



Living the Word: Kids

Dear Teachers:

Greetings from Spirit & Truth Publishing! I hope you are excited for a new year of faith formation with your students. Here are a few things to know about the *Living the Word: Teaching Kids God's Story* curricula.

- **Themes & Points-** The *Living the Word: Kids (Year 3)* products have an annual theme as well as multi-week thematic units to help tie the lessons together. Each lesson, is focused on "The Point," the main idea of the lesson. Please note that if your congregation is using *Living the Word* products for other age groups, the themes, The Point, and the daily Bible readings are common among all of our products each week.
- **Quantity-** We have designed these lesson plans to include more material than most teachers can fit within the time allotted each week. We have done this so that you as the teacher can choose which activities you would like to focus on for a particular lesson. Please don't stress about getting to every activity! As you get to know your class, you might find that one type of activity really gets your students engaged, or another type makes them lose focus. There are different learning styles, different teachings styles, and different perspectives on what all should be taught in education time. We have something for everybody!
- **Activities-** As mentioned above, feel free to choose whatever activities will fit your class each week. If you would like some guidance, we recommend the following:
 - Focus on the "Learning the Story" and the "Living the Story" activities as the core of the curriculum.
 - If you have time, add the "Into the Story" opening activity, "Sending the Story" closing activity and the "Bible Nuts & Bolts" to introduce students to some of the form and structure of the Bible.
 - Finally, add in "Additional Activities" to reinforce The Point as you have time! You can use the same structure every week, or change it up; it's up to you!
- **Scripts-** Most of the activities in this curriculum include "talking scripts" of what you as the teacher are "supposed" to say. Please feel free to use these scripts, change them in some way, or throw them out and do it your own way! Don't feel like you need to use them if you don't want to. They are only there to help you if you want them.
- **Timing-** The activities in each lesson plan have suggested times next to them to help you plan your lesson. However, this is only a tool to help you make decisions, not a rule or expectation. Some classes might blow through a particular activity in half the time, while others might really dive into it and spend the whole class period on that same activity! Either is great, as is anywhere in between!
- **Extended Lessons-** You may notice that there are two Sunday in the program year that we do not provide a regular lesson for, the Sunday after Christmas and the Sunday of Easter. We do this because many congregations do not have faith formation times those days or weeks. However, since we do not want to miss the Bible readings for those days, and since some congregations do have faith formation time then, we have created Extended Lessons for the following Sundays. This year we have also included a third extended lesson on Palm Sunday. This lesson is extended to include the events of Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. For a more detailed explanation of extended lesson, please see that letter included in your download files.

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So, what's included in each lesson?

Each lesson follows the same basic format. Below describes the different lesson components.

- ✚ **Overview**: The first page of the Teacher Guide gives basic information about the lesson.
- ✚ **Activities a la Carte**: This is the table of contents for the lesson activities. Like an “a la carte” menu, pick and choose the elements that work best for you and your students!
- ✚ **Background for Teachers**: This section briefly gets you up to speed with background information on the Bible passage, Bible Nuts & Bolts topic, and spiritual practice focus.
- ✚ **Into the Story**: This section gives a brief activity to help students transition from walking into the room to being ready to dig into the Bible story. It is what is known in educational terms as a “set” or quick introduction that will help students move into the lesson.
- ✚ **Bible Nuts & Bolts**: Each lesson has an activity that helps students learn about the structure, themes, tools, or topics related to getting to know the Bible, with different subjects each week!
- ✚ **Learning the Story (Core Activity)**: This is the heart of the guide. If there is one thing not to skip—this is it. Here is where the Bible story is encountered most fully. This Bible “study” uses a variety of formats and learning styles to help students experience God in the day’s story.
- ✚ **Living the Story (Core Activity)**: Each lesson seeks not only to help your students engage the Bible, but also to practice their faith using the designated spiritual practice (Prayer, Worship, Fellowship, or Service). Challenge them to keep practicing this throughout the week on their own!
- ✚ **Additional Activities**: Just like the name says, this section gives three more activities related to the lesson. Point and offer additional support for different learning styles.
- ✚ **Sending the Story**: This last section gives you a chance to review the lesson together and end with a prayer.
- ✚ **Activity Sheets**: Many lessons include reproducible activity sheets to support certain activities. If so, they are found at the back of the Teacher Guide.
- ✚ **The Story @ Home**: Each Teacher Guide ends with a two-page take-home resource for students and their families. The first page gives “bite-sized” chunks of information for parents and the second page give suggestions for family discussions and daily devotions. In addition to, or instead of, photocopying the take-home pages, you have the option of sending out the separate PDF file electronically.

If you want more background information on each Bible passage, talk to your congregational leaders about ordering our new *Living the Word: Contexts & Connections* resource!

Thank you for the invaluable work you do, teaching our children! Please know that if you have any questions about the curriculum, feel free to ask! You may email me, post a question on our *Living the Word: Kids* Facebook page, or give me a call! Your feedback will help make future materials even better!

Blessings,

Gregory Rawn
Publisher