believers. The Spirit unified them and gave them a passion to follow Christ. They received the power to intelligibly communicate the truth of Jesus to the entire world.

Peter invited his listeners to repent and to be baptized. New believers joined the community of faith, and they grew in their faith by obeying the apostles’ teaching, praying daily, and sharing with those in need. In these first two chapters, we see the start of Jesus’ mission to bring freedom from sin and to see that message spread to the ends of the earth.

The Early Church had hope. They saw that God continued to transform them by the power of the Holy Spirit.

God was revealing his kingdom on earth. They were excited to share this good news with everyone. As believers, we continue the mission started by the faithful Church over two thousand years ago. Likewise, we can experience the power of the Holy Spirit, and, we will be witnesses of God's kingdom when God changes us.

WORDS OF OUR FAITH

the Holy Spirit — the Spirit of God. The Holy Spirit empowers us to live for God as we trust Jesus as Saviour.

Jesus Christ — Jesus is God's son, the Saviour of the world. Jesus is fully God and fully human. Christ is a Greek word that means "the anointed one."

the Messiah — Messiah is a Hebrew word that means "the anointed one" and is usually translated as "the Christ." It refers to Jesus Christ.

Peter — one of Jesus' 12 disciples. He preached the first sermon at Pentecost and was a leader in the Early Church.

Jerusalem — The centre of the Jewish religion. Jerusalem is the geographical focal point for much of the Bible.

Pentecost — a Jewish religious festival held 50 days after Passover. Christians celebrate this as the day the Holy Spirit came and the Early Church was born.

the Apostles — Early leaders of the Christian Church who were specially chosen by Jesus. They were God's ambassadors as the Church grew and spread.

baptism — a public ceremony that symbolizes a person's rebirth in Jesus Christ. Baptism is a ritual in which a believer is immersed in

water or has water sprinkled or poured on his or her head. A believer chooses to be baptized to show that they are beginning a new life in Christ.

the Jews — people who practice the Jewish religion. God established a covenant with Abraham in Genesis 15 and 17. The Jews are known as the descendants of Abraham and his son and grandson (Isaac and Jacob). The Bible also calls them Israelites.

prophecy — a message from God to people. Some prophecies tell what will happen in the future.

ACTIVITY

Invite two children to stand at the front of the classroom. Tell the others to look at them for 10 seconds. Then, send the two children to a place where no one can see them.

While they are gone, have the other children describe them to you. Write down all the details. You may prompt them with questions. For example, ask things like this:

- Were the two children wearing a jacket?
- Did they have anything in their hands?
- What colour were their shoes?

Bring the two children back into the room. Review the descriptions of the children.

Ask, **How accurately did we describe them?** Allow time for the children to respond. Then, say, **We used a lot of words to talk about these two people. Now, if they left this room and someone asked you to describe them again, you could talk about them more accurately because you have looked at them closely. Today we are going to learn how Jesus asked his friends to talk about him.**

BIBLICAL LESSON

Prepare a Bible story based on the lesson's scripture verses.

An easy-to-read version of this lesson is printed in the back of this book, on pages ###-###.

Children will understand the lesson better if you tell them the story rather than reading it to them.

After the story, encourage the children to answer the following questions. There are no right or wrong answers. These questions help the children to understand the story and to apply it to their lives.

1. **Have you ever felt God leading you? How do you recognize God's direction? Discuss this topic together.**
2. Read the memory verse, Acts 5:32. **To whom does God give the Holy Spirit?**
3. **What struggles has the Holy Spirit helped you to overcome?**
4. **Baptism is a way to show that you are devoted to Jesus Christ. It is also a sign to others that you want to become a part of God's family, the Church. Have you been baptized? Why or why not?**

Say, **In this lesson, you will learn that God worked through the believers in the Early Church. But God's good work did not end there. You are a part of God's story, too. God's gift of the Holy Spirit will help you to be bold and courageous as you live for him.**

MEMORY VERSE

Practice the study's memory verse. You will find suggestions for Memory Verse Activities on pages ###-###.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

Choose from any of these options to enhance the study.

1. Find a Bible with a concordance and research the term "Holy Spirit." Study several additional passages that reference the Holy Spirit and read them to the class. Discuss what these passages teach about the Holy Spirit.
2. Research the Feast of Weeks, also called Pentecost. What was the significance of this time? What usually happened during this celebration time?

QUESTIONS FOR BASIC COMPETITION

To prepare the children for competition, read Acts 1:1-11; 2:1-8, 12-21, 36-47 to them.

1 To whom is the book of Acts written? (1:1)

1. Caesar
2. Luke
3. Theophilus

2 About what did Jesus speak when he appeared to the apostles for forty days? (1:3)

1. About the kingdom of God
2. About his resurrection
3. About his miracles

3 While he ate with the apostles, Jesus told them not to do something. What was it? (1:4)

1. Do not eat too much.
2. **Do not leave Jerusalem.**
3. Do not tell anyone that you saw me.

4 With what did John baptize? (1:5)

1. With the Holy Spirit
2. With oil
3. **With water**

5 Jesus said that the apostles would receive something after the Holy Spirit came on them. What was it? (1:8)

1. Love
2. **Power**
3. Gifts

6 Jesus said that the apostles would be his witnesses when the Holy Spirit came. Where were they to be witnesses? (1:8)

1. In Jerusalem, in Judea, and in Samaria
2. To the ends of the earth
3. **Both answers are correct.**

7 Who will prophesy when God pours out his Spirit on all people? (2:17-18)

1. Sons and daughters
2. God's servants, both men and women
3. **Both answers are correct.**

8 How many were added to the number of the Apostles on the day of Pentecost? (2:41)

1. About 1,000
2. **About 3,000**
3. About 5,000

9 To what did the believers devote themselves? (2:42)

1. To fellowship and prayer
2. To the breaking of bread
3. **Both answers are correct.**

10 How often did the believers meet? (2:46)

1. **Every day**
2. Only on Sundays
3. Once each week

QUESTIONS FOR ADVANCED COMPETITION

To prepare the children for competition, read Acts 1:1-11; 2:1-8, 12-21, 36-47 to them.

1 While he ate with the apostles, what did Jesus say to them? (1:4-5)

1. "Do not leave Jerusalem."
2. "Wait for the gift my Father promised."
3. "You will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."
4. **All of the answers are correct.**

2 Jesus said that the apostles would be his witnesses when the Holy Spirit came. Where were they to be witnesses? (1:8)

1. In Jerusalem
2. In all Judea and Samaria
3. To the ends of the earth
4. **All of the answers are correct.**

3 What did the two men dressed in white say? (1:10-11)

1. "Do not be afraid."
2. **"Jesus will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven."**
3. "Go to your homes. There is nothing to see here."
4. "Jesus went away to prepare a place for you."

4 What happened when the day of Pentecost came? (2:1-4)

1. They heard a sound like the blowing of a violent wind.
2. They saw tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them.
3. They were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues.
4. **All of the answers are correct.**

5 Who were staying in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost? (2:5)

1. Cornelius and his family
2. **God-fearing Jews from every nation**
3. Jesus and the apostles
4. Three women named Mary

6 Peter quotes from an Old Testament prophet on the day of Pentecost. Which prophet was it? (2:16-21)

1. Isaiah
2. Jeremiah
3. **Joel**
4. Samuel

7 Of what did Peter say that Israel should be assured? (2:36)

1. **“God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.”**
2. “John is the only one who should baptize people.”
3. “Jesus will tell us about his return.”
4. “We apostles saw Jesus.”

8 For whom is the promised Holy Spirit? (2:38-39)

1. For you and your children
2. For all who are far off
3. For all whom the Lord our God will call
4. **All of the answers are correct.**

9 What did the believers do after they sold their possessions and goods? (2:45)

1. **They gave to anyone who had a need.**
2. They kept the money for themselves.
3. They gave their money to the church.
4. They bought other things.

10 Finish this verse: “We are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given ...” (Acts 5:32)

1. **“... to those who obey him.”**
2. “... to those who call on his name.”
3. “... to everyone who asks.”
4. “... to those who received his spirit.”