

THEME 5

Living for Christ

As Christ's disciples, we are called to share the good news of his life, death and resurrection with others. Students will hear the great commission and learn how some people have shared Christ with others. We can be missionaries at home and abroad. Servanthood requires selfless living, and selfless living is a challenge no matter where we live. Empowered by the Holy Spirit, we are to share the joy of Jesus with others, both in word and in deed.

Units in Theme 5:

Unit 12: Sharing the Good News

Unit 13: The Holy Spirit Lives in Us

Grade 2—Unit 12

Sharing the Good News

Making a decision to follow Christ often means making changes in our lives. Students will take a look at one turning point in the disciples' lives—when Christ sent them out in groups of two to spread the good news—and will also learn of the Great Commission, when Christ commands all of us to spread the gospel.

Students will also learn of two followers of Christ who lived during the time of the early church—Philip and Dorcas—and of the ways they spread the good news of Christ. In the final lesson of this unit, students will make a “Gallery of Godly Greats” as a way to review some of the biblical characters they have encountered in this year’s study and as a way to help them honor older people in their lives who are following Christ.

LESSONS

1. Turning Point
2. The Great Commission
3. Philip Spreads the Good News to Samaria
4. Philip and the Ethiopian

Unit 12: Sharing the Good News

Unit Information

SUMMARY

Jesus chose twelve followers to be his disciples, to learn from him. He sent the disciples to teach, preach, heal, and share the good news. Jesus commissioned them to go to every nation, making and baptizing new disciples. Those were Jesus' instructions to his disciples in his time, and those are Jesus' words to us today.

KEY BIBLE TEXTS

Matthew 28:16-20

Matthew 10:1, 9-14

Luke 9:1, 3-5

Mark 6:7-12

Acts 8:4-25

Acts 8:26-40

Acts 9:36-42

BIBLICAL BACKGROUND

Jesus Sends Out His Disciples

Jesus chose people of diverse personalities and backgrounds to be his disciples. Such willingness to associate with all kinds of people often surprised others. Jesus wanted people to know that his message was for everyone. Jesus taught the twelve disciples to share the good news. The message is the same for us today.

The Great Commission

After rising from the dead, Jesus appeared to the disciples. He gave them specific instructions: to go to all nations, to preach the good news of his coming, to baptize new disciples, and to teach people to obey God's commandments. These commands were for Jesus' disciples then, and are commands which we should faithfully follow today.

Early Church Workers

This unit looks at a lesser-known story about a follower of Christ, Philip. Philip traveled to Samaria after the stoning of Stephen, but before Saul's conversion. It is important to note that this Philip is not the same as the Apostle Philip who was one of Jesus' disciples—the Philip referred to in these stories was one of seven deacons chosen to care for the poor within the young church in Jerusalem (Acts 6).

Philip preached with much success in the city of Samaria, winning over a magician there named Simon Magus. He then revealed the good news to an Ethiopian man traveling from Jerusalem to Gaza, clarifying the Scriptures for him and baptizing him. This story is traditionally understood as the beginning of the Ethiopian church. Philip eventually settled in Caesarea and had four unmarried daughters who prophesied (Acts 21:8-9).

ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDINGS

- We are called to be disciples of Jesus.
- Jesus wants us to share the “good news” with people wherever we are.

- Jesus calls us to a life of sharing God’s love with people throughout the world.
- Jesus promises to be with us as we follow his commands.

WORSHIP

Focus: Sharing the good news of Christ

Worship Table Symbols:

- **Walking stick** to symbolize Jesus sending out the disciples (Lesson 1)
- **Copy of the Great Commission** written or typed on small piece of paper (Lesson 2)
- **Dollar bills** to represent attempts to buy the Holy Spirit (Lesson 3)
- **Open Bible or scroll** to represent the Ethiopian and Philip reading scripture together (Lesson 4)

Suggested Songs: “And There Were Twelve” (p. 385), “You Are Salt for the Earth” (*Hymnal: A Worship Book*, #226).

A nice CD to use with this unit’s worship section is *Can’t Keep Quiet* by Mennonite singer-songwriter Bryan Yoder Suderman (2005). Several of the songs are easy enough to teach children simply by playing them several times for them to hear and then singing them together. See especially track one (“Come, Gather Round”) and track four (“Can’t Keep Quiet”).

ASSESSING TEACHING / LEARNING

There will be various opportunities to assess students’ understanding of the material during the course of this unit, as well as to add items to their portfolios: the letters they write in the voice of a commissioned disciple (Lesson 1), their mastery of the Great Commission memory work (Lesson 2), their completion of the character and verse worksheet (Lesson 3), their sentences relating themselves to Philip and the Ethiopian (Lesson 4). A unit assessment is also available.

MEMORY VERSE

Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the end of the age.” (Matthew 28:18-20)

Suggested motions:

Then Jesus came to them (*spread hands in front of body*)
 and said, “All authority (*hold right hand as if gripping a staff*)
 in heaven (*point upwards*) and on earth (*point to ground*)
 has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations (*point to various places around room*)
 baptizing them in the name of the Father (*tip hand as if pouring from pitcher*)
 and of the Son (*tip hand again*)
 and of the Holy Spirit (*tip hand again*)
 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you (*move hand in circle in front of body*)
 And surely I am with you always (*hold hands in fists and cross arms on chest*)
 to the end of the age.



Then Jesus came to them and said,
“All authority in heaven
and on earth has been given to me.
Therefore go and make disciples
of all nations, baptizing them
in the name of the Father and of
the Son and of the Holy Spirit,
and teaching them to obey
everything I have commanded you.
And surely I am with you always,
to the end of the age.”

Matthew 28:18-20

And There Were Twelve

J. M. and T. C. E.

Jean Moyer and Theresa C. Eshbach

C F G7



And there were twelve, twelve, twelve dis - ci - ples stand - ing

C D7 G G7



by his side; Twelve to spread the Good News far and wide;

C F C G7



Twelve dis - ci - ples for our Lord, And I'd like to be one

C G7 C G C



too to - day; I'd like to be one too.

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Dear Parents,

This unit, “Sharing the Good News,” focuses on Jesus’ Great Commission, when he told his disciples to go to every nation, baptizing new followers.

Unit Overview

Jesus’ disciples went out teaching, preaching, healing, and sharing the good news. This unit also includes the story of Philip, who, in his own unique way, spread the good news of Christ. Jesus’ instructions to his disciples are words to us today as well: we are to tell others about the good news of Christ!

Memory Verse

Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the end of the age.” (Matthew 28:18-20)

Suggested Motions:

Then Jesus came to them (*spread hands in front of body*) and said, “All authority (*hold right hand as if gripping a staff*) in heaven (*point upwards*) and on earth (*point to ground*) has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations (*point to various places in room*) baptizing them in the name of the Father (*tip hand as if pouring from pitcher*) and of the Son (*tip hand again*) and of the Holy Spirit (*tip hand again*) and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you (*move hand in circle in front of body*) And surely I am with you always (*hold hands in fists and cross arms on chest*) to the end of the age.

Ideas

- ✓ Several children’s books provide inspiring stories about people who have shared the good news of Christ with others. One of these that you may be able to find at your local church library is *I Heard Good News Today: Stories for Children* by Cornelia Lehn (Faith & Life Press, 1983).
- ✓ Since your child will be learning about the Great Commission during this unit, it would be a good time for your family to connect with a mission or service worker you know. OR, ask your pastor or denominational mission board to supply you with the name of a person or family. You and your child could send letters and perhaps financial support. Personal connections to people who are serving Christ around the world will help your child visualize the Great Commission as something current and active, not just words on a page.
- ✓ Display a world map prominently in your home, and talk to your child about people you know who are from different countries around the world. Again, such an activity will help children grasp the global nature of God’s love.
- ✓ We will be talking about several people this unit, including Philip, who were devout followers of Jesus during the time of the early church. You could help your child make connections to the lives of such disciples by talking about people you know who have made difficult choices to follow Christ. Who in your church or in your community do you see living out the gospel of Jesus?
- ✓ Worship table symbols you could use during this unit include **a walking stick** to represent Christ’s sending out the disciples; **a copy of the Great Commission**; **an open Bible or scroll** to represent the story of Philip and the Ethiopian.

Sharing the Good News

LESSON 1: TURNING POINT

Objective

Students will write a letter in the voice of one of the Twelve being commissioned by Jesus to preach and teach throughout the land.

Key Concepts

- The disciples' lives were changed when they made the decision to follow Jesus.
- When we make the decision to follow Jesus, we want to live as Jesus taught and follow his example.

Text: Mark 6:7-12

Estimated Lesson Time: 30-35 minutes

Materials

- Pair of child-sized sandals
- Child-sized coat
- Wallet
- Loaf of bread or a snack
- Walking stick
- Student Bibles
- “A Disciple’s Letter” (p. 389)
- “And There Were Twelve” song (p. 385)
- For Extend the Lesson, option one: *Walking with Jesus* by Mary Clemens Meyer (Herald Press, 1992)
- For Extend the Lesson, option two: letter from a mission or service worker

Teacher Preparation

1. Ask a student in your class or an older child to help you with the Introducing the Lesson section. Tell the child to simply stand in front of the room with you, wearing the coat and the sandals and carrying the wallet, walking stick, and bread or snack.
2. Make copies of “A Disciple’s Letter,” one for each student.

INTRODUCING THE LESSON

Ready to travel. Invite your helper to the front of the room. Tell the class that you are sending this person on a special mission—to spread the good news of Jesus Christ to the towns around your school (*name some of the local towns or cities*). But you need to give a few instructions first: Your helper can’t take any money along, or any food. He/she has to take the coat off, and can’t take any extra clothes along in a suitcase. (*As you say these things, take the items from the student, to demonstrate the radical nature of Jesus’ call to his disciples—be as dramatic as you like.*) Then, as if you’re being very kind, say that the helper can keep the sandals, as well as the walking stick (*since he/she won’t be able to drive a car*).

Thank your helper. Ask the student and the rest of the class how they feel about the mission. How would they feel if Jesus asked them to do this?

LESSON STEPS

- 1. Review Jesus' twelve disciples.** Can students name them all? Write the names on the board as students call them out. *(See Unit 8, Lesson 3, for a complete list.)*
- 2. Jesus' instructions.** Explain that before Jesus ascended into heaven, he gave instructions to these disciples like the ones you gave to your helper. The Bible passages you will read today include some of those instructions, and the next lesson will include another set of instructions that Christ gave to his followers (*the Great Commission*). Have students turn to Mark 6:7-12 in their Bibles, and ask a volunteer read it or have the children follow along as you read it.
- 3. Discuss the idea** that following Jesus was a life-changing event for his disciples and is for us today, too. How did following Jesus change the lives of his disciples? Why did Jesus ask them to give up so much? Is there a reason Jesus sent them out two by two, instead of alone?
- 4. "A Disciple's Letter."** Distribute the worksheet and have the students complete it, imagining they are one of the twelve disciples and writing a letter.
- 5. Sing together.** Teach the children the song, "And There Were Twelve," printed on p. 385.

EXTEND THE LESSON

(These activities will take longer than the regular lesson time.)

- **Read some stories** from *Walking with Jesus: Stories of Real People Who Return Good for Evil* by Mary Clemens Meyer. Several of these stories emphasize the hard choices that followers of Christ must sometimes make.
- **Read a letter** from a mission or service worker—someone you know, or perhaps someone with whom a friend or relative corresponds. Talk about what the mission or service worker had to give up, just like the disciples who followed Jesus' call, to do the work of sharing God's love with others.

Name: _____

A Disciple's Letter

Imagine that you are one of the twelve disciples. You have been sent out by Jesus to preach and teach and heal people. Write a letter home to a relative or friend about your experience. How did you feel when Jesus called you to go out with hardly any supplies and food? What do you like about telling others about Jesus?

Dear _____,

Sincerely,

Sharing the Good News

LESSON 2: THE GREAT COMMISSION

Objective

Students will use the words of the Great Commission to create new sentences, and, through hearing the testimony of an invited guest, relate these words of Jesus to current life.

Key Concepts

- The disciples were the first missionaries.
- God wants us to share Jesus' love with others wherever we go.
- God is at work in people's lives around the world.

Text: Matthew 28:16-20

Estimated Lesson Time: 35-40 minutes *(depending on how long the guest shares)*

Materials

- Chart paper
- Large sheets of plain paper
- Notebook paper
- "Commission Blocks" (pp. 392-393)
- Scissors
- Glue sticks
- Student Bibles

Teacher Preparation

Make copies of "Commission Blocks," one for each student.

INTRODUCING THE LESSON

Have the students find Matthew 28:16-20 in their Bibles. See if they can do so with minimal help. Read the verses aloud, or have someone else do so.

LESSON STEPS

1. Discuss the passage. Ask students if they understand the words. Explain that Jesus was now sending out the twelve disciples to teach others about Jesus.

2. Ways to show love. Talk about ways students can show the love of Jesus to others around them, such as people in their neighborhoods. Perhaps they could take the trash out for a neighbor who has a broken ankle. Perhaps they could exercise an elderly person's pet. What else could they do to share the love of Jesus with others?

3. "Commission Blocks." Distribute copies of the worksheets, as well as scissors and notebook paper. Have students cut apart the blocks and scramble them in a pile. Then demonstrate how to make sentences out of the words: "Obey the Holy

Spirit,” “Go and baptize disciples,” “I am with you always,” “On earth the Son commanded you to make disciples,”” etc. Allow time for the students to play with the words and see how many sentences they can arrange. As they create sentences, write them down on a large sheet of chart paper.

4. The Great Commission. After the students have made sentences, hand out glue sticks and large sheets of paper. Write the Great Commission on the board or have students turn to Matthew 28:18-20 in their Bibles. *(OR, if you’ve already worked on the Bible memory for this unit, see if they can do it without referring to the text.)* Have them rearrange the words in the correct order and glue them on the sheets of paper.

5. Bible memory. This would be a good opportunity to practice the Bible verses, since the children have just been working with them.

EXTEND THE LESSON

(These activities will take longer than the regular lesson time.)

• **Write in journals.** Write the following questions on the board for students to respond to in journals or on sheets of paper:

1. Think of a place in the world you would like to go to share the good news and love of Jesus Christ.
2. What needs do the people there have? What strengths do they have? If you don’t know, where could you find out about the people and the place?
3. What kind of work would you like to volunteer to do?
4. Why would you choose to do that kind of work?
5. How would you be sharing Jesus’ love through your work?

• **Make a book.** Assemble the children’s responses to the above questions in a book. Have one student make a cover, and title the book *Sharing the Good News*. Place the book in your classroom library. Alternatively, display the children’s responses around a large world map on the bulletin board.

• **Have children write letters** to mission boards to request the names of voluntary service workers. These people could become both prayer partners and pen pals. Mission organizations might have the names of families with children in second grade. This could be a class project with one family, or a personal project on the part of individual students.

OR, simply request prayer cards from a mission board and post the cards on a bulletin board with a world map. Attach lengths of yarn leading from the prayer cards to the countries where the mission or service workers are stationed.

• **Sing “I Have Decided to Follow Jesus,”** using the following words from the Great Commission:

- I have decided to go to all nations . . .
- I have decided to preach the good news . . .
- I have decided to make disciples . . .
- I have decided to baptize believers . . .
- I have decided to teach God’s laws . . .

Commission Blocks

All	heaven	in	make
me	of	nations	,
Father	the	go	Holy
.	obey	have	everything
always	and	Son	surely
teaching	of	been	them
and	age	with	has
of	And	authority	you

them	I	.	in
all	baptizing	end	to
am	very	,	name
Therefore	I	you	the
.	the	disciples	to
to	of	and	on
earth	the	given	and
Spirit	and	,	the
of	the	commanded	

Sharing the Good News

LESSON 3: PHILIP SPREADS THE GOOD NEWS TO SAMARIA

Objective

Students will scan the text and select characters that match listed attributes or actions.

Key Concepts

- The Holy Spirit is available to all who truly seek God.
- Peace in Christ cannot be bought or sold.
- God uses disciples to help in converting others to Christ’s way.

Text: Acts 8:4-25

Estimated Lesson Time: 30-35 minutes

Materials

- 4 pieces of poster board or paper with words Peace, Hope, Joy, and Love
- Dollar bills, pretend or real
- Student Bibles
- “Spreading the Good News” (p. 396)
- For Extend the Lesson: magazines to find advertisements

Teacher Preparation

1. Make signs saying Peace, Hope, Joy, and Love in large letters. Give them to four students before the lesson begins. Ask them to simply stand in front of the class holding their signs during the lesson introduction. You will try to “buy” their signs from them; instruct them to refuse by shaking their heads or saying “No.”
2. Make copies of “Spreading the Good News,” enough for every two students (*unless you want them to work on this individually*).

INTRODUCING THE LESSON

What can money buy? Have your volunteers stand with their signs in front of the class. Go down the line, offering each one of them money if they will give you their sign. Be as dramatic as you like—act disappointed when they refuse, offer increasing amounts of money, get down on your knees and hold up bills to the students, etc.

Thank your student volunteers, and debrief with the entire class. Talk a bit about what money can and can’t buy. Explain that the Bible story for today will introduce a man who tried to buy something that can’t be bought: the Holy Spirit.

LESSON STEPS

1. **Read about Philip** from Acts 8:4-25. You may want to paraphrase the text so it isn’t so long. Talk a bit about the story, and give students the opportunity to ask

questions about the text, which might be a little confusing. Don't feel like you need to have all the answers, but encourage questions nonetheless.

2. “Spreading the Good News.” Hand out copies of the worksheet and have students work in pairs to match the names in the story with the references.

3. Bible memory. Work on memorizing the Great Commission, if you have time. End by singing “You are Salt for the Earth” in *Hymnal: A Worship Book* (#226).

EXTEND THE LESSON

(This activity will take longer than the regular lesson time.)

- **Build on the idea** of people trying to buy and sell things like happiness, peace (or the Holy Spirit, as in the Acts story) by doing some basic ad analysis. Cut out several advertisements from magazines, or give a stack of magazines to your students and have them each cut out one or two ads. On the board, in one column, make a list of the products the advertisers are trying to sell: Barbies, dish soap, lawn mowers, etc.

In another column, have students look at the advertisements and try to figure out what emotion the advertisers are trying to make us feel (*trying to make us “buy”*): happiness, pride, safety, feeling rich, etc. Then help students think about the things in life that give us true happiness, safety, pride, etc.: times with our families and friends, playing games, knowing God loves us, helping others, etc. Write these down in a third column.

Names: _____

Spreading the Good News

Open your Bible to the story in Acts 8:4-25. Look up the verse that is in each block. Then in each block, list one or more of the characters that you find in that verse. The first block is done for you. The characters you will use are:

Philip

Simon the Sorcerer

Peter

John

<u>Verse 23</u> <i>Simon the Sorcerer</i>	<u>Verses 5 and 25</u>	<u>Verse 6</u>
<u>Verse 17</u>	<u>Verse 5</u>	<u>Verse 9</u>
<u>Verse 25</u>	<u>Verse 9 or 11</u>	<u>Verses 20-23</u>

Spreading the Good News

Open your Bible to the story in Acts 8:4-25. Look up the verse that is in each block. Then in each block, list one or more of the characters that you find in that verse. The first block is done for you. The characters you will use are:

Philip

Simon the Sorcerer

Peter

John

<u>Verse 23</u> <i>Simon the Sorcerer</i>	<u>Verses 5 and 25</u> <i>Peter</i> <i>Philip</i> <i>John</i>	<u>Verse 6</u> <i>Philip</i>
<u>Verse 17</u> <i>Peter</i> <i>John</i>	<u>Verse 5</u> <i>Philip</i>	<u>Verse 9</u> <i>Simon the Sorcerer</i>
<u>Verse 25</u> <i>Peter</i> <i>John</i>	<u>Verse 9 or 11</u> <i>Simon the Sorcerer</i>	<u>Verses 20-23</u> <i>Peter</i>

Sharing the Good News

LESSON 4: PHILIP AND THE ETHIOPIAN

Objective

Students will identify ways they can emulate Philip’s openness to the Holy Spirit and the Ethiopian’s humility and eagerness to learn the gospel.

Key Concepts

- The Holy Spirit prompts us to know what God wants us to do.
- We can be like Philip and listen to the promptings of the Spirit.
- We can be like the Ethiopian man and be open and humble in receiving instruction.

Text: Acts 8:26-40

Estimated Lesson Time: 30-35 minutes

Materials

- High school textbook (*several copies, if possible*)
- Map or globe
- Large sheet newsprint
- Student Bibles
- “Like Philip and the Ethiopian” (p. 400)
- Crayons and markers

Teacher Preparation

1. In the high school textbook(s), highlight a passage that would be very difficult for your students to understand if they tried to read it themselves but that they can comprehend if you explain to them more simply. Be prepared to explain the paragraph in second-grade language.
2. On the sheet of newsprint, make two columns labeled “The Ethiopian” and “Philip.”
3. Make copies of “Like Philip and the Ethiopian,” one for each student.

INTRODUCING THE LESSON

Pass the textbook(s) around, encouraging students to read the highlighted passage. (*Several copies of the same textbook will make this exercise go more smoothly.*) Invite them to sound out words they don’t recognize, guess at meanings of words, etc. (*You’ll probably want to reassure them that they shouldn’t be able to understand this book at their age, but when they get older, they’ll be able to read such books.*) After each student has had a chance to look at the passage, explain the passage to them in simpler words that they can understand.

LESSON STEPS

1. **Read the story.** Explain that the story for today is about a man who was trying to read a portion of the Bible and couldn’t understand it until he had someone

explain it to him. Have students turn in their Bibles to Acts 8:26-40, and then read it to them. You could explain a couple things as you go: it was not uncommon in those days for people to read texts out loud. Also, to help students visualize the chariot, tell them that it was probably a four-wheeled oxcart, with sitting room for the Ethiopian man, a driver, Philip, and possibly a servant. Point out Ethiopia on a map or globe, and show how far Philip lived from where the Ethiopian lived.

2. Discuss the story. Ask what the students notice about the Ethiopian eunuch's attitude toward Philip. (*He was inviting, open, humble, and eager to learn from Philip.*) List their ideas in "The Ethiopian" column on the newsprint you prepared. Then ask what they notice about Philip's attitude. (*He was open to the Spirit, he wasn't afraid to talk to someone he didn't know, he began to explain the gospel starting with what the Ethiopian could understand, etc.*) You might want to have student volunteers make the lists for you on the newsprint.

3. "Like Philip and the Ethiopian." Distribute the worksheets to the class to complete. You may need to help them think about times they can be open to having something explained to them and eager to learn (*like the Ethiopian*), and times they can be open to the Holy Spirit (*like Philip*).

EXTEND THE LESSON

(These activities will take longer than the regular lesson time.)

- **Create a "mural."** If the weather is nice, have children go outside and use sidewalk chalk to draw a "mural" of Philip and the Ethiopian on an outside surface.
- **Have children act out the scene** from the Acts 8 passage as you read it out loud. Divide them into groups of three (*Philip, the Ethiopian, a driver*), and set up "chariots" (*sets of chairs*) around the room.

Name: _____

Like Philip and the Ethiopian

Draw a picture of the Ethiopian official here.

The Ethiopian man was **humble and eager to learn** from Philip.

I can be like the Ethiopian when I:

Draw a picture of Philip here.

Philip was **open** to the Holy Spirit's leading and **brave** enough to follow.

I can be like Philip when I:

Name: _____

Unit 12 Assessment

Write two of the things Jesus told the disciples they could NOT take with them when he sent them out to preach.

1. _____

2. _____

Match the people below with the actions they took:

Philip

tried to buy the Spirit

The Ethiopian

baptized by Philip

Simon the Sorcerer

rebuked Simon the Sorcerer

Peter

preached in Samaria

ANSWER KEY

Unit 12 Assessment

Write two of the things Jesus told the disciples they could NOT take with them when he sent them out to preach.

1. *Any of the following: bread, bag,*
2. *money, an extra tunic (or coat)*

Match the people below with the actions they took:

