

GROWING UP IN GRACE

Sunday School Program

A ministry of the
Berean Bible Society

THE GRACE LIFE

CHRIST IN MY HEART

Middle School Book 1

N112 W17761 Mequon Road
P.O. Box 756
Germantown, Wisconsin 53022

(262) 255-4750

Info@growingupingrace.com

www.growingupingrace.com

THE GRACE LIFE: Christ in My Heart Middle School Book 1

CONTRIBUTORS

The following individuals contributed to the production of these lessons. The area of contribution is briefly noted. Each contributor has placed their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and each is committed to proclaiming the Gospel of the Grace of God.

Pastor John Fredericksen, writer
Pastor Ricky Kurth, writer
Pastor Ken Lawson, writer
Christine Mulholland, formatter and coordinator
Sally Payne, student page developer
Jessica Sadler, production
Pastor Jeff Seekins, writer
Ruth Shober, editor
Steve Shober, writer and director

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Photos and Illustrations

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Other

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NOTES

About the Berean Bible Society

The purpose of the Berean Bible Society is to help you understand and enjoy the Bible. The mission of BBS is to exalt the Lord Jesus Christ by proclaiming the whole counsel of God according to the revelation of the Mystery. Our goals are to evangelize the lost, to educate the saved in “rightly dividing the Word of truth” (2 Tim. 2:15), to energize their Christian lives, and to encourage the local church.

Bible Version

The King James Bible is used for all references. It is a reliable and faithful translation of the Received Text, which is considered the preferred biblical text. There are times when a paraphrase or emphasis is used, these are clearly noted so that there is no confusion.

Teacher’s Manual

This lesson book may be used over and over. A teacher may use this manual for many years and has permission to copy the student pages. This manual is written to the teacher; it is not intended to be read to the students.

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Notes to the Teacher

Middle School Lessons

The Berean Bible Society's desire is that the Sunday School Program lessons will be used to honor and glorify the Lord Jesus Christ.

Purpose of Lessons

The overall goals of the Sunday School Program reinforce those of the Berean Bible Society. In order to assure proper lesson development, there are 12 critical requirements that guide those preparing the Growing Up In Grace (GUIG) lessons. These requirements are listed on the GUIG website: www.growingupinGrace.com. Six of these requirements also relate to the teacher, they are:

- Emphasize the need for salvation.
- Foster a deep love and respect for the Lord and the Grace message that will continue throughout a student's life.
- Provide doctrinally sound teaching, address practical daily-life applications, offer lifestyle directions, and provide encouragement for students.
- Help assure students are informed, encouraged, and excited about their faith.
- Build-up, energize, and provide hope for students.

Overview of Curriculum

The overall title for the first year of Middle School is, The Grace Life. Three books will be prepared for the first year, each book contains 13 lessons. The goal is to teach what grace means in practical, daily life. The three books will be entitled: Christ in My Heart, Christ in My Life, and Christ in My World. Each book and each year are independent of each other, which means they can be taught in any order. All years are written at the same level.

New Teachers

Congratulations! The Lord is about to take you on an exciting adventure as you invest in the lives of young people. You will find it a true blessing to be used by Him to reach others with the Word of God. Teaching is a skill, and like all skills, it needs to be honed and developed. Please do not be discouraged by a shaky beginning. Students are more concerned with your honesty and concern for them than what you know, or how well you teach. The more you teach, the better and more comfortable you will become. Do not be afraid to share your concerns with other teachers. You will find them to be a great source of ideas and encouragement. There are also many excellent books and seminars that may help you.

Lesson Design

The lessons are written at a level somewhere between Middle School and the adult level. Writing at this level gives you some insight on how to bring the topic to the student's level to assure better understanding. The level of writing provides the teacher an example of appropriate language, thoughts, and style that communicate with the typical student. In rare cases, a teacher may have

to read a portion of the lesson, in such cases the lesson is written so that it can be understood by a student (reading is not recommended as a good teaching technique).

Teacher's Outline: each lesson has a Teacher's Outline designed to enable you to teach the class without reading or referring to the main lesson. Using the outline will enable you to speak the lesson in your own words, without reading to the class. The Teacher's Outline gives the main thoughts of the lesson and the appropriate verses to consider.

Discussions: each lesson has discussion items or activities. This age level has few graphics or other items to capture their senses; thus, it is important to break the teaching with discussion items. The discussions are designed to keep the students focused on the class, enable you to see if you are really connecting with them, and to prevent boredom. Attention spans are very short for this age group; breaking up the lesson with discussions can help alleviate boredom and distractions. Generally, tips or thoughts are given to the teacher; do not give these to the students at first. The goal is to see if they can articulate answers from the lesson, somewhat along the lines of the tips. The tips are items you can use if the class is struggling to develop ideas. This is their time for discussion, you are a facilitator in the process (keep them on subject, help when they lack ideas, offer tips or thoughts).

A Summary, Application, Gospel, and Encouragement section are part of each lesson. These sections are printed in-full on the back of the Teacher's Outline. These are the concluding sections of the lesson, perhaps the most important. If a substitute has to teach the class on short notice, or if you are not sure how to effectively communicate the lesson, these sections can be relied upon to help you conclude the class in an effective manner. While reading to the class is strongly discouraged, these are the sections that could be read when the teacher is not well prepared.

Gospel: this section is primarily for those who have not placed their faith in Jesus Christ.

Application: this section is designed to show the students how to apply what they have just learned to the practical, every-day circumstances of their lives. As you consider your class, you may need to modify this section.

Encouragement: this section is designed for those students who have placed their faith in Christ. It is not intended to persuade students to do something (like things just taught in the class), but to uplift the students for whatever they are doing for the Lord. The goal is to encourage and praise them for even minor steps of faith or service for our Lord. Students may be trying very hard to live a godly life but are discouraged at home, at school, by friends, etc.; it is our biblical duty to uphold and support them.

Take Home Sheets: each lesson has a take home sheet that you have permission to copy for your class. A survey of students determined that they believe their relationship with Christ would be stronger if they developed personal devotional time. The take home sheets are designed to do just that. They also have a story that reinforces the lesson and there are appropriate humor, games,

and activities. **How to copy the take home sheets:** Make two-sided copies in the order they appear in the book. Then, fold the sheets to form a 5.5" x 8.5" booklet.

Preparing for the Class

It is critical the teacher is prepared to teach. This means during the proceeding week the teacher should spend time in prayer for each student, prayer for the class, and make adequate preparation. It is important that you prepare your heart for the class. It is recommended that you:

- Humble yourself and pray for this important ministry.
- Try not to let the cares of your life reflect outwardly in the class.
- Let the students know how important they are to you and the Lord.
- Prayerfully consider your class and how best to reach them.
- Put yourself in their shoes and ask, "What would I want to know about this topic?"
- Ask yourself what is really the most important for your class.

The lesson is no more important than the teacher's preparation for the class. Please do not try to memorize the lesson. Initially, read and study the lesson carefully several times during the week. Then, practice teaching the lesson using the Teacher's Outline as your teaching guide. You may want to make a copy of the outline (some place it in their Bible), that way you do not have to wrestle with the larger lesson book while teaching.

Teaching the Class

Class prayer is important, consider mentioning each student's name in prayer. Whenever possible, pray for and with your students at the beginning and end of each class. You may want to encourage or contact each student during the week (phone, card, email, text message), but make sure this is approved by their parent(s) or guardian.

Please assist your students to find and read the Scriptural passages in their own Bible (they may have various translations). Lesson may have many Scriptural references; please do not think you have to look-up each one to teach the class. You will most likely not have time to look-up all the references, doing so can be a diversion from the main topic. The references are more for your study than for the students; the most appropriate are noted in the Teacher's Outline.

Please do not read the lesson to the class. Instead, maintain eye contact with the students as you teach from your heart. As you maintain eye contact, you will see if you are reaching them and connecting, or, if you are boring them or going over their heads. If you are boring them or over their heads, you should adjust quickly; you could even ask them why the class does not seem to be going well (maybe someone has a problem that the students know about but you do not, address that first). Ask questions and encourage them to do the same.

Do not worry about accidentally missing some point. The main thing is to properly prepare to teach the lesson. Teach from your heart in a way students will grasp and take it to their heart (mentioning every detail is not important).

Always remember that students this age do not want to be referred to as “kids, children, youngsters, etc.” They want to be considered beyond that age group. So please refer to them as “teens, students, young people, etc.”

The goal of the class is to reach the student’s heart, not to “pound home” the facts. You may think you can make students this age do pretty much what you want, that is, make them say this and do that. However, this form of forced obedience and conformity should not be confused with a true heart-felt desire. Conformity to an adult’s direction does not mean a student’s heart is in agreement. Thus, making a student do what is considered correct may result in outward compliance, but the desired inward transformation is lacking. Reaching a student’s heart in sincerity is what will best serve the Lord in the long term.

Employ positive teaching! If teaching is seen by the students as negative or coercive it may only build resentment and give them cause to rebel later in life. Relax, have fun, use appropriate humor, enjoy the class, and make sure the students are connected and participating. Do not be overly concerned if you accidentally miss, or intentionally omit, part of the lesson.

Negative teaching can occur if the teacher intentionally, or unintentionally, puts the students down, figuratively points their finger at them, constantly accuses them of sinning, presumes they do nothing for the Lord, etc. Please avoid excessive uses of terms like: “what have you done for the Lord; your hearts are wicked; you know you sinned this week; have you ever thought of anyone besides yourself; ...”

Positive teaching occurs when the teacher nurtures, builds-up, enriches, encourages, and provides a “yes, you can” attitude. The teacher should note that we all sin (not just students), that even minor things done for the Lord are wonderful, encourage them to continue doing what is right, remind them the Lord finds joy in the obedience of His loved ones, etc. Do not be afraid to let the students know your life is less than perfect; but, do not overdue it. The teacher models Christ-likeness to the students, and part of that is not pretending you have a perfect life. His life, in us, is often seen by how we handle adversity and the complex matters of daily life, not pretending they do not exist.

It is suggested you use terms like “we, us, our” when the teacher is part of the discussion, i.e., “We all have sinned.” When the issue pertains only to the students do not include yourself, i.e., “Don’t you get upset when your gym teacher is late?”