

Doctrinal themes taught in these lessons

The doctrinal themes running through this course are those which will 1) help the children understand the nature and character of God, 2) show the children they are sinners — condemned, and helpless before God, their holy and righteous Creator and Judge, and 3) generate faith and bring complete dependence on the Lord Jesus Christ as the wonderful, all-sufficient Savior.

Here are the specific doctrinal themes which will be emphasized:

The person and character of God

1. God is greater than all and more powerful than all; He is the highest authority.

In other words, God is **supreme** and **sovereign**. This truth is foundational to all other doctrines concerning God and to all spiritual matters.

God's sovereign position is clearly evidenced throughout the Bible. He is the authority over all creation, over man, angels, and Satan. No one can question what He does. He is the great initiator, the Alpha and Omega, working all things according to the counsel of His will.

In a society where humanistic teachings are taught as fact, **children must be taught that God is sovereign!** When that one truth is clear, other truths can begin to fall into place.

These lessons present God acting in and through history — always victorious, always overcoming all who oppose Him. He is the Creator of all and the eternal authority over all. He stands supreme and gloriously sovereign as Almighty God.

2. God communicates with man.

The Bible is not just a record of what God said to people in the past. It is also God's voice speaking to us in the present.

These lessons emphasize that God's Word is true — a true history and a living message to every person in the whole world. Children need to know that the Bible is God's message to them personally.

3. God is everywhere all the time; He knows everything.

We have used this expression in place of the words "omnipresent" and "omniscient" so that the meaning will be very clear.

Remember, the children may be hearing false teaching elsewhere, so we need to be very careful as we teach these attributes of God. As noted in the lessons, New Age and other pantheistic religions teach that God is everything and everything is God. Be sure to make a clear distinction between the Creator God and His creation. He is everywhere, but He is not in everything; everything is not God.

4. God is all-powerful.


We are using this simple terminology instead of "omnipotent."

Children love to hear of God's almighty power. If you teach the Word clearly, it is not a problem for most children to believe miracles. They (and you) will delight to consider the wonders of our great God!

Teach them when they are young — teach them the truth built on the firm foundation of God's Word. As the years pass and the winds of doctrinal error and the lies of the Enemy press in on them, many of the children will prove to have been firmly and eternally rooted in God's Word.

5. God is holy and righteous. He demands death as the payment for sin.

God is the only standard for goodness. Anything less than God's perfect righteousness is unacceptable to Him.

I believe
that Jesus
did
many
miracles,
saves
people ...
loves
people no
matter
what they
look like ...


Anything which disagrees with or is contrary to God is sin.

Of all the truths about God, this one is most notably absent from today's "religious" thinking. Absent from most preaching are messages about God's holiness, man's sinfulness, the death penalty for is, and the blood of Jesus Christ, poured out for sinners.

The message of the Bible is not, "Smile, God loves you," it is, "... *the soul that sinneth, it shall die*" (Ezekiel 18:4). When the message is clear, than John 3:16 takes on its true meaning. Children, also, must know the truth, for they are sinners too. Though at first it may seem harsh to teach the reality of the penalty of sin, we know that God did not shrink from including children in teaching His Word.

Many people in industrialized societies have no concept of blood sacrifice, though a distorted version of animal sacrifice is still widely practiced in many parts of the world. The Bible is full of the principle of substitutionary sacrifice, culminating in the one sacrifice that could effect remission of sins.

To many people, the idea of the death penalty for sin and the truth of a literal Hell are considered to be no longer relevant. But God hasn't changed His righteous standard. He will never allow any man to approach Him unless the complete and righteous demand of His Law if fully paid.

Evan though the righteous demands of God's Law could only be met through the blood of Jesus Christ, God still accepted sinners who came to Him in faith during the time prior to the Cross, because Christ's death was, even then, a present reality to God (Revelation 13:8). Nevertheless, during the Old Testament dispensation, worshipers had to be reminded that their acceptance by God was not at the expense of justice. God demanded the death of the sinner. Animal blood could only act as a temporary covering for sin. There could be

no complete satisfaction for the offerer prior to the Cross. There was always a consciousness of sin. Death, the wages of sin, was constantly portrayed by the death of innocent animals which had to be without blemish as a picture of God's unwillingness to accept anything less than a perfect payment for sin.

The first recorded example that we have of an animal sacrifice is the one Abel brought. Abel's sacrifice must have been on the basis of a divine revelation. The first time God gave man permission to kill and eat animals was after the flood. Abel would not have taken it on himself to take the life of one of God's creatures and give it as a sacrifice to God unless it had been ordered by God. Abel came by faith. Faith requires a revelation from God as its basis. It is mere human presumption, not faith, which acts apart from revelation, hoping that it will be satisfactory to God. Cain tried to approach God this way, and was rejected.


Therefore, constant reference is made throughout these lessons to God's requirement of animal sacrifices, because these emphasize God's holiness and His righteous demands for the death of the sinner as the payment for sin. Animal blood could not be a replacement for the death of the sinner, but it was a constant reminder that nothing less than death could satisfy God's holy and just demands (Hebrews 10:1-12).

As you teach God's character and man's sin, the children will begin to understand the harsh reality of the penalty of sin. Do not shy away from teaching the truth. God uses truth to change hearts.

6. God is loving, merciful and gracious.

God's love is unchanging, pure, and not dependent upon the merit or worthiness of the objects of that love. God is love (I John 4:8).

These lessons present God's love in that context; not in the man-oriented, self-serving context often presented

... Jesus
loves any
color of
people,
any tribe,
anybody
at any
time ... 

today. Children need to understand God's love in the context of His Word, not just in shallow, human, emotional terms.

God's mercy is described in these lessons as His making a way for sinners to escape the punishment they deserve. His grace is described as His kindness toward undeserving sinners.

7. God is faithful; He always does what He says; He never changes.

The theological word *immutable* is explained in the words *never changes*.

This is another key concept. Some “religious” scholars are engaged in rewriting the Bible to suit what they feel is appropriate for today. We must teach clearly that God does not change; neither does His Word.

These lessons also emphasize God's faithfulness — a thrilling message in a world of continual disappointment. God keeps His promises. This fact must be repeated frequently because it is so unlike what children know of themselves and of others.

Man

1. Man is a sinner. He needs God and is helpless to save himself.


Man cannot please God by his own efforts. Only the grace of God can save him.

God has provided **everything** that man has — his life and all the things which sustain his life. Man's helplessness in the natural realm is used in the Scripture to illustrate man's spiritual helplessness and the need of God's gracious provision for deliverance.

2. Man can come to God only according to God's will and plan.

Because God is holy and supreme, He alone determines the way man can approach Him and be saved. It must be done God's way.

3. Man must have faith in order to please God and be saved.

... He is now
in heaven,
He will
come
again, He
is kind,
doesn't
like the way
people
act in the
world ... 

Satan

1. Satan fights against God and His will. Satan is a liar and a deceiver. He hates man.

Satan (originally Lucifer) and his angels were created by God and, therefore, are dependent on, and finally subject to, His authority. They are the implacable foes of God and man. Satan uses his angels and sinful man in his efforts to establish his own kingdom and to try to destroy the kingdom of God.

Even though Satan and his demons are not often mentioned in the Old Testament text, it is good to remind our students of the continual presence and influence of these spiritual enemies in the history of the world. We know from the New Testament that Satan is the “god of this world” (II Corinthians 4:4), so we know he is always present to tempt and guide men in their opposition to God and His will.

Even so, God is always triumphant over every endeavor of Satan to destroy God's plans to bless His people and bring salvation to mankind.

Children need to learn from God's Word to recognize the Enemy and to know the way he works. Children are continually bombarded by evil. You may be amazed at how much they have seen and heard — and how relieved they are to know the source of evil — and TO KNOW THAT GOD IS STRONGER THAN ALL!

Jesus Christ (New Testament only)

Jesus Christ is presented in fulfillment of prophecy — fully God and fully man — the only Savior.

You and the children you teach can take delight in studying about Jesus Christ, the promised Deliverer!

1. Jesus Christ is God.

2. Jesus Christ is man.

3. Jesus Christ is holy and righteous.

4. Jesus Christ is the only Savior.