

The Great Commission

Bible Lesson: Acts 1:8; Matthew 28:16-20; Galatians 3:7, 29

PREPARATION

Objective

Students will understand that God's plan to reach the world continued after Jesus finished his ministry on earth.

Outcomes

1. Students will understand that all Christians have a responsibility to tell people about Jesus.
2. Students will have a basic understanding of the concept of Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria, and the ends of the earth.

Memory Verse

Acts 1:8 "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Directions

1. Review verses for the "Bible Drill Challenge." Consider how you will relate each to today's theme.
2. Review the "Key Word Wheel" poster. Integrate these words as you notice them in any and all sections of today's lesson. Suggested: "Purpose," "People," "Power," "Proclamation," and "Passport to the World."
3. Read the Bible story references. Pray that God will guide you as you teach and apply this lesson to your unique group of students.
4. Be sure that either an electrical outlet or batteries (power supply) are available.



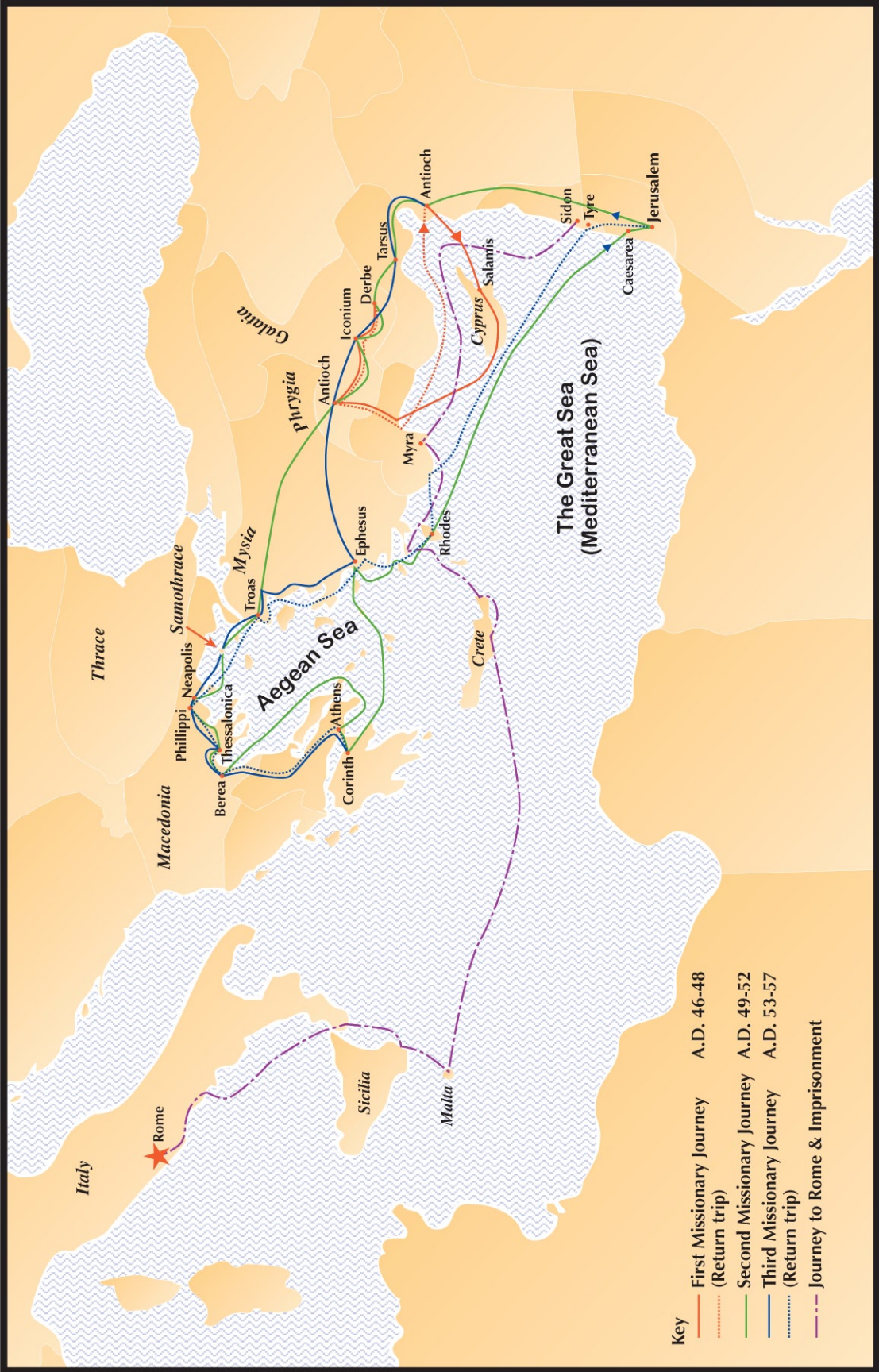
PREPARATION: 20 min.

TEACHING: 35 min.

Materials

- Bibles
- "Key Word Wheel" poster (Introduction p. 6)
- "Key Word Cards" (Introduction pp. 7-8)
- "Paul's Missionary Journeys" map (p. 2)
- one CD by a contemporary Christian artist, your choice
- CD player

Paul's Missionary Journeys



TEACHING (CORE)

PRE-LESSON ACTIVITY: WHERE'S THE POWER?

Directions

1. Warmly welcome students to your time of better understanding God's purpose together.
2. Tell students that you are excited because you have a new CD. Explain that you have not had a chance to listen to it yet. Ask, *"Would you mind listening to it with me?"*
3. Place the CD in the player and try to play it. You will have problems because the CD player is not plugged in and/or does not have batteries. Ask, *"What is the problem?"* Shortly, students should discover there is no power.
4. After discovering the problem, fix it and play a portion of a favorite song.
5. Say, *"This experience with the CD player not working reminds us of an important truth related to people around the world coming to know about God."*
6. Hold up the "Key Word Wheel" poster. Explain, *"In some ways, we are like this CD player. We were created to proclaim (point to the word 'Proclamation' on the poster), to tell the good news about Jesus. God has always used people (point to the word 'People' on the poster) to do this. However, we must be connected to the source of power (point to the word 'Power' on the poster) – God and his Holy Spirit. Jesus knew people needed help with this often scary and difficult job of sharing the gospel. So he sent help."*

BIBLE DRILL CHALLENGE

Acts 1:8 "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Directions

1. Give each student a Bible. Invite students to participate in a Bible drill. Say, *"Since the Bible has such an important purpose, we want to get more acquainted with the Bible itself. Today, and over the next several weeks, we will practice finding verses and stories in the Bible that help us understand God's purpose."* (optional: *"We will also be practicing to challenge our parents to a Bible Drill Challenge on the last week of our quarter."*)
2. Instruct students to hold their Bibles in a ready position, Bibles closed and above their heads. Invite students to work in pairs if they are less familiar with their Bibles. Let students warm up for a speed competition by first looking for each item below, one at a time. As you name the item, adding theme-related questions or comments, students will lower their Bibles and quickly try to find what you have named. Say, *"Ready, begin"* after introducing each item.
 - Malachi 1:11 – *"What is God's purpose?"* (review verse from Lesson 1)

Materials

- CD player (unplugged or with the batteries removed)
- one CD by a contemporary Christian artist
- "Key Word Wheel" poster (Introduction p. 6)

Materials

- Bibles

- Isaiah 45:22 – “What does God want for all people?” (review verse from Lesson 2)
 - Psalm 67:1-2 – “Why does God bless his people?” (review verse from Lesson 3)
 - Exodus 9:16 – “What did God do through Moses?” (review verse from Lesson 4)
 - 1 John 4:9 – “How did Jesus show us God’s love?” (review verse from Lesson 5)
 - Acts 1:8 – “Today’s verse is both a command and promise from Jesus.”
3. After reading the final verse aloud, discuss its meaning together. Explain, “As Jesus was preparing to return to heaven, he gave his followers some final words of instruction. He told them to go make disciples of all people. They knew this job was too big for them to do alone. So Jesus gave them help.”
 4. Continue, “He promised that God’s own Holy Spirit would be with them, giving them power to do this work.”
 5. “With God’s power, they would then be able to make Christ known in Jerusalem (the city they were in), in Judea (the region they were in), Samaria (a neighboring, somewhat different region) and to the ends of the earth (all over the world).”
 6. Ask, “Do you find it easy to share the truth about Jesus with others? How can this promise help you?” Allow a few student responses.

BIBLE LESSON: THE GREAT COMMISSION

Directions

1. Say, “When someone you know is leaving for a long trip, their instructions to you are very important. Jesus had some very important instructions for his disciples.” Read Matthew 28:16-20. Say, “This is called ‘The Great Commission.’”
2. Explain that in these verses, Jesus tells his disciples that he was blessed with all authority. He told them he was blessing his disciples by promising to be with them always.
3. “Why? What was the disciples’ responsibility? Jesus instructed them to go and make disciples of all nations.” Explain that “disciple” means a student or a follower. Then say, “They were to baptize people and teach them to obey God’s commands.”
4. Invite students to share some of the things that new followers of Jesus would need to know about God. Then say, “This was a big job, but all of Jesus’ disciples obeyed the Great Commission, going to many different places around the world.”
5. Say, “Let’s see how Jesus command was obeyed by Paul, a follower of Jesus and one of the first missionaries. Paul understood that like Abraham, he had been blessed for a reason.” Together, read Galatians 3:7 and 29. Explain, “Paul knew that all believers were considered spiritual sons of Abraham and were to bless all the nations.”

Materials

- Bible
- “Paul’s Missionary Journeys” map (p. 2)
- “Key Word Wheel” poster (Introduction p. 6)

6. *“Although Paul was Jewish, he fully understood that the message about Jesus was for all people. Paul traveled around the known world several times, telling people about Jesus in new cities and regions.”*
7. Show “Paul’s Missionary Journeys” map. Teach that the Bible records three major missionary journeys that he took. Let’s look at some of the main cities he visited.
 - Find Tarsus – Paul’s home town (Paul’s “Jerusalem”)
 - Find Jerusalem – in Paul’s home country of Israel (Paul’s “Judea”)
 - Find Antioch – in a neighboring region (Paul’s “Samaria”)
 - Find Rome, Italy – far away (Paul’s “ends of the earth”)
8. Hold up the “Key Word Wheel” poster. Paul’s whole Christian life was about “Proclamation.” He told “People” about Christ. God gave him a “Passport to the World.” Paul traveled extensively, experiencing many different cultures.

IN CLOSING: PRAYER

Directions

1. Ask, *“What do you admire about Paul’s life? How did he obey the Great Commission?”*
2. *“What is hard about obeying Jesus’ command to tell other people about him and make disciples?”* Let the students share their concerns and feelings.
3. Pray for students to have boldness and an understanding that Jesus is with them and that they have the power of the Holy Spirit to help them.



PRAYER ACTIVITY: NEAR AND FAR THINKING

Directions

1. Write headings for each of the following across an erasable board:
 - Home Town (Jerusalem)
 - Your County or State (Judea)
 - Neighboring Region or Country (Samaria)
2. One by one, invite students to help you list groups of people that kids can help in each of these categories. Also list specific projects they might do to help that group of people. For example: homeless people in hometown – hold a clothing drive. Continue for about six minutes.
3. After the lists are complete, ask your students, *“What are the difficulties in talking about God in our hometown? What might be easy about working in our hometown?”* Listen for student responses. Continue, asking the same questions for each of the categories listed. Together, discover that God’s power is available to help with any difficulties, in any of these regions.
4. If possible, tell a brief story of people in your area working in “home missions.”
5. Add this heading to the board: Distant Country or Very Different Culture (Ends of the Earth) Say, *“Let’s see what Jesus meant by going to all nations.”*
6. Play Infobyte #3 to learn about nations and people groups.
7. Ask, *“Would it be less or more difficult to help people in the ends of the earth? Why?”* Allow responses. *“Can you think of one people group in this category?”* Write this group on the chart.
8. Pray together for specific groups you have listed in each region.



PREPARATION: 5 min.

TEACHING: 15 min.

Materials

- chalkboard or dry erase board
- chalk or dry erase markers
- Infobyte #3, “People Groups” (IB)
- TV/DVD player