

DEAR PRIMARY TEACHER

Faith is believing in something we can't see. Faith is scary, wonderful, and challenging. Our little ones don't grasp abstract thought, yet teach us so much about simple belief and faith. That is why I love teaching children and paraphrasing Scripture—so that they can deepen their faith and their love for Jesus.

I am honored to be the new Editor of *Primary Street*®. I am aware that I have some amazing shoes to fill as Melissa Moore moves on to new adventures. She and I have worked together at UMI for six years, and it is a privilege to follow her in developing this publication. She is a woman of faith and many gifts. She will be missed.

I have been the *Preschool Playhouse*® Editor for six years and love our UMI family. There is no greater calling than investing in the lives of children and sharing Jesus with them. I love equipping them for ministry and encouraging them in their role as sons and daughters of the High King!

I am a graduate of Talbot School of Theology and a credentialed teacher. I have worked in youth ministry and now teach at a juvenile hall. I'm a wife and mom to a blended family of six. I hope to encourage you as a teacher, and give you engaging and practical lessons to use with the children you serve in Jesus' name.

The *Primary Street*® student and teacher curriculum is designed to help you present Bible stories and scriptural principles to primaries so they will love Jesus and please God through obedience to His Word. You'll notice our objectives are always to reinforce Scripture, encourage children in their walk with Jesus, and to give them practical ways to live out their faith.

Teaching aids such as *Craft Kingdom*®, *Scripture Scenes*®, and the *Teaching Success Kit* are sold separately. The *Sing-Along* CD is provided in the *Teaching Success Kit*. These materials enhance the learning experience by reinforcing the lesson concepts through intentional and fun activities such as games, puzzles, skits, and a variety of small projects that children can take home. In addition, we have added a "Dear Parents" section to the student folders. We hope this will help families to engage in the lesson throughout the week.

Thank you for leading and guiding your primaries into a life of serving Jesus. Leadership encompasses teaching, mentoring, discipling, and serving, and we know you do all this and more for the children in your care. I can't wait to hear how God uses you this year!

Praying for you each and every Sunday,

Brooke Zuidema
Primary Street® Editor

ONE-HOUR CLASS SCHEDULE

ACTIVITY	LENGTH	PURPOSE
OPEN THE LESSON: Focus Activity	10 minutes	Gathers the class and identifies what students already know about the topic.
PRESENT THE SCRIPTURES: Life Application Story (student folder—page 1)	8 minutes	Introduces the Bible theme through an age-appropriate, reader-friendly story.
Bible Story (student folder—page 2)	8 minutes	Provides a Bible Story written specifically for young readers to read.
EXPLORE THE MEANING: Review	4 minutes	Provides discussion questions, games, and presentation ideas to help students show their understanding of the Bible Story and theme.
Memory Verse	5 minutes	Provides active strategies for students to memorize or enhance understanding of the Memory Verse.
NEXT STEPS FOR APPLICATION: Be Smart and Good Attitude (student folder—pages 3 and 4)	10 minutes	Relates directly to the lesson aims by using pencil and paper activities to help students express what they are learning.
Worship Time	5 minutes	Helps students focus on God and applies the lesson to their situations through age-appropriate activities.
Craft Kingdom®	10 minutes	Reinforces the topic and aids students in sharing the lesson with parents through take-home projects that are created in class.

NOTES

T4T—TIPS FOR TEACHERS

SHYNESS

You've just presented a wonderful Sunday School lesson, and now you're eager to reflect and review with your students. There's a feeling of accomplishment in seeing so many hands raised, eager to share what's been learned. However, you notice one or two children sitting quietly off to themselves seemingly unmoved by the excitement around them. You may assume they were not listening, or wonder whether your voice and tone projected in a way that stimulated their interest. Chances are you did a fantastic job preparing and presenting your lesson. So what's wrong? You probably have shy children in your class.

Shyness can result from feelings of discomfort, apprehension in social situations, or fear. These responses can arise when children enter a new class, meet new people, or are separated from their parents. Shy children may have little to say and may be reluctant to participate in classroom activities. As you address shyness your goal is to elicit participation from your shy students by helping them feel more comfortable in your classroom. Begin your effort by reminding them, "God did not give us a spirit of timidity (fear), but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline" (from 2 Timothy 1:7, NIV).

Here are some strategies to address the students with shyness in your classroom:

- **Accept & Address Shyness.** Do not perceive shyness as a problem, but look at it as an individual part of a child's character. Accept each student as unique and valued. Smile as you greet each child in the class. This will tell all of your students they are valued from the moment they arrive. Plan inclusive group activities, such as singing songs while holding hands. Children who are shy can be a part of the activity without feeling fearful, should they choose not to sing. Pairing students or placing a child

near you can also help put shy students at ease and build confidence.

- **Involve Parents.** Ask the parents how they effectively communicate with their child at home. Ask for suggestions on how to adapt those strategies to the classroom. Speaking with parents will help you gain insight into their child's likes and dislikes. Encourage parents to occasionally sit in the classroom to help lessen a child's feeling of anxiousness. Encourage the parents to talk with their child about the topics, songs, and games that have been highlighted in class.
- **Communicate.** Use verbal and non-verbal skills to help shy students recognize your classroom as a place of comfort and safety. Smile often and use good eye contact. Shy students may have to be called upon to answer questions. Verbally praise the child for trying. Praising a child's effort will ease his or her willingness to try again. Offer rewards, such as colorful stickers, for desired behavior. Using toys such as stuffed animals, puppets, and toy phones throughout your lessons can facilitate verbal communication. Gradually introducing your students to different activities will produce indicators (smiles, a raised hand, singing, and playing), which will let you know that you're making progress.

The more comfortable your students become, the more likely they will participate in class. Be patient as your students develop the courage to speak up. Many children will leave their shyness behind as they grow and mature, while others may always have a sense of shyness about them. As teachers who appreciate and stand on God's Word as the ultimate teaching plan, you will feel pleased knowing you have contributed in helping all your students learn about God's goodness.

Quarter At-A-Glance September 2022

A Living Faith

This study focuses on faith. The first unit uses passages from Hebrews to move participants toward a definition of faith, while the second and third units continue the study of faith through the lens of the Early Church.

UNIT 1 • What Is Faith?

These lessons engage learners in responsive obedience to God's love that is revealed in Jesus. This response is an act of faith.

UNIT 2 • Who Understands Faith?

The first two lessons focus on Stephen's message and martyrdom. The third lesson explores the repercussions for those who treat faith as a commodity. The fourth lesson looks at the faith that guides both Philip the evangelist and the Ethiopian seeker to examine the Scriptures together.

UNIT 3 • What Does Faith Cost?

This unit is a four-lesson study of Paul's faith and ministry. The first lesson examines Paul's speech before King Agrippa. The second lesson goes with Paul aboard the ship to Rome. The final two lessons focus on Paul's ongoing ministry even though he is a prisoner.

NEVER GIVE UP!

WEEKLY THEME:

FAITH CALLS FOR PERSEVERANCE

BASED ON:

Hebrews 10:19-31, NIV

KEY VERSE:

Hebrews 10:23, NIV

LESSON OBJECTIVES

Knowledge: Primaries will recall the Bible story by answering questions using evidence from the text.

Attitude: Primaries will recognize that helping others helps us stay closer to God.

Action: Primaries will identify one way that they can draw near to God this week.

DEAR TEACHER

The children will learn to be determined to stay close to God and strong in their faith.

SUPPLY LIST

SECTION	MATERIALS
Focus Activity	Two 10-foot lengths of string, squares of paper

OPEN THE LESSON

Focus Activity

Before class: Cut two long pieces of string, each about 10 feet long. On several squares of paper, write phrases like “Tell the truth,” “Say your prayers,” and “Love others.”

During class: Lay the string on the floor in two parallel lines, about 15 inches apart. Place the squares of paper inside the string path. Read the squares to the class. See if the children can stay inside the narrow path from one end to the other, reading the phrases that will help them never give up in their faith. Encourage them to try hopping on one foot or walking sideways for fun. Help the primaries understand that following God sometimes is like walking on a narrow path. We can stay on the path and have a life that is blessed. When we wander off the path, we can get into trouble and situations that aren’t good for us.

PRESENT THE SCRIPTURES

Life Application Story

(Distribute the student folders.)

Before reading, ask the children if they ever made up their mind to do something good, and

stuck to it. Read the story and ask if anyone would like to help with reading. After reading, ask the students what Keller had made up his mind to do. Was it a good thing? Why? (Possible responses: He was thinking of others rather than himself. It was something that would keep him close to God. It would help him stay strong in his faith.)

Bible Story

Never Give Up!

The Bible Story in the student folders is designed for primary students to read. The Scripture Scene® is provided as a visual aid. Be sure to study the information on this Bible passage in the white pages of the Teacher Guide.

Before Jesus, there was a place in the Temple that only a chosen priest could enter. Now, we can enter the Most Holy Place because of Jesus. That means we can be closer to God. Jesus has opened a new and living way for us. Jesus is our great priest, so we can draw near to God through Him. We don’t have to have a priest pray on our behalf or offer sacrifices for our sins, Jesus did that. We’re cleansed from feeling bad and having a guilty conscience. Because of these, we can

never give up holding on to our hope. God made promises and He is faithful. Never give up loving others and doing good deeds. We should keep meeting together and encouraging each other. God does not like for us to sin. God is pleased when we love each other and do kind things. Let's keep worshipping together and following God. Always remember, God will judge His people, so we must strive to love, serve, encourage, and obey.

EXPLORE THE MEANING

Review

Using the Bible Story from the student folders, have the primaries participate in a discussion with you to recall the details of the Bible Story. Here are some questions you can ask: (1) Why can we enter the Most Holy Place and be closer to God? (Because of Jesus) (2) What was opened up for us because of what Jesus did for us? (A new and living way) Follow up: What do you think that means? (3) Jesus is a great _____. (Priest) Talk about how a priest is like a minister or pastor and Jesus was the greatest of all. (4) What are we cleansed from? (A guilty conscience) (5) Is God faithful? (Yes – always!) (6) What are some things we can do to stay close to God and never give up in our faith? (Meet together and go to church; keep doing good deeds for others; try not to sin) (7) Who is our judge? (God) (8) What do we want to keep doing? (We want to love, serve, encourage, and obey.)

Memory Verse

“Let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with... faith” (from Hebrews 10:22, NIV).

To help the children learn the verse, play a game of pantomime. For example, a child who is pretending to draw with a pencil or crayon could pantomime the word “draw.” For “near,” a child could make the letter “N” with his fingers and then point to his ear. Choose a student to perform the first word of the Memory Verse, another student for the next word, and continue until the verse is completed. Help them as needed. Write each word on a dry erase board or blackboard as the children guess them. After the verse is completed, have the children recite it with you several times.

NEXT STEPS FOR APPLICATION

Be Smart

Circle Puzzle

Have the children circle every third word in the puzzle, starting from the word “Go,” to find an important message from Hebrews. Then they can color in the pictures. **Answer:** God is pleased when we love each other.

Good Attitude

Hidden Memory Verse

Today's Memory Verse is Hebrews 10:22. The students will find the letters and numbers of this verse within the pictures and color them. Discuss ways the children can draw near to God. Have them write down one thing they can do this week to draw near to God.

Worship Time

Have the children repeat this prayer/poem with you:

God, help me be strong in You,
Faithful in all the things I do.
Help me love, and help me pray,
Joyfully in faith, each and every day.
Help me always be strong,
Doing what is right, not wrong,
Never giving up or in— Then the victory I will win!

Craft Kingdom®

Craft Kingdom® provides directions to make a craft that reinforces the lesson. Play the *Sing-Along* CD as students work.

NOTES

Faith Calls for Perseverance

Bible Background • HEBREWS 10:19–31

Printed Text • HEBREWS 10:19–31 | Devotional Reading • ROMANS 5:1–5

Aim for Change

By the end of the lesson, we will: KNOW Jesus' sacrificial death opens the way to the presence of God; FEEL the importance of holding on to faith in Jesus; and SHARE our faith with others.

In Focus

Anthony and Angie dated for one year and had been friends for eight. One Saturday, Anthony met with Mr. Williams, Angie's father. Anthony said to him,

"May I have your permission to ask Angie to marry me? I love and respect your daughter and I want to make her my partner for life. She is my blessing from God. I can't imagine life without her."

Mr. Williams thought for a moment then smiled. "You have my permission, Anthony," he said. "Let's pray for your lives together."

One evening as Anthony and Angie walked through the park, Anthony knelt on one knee and proposed. Angie was speechless. As tears ran down her cheeks, she said,

"I have made too many mistakes in my life. You can't truly love me, because I have not forgiven myself. I don't deserve a life with you. I love you, but I can't marry you!"

As Angie started to leave, Anthony said, "We all make mistakes, but God forgives us when we sincerely come to Him."

Through faith in Christ, our sins are forgiven and we have a new life. In today's lesson, we can develop a personal relationship with Jesus by faith and enter into the presence of God.

Keep in Mind

"Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering;"
(Hebrews 10:23, KJV)

Focal Verses

KJV Hebrews 10:19 Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,

20 By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;

21 And having an high priest over the house of God;

22 Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

23 Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)

24 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:

25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

26 For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,

27 But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.

28 He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses:

29 Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?

30 For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people.

31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

The People, Places, and Times

Holy of Holies. It was located in the innermost sanctuary of the temple. Separated from the other parts of the temple by a thick curtain, the Holy of Holies was specially associated with the presence of Yahweh, God. In the early years of the existence of the temple, the Holy of Holies contained the Ark of the Covenant, which represented God's presence with the people of Israel.

High Priest. He was the one in charge of the temple worship. It was a hereditary position based upon descent from Aaron. Normally, the high priest served for life. Only the high priest could enter the Holy of Holies and only on the Day of Atonement.

Hebrews. Because there are references to religious sacrifices and ceremonies, the book of Hebrews was probably written before the

destruction of the temple in Jerusalem in A.D. 70. The name of the author is not given, but the person is a "brother" of Timothy (Hebrews 13:23). The setting for the book is a period when Jewish Christians underwent severe persecution from the Romans and Jews, both socially and physically. It's clear that the author was knowledgeable of the Old Testament because there are direct quotations from it as he argues the superiority of Jesus Christ and faith.

Background

Sacrifices were practiced from the earliest of times in the Old Testament. Sacrifices from the produce of the land and firstborn of the flock were offered by Cain and Abel; Noah built an altar and offered sacrifices after he left the ark. The Mosaic sacrifices were prior to Christ's

ultimate sacrifice on the Cross. Animals were imperfect sacrifices that could not completely purify and atone for the sins of the people. If they could, they would have ceased. The annual sacrifice on the Day of Atonement was a visible reminder of the sins of humanity.

The writer expressed the importance and superiority of Christ's priesthood and the New Covenant to the Levitical priesthood and the Mosaic covenant. The Levitical high priest could only enter the Holy of Holies, which was the most holy place (inner sanctuary of the temple) one day a year, the Day of Atonement, the 10th day of the seventh month of the Jewish calendar (September-October). On the Day of Atonement, the high priest made reconciling sacrifices for the sins of the entire nation. The images that the writer revealed about the Day of Atonement emphasize the superiority of the priesthood of Christ.

In Chapter 9 of Hebrews, the writer explained that the *diatheke*—the Greek word for agreement, covenant, or arrangement—was placed into effect when Christ died (Hebrews 9:11–12, 24–28). The new covenant, which was initiated when Christ died, frees believers from the bondage of the first covenant. God took away the Levitical sacrificial system, which was the first arrangement, when He established the perfect sacrifice—Jesus Christ.

At-A-Glance

1. The Priesthood of Christ Is Superior (Hebrews 10:19–21)
2. The Priesthood of Christ and Our Profession of Faith (vv. 22–25)
3. The Priesthood of Christ and Knowledge of the Truth (vv. 26–27)
4. The Priesthood of Christ and How God Will Judge His People (vv. 28–31)

In Depth

1. The Priesthood of Christ Is Superior (Hebrews 10:19–21)

In chapters 5 through 10 of the book of Hebrews, the writer has explained that the priesthood of Christ is superior to the Levitical priesthood, which was made at Mount Sinai. The Levitical priesthood could not bring the people to perfection. There was no permanent reconciliation between the people and God through the temporary animal sacrifices. The people needed the perfect sacrifice, Jesus Christ, who gave His life once to restore the people to a relationship with God. The Levitical high priests atoned for all sins of the people on the Day of Atonement. Every year, the high priest entered the Holy of Holies where he made a sacrifice for the nation's sins. A curtain prevented anyone from seeing the inner sanctuary. When Jesus died for the sins of humanity, the curtain was torn open, permitting anyone to enter the holiest of all—God's presence. The high priest was no longer required for believers to be forgiven. By a "new and living way" (Hebrews 10:20), believers can go directly to God through faith in Christ.

During biblical times, the high priest passed through a veil to enter the inner sanctuary where God's presence existed. Because of Christ's sacrificial death on the Cross, believers can now personally come before God. Christ shed His blood to give humanity the ability to come before God's presence by faith. Our High Priest is Jesus Christ, who experienced the pain, temptations, and trials that we experience as believers. By the righteousness of Christ, the Superior Priest, we can approach God with "boldness ... by the blood of Jesus" (Hebrews 10:19). Through the shed blood of Christ, we can come before our Creator by faith. Have you accepted Christ by faith and experienced a relationship with God that is only available through Christ, the Superior Priest?

2. The Priesthood of Christ and Our Profession of Faith (vv. 22–25)

Through Christ, we can freely enter into the presence of God. Through faith in Christ’s work on our behalf, we have “full assurance,” or certainty, that our sins are forgiven. There is an allusion to Christian baptism when the writer refers to “our hearts sprinkled” and “bodies washed with pure water” (Hebrews 10:22). Because of the eternal efficacy of the blood of Christ, our consciences are cleansed. When the high priest entered the “holy place . . . He shall put on the holy linen coat . . . the linen breeches . . . a linen girdle . . . these are holy garments” and he must be cleansed; therefore “shall he wash his flesh in water” (Leviticus 16:3-4). Likewise, the believer must be cleansed before he or she can come before the Holy One. While we are declared “not guilty” because of the work of Christ, we need to cleanse ourselves daily by turning away from sin and turning to God to experience the fullness of relationship with Him. We must give ourselves completely to God and maintain a personal relationship with Jesus.

The writer encourages believers to “hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering” (Hebrews 10:23). God reveals His promises and truths through His Word; thus, we must embrace God’s Word and resist temptation and opposition. His promises are our treasures that we believe with a confident expectation. The foundation of our faith, therefore, is based upon the integrity and righteousness of Christ. We have hope because “God is faithful” (1 Corinthians 1:9). Although the Jewish Christians were experiencing persecution, the writer urges the believers to resist the temptation to apostasy. He wants to reassure the believers by calling them to remember, “He (God) is faithful that promised”; God will do what He has promised (Hebrews 10:23).

The writer instructs the believers to “consider”—which means to observe or contemplate—each other (Hebrews 10:24). Believers must provoke or stir up the qualities of love and good works toward each other (Hebrews 10:24). The writer knew believers could have an impact on one another by loving and doing good deeds for each other.

Because of the fear of persecution, some of the believers had stopped attending worship services; therefore, the writer encourages believers to pull together to stir up loving and active faith. The fellowship of believers is a source of encouragement; it is an opportunity to share faith and grow stronger. The writer urged the believers to get involved in encouraging or “exhorting one another” with the truth (Hebrews 10:25). The fellowship of believers promotes accountability; it is the opportunity to worship and pray with others. As you fellowship with the body of believers, encourage someone today!

3. The Priesthood of Christ and Knowledge of the Truth (vv. 26–27)

The writer of Hebrews reminds believers that if they “sin willfully” they deliberately reject Christ (Hebrews 10:26). It is a conscious rejection of God after receiving the truth and the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The writer does not refer to an occasional act of sin. God sent Jesus to die for our sins; “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9). Believers should not willfully rebel against God’s provisions after receiving and fully understanding the “knowledge of the truth,” which is Christ’s offer of salvation (Hebrews 10:26).

The consequences of rejecting God are “judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries,” and there is no hope of forgiveness (Hebrews 10:27). Thus, those who reject Christ and disobey God are His adversaries. There is one certain judgment,

death and destruction, for obstinate apostates. The apostates will experience the wrath of God because there is no other help for sinners who reject their only remedy—salvation through accepting Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

4. The Priesthood of Christ and How God Will Judge His People (vv. 28–31)

The Old Testament refers to the sin of idolatry that requires “two witnesses, or three witnesses ... (to) be put to death” (Deuteronomy 17:6). The judgment for idolatry was death by stoning, but there is a worse punishment for someone who rejects the word of Christ. If someone considers the “blood of the covenant ... an unholy thing,” the person grieves the “Spirit of grace,” the Holy Spirit (Hebrews 10:29). The person that rejects the Spirit of God will receive a punishment greater than a physical death.

Judgment belongs to God for “the LORD shall judge his people” (Deuteronomy 32:36). There is no other sacrifice for sin except Christ’s sacrifice on the Cross. If someone rejects God’s mercy, he or she will receive God’s judgment. The writer of Hebrews states, “It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God” (Hebrews 10:31). The apostate will experience an eternal punishment from God’s hands. Believers, who have received the mercy of God through Christ, are saved and have nothing to fear.

Search the Scriptures

1. What is the “Holy of Holies” (Hebrews 10:19)?
2. What is the “new and living way” that Jesus has prepared for believers to come into the presence of God (Hebrews 10:20)?
3. Explain the difference between a “willful sin” and an “occasional sin.” (Refer to the “knowledge of the truth” and the effects of deliberately rejecting “the truth” that are discussed in Hebrews 10:26.)

Discuss the Meaning

1. How can we draw near and remain in the presence of God each day? How can we truly experience God’s presence?
2. When we accept Christ, He responds, “henceforth, I call you not servants ... I have called you friends” (John 15:15). What should be our response to Christ as believers? Does your relationship with Christ reveal that He is your friend?

Liberating Lesson

Faith is effective when we depend on God and rest in what Christ has done on the Cross. The writer of Hebrews urged believers to recognize the superiority of our faith and live in obedience to God each day. Through Christ, we have an eternal reward and significant privileges that we can experience through our new life in Christ. Through Christ, we can experience God’s presence and develop a relationship with Him. We can grow in faith and experience a deeper relationship with God when we trust and believe without doubts and concerns that the world presents. The world is temporary, but our life with God is eternal. Each day we must trust God and hold on to our faith and then share our faith with others. When we share our love for God, we can encourage others and introduce them to a new life through Christ.

Application for Activation

The world focuses on tangible rewards, promotions, and recognition with financial bonuses. The world encourages the pursuit of tangible endeavors and earthly wealth with retirement plans focused on life in the world. Retirement plans can be important, but as Christians, our focus is greater. Because we have accepted Christ by faith, we are friends of Christ with a purpose to share our love for Christ through faith. Consider local ministries that allow you to share your faith in God. Volunteer

your time to share your love for God with people who do not know Him or share your faith and encourage believers who are homebound or sick. Help others to remain faithful and experience the presence of God each day. Make a daily affirmation to share your faith. Finally, ask God for boldness to share your faith with others. God will give you the opportunity and bless your desire to be faithful.

Follow the Spirit

What God wants me to do:

Remember Your Thoughts

Special insights I have learned:

Sources:

Bruce, F. F. *The Epistle to the Hebrews, Revised: New International Commentary on the New Testament*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, Reprint, 1988.

Guthrie, Donald. *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries: Letter to the Hebrews*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1983. 216.

Holman Pocket Bible Dictionary. Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2004. 762-764, 773.

Johnson, Luke Timothy. *Hebrews: A Commentary. The New Testament Library*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006. 259.

Keener, Craig S. *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993. 647-650, 670-671.

Lane, William L. *Hebrews 9-13. Word Biblical Commentary*, Vol. 47B. Dallas, TX: Word Inc., 1991.

Life Application Study Bible, King James Version. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 1997. 2154-2155, 2170-2172.

"New Testament Greek Lexicon." Bible Study Tools.com. <http://www.biblestudytools.com/lexicons/greek> (accessed September 6, 2011).

Radmacher, Earl D., ed. *Nelson's New Illustrated Bible Commentary: Spreading the Light of God's Word into Your Life*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1999. 1648-1653.

Say It Correctly

Abihu. uh-BAHY-hyoo.
Nadab. NAY-dab.

Daily Bible Readings

MONDAY

A Great Faith
(Matthew 8:5-13)

TUESDAY

A Saving Faith
(Romans 10:8-17)

WEDNESDAY

A Justifying Faith
(Galatians 2:15-21)

THURSDAY

An Examined Faith
(2 Corinthians 13:5-10)

FRIDAY

An Enduring Faith
(Romans 5:1-5)

SATURDAY

An Exemplary Faith
(1 Thessalonians 1:2-10)

SUNDAY

The Full Assurance of Faith
(Hebrews 10:19-31)

WE BELIEVE

WEEKLY THEME:

FAITH IS ASSURANCE

BASED ON:

Hebrews 11:1–3, 6; Psalm 46:1–3, 8–11, NIV

KEY VERSE:

Hebrews 11:1, NIV

LESSON OBJECTIVES

Knowledge: Primaries will identify ways God has cared for them.

Attitude: Primaries will feel assured that God is always with us.

Action: Primaries will recite Psalm 23 with the teacher and discuss it.

DEAR TEACHER

The children will learn that they can trust God and His care for them, in faith. No matter what happens, He is always there to help us.

SUPPLY LIST

SECTION	MATERIALS
Focus Activity	Images of scenes depicting Psalm 23, poster board, glue sticks
Review	Paper, markers or crayons
Memory Verse	Optional: <i>Teaching Success Kit</i> coloring page

OPEN THE LESSON

Focus Activity

Use the pictures of scenes depicting Psalm 23 you find on the internet, or they can be found in the *Teaching Success Kit*. Lay them out on a large poster board. When the children come in, read Psalm 23 to them (letting them help if they wish). After you've read it one time, read it again, going through the passage verse by verse. Have the students take turns finding the image that goes with the phrase you've read, gluing it on the poster board. Other students can write the phrases that are meaningful to them, and the reference, so that everyone can participate.

PRESENT THE SCRIPTURES

Life Application Story

(Distribute the student folders.)

Before reading, ask the children if they've ever been sick in bed. Did their parents or care-giver make something special for them to eat?

Ask if anyone would like to help read a sentence or two as you read the story.

After reading, ask the children why Tonya was in bed. Did her mom take good care of her? What did she do to make Tonya feel better? Did Tonya feel safe and cared for by her mom?

Explain that God cares for us in a similar way. He can be trusted, just like we trust parents, grandparents, aunts, guardians, or someone else who loves us.

Bible Story

We Believe

The Bible Story in the student folders is designed for primary students to read. The Scripture Scene® is provided as a visual aid. Be sure to study the information on this Bible passage in the white pages of the Teacher Guide.

Faith is being sure of what we hope for. It is belief in something we can't always see. Because of our faith, we understand that the universe was

formed by God’s command. The world we see wasn’t made by anything we can see.

Without faith, it’s impossible to please God. Anyone who comes to Him must believe He exists, and He rewards those who seek Him.

God is our safe place and where we get our strength. He always helps us in trouble. We won’t be fearful—even if the earth gives way, or if the mountains fall into the sea! God makes us strong and shelters us. He always helps us through trouble.

Look at what God has done! God has ended wars with His might. God told us to be still and know that He is God. He even said He would be exalted. That means He would be lifted up high and glorious!

We can have faith in God, even though we can’t see Him because He is good, He is powerful, and He is with us always.

EXPLORE THE MEANING

Review

Hand out sheets of paper and markers or crayons. Have the children draw images or write names of things that they can’t see but know exist, such as the love of their family or friends. Have them share. Then, together, read the first and second paragraphs of the Bible Story. Talk about how our belief in God is like that—we can’t see God, but we can see all the things He does, and we can believe in Him.

Next, have the children draw images or write down times when they’ve been sick, afraid, anxious, or gone through something difficult. Read the third and fourth paragraphs again and discuss how God is always with us. He brings good out of bad, and always is with us during the bad.

Last, have the children think about that difficult thing they drew or wrote, and then read the last line of the Bible Story together in a chorus.

You have another option for this Review section in the *Teaching Success Kit*.

Memory Verse

“Without faith it is impossible to please God” (from Hebrews 11:6, NIV).

Play a game with the children. Have them gather in a circle. Tell them to say, “it’s impossible!” after you say these sentences:

“Let’s fly to the moon!”

“Let’s run 1,000 miles!”

“Let’s ride our bikes to China!”

Think of other sentences you could say. End by saying, “without faith (have the children say: “it’s impossible”) to please God.” Repeat the verse two or three times.

If you have extra time, you can have the children color the “Jesus Loves” coloring page from the *Teaching Success Kit*. Explain to them that we can have faith that Jesus loves us and will take care of us.

NEXT STEPS FOR APPLICATION

Be Smart

Crossword Puzzle

Primaries will review the Bible Story to complete the sentences. Then they will write the answers in the puzzle.

Good Attitude

Thankful List

On one side of the page, have the children list things they are thankful for that their parents or other loved ones do for them. On the other side, have them list things that God does to take care of them and show that He loves them. Below, have them list some things they can do this week to help others.

Worship Time

Sing this song to the tune of “Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star.”

Thank You, God, for hearing me

Every time I pray to Thee,

I have faith in Your great care,

I know You are always there,

Thank You, God, for hearing me,

Every time I pray to Thee.

Sing worship songs together and close the lesson with a prayer. Have the children stand in a circle, and if they are comfortable, have them ask God to help them know He is near in the difficult thing they drew a picture of in the Review section. End with a prayer of thanks to God for His love and care.

Craft Kingdom®

Craft Kingdom® provides directions to make a craft that reinforces the lesson. Play the *Sing-Along* CD as students work.

Faith Is Assurance

Bible Background • HEBREWS 11:1–7; PSALM 46:1–11 | Printed Text • HEBREWS 11:1–3, 6; PSALM 46:1–3, 8–11 | Devotional Reading • PSALM 27:1–6

Aim for Change

By the end of the lesson, we will: KNOW the meaning of faith and its implication for our lives; FEEL God’s constant presence; and DEVELOP a practice of relying on God for positive change.

In Focus

The students knew today’s lecture was going to be about the terrorists’ attacks on September 11, 2001, but they wondered why it was going to be discussed in their African American Studies class.

Professor Williams started the class by asking the students what they thought of the movie she assigned, “The World Trade Center.” Several students shared their critiques of the movie. When she asked what was missing, the room was silent.

Then a student asked, “Were the Black people on the board behind you also directly affected by the attacks?”

“Yes, Deshawn,” Professor Williams said. “Not only were the stories of African Americans left out of the news coverage at that time but the real life account of Jason Thomas, a former U.S. Marine who helped to rescue New York Port Authority police officers from out of the rubble, was cast as a white man in the movie. It’s as if anyone Black was scrubbed from this event.”

She told the students that over 260 African Americans died in New York; Washington DC; and Shanksville, PA on that day.

Professor Williams continued, “These stories aren’t just important for their families, and the nation at large, but for us as African Americans. Mr. Thomas had the faith and commitment to do the work he was called to do, even though it could have cost him his life.”

In today’s lesson, we learn that when we experience conflicts in life, we can trust God by faith to see us through.

Keep in Mind

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”
(Hebrews 11:1, KJV)

Focal Verses

KJV Hebrews 11:1 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

2 For by it the elders obtained a good report.

3 Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.

11:6 But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

Psalms 46:1 God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

2 Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea;

3 Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah.

46:8 Come, behold the works of the LORD, what desolations he hath made in the earth.

9 He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire.

10 Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.

11 The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah.

The People, Places, and Times

Sons of Korah. Psalms 42 through 49 were written by the sons of Korah, who were temple musicians and assistants. The Korahites were among the chief Levitical families; they were listed as “gatekeepers.” Korah was a Levite who led a rebellion against Moses. Although Korah was killed, his family remained faithful to God and continued to serve in His temple. King David appointed men from the clan of Korah to serve as choir leaders. Later, the choir leaders continued to serve as temple musicians for hundreds of years.

Psalms. The book of Psalms is a series of five collections: Book I (Psalms 1–41), Book II (Psalms 42–72), Book III (Psalms 73–89), Book IV (Psalms 90–106) and Book V (Psalms 107–150). Several authors wrote the collections, and some are anonymous. David wrote at least 73 psalms, and Asaph, sons of Korah, Moses, Solomon, Ethan, and Heman wrote others. Psalms was written over a period of more than 1,000 years, which included the time of Moses

(around 1440 B.C.) to the time of captivity in Babylon (around 586 B.C.). The majority of the books were written during Israel’s wilderness experience and time in Israel, Judah, or Babylon. The title “Psalms” was first used in the Septuagint. The traditional Hebrew title is *tehillim*, which means “praises” but most of the psalms are *tephillot*, which means “prayers.”

Background

The readers of the book of Hebrews knew Scripture and professed faith in Christ. Because of doubt, persecution, or false teaching, the believers, who were Jewish Christians, considered giving up Christianity and returning to Judaism. The writer emphasized the superiority of faith to encourage the Christians of the first century to stand by faith.

Christians were demoralized and discouraged because centuries of tradition were replaced with spiritual freedom based upon faith in Christ. As a result, the believers experienced the wrath of the Jewish religious establishment

because they believed in God’s greatest promise—Jesus Christ—the Messiah, who fulfilled the prophecies of the Old Testament. The writer wanted to prevent believers from rejecting Christianity and returning to Judaism.

The writer explained the superiority of faith by examples of people who demonstrated greater faith. The heroes of faith were intended to encourage the power of faith as the believers adhered to their profession of true religion. Through examples in biblical history, faith is revealed through assurance in God’s future promises with the implications that inspire believers to persevere. Through the summary of Jewish history, the heroes of faith challenge believers to grow in faith and live in obedience to God. Psalm 46, which was written by the sons of Korah—who were temple assistants—was a celebration of God’s deliverance. The psalm may have been written when the Assyrian army invaded the land and surrounded Jerusalem. As the psalm speaks to ancient Israelites, it speaks to believers today. We need not fear if we trust God. Through faith we can give thanks for God’s constant presence in our lives. Because God is with us, we can be rescued. The writer refers to a “river” (Psalm 46:4), which is the tunnel that King Hezekiah built to guarantee a continuous water supply for Jerusalem during times of war. Like the tunnel, God’s presence is constant for believers.

At-A-Glance

1. Faith Is Confidence and Certainty (Hebrews 11:1–3)
2. Faith Is Necessary (v. 6)
3. Faith Is Trust in God as Our Refuge (Psalm 46:1–3)
4. Faith Is Trust in God Whose Presence Is Constant (vv. 8–11)

In Depth

1. Faith Is Confidence and Certainty (Hebrews 11:1–3)

The writer of Hebrews begins chapter 11 with a description of faith as “the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen” (Hebrews 11:1). The reality of faith is what is “hoped for.” Our prayers and hopes are based upon the promises of God. With a firm persuasion and expectation, the writer encouraged the believers to trust that God will perform what He has promised through Christ. We cannot see the future, nor do we know what will happen tomorrow, but our confidence is based upon the certainty of God’s trustworthiness. To encourage struggling believers to hold to the superiority of their faith in Christ, the writer refers the believers to the elders of the Old Testament (Hebrews 11:2). The “elders” received a “good report,” which was the evidence that they would receive the promise of participating in God’s kingdom when it arrives in its fullness. Their actions revealed a genuine faith that will bring honor to the ancient believers.

Many Jewish teachers believed the material universe was created based on God’s invisible pattern exemplified in His Word or wisdom. By faith, we believe God created everything out of nothing. Moses detailed the story of creation in Genesis chapter 1; there was a majestic display of power and purpose. With each creation, God “saw that it was good” (Genesis 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21). By faith, we believe God spoke and created the entire universe. Our faith is based upon who God is; our response should be a confident and certain hope in God because He is ever present. Do you have certain and confident faith in God?

2. Faith Is Necessary (v. 6)

Faith reveals the reality of God. “It is impossible to please God” without faith because

faith is necessary to have an active relationship with God; it is necessary to walk with God (Hebrews 11:6, NLT). By faith, we believe in God and trust with certainty the future promises that He has revealed.

The heroes of faith believed and obeyed regardless of the consequences. In the same way, we can believe with a willing trust and please God. Our steadfast confidence is based upon who God is—the creator of the universe. God will recognize and reward our faith because we “diligently seek him” (Hebrews 11:6). By faith, we realize our own insufficiency and depend on God to work within us and through us. By faith we have confidence in the continual promises of God.

3. Faith Is Trust in God as Our Refuge (Psalm 46:1–3)

The sons of Korah were temple assistants who wrote Psalm 46. The psalmists recognized God as their source of help; they realized God’s complete power and ability to rescue His children. As believers, we do not need to fear because God’s presence is constant. God is our refuge; therefore, we can flee to Him and find security.

Life presents temporary destruction, doubts, and uncertainty, but God’s presence is constant; “therefore will not we fear” (Psalm 46:2). We can appreciate God’s constant presence because He is our mighty fortress. The earth swallowed up Korah, but the psalmists did not fear. We can be fearless with God as our present help, too. God is not a temporary resource; instead, God is our eternal refuge. The psalmists remind believers, “Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake,” God’s power is complete and victory in Him is certain (Psalm 46:3). We should not be troubled when the earth is unstable because our confidence is not found in the earth. Our confidence is based upon God, our sound eternal footing.

4. Faith Is Trust in God Whose Presence Is Constant (vv. 8–11)

The psalmist urges the believers to “behold the works of the LORD” (Psalm 46:8). Recognize the presence of God and His ability to save His children. He is the creator who cares for nature and all living things. As believers, we can trust in God’s strength and His constant presence. Those who oppose God will experience desolation and face His judgment. But believers can stand in awe of God’s power.

The psalmist encourages believers to respond with a generous heart. We can, as the psalm states, “Be still, and know that I am God” (Psalm 46:10). Even though war, destruction, and famine are a part of the world, God is still in charge. He is sovereign. Final victory belongs to Him, and He will be exalted. Therefore, we can rest assured and know with comfort that He is Lord.

Search the Scriptures

1. How did the writer of Hebrews describe faith (Hebrews 11:1)?
2. Who received a “good report” (Hebrews 11:2)?
3. Why is faith necessary to “understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God” (Hebrews 11:3)?

Discuss the Meaning

1. The writer explains that faith is required to understand that God created the universe where nothing existed. Genesis 1 details the awesome creation of the universe that was formed by God’s Word. Faith is the beginning of our relationship with God. What qualities of faith are necessary to continue to grow and strengthen our relationship with God?
2. When Korah, Dathan, and Abiram led 250 princes against the priesthood of Aaron and Moses’ general authority, God punished the leaders by allowing their challengers to be

swallowed up by the earth. A fire consumed 250 of them. The psalmists, the sons of Korah, reiterate God's presence and encourage readers not to fear. How can we maintain a quiet confidence in the midst of economic turmoil, natural disasters, and continual wars?

Liberating Lesson

If we watch the news, listen to the radio or interact with others on social media, we hear about the current state of the world. The pandemic has devastated communities in different ways. Many people are homeless, unemployed, or on the verge of both. Natural disasters occur, and the number of fatalities grows. War and destruction are continually reported by the news. Peace seems impossible. While positive change seems nonexistent, we must not lose hope. God is ever present. If we trust God, we will be rescued, and change will occur through God's strength. We can rely on God for positive change as we realize our faith will be tested. How has your faith in God become stronger or weaker in light of world events, catastrophes, and unrest? How much do you think the world dismisses the constant help of God as a result of abundant negativity, catastrophe, and unrest?

Application for Activation

To remain faithful with steadfast confidence and certainty, we must keep our eyes on God through continual prayer. We must remain hopeful for positive change, as we believe that God is in control. We can have faith in God's constant presence even today because we know He is our refuge in times of trouble. Make a commitment to regularly attend Bible study and Sunday school to increase your awareness of God's power in troubling times. Join ministries that actively build the community and encourage people who are suffering or do not know God. Allow God's presence to be evident through your actions and words.

Follow the Spirit

What God wants me to do:

Remember Your Thoughts

Special insights I have learned:

Sources:

- Barclay, William. *The Daily Study Bible: The Letter to the Hebrews*. Revised ed. Philadelphia, PA: The Westminster Press, 1976.
- "Bible History Online." <http://www.bible-history.com> (accessed on September 6, 2011).
- Bruce, F. F. *The Epistle to the Hebrews, Revised: New International Commentary on the New Testament*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans. Reprint, 1985.
- Craigie, Peter C. *Word Biblical Commentary, Vol. 19: Psalms 1-50*. Waco, TX: Word Publishing, 1983.
- Dictionary.com. <http://dictionary.reference.com/> (accessed September 6, 2011).
- Goldingay, John. *Psalms, Vol. 2: Psalms 42-89*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007.
- Guthrie, Donald. *Hebrews, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1983.
- Holman Pocket Bible Dictionary*. Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2004.
- Johnson, Luke Timothy. *Hebrews: A Commentary. The New Testament Library*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006. 259.
- Keener, Craig S. *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993.
- Luther, Martin. "A Mighty Fortress is Our God." Composite translation by Pennsylvania Lutheran Church, 1868. Klug's Gesangbuch, 1529; <http://www.lutheran-hymnal.com/lyrics/tlh262.htm> (accessed Feb. 15, 2012)
- Lane, William L. *Word Biblical Commentary, Vol. 47B. Hebrews 9-13*. Dallas, TX: Word Inc., 1991.
- Life Application Study Bible, King James Version*. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 1997.
- "New Testament Greek Lexicon." Bible Study Tools.com. <http://www.biblestudytools.com/lexicons/greek> (accessed September 9, 2011).

“Old Testament Hebrew Lexicon.” Bible Study Tools.com. <http://www.biblestudytools.com/lexicons/hebrew> (accessed September 9, 2011).
Walton, John H., ed. *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000.

Say It Correctly

Abel. **AY**-buhl.
Cain. **KAYN**.

Daily Bible Readings

MONDAY

The Trusting Child
(Mark 10:13–16)

TUESDAY

The Trust of the Weak
(2 Chronicles 14:2–12)

WEDNESDAY

The Prayer of Trust
(Psalm 3)

THURSDAY

The Security of Trust
(Psalm 4)

FRIDAY

The Confidence of Trust
(Psalm 27:1–6)

SATURDAY

The Patience of Trust
(Psalm 27:7–14)

SUNDAY

The Certain Refuge
(Hebrews 11:1–3, 6; Psalm 46:1–3, 8–11)

Notes
