

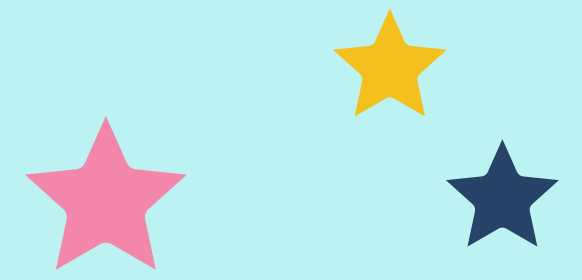


GOD'S STORY, OUR STORY

*75 Sunday School Lessons
for 3-6 Year Olds*

By Jessi Colund Rennekamp

LETTER FROM THE AUTHOR



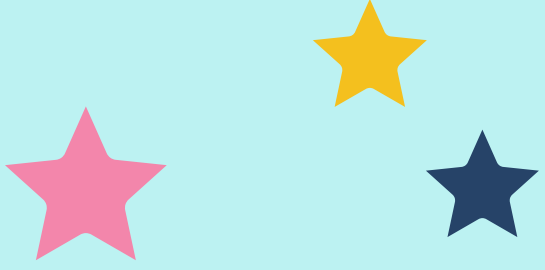
Dear fellow worker in Christ,

I thank God for your heart to love and teach the youngest disciples in the church as they begin to understand God's grand story and how it shapes their own life stories.

My husband Andrew and I became the coordinators of the preschool Sunday school program at our church on the North Shore of Massachusetts in late summer 2021, after a year and a half without in-person children's ministry due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As parents of two little ones, we felt acutely the impact that this lack of childcare had on our own spiritual lives; it seemed our children always chose the Sunday morning live-streamed church service as the time to play with their loudest toys, run around with excitement, or have a meltdown. Consequently, we hadn't fully participated in a church service in about 18 months – and we knew we weren't the only family experiencing these struggles.

We reached out to the children's ministry leader at our church to offer to help in any way we could with getting the children's programs back up and running as the church prepared to return to in-person services, and she let us know about the need for a preschool Sunday school coordinator. We took on the task with enthusiasm, hoping to support other families in our church and creatively engage the young children in learning the Bible and encountering Jesus and his deep love for them.

We also took on the task with a bit of trepidation, knowing how stretched thin we already were with both of us working full-time, taking care of our kids who were then a six-month-old and a 2.5-year-old, and trying to rebuild our family rhythms as the world emerged from a global pandemic. Particularly that first year, we spent hours putting together preschool lesson plans; choosing devotionals and stories from some of the best children's storybook Bibles we could find; and developing crafts that (a) were interesting but not too difficult for the kids, (b) involved very limited prep for us and our volunteers, (c) involved only materials we had on hand or could acquire on short notice, and (d) meaningfully and tactilely connected the children with the Bible stories.



This book grew out of our efforts on behalf of our local church congregation, and is intended to be a practical support tool for Sunday school leaders and children's ministry coordinators. It pairs short devotionals and Bible stories from leading children's ministry resources with interactive questions and discussion points that are accessible for young children. It suggests memory verses and prayer time topics to accompany each lesson. It provides a single resource list to ensure a well-stocked Sunday school classroom that will support every craft and lesson plan in this book. ***With this book, coordinators and volunteers can show up on Sunday morning without putting in hours of prep time, so their focus can be on serving the children and families of their local congregations.***

One of our goals when developing the curriculum for our Sunday school program was to familiarize the children with the whole Bible narrative – creation, Abraham's family, Moses and the Exodus, the era of the Promised Land and the judges, the kings and the prophets, the exile and the return, the life and death of Jesus, the coming of the Holy Spirit, and the church age. We were also intentional about including stories of women in the Bible alongside the stories of the men. To our surprise, many children's resources felt incomplete, skipping over entire segments of the Bible; by utilizing a handful of the most beloved children's storybook Bibles and devotionals, we found it was easier to create a curriculum that told the full story. In our experience, using multiple resources also helped to engage children of different learning styles and ages. By incorporating a brief devotional into each lesson, we were also able to more explicitly connect the Bible story with the children's own lives. Lastly, using these popular resources enables parents to easily follow along with the Sunday school curriculum and engage their children on the same stories throughout the week if they so choose.

Most importantly, we firmly believe that every story in the Bible points to Jesus and his love for all his children. Every lesson in this book points to him, and our hope is that each child will come to know and experience his love personally. We also hope that this resource can support the Sunday school teachers and volunteers as they strive to reflect his care and love for each child in their ministries.

Jessi Colund Rennekamp