

# LESSONS ON THE UCCP STATEMENT OF FAITH

## A Sunday School Guide for Adults

### WE BELIEVE

That the Holy Bible is a faithful and inspired witness of God's self-revelation in Jesus Christ and in history to illumine, guide, correct and edify believers in their faith and witness.

First Sunday after  
Christmas Day  
December 30, 2018

### LESSON 32: THE HOLY BIBLE AND GOD'S SELF-REVELATION IN JESUS CHRIST

**General Concept:** The Holy Bible is a faithful and inspired witness to God's self-revelation in Jesus Christ.

**Biblical References:** Luke 2:41-52; John 1:1-18

*List of Lectionary Readings for the Week:* 1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26; Psalm 148; Colossians 3:12-17; Luke 2:41-52

### Age-Level Concepts

- The Bible is an important book written by people inspired by the Holy Spirit.
- The Bible, though written by people with limitations, faithfully tells us of God's self-revelation in Jesus Christ and in history.
- The Bible affirms God's active participation in the life and struggle of the people.

### Learning Objectives

By the end of the session, the learners are expected to:

- Learn about John as writer/author of the Gospel of John and other books in the Bible
- Learn about other Gospel writers/authors
- Discuss some stories about God revealing Godself in history through Jesus Christ
- Affirm that the Bible is a book that tells the story of God and God's participation in the life and struggle of the people

**Materials:** The Holy Bible (preferably the New Revised Standard Version [NRSV]), song chart, offering plate or basket, journal, pens

### Suggested Lesson Outline

#### *Expressing Praise and Thanks to God*

Visit the tree the class planted and make sure it is doing well. Give it the care it needs.

Opening Hymn "God, We Praise You for this Lord's Day" (*Hymnal of a Faith Journey*, p. 5)

God, we praise you for this Lord's day,  
Praise your goodness now and always.  
By your grace we all do live;  
In your mercy, you forgive.

After toiling through the long week,  
Now we come to hear your voice speak.  
In your house may all be blessed,  
Here may all find strength and rest.

Sometimes we bear pain and sorrow,  
Sometimes darkness hides the morrow,  
Loving Lord God, leave us not,  
When sore trouble is our lot.

Sometimes we find peace and gladness,  
Calm and hope in joy or sadness,  
On our way you shed your light,  
Love us ever, day and night.

Here we come, our lives to offer,  
Hearts and minds we humbly proffer;  
Dear Lord, hear us while we pray,  
And receive us now for aye.

Announcements and/or Birthday Greetings

Opening Prayer (Also pray for the birthday celebrant[s], if there are any.)

Recite a portion of the UCCP Statement of Faith:

“We believe that the Holy Bible is a faithful and inspired witness of God’s self-revelation in Jesus Christ....”

### **Learning Time**

#### *Discovering the Biblical Truth*

- Read responsively the biblical references.
- The teacher/facilitator will share and explain the biblical background of the texts.
- Guide questions for discussion
  - In your own words, retell how the story in Luke 2 tells us about the life of Jesus as revelatory of God.
  - In the text in John, what verse shows the authenticity of John as the author/writer of this gospel? (v. 6-9). What inspired him to write the events of Jesus’ life?
  - How does Jesus’ life reveal God?
  - Why do you think reading the Bible is important for believers?
  - What verse proves that Jesus was interested in the affairs of the people’s lives? (v. 14)
- Learning further about authorship of other books in the Bible
  - **Gospel of Matthew:** The writer of this Gospel may have been a Greek-speaking Jewish Christian scribe who wrote around 80 and 90 CE (Common Era). In around the second century, the Gospel was attributed to Matthew, one of



Jesus' twelve disciples, in order to give the writing more authority. The writer describes Jesus as the compassionate Messiah from the ancestry of David who fulfills what has been written in the Scriptures. His followers are to proclaim the gospel to the whole world.

- **Gospel of Mark:** This Gospel was written around the late 60s CE in a place most likely beyond Palestine. Again, in around the second century, authorship was attributed to Mark, supposedly Peter's traveling companion in Rome. The author highlights Jesus' suffering and death. True followers of Jesus must exemplify self sacrifice for the sake of the gospel and service to God, and must be watchful in a time of great suffering and persecution.
- **Gospel of Luke:** This Gospel was written around 60-90 CE by someone attributed to Luke, the "beloved physician". The Gospel is written in eloquent style and tells the story of Jesus as one who was written about in Scriptures, with his mission divinely ordained to fulfill God's Reign and will.

#### *Lessons Learned*

- The Bible is indeed a book written by people who themselves have experienced God through Jesus Christ as proven in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.
- Reading from the book of Genesis, from the story of creation, to the call of Abraham and Sarah, to the establishment of the nation, Israel, to the coming of Jesus and up to the ministry of the apostles and the early Christians, we can see clearly how God worked to fulfill God's promise of salvation to humanity through Jesus Christ, the promised Messiah.

#### *Applying the Lessons Learned*

- Read the Bible regularly and seriously. Make a schedule of what to read every day.
- Make a journal of your readings with the following format:
  - **Date**
  - **Text**
  - **Theme or Title of the Story**
  - **God's Revelations** (*how God revealed Godself through actions or responses to the life and struggles of the people*)
  - **Self-Discoveries or Realizations** (*what have you discovered and realized about God that will help deepen and strengthen your faith?*)
  - **Questions** (*if there is any for clarification with your pastor*)

Having this logbook will inspire you and help you realize that, indeed, God is at work, participating in the lives and struggles of people yesterday, today, and tomorrow.

Note: Encourage or assign one learner to share every Sunday what she/he has in her/his journal so as to inspire others to read the Bible and grow in the knowledge of God.

#### ***Closing Worship***



Offertory and Closing Hymn “Wonderful Words of Life” (*Hymnal of a Faith Journey*, p. 358)

Sing them over again to me, wonderful words of life;  
Let me more of their beauty see, wonderful words of life;  
Words of life and beauty teach me faith and duty.  
Beautiful words, wonderful words, wonderful words of life.  
Beautiful words, wonderful words, wonderful words of life.

Christ, the blessed one, gives to all wonderful words of life;  
Sinner, wake to the loving call, wonderful words of life;  
All so freely given, our sure hope of heaven.  
Beautiful words, wonderful words, wonderful words of life.  
Beautiful words, wonderful words, wonderful words of life.

Sweetly echo the gospel call, wonderful words of life;  
Offer pardon and peace to all, wonderful words of life;  
Jesus, only Savior, keep me with you forever.  
Beautiful words, wonderful words wonderful words of life.  
Beautiful words, wonderful words, wonderful words of life.

Closing Prayer

### Epiphany of the Lord

January 6, 2019

#### LESSON 33: THE HOLY BIBLE AND GOD'S SELF-REVELATION IN HISTORY

**General Concept:** The Holy Bible is a faithful and inspired witness to God's self-revelation in history.

**Biblical References:** Genesis 12:1-9; Deuteronomy 6:1-7, 20-25; Psalm 72:1-4

*List of Lectionary Readings for the Week:* Isaiah 60:1-6; Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14; Ephesians 3:1-12; Matthew 2:1-12

#### Age-Level Concepts

- The Bible narrates about the people of God with whom God chose to establish a covenant relationship.
- The Bible teaches people of God's ways and demands, challenging them to live a faithful, responsible life, and in right relationship with God.
- The Bible continues to be a faithful witness to God's intentions even in our present time.

#### Learning Objectives

By the end of the session, the learners are expected to:

- Recall the story about God choosing and establishing a covenant relationship with God's people
- Discuss God's ways and God's demands of God's people
- Mention situations or experiences wherein God's intentions, as mentioned in the Bible, are being realized at present



**Materials:** The Holy Bible (preferably the New Revised Standard Version [NRSV]), song chart, offering plate or basket, journal, pens

### **Suggested Lesson Outline**

#### ***Expressing Praise and Thanks to God***

Opening Hymn "Let Us Sing to the Lord Our God" (*Hymnal of a Faith Journey*, p. 11)

Let us sing to the Lord our God, with a fresh, new song of adoration,  
Let us sing to the Lord our God, in every land and nation,  
Let us sing to the Lord our God, and God's name we lift up and raise;  
Let's proclaim God's salvation from day to day, with joyful songs of praise.

Let God's glory be clearly heard, in the midst of all the tribes and nations,  
All people, we proclaim the wonders of salvation,  
God is worthy of all praise; unto God our glad anthems raise,  
For all glory and honor belongs to none, but the all-awesome One.

Announcements and/or Birthday Greetings

Opening Prayer (Also pray for the birthday celebrant[s], if there are any.)

Recite a portion of the UCCP Statement of Faith:

"We believe that the Holy Bible is a faithful and inspired witness of God's self-revelation in Jesus Christ and in history...."

### ***Learning Time***

#### ***Discovering the Biblical Truth***

- Read the biblical references. Divide the class into three. Assign each group a reading and have them discuss in their group the following questions:
  - Group 1 – Genesis 12:1-9  
Questions for discussion:
    1. What covenant did God make with Abraham?
    2. What did God demand of Abraham?
    3. How did Abraham respond to God's covenant?
  - Group 2 – Deuteronomy 6:20-25 (Read also Deuteronomy 5)  
Questions for discussion:
    1. How did God establish the covenant with the house of Israel?
    2. What did God demand of Israel?
    3. What did God promise to Israel if they keep the covenant?
    4. Do you think we will also receive the same promise if we follow God and keep God's covenant?
  - Group 3 – Psalm 72:1-4  
Questions for discussion:
    1. What does God demand of those God chooses?



2. Why is righteousness and justice important principles to uphold by those who are in a covenant relationship with God?
3. How should we respond to God's demand for righteousness and justice? Cite ways.

After the group discussion, spend some time for sharing to the whole class.

#### *Lessons Learned*

- Share to the whole class the biblical background of the texts for deeper understanding, with emphasis on the truth that it is God, as revealed in the Bible who initiated the covenant with God's people.
- The Bible presents ways and standards in order for us to be able to live a life of responsible and right relationship with God.
- Our role is to respond in faith and obedience to God's will for us, so that all will be well with us.

#### *Applying the Lessons Learned*

- Mention situations or experiences wherein God's intentions, as mentioned in the Bible, are being realized at present.
- Continue reading the Bible every day and be inspired by the faith and obedience of the people written about in the Bible.
- Continue writing in your journal with an additional entry:
  - My Response to God's Covenant with Me

#### ***Closing Worship***

Offertory and Closing Hymn "Take My Life God, Let it Be" (*Hymnal of a Faith Journey*, p. 279)

Take my life, God, let it be consecrated faithfully.

Take my moments and my days, let them flow in ceaseless praise.

Let them flow in ceaseless praise.

Take my spirit, let it move at the impulse of your love.

Take my intellect and use all its powers as you choose.

All its powers as you choose.

Take my will; your will be done! Make your will and mine be one.

Take my heart, and by your grace make of it your dwelling place.

Make of it your dwelling place.

Take my love and help it grow; let my loving overflow.

Take me now, and help me be part of Christ's community.

Part of Christ's community.

Closing Prayer



**Baptism of the Lord**

*First Sunday after the Epiphany*

January 13, 2019

**LESSON 34: THE HOLY BIBLE AND OUR FAITH AND WITNESS**

**General Concept:** The Holy Bible illumines, guides, corrects and edifies believers in their faith and witness.

**Biblical References:** Deuteronomy 6:1-9; Psalm 119:105; 2 Timothy 3:16

*List of Lectionary Readings for the Week:* Isaiah 43:1-7; Psalm 29; Acts 8:14-17; Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

**Age-Level Concepts**

- The Bible is an instrument that illumines our understanding of God, guides us in our conduct and way of life, corrects us when we commit mistakes and edifies believers in their faith and task of witnessing to all people about God.
- We need to seriously read and study the Bible and be renewed in our awareness, our life and commitment to serve God and people.

**Learning Objectives**

By the end of the session, the learners are expected to:

- Explain how the Bible illumines us in our understanding and how it guides us in our way of conduct
- Share stories about when they have used the Bible in correcting and edifying themselves and others
- Commit to regularly read the Bible for their self-edification

**Materials:** The Holy Bible (preferably the New Revised Standard Version [NRSV]), song chart, offering plate or basket, journal, pens

**Suggested Lesson Outline**

***Expressing Praise and Thanks to God***

Opening Hymn "What a Perfect Joy" (*Hymnal of a Faith Journey*, p. 53)

What a perfect joy in our hearts,  
Today when we always walk and live with our God,  
All the darkness of life will disappear in Jesus who is light.  
Rejoicing always, fulfilled in gladness,  
Our hearts refreshed when we are with our God!

What a perfect joy in our hearts,  
Today when we love and serve the Lord our God,  
All creation praises, and despite our hardships, we don't regret,  
We are light-hearted when we are with our God!

Announcements and/or Birthday Greetings

Opening Prayer (Also pray for the birthday celebrant[s], if there are any.)

Recite a portion of the UCCP Statement of Faith:



“We believe that the Holy Bible is a faithful and inspired witness of God’s self-revelation in Jesus Christ and in history to illumine, guide, correct and edify believers in their faith and witness.”

### **Learning Time**

#### *Discovering the Biblical Truth*

- Read the biblical references.
- The teacher/facilitator shares the biblical background to the learners.

#### *Lessons Learned*

- Divide the class into three groups. Assign each group a reading, and let them discuss the following questions:
  - Group 1 – Deuteronomy 6:1-9
    - a. Why was God so strict with Israel in the study and meditation of God’s laws?
    - b. Do you think the parents were successful in their obligation to implant the words of God in the minds and hearts of their children? What methodology could they have used in teaching and nurturing the children in the faith?
  - Group 2 – Psalms 119:105
    - a. Let each member of the group share his/her own experiences when they used the words of God to illumine their way and give them hope to continue with the journey despite all circumstances.
    - b. What particular teaching strategy did the Hebrews use in imparting the Words of God to the people? Do you think this teaching strategy is still applicable in the present context?
  - Group 5 – 2 Timothy 3:16
    - a. If the writers of the books of the Bible were inspired to write down the words of God, can we also claim that same inspiration in our study of God’s words? How?
    - b. Share experiences or mention situations when you have used the Bible as your final authority in measuring the rightness of your conduct and decision.

#### *Applying the Lessons Learned*

- Continue reading the Bible every day and be inspired to continue doing the will of God, be edified in your conduct and be illumined when you journey in dark paths and gloomy days of your life.
- Continue writing in your journal with another new entry.
  - God Chastened Me and I Changed  
Record your experiences here when God disciplined you and it led you to change your life. Mention the verse that led you to change.

### **Closing Worship**

Recite a portion of the UCCP Statement of Faith:

WE BELIEVE

In one God: Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer, who provides order, purpose, meaning and fulfillment to all creation.





That in Jesus Christ, who has born of Mary, God become human and is Sovereign Lord of life and history.

That in the Holy Spirit, God is present in the world, empowering and guiding believers to understand and live out their faith in Jesus Christ.

WE BELIEVE

Persons are created in the image of God and destined to live in community with God, with other persons and with all creation.

That by disobedience, they have become sinful, but, by grace through faith, they are redeemed in Jesus Christ.

That being entrusted with God's creation, they are called to participate in the establishment of a just and compassionate social order.

WE BELIEVE

That the Church is the one Body of Christ, the whole community of persons reconciled to God through Jesus Christ and entrusted with God's ministry.

WE BELIEVE

That the Holy Bible is a faithful and inspired witness of God's self-revelation in Jesus Christ and in history to illumine, guide, correct and edify believers in their faith and witness.

Offertory and Closing Hymn "Wonderful Words of Life" (*Hymnal of a Faith Journey*, p. 358)

Sing them over again to me, wonderful words of life;  
Let me more of their beauty see, wonderful words of life;  
Words of life and beauty teach me faith and duty.  
Beautiful words, wonderful words, wonderful words of life.  
Beautiful words, wonderful words, wonderful words of life.

Christ, the blessed one, gives to all wonderful words of life;  
Sinner, wake to the loving call, wonderful words of life;  
All so freely given, our sure hope of heaven.  
Beautiful words, wonderful words, wonderful words of life.  
Beautiful words, wonderful words, wonderful words of life.

Sweetly echo the gospel call, wonderful words of life;  
Offer pardon and peace to all, wonderful words of life;  
Jesus, only Savior, keep me with you forever.  
Beautiful words, wonderful words wonderful words of life.  
Beautiful words, wonderful words, wonderful words of life.

Or "Thy Word is a Lamp Unto my Feet"

Refrain:

Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path;  
Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.



When I feel afraid, think I've lost my way, still You're there right beside me  
And nothing will I fear as long as You are near;  
Please be near me to the end. *[Refrain]*

I will not forget Your love for me and yet my heart forever is wandering;  
Jesus be my guide, hold me to your side  
And I will love You to the end. *[Refrain]*

Closing Prayer

