



hesed

*The **BIG** Story of God's Faithfulness*

A Sunday School Resource Based on the Narrative Lectionary
Year of Luke

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Introduction

Welcome! This year of Sunday School is an opportunity for us to learn together the story of God's faithfulness. As we read through the Bible, we will learn about God's faithfulness to God's people throughout generations past as well as how God's creative and redeeming actions make our own lives part of the story of God's enduring faithfulness!

This year during Sunday morning worship, our congregation will be using what is called the "Narrative Lectionary." The Narrative Lectionary is a way of reading through the Bible each week that begins with readings at the beginning of the Bible in the fall and works through the Bible in order all the way throughout the year. You will notice that each Sunday we will only have one Bible reading (although sometimes the pastor may make reference to others too!) Only having one reading gives us more time to focus on that particular passage, its context and meaning. The goal is that by the end of the end of the year we will all have a better understanding of the flow of Scripture and God's Big Story!

Our Sunday School this year will be studying the same Bible passage that will be used in church each Sunday. Please encourage your students to attend worship and be there yourself! Prayerfully, this year of connection between Sunday School learning and worship becomes deeply meaningful to the students as well as to parents and teachers. You are the ones who will teach by your example the importance of worship as the opportunity to praise God in community, to be forgiven, strengthened in faith, and prepared to go out and live the coming week as Children of God!

What is *hesed*?

Hesed is a Hebrew word that is not easily summed up in one English translation but rather encompasses a whole host of meanings. *Hesed* is the word for God's grace, favor, mercy, forgiveness, compassion, blessing, steadfast reliability, enduring faithfulness. From the beginning of the Bible to the last page, from the days of Adam and Eve to our own, the story of God's people is one of experiencing God's *hesed* even though we do not deserve it. This is the Big Story of God's faithfulness and it's the reason we gather each Sunday morning. May this year be one of joy in learning as our children grow and experience that *hesed*. Thanks be to God!

Curriculum Overview

This curriculum follows the Narrative Lectionary Readings for the year of Luke and is divided into 9 Units:

Unit 1- Pentateuch

1. God Creates the World, Adam and Eve Sin
2. God Promises Abraham Descendants
3. God Uses Joseph for Good
4. Passover
5. Moses Intercedes for God's Unfaithful People

Unit 2- Historical Books

6. Hannah Praises God for Samuel
7. God Promises David's Kingdom Will Endure
8. Solomon Builds the Temple
9. Elijah Cares for a Widow

Unit 3- Prophets

10. God Sends Jonah to Nineveh
11. God Calls Isaiah
12. Jeremiah Writes a Scroll
13. Daniel in the Lions' Den
14. Return to the Lord Your God
15. Isaiah Announces Liberty

Unit 4- Gospel of Luke: Jesus is Born

16. An Angel Tells Mary of Jesus' Birth
17. Jesus is Born
18. Shepherds Visit Jesus
19. Simeon and Anna Celebrate Jesus

Unit 5- Gospel of Luke: Jesus' Ministry

20. John Baptizes Crowds
21. Jesus Preaches in Nazareth
22. Peter Fishes for People
23. Jesus' Disciples Pick Grain on the Sabbath
24. A Sinful Woman Weeps at Jesus' Feet
25. Transfiguration
26. Jesus Sets His Face Toward Jerusalem

Unit 6- Gospel of Luke: Jesus' Stories (Parables)

27. The Good Samaritan
28. A Fig Tree that Bears No Fruit
29. A Lost Sheep, Lost Coin, Prodigal Son
30. A Rich Man Ignores Lazarus

Unit 7- Gospel of Luke: Death and Resurrection

31. Jesus Welcomes Sinners Like Zacchaeus
32. Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem
Holy Week: The Last Supper, Jesus is Crucified
33. The Tomb is Empty
34. The Road to Emmaus

Unit 8- Acts of the Apostles

35. Stephen is Martyred
36. Philip Baptizes an Ethiopian
37. Faith Gives Identity

Unit 9- Letters of Paul

38. People are Justified by Faith
39. No Longer Jew or Greek, Male or Female
40. Pentecost

Curriculum Goals

Theological Goals

- 1. Students will develop an understanding of sin and forgiveness and that in Christ is “Good News.”**
- 2. Students will develop an understanding that God calls us into relationship with God, with our family/church, town, and world.**
- 3. Students will develop an understanding that God calls them (and all of us as a community) to holiness and service.**

Preschool

Objectives:

Students will be able to articulate that “God loves me.”

Students will be able to confess sin, ask for and receive forgiveness from teachers/parents when they have done wrong.

Students will identify that “I am a part of the people of God.”

Students will be able to identify that “God expects something of me and will help me.”

Early Elementary

Objectives:

Students will be able to articulate that “God loves you and me.”

Students will understand themselves as part of a community of faith who tell each other that “God loves you!”

Students will be able to articulate specific ways that God calls us to holiness and service: such as not teasing, stealing, hogging attention, etc. but rather treating classmates/parents/siblings well.

Students will be identify the “wrong” we do as sin. Students will work toward understanding that sin is against God and that God also forgives.

Students will identify the worth that they and others have comes from being created by God, forgiven, and loved by God.

Upper Elementary

Objectives:

Students will be able to identify sin beyond moral failing as brokenness in our relationship with God and one another and the product of evil.

Students will be able to identify that forgiveness is receiving the “right-ness” of Christ Jesus, our Lord.

Students will identify that God’s purpose is to bless and save the whole world.

The holiness God calls us to is to care for those we love, those we may not like, those we do not even know... the whole world and all of creation.

Historical/Contextual Goal:

Students will develop an understanding of “Bible Times and Places” as similar to and different from our own context.

Preschool

Objectives:

Students will be able to identify “Bible Times” as being before they were born, before parents were born, before grandparents were born.

Students will be able to identify similarities and differences in location between their own and Bible Places such as weather, crops, modes of transportation, modes of communication, houses, etc.

Early Elementary

Objectives:

Students will meet all Pre-K objectives, plus...

Students will demonstrate an understanding of the Bible as a “library” composed of many books, written at different times and in different locations, for different purposes and audiences.

Students will develop a familiarity with “Bible Places” such as Canaan, Egypt, Israel/Judah, Babylon, Sea of Galilee, Jordan River, Dead Sea, Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and Nazareth.

Upper Elementary

Objectives:

Students will meet all Early Elementary objectives, plus...

Students will be able to identify specific types of writing included in the Bible.

Students will be able to identify the main languages in which the Old Testament and New Testament are written.

Students will begin to demonstrate an understanding of how the Biblical canon was formed.

Practical Goals:

- 1. Students will develop the skills necessary to navigate the Bible including the ability to name the books of the Bible, understand the division of Old Testament and New Testament, be able to look up a particular reference, identify the major division of Biblical books.**
- 2. Students will learn the Lord's Prayer**
- 3. Students will learn the Creed.**
- 4. Students will learn the 10 Commandments.**

Preschool

Objectives:

Students will be able to identify the two major parts of Scripture: Old Testament and New Testament. By the end of the year, each child will be able to name at least one event that happened in each part of Scripture.

Students will be able to say the Lord's Prayer with a teacher/parent with at least 90% accuracy.

Early Elementary

Objectives:

Students will be able to name the books of the Bible independently with at least 80% accuracy.

Students will be able to say the Lord's Prayer independently or as a group with 100% accuracy.

Students will be able to complete a "fill in the blank" style assessment on the Apostle's Creed with at least 80% accuracy.

Students will be able to identify correctly the 10 commandments from a list of 15 true and made-up commandments.

Upper Elementary

Objectives:

Students will be able to name the books of the Bible in order with 100% accuracy.

Students will be able to say the Lord's Prayer together or in a group with 100% accuracy.

Students will be able to say the Apostle's Creed as a group with no more than 2 teacher prompts.

Students will collaboratively be able to name all 10 commandments.

Lesson Overview

Gathering (5-10 minutes):

At the beginning of each day, children of all age groups gather together for music and an introduction to the lesson of the day. Included in this time is an introduction to the “Great Big Word” related to the day’s Bible reading.¹

Following the gathering, children may split up into groups according to age/grade. This resource provides materials for children in three age groupings: preschool, lower elementary, and upper elementary/middle school. If you don’t have enough kids to split into groups, feel free to pick the most appropriate activities for the age level of the kids you have and do this one-room-schoolhouse style. Since all the kids are working with the same Scripture passage, the activities can be interchanged fairly easily. You will notice that several times during the year there are lessons that are designated as “Intergenerational.” This is an opportunity for parents, grandparents, older adults, youth, children, EVERYONE in the congregation to join together for the Sunday School lesson.

Experiencing the Story and Skill Building (15-20 minutes):

A key component to this Sunday School curriculum is the opportunity for students to experience each Bible story in ways that both enable the student to relate this story to the “Big Picture” of the Bible’s message and build each student’s confidence in reading and understanding the Bible. Each opportunity you have to read from the Bible with your students is a chance to help them learn the mechanics of how to look up a passage and make sense of what is read. Each lesson will have a specific skill focus that will be introduced and revisited throughout the year.

Application Activity (15 minutes):

As much as the stories that we read from the Bible are about people of different times and places, these stories also are true for us. It’s important that each student also make the connection from the Bible story to their own life. These activities are designed to help reinforce ideas presented in the story and help make that personal connection.

Sending (10 minutes):

Each day closes with another opportunity for the large group to gather together, review what has been learned, sing, and pray together.

¹ The “Great Big Words” used in this Sunday School Curriculum come from the Narrative Lectionary Children’s Worship Bulletins published by The Rev. Dr. Kimberly Leetch and available at www.clergystuff.com.