

Letters to the Seven Churches

Lesson Aim: To know Jesus cares about our ongoing relationship with Him as shown in His letters to the seven churches.

PROPHETS AND PROMISES PART 1

THE WORSHIP, THE WORD, & THE WAY

THE WORSHIP

Who God is: The Spirit Who Shows Us

THE WORD

New Testament Letters: Revelation 3:14-16, 19-22

GOT TIME? Letter: Revelation 1:10-13

What He has done: Jesus told John what to write to the seven churches.

Key Verse: Revelation 3:20

THE WAY

Christ Connection: Psalm 24:9-10

BIBLE MEMORY VERSE

"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path." Psalm 119:105 (NIV)

The Books of the New Testament

For your own encouragement this week, read Revelation 7:9-17. Please join us in praying this week's Teacher's Prayer: "Thank you Lord, for giving us Your letters to the churches. Open our ears to hear Your words speaking into our lives and the lives of Your children. Amen"

PREPARE

Highlight in your Bible:

- ☐ Revelation 3:14-16, 19-22
- ☐ Psalm 24:9-10

Read:

- ☐ Teacher's Guide
- ☐ At-A-Glance

MAILBAG

Create a list of today's New Testament letter scripture references, fold it and place it in the Teacher's Bible. Place the Teacher's Bible, Pen Pal Letter, the text from Revelation 3:20 printed on scroll, and the A.B.C. Prayer of Salvation postcards in any bag.

TEACHER TIP

Complete THE WORSHIP, THE WORD, and THE WAY. If time allows, choose a Got Time? activity or create your own activity to illustrate the Bible Story, the Aim, or the Bible Memory Verse.

PRESET

THE WELCOME

- ☐ Getting Started—28 envelopes, paper, tape, marker

THE WORSHIP

- ☐ Scripture Reading—Revelation 3:20
- ☐ Bible Memory Verse Song—"New Testament Overture"
- ☐ Other related music
- ☐ Worship Illustration or Storybook Lesson 30

THE WORD and THE WAY

- ☐ Golden Bowl—pencils & note cards
- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ Mailbag
- ☐ Daily Way Lesson 30
- ☐ Treasure Treat—Today's New Testament Postcard with a stamp or sticker of a church
- ☐ Children's Guide for New Believers and A.B.C. Prayer of Salvation postcards (both available at www.childrensministrywarehouse.net)

GOT TIME?

Any crunchy snack, drinks, napkins, plates, cups, bag or box, seven different objects, paper, large envelope, pens or pencils, crayons or markers, glue or tape, assorted craft supplies, colored paper, "New Testament Overture" song, player and poster, flashlight, Bible

Resources: The additional resources referred to in this lesson and supplemental materials are available at www.childrensministrywarehouse.net. To be a resource yourself, click on the Teacher's Blog tab to share your ideas with teachers worldwide.



1. THE WELCOME

(10 minutes)

Getting Started

To spark anticipation, encourage arriving children to meet and greet one another with today's

Meet & Greet Question: If you could write a letter to anyone, who would it be?

GAME: SPEEDY DELIVERY

PURPOSE: Children will run a race to introduce Jesus' letters to the seven churches.

SUPPLIES: 28 envelopes, paper, tape, marker

PREPARE: Create one sign for each location of the seven churches: Smyrna, Sardis, Philadelphia, Ephesus, Pergamum, Thyatira, and Laodicea. Create four sets of seven envelopes with each church name written on one of the envelopes. Display the signs in various places around the play area.

SAY> Let's pretend you are like the apostle John and Jesus has given your team seven letters. Each letter has a special message for one of the seven churches. How fast can you deliver the letters to the seven churches?

DIRECTIONS:

1. Point out each of the location signs and read the names.
2. Divide children into four teams of equal size.
3. Have each team form a line in one corner of the play area.
4. Place each set of seven envelopes in a pile in front of each team's line.
5. On your signal, the first child in line takes an envelope from the pile and races to deliver the envelope to the corresponding city and then back to tag the next child in line.
6. That child takes an envelope from the pile and repeats the process.
7. The goal is to be the first team to deliver all of the envelopes to the correct city.
8. If you have more than seven children on each team prepare extra sets of envelopes or allow the children to touch the envelope to the sign and bring it back to the pile. Once each child on the team has delivered an envelope, that team has completed the task.
9. For added fun, as children are racing to deliver the envelopes, call out different ways the children must move to deliver the letters. (Crawl, hop, jump, skip, wiggle, dance, walk backwards, spin in a circle, etc.)

SAY> Now that we've delivered the letters, let's learn more about what was written in them! We can find the letters to the seven churches in the last book of the Bible called Revelation.

Teacher Tips:

- Small group? Instead of playing in teams, all children work together to deliver the envelopes. Time the children and challenge them to get a faster time during a second round of the game.
- Non-readers? Color-code the envelopes and signs to match.
- Limited space? Deliver the letters by passing them from child to child in unusual methods (above the head, using feet only, using elbows only, etc.)
- Play the Unit 6 Bible Memory Verse Song in the background as children race.



2. THE WORSHIP

(15 minutes)

Worship Theme: The Spirit Who Shows Us

Today we worship the Holy Spirit who shows us what will happen one day in heaven. We will hear about some rewards Jesus promised to those believers who stayed faithful to Him. Let's thank Jesus for those promised rewards by giving our offering. (Sing: "Blessed Be The Name Of The Lord" as the offering is collected.)

The greatest reward in all of heaven is to be close with God. (Read Revelation 3:20.) It is as if Jesus is standing and knocking on the door to your heart. When you invite Him into your heart, He comes. He comes to give forever life to anyone who believes that He is the Lord. He comes with open arms of forgiveness for any believer who asks for it. If you have never invited Jesus to come into your heart, and you would like to do that now, let's pray the A.B.C. Prayer together. (Lead children in A.B.C. Prayer.) When you pray a prayer like that to Jesus, His Holy Spirit comes into your heart and you belong to God's forever family. One day all of that family will worship Him together in heaven!

Worship Elements:

Lead prayer of salvation such as the A.B.C. Prayer.
Designate a special corner or area for worship.
Select songs that focus on eternal life with Jesus.
Scripture Reading: Revelation 3:20
Lead a prayer to bless the offering: collect offering
Perform Worship Illustration or read Storybook:
Prophets & Promises Unit 6, Lesson 30

Unit 6 Song Suggestions:

- Unit 6 Bible Memory Verse Song:
"New Testament Overture"
www.childrensministrywarehouse.net
- "To Him Who Sits On The Throne"
www.childrensministrywarehouse.net
- "Not By Might"
www.childrensministrywarehouse.net
- "Awesome God"
- "Jesus Loves Me"
- "Shout To The Lord"
- "Blessed Be The Name Of The Lord"
- "Here I Am To Worship"
- "Forever"
- "Worship You Forever"

Unit 6 Song Collection Suggestions:

- Songs 4 Worship Kids, Volume 1—Awesome God
- Worship Jamz—Volumes 1, 2, 3
- Hillsong Kids
- Shout to the Lord Kids 2

BIBLE MEMORY VERSE SONG



"New Testament Overture"

Psalm 119:105 (KJV)

The Books of the New Testament

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!

Go to Matthew, to Mark, go to Luke and John.
Go to Acts and the letter to the Romans.
Go to First, go to Second Corinthians, to
Galatians and Ephesians!

Philippians and Colossians,
First and Second Thessalonians,
First and Second Timothy,
then Titus and Philemon!

Go to Hebrews and go to James.
Go to First, go to Second Peter.
Go to First, Second, Third John.
Go to Jude, then go to Revelation!

(Repeat three times going faster each time.)

*Sheet music and recordings available at
www.childrensministrywarehouse.net.*

A.B.C. Prayer of Salvation

Lord Jesus,
I **A**dmit that I am a sinner.
I **B**elieve You are the Lord
who died to take my sins away.
Please **C**ome into my heart
and I'll follow You forever.
Amen.

*Copies of the A.B.C. Prayer of Salvation and the
Children's Guide for New Believers are available at
www.childrensministrywarehouse.net.*



3. THE WORD

(5 minutes)

Jesus tells John what to write to the seven churches.

Transition: As you move from worship to instruction, change rooms or locations within a room to help redirect the children's focus to the Bible story. During this transition time, have each child write their name on a card and place it in the Golden Bowl.

Before we read God's Word, let's go over our Class Covenant. A covenant is an agreement. Just as God made a covenant with His people, I ask each of you to make this covenant promise with me today. Listen as I read our Class Covenant. (Read Class Covenant.)

CLASS COVENANT

I will keep my  on my teacher,
my  in control,
my s on God's Word;
knowing God is my goal.

BIBLE TIMELINE

The New Testament letters were written from circa 37 A.D. to 95 A.D. The Bible Timeline Review activities will resume in Prophets & Promises, Lesson 32 when we complete our ten-week study of the New Testament letters.

(Teacher holds up mailbag.) Last time in our mailbag we found letters about how to be strong in the Lord. Today our mailbag letters are from the last book in the Bible. It is called Revelation and it shows us what will happen in heaven.

In the book of Revelation we learn that Jesus told John exactly what to write in letters to seven different churches. The churches were from Smyrna, Sardis, Philadelphia, Ephesus, Pergamum, Thyatira and Laodicea. In those seven letters, Jesus gave the churches encouragements, warnings and the promise of rewards in heaven.



If you brought your Bible, open it now and share with others. (Hand out spare Bibles.) Today's New Testament letters are in the mailbag. (Teacher opens mailbag and removes Bible, opens Bible and takes out list of today's New Testament letter scripture references: Revelation 3:14-16, 19-22.)

Before we read, let's stand and ask God to open our eyes, ears, hearts and minds to His Word today. Who'd like to pray that for us? (Child prays aloud.) Be seated.

Let's read the first part of the letter to the church in Laodicea. Listen for the warning from Jesus. (Read Revelation 3:14-16, 19.) Jesus wants us to be strong in our actions and work hard for His kingdom instead of being lukewarm, or believing but not really caring about His kingdom.

Remember that Jesus was writing this to the church. In most churches there are some who believe and follow Jesus as well as some who have not yet decided to follow Him. Now let's read about the promise Jesus makes to those who want to be closer to Him. (Read Revelation 3:20-22.) So, even after we have decided to follow Jesus and believe in Him, He continues to knock at the door of our hearts be closer with us every day.



4. THE WAY

(13 minutes)

Jesus still stands at the door and knocks

(Print the following text on a sheet of paper. Fold the paper and place it in an envelope to create the Pen Pal Letter. Take out Pen Pal Letter from mailbag, open the envelope. Remove the letter and read.)

Hey Pals,

Today we get to talk about the best letters of all—the ones from Jesus Himself! My favorite letter from Jesus is to the church in Laodicea. In each of the seven letters, Jesus gives an encouragement or a warning. He warned the church in Laodicea to turn from being “lukewarm” in their actions. Jesus loves us so much that instead of being angry at us for our sins, He warns us to change our ways. He promises a reward in heaven to those who overcome and stay faithful to Him. Some of these rewards include the crown of life, the white stone with a new secret name, and the morning star, as well as the right to rule over nations, to eat from the tree of life, to walk with God in white robes, and to sit with God on His throne. Which one of these rewards would you enjoy the most? (Respond.)

(Remove the scroll from mailbag and read the text from Revelation 3:20 aloud.) What did Jesus promise He would do if we open the door when He knocks? (He will come in.) He waits for us to invite Him into our hearts. That means choosing to believe in Jesus and to live His way every day instead of choosing to live our own way. If you have never invited Jesus to come into your heart, you can pray a special prayer to do that now. If you are not ready to pray that prayer, know that Jesus always stands at the door and knocks, so whenever you are ready, you can invite Him to come into your heart. (Lead any child expressing desire to pray in the A.B.C prayer located on the postcard in the mailbag. Give an A.B.C. Postcard to any child who prayed the prayer today, has prayed it in the past, or would like to think about praying it in the future.)

Anyone who prays a prayer like the A.B.C. Prayer will have the Holy Spirit in his or her heart forever. But sometimes believers get too focused on other things and forget to put Jesus first. When that happens, remember He still stands and knocks at the door of your heart. Even after we belong to Him, it is important to keep inviting Him in to lead us in every choice we make, to forgive us, and to bring us closer to Him. Let’s take 60 seconds of silence to do that now. If you don’t want to pray, spend this time thinking about who God is and what He has done.

CHRIST CONNECTION

Connecting the Old Testament, the New Testament and Us

One thousand years before Jesus said He will come in, David knew that the Lord would stand at the door to our hearts. Check it out.



Everyone place your Bible on your laps. Let’s find Psalm 24:9-10. (Read Psalm 24:9-10.)

Remember, Jesus is always with us. He is always ready to come in to our hearts and our lives and bring us even closer to Him.

Believe and Belong!

Your Pen Pal

THE WAY *continued...*

GOLDEN BOWL

Revelation 5:8

The Golden Bowl contains names of classmates, a local church leader and a child in another nation.

The Bible says that our prayers are like sweet smelling incense in the golden bowls at God's throne. So I'm going to lift each one of you up to God's throne out loud as you pray for each person silently. Then we'll pray out loud the Lord's Prayer. (Matthew 6:9-13.) Let's pray.

Lord God, we lift up to Your throne the name of each child here. We trust You to watch over us and our needs, the ones we say out loud and the ones hidden in our hearts.

First, we lift up to You ____, ____, ____ (read names in Golden Bowl).

Now, we pray the prayer Your Son taught us.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your Kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the Kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

FINAL FIVE MINUTES

When only 5 minutes remain, begin this segment.

CHILDREN'S GUIDE FOR NEW BELIEVERS

Give a Children's Guide for New Believers to any child who prayed the A.B.C. Prayer of Salvation today. Guides are available for download at www.childrensministrywarehouse.net.

TREASURE TREAT



Today your Treasure Treat is a New Testament Postcard. I'm giving you this stamp or sticker of a church to remind you that Jesus sent letters to seven churches. Those letters were for each of us, too! (Place stamp or sticker in the corner box on the back of the postcard.) Take it home and create a special mailbox or mailbag where you can collect the remaining postcards. On your postcard, write where to find today's New Testament letters in the Bible. You'll find the scriptures listed in the Daily Way. Read these scriptures again to help you answer the postcard question.

DAILY WAY CHALLENGE



Did anyone bring in their completed Daily Way from last time? (Praise or reward those who returned Daily Way; collect in basket.) Take home this week's Daily Way. (Distribute Lesson 30 Daily Way 5-day Bible study.) Complete this at home and let God speak to you through His own words in the Bible. Return it and place it in our class basket. When we fill the basket, we'll celebrate with a class surprise!

OFFERING OF ART



Until it is time to be dismissed, make an Offering of Art. For your offering, draw a picture of Jesus standing at your door and knocking. The Offering of Art can be finished at home or given as an offering to the teacher for display.

PRAYER REQUESTS



As children work on their Offering of Art, ask how you can pray for them this week. Write individual requests in your teacher's prayer notebook.

BIBLE MEMORY VERSE SONG



Play the Unit 6 Bible Memory Verse Song in the background as children wait to be dismissed.



5. GOT TIME?

If time remains, choose from the connected activities below.



SNACK, GAME, DISCUSSION AND CRAFT

SNACK: LOUD CRUNCHERS

PURPOSE: Children will eat a snack that reminds them it is important to listen to Jesus and follow His Word.

SUPPLIES: Crunchy snack, drink, napkins, plates, cups

ASK> Jesus had a message for each of the seven churches. Which letter did we read today? (The letter to the church in Laodicea.) Jesus has a message for each one of us, too! His Word in the Bible, including the letters to the seven churches, is for each one of us to know how to follow Jesus and do things God's way.

SAY> We read a special message from Jesus today in Revelation 3:20. Jesus says that He knocks at the door of our hearts and that anyone who lets Him will be close with Him forever! When Jesus knocks at the door of our hearts, does it sound like real knocking? (No.) Jesus isn't knocking at a real door, He is trying to get our attention. Just as Jesus wanted each of the seven churches to listen closely to His messages, He wants us to listen closely, too.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Serve the snack and drink.
2. Child prays to thank God for the snack.
3. **SAY>** Let's eat a loud snack. Listen to how loud it is when everyone crunches their snack together! Who can crunch the loudest? Now let's see how quietly we can crunch as we listen carefully to each person answer today's question.
4. Ask the Snack Discussion Question: "If Jesus knocked on the door to this room, what do you think He would say to you?"

GAME: WHAT'S THAT SOUND?

PURPOSE: Play a listening game to reinforce that we are to listen to the teachings of the Spirit.

SUPPLIES: Bag or box, seven different objects that will make a distinct noise when dropped (For example: a coin, a rubber ball, a pin, a book, etc.)

PREPARE: Place the seven objects in the bag or box so children can not see them.

SAY> Today we learned the apostle John wrote down what Jesus told him in letters to seven different churches. Each letter had an encouragement or warning and a promised reward. Each of the seven letters also ended the same way, "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." Jesus wants everyone to listen closely to His messages. Let's see if we can use our ears to figure out the seven different objects in this bag.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Instruct children to close their eyes and listen carefully.
2. Remove one object from the bag and drop it a few times on a hard surface.
3. Put the object back in the bag.
4. Allow children to guess what the object is. (Provide clues if necessary.)
5. Once children have guessed the object, remove it from the bag and repeat game using with another object.

GOT TIME? *continued...*

CRAFT: CARE PACKAGE—LETTERS TO CHURCHES

PURPOSE: For children to write letters to another church just as the apostle John did.

SUPPLIES: Paper, large envelope, pens or pencils, crayons or markers, glue or tape, assorted craft supplies.

PREPARE: Choose the church were you will send the letters. Write **"Here I am! I stand at the door and knock."** Revelation 3:20a where children can see to copy.

ASK> Today we learned that Jesus gave John a message for each of the seven churches. John wrote down the messages in letters. You can be like John! Let's write letters to the children at another church. We can tell them Jesus' message in the letter to the church at Laodicea that we read today. (Share information about the care package recipient(s) with the children. Allow them to ask questions so they truly understand where and to whom their letters will be delivered.)

DIRECTIONS:

1. Write "Dear friend," at the top of the letter.
2. Write the Bible verse as the body of the letter.
3. Sign your letter with your first name.
4. Draw a picture of Jesus knocking at a door.
5. Use the craft supplies to decorate the letter.
6. Place all of the letters in the large envelope. Address and mail the gift!

***Teacher Tips:** Pre-print the Bible verse onto the paper for non-readers and allow them to color and decorate. If possible, take some or all children with you to mail the package.

***Options:** Get the names of specific children at the church receiving the letters. Have children address their letters to the children specifically. On the back of the letter, allow children to write something about themselves. Encourage the children receiving the letters to write back to begin a pen pal relationship.

DISCUSSION: GOT TIME? LETTER—REVELATION 1:10-13

PURPOSE: Children learn the origin of the letters to the seven churches found in Revelation.

SUPPLIES: Bible opened to Revelation 1:10-13.

PREPARE: None

SAY> The Holy Spirit came to John and he heard a loud voice. Let's read what he heard in Revelation 1:10-13. (Read Revelation 1:10-13.) **Who did John hear speaking in a loud voice?** (The Son of Man) **The Son of Man is another name for Jesus. What do you think Jesus' voice sounded like?** (Respond.)

SAY> After he heard the loud voice, John turned around and saw something amazing. What did he see? (Seven golden lampstands and someone dressed in a robe with a golden sash.) **Who do you think that was?**

GOT TIME? *continued...*



BIBLE MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITIES:

"New Testament Overture"

Sheet music and recordings available at www.childrensministrywarehouse.net

Psalm 119:105 (KJV) and the books of the New Testament sung to the tune of The William Tell Overture: Allegro Vivace

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!

Go to Matthew, to Mark, go to Luke and John. Go to Acts and the letter to the Romans.

Go to First, go to Second Corinthians, to Galatians and Ephesians!

Philippians and Colossians, First and Second Thessalonians,

First and Second Timothy, then Titus and Philemon!

Go to Hebrews and go to James. Go to First, go to Second Peter.

Go to First, Second, Third John. Go to Jude, then go to Revelation!

GAME: LIGHT MY PATH

PURPOSE: Children learn the Unit 6 Bible Memory Verse.

SUPPLIES: "New Testament Overture" song, player and flashlights

DIRECTIONS:

1. Children choose partners.
2. Give each pair a flashlight. (Pairs may take turns if there are a limited number of flashlights.)
3. As the Bible Memory Verse plays, one partner moves the flashlight beam across the floor as the other partner walks the path highlighted by the beam. Make sure the partner moves the beam slowly enough that the other child can walk in it.

ASK> How did you know where your partner wanted you to go? (By following the lighted path.)

Psalm 119:105 says "Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." When we read God's Word in the Bible, it's like He is shining a light for us to see how to follow the right path—His path. The Bible helps us know God and how to follow Him.

GOT TIME? *continued...*

GAME: NEXT BOOK

PURPOSE: Children learn the New Testament books in order.

SUPPLIES: "New Testament Overture" song, player, and poster

SAY> The Bible is made up of 66 different books. The New Testament has 27 books. Let's learn the books of the New Testament to help us find scripture verses quickly. How fast can you learn all the New Testament books in order?

DIRECTIONS:

1. Play the Unit 6 Bible Memory Verse one time. Have children sing along as they learn the words.
2. Play the song again. This time stop the song during the list of the books of the New Testament.
3. Children call out the name of the book that comes next. They can refer to the poster if necessary.
4. Play again as time permits.
5. As children learn the books, challenge them by taking away the poster and choosing one child to respond each time you stop the song.

GAME: THE BIBLE IS HOT, HOT, HOT!

PURPOSE: Children learn the New Testament books in order.

SUPPLIES: "New Testament Overture" song, player and poster, Bible

DIRECTIONS:

1. Seat children in a circle.
2. Play the Unit 6 Bible Memory Verse as children quickly pass the Bible around the circle.
3. Stop the song during the list of the books of the New Testament.
4. The child holding the Bible when the song stops is to open the Bible and find the last New Testament book sung in the song as quickly as possible.
5. Play again as time permits.
6. As children learn the books, challenge them by timing the child searching for the book. Encourage children to cheer for each other and try and get a faster time each time they are selected.

***Teacher Tip:** For an added challenge and to protect the Bible during this game, use a hard cover Bible and tie it closed with a sturdy ribbon or enclose the Bible in a zipped cover or large zip top bag.

DISCUSSION: ALL GOD'S WORD

PURPOSE: For children to recognize there are different versions of the Bible, but it is all God's truth.

SUPPLIES: Different versions of the Bible opened to Psalm 119:105 (NIV, KJV, NLT, NIRV, The Message, etc.)

SAY> Have you ever noticed that even when people speak the same language, they use different words to say the same thing? In the English language, "soda," "soft drink" and "pop" are all words used for the same type of fizzy drink. People who are from different areas use different words and so do people of different ages. In the same way, Bibles use different wordings to say the same thing. For example, in some Bibles Psalm 119:105 uses the words: "Thy word" while other versions use the words: "Your word." Both are true!

DIRECTIONS:

1. Read a version of Psalm 119:105 aloud.
2. Read a different version of Psalm 119:105. Point out the differences.
3. Read a third version of Psalm 119:105. Point out the differences again.
4. Take a vote to determine the children's favorite version.
5. Read and sing the Bible Memory Verse song according to the King James Version.

***Teacher Tip:** Compare Bible versions of other famous passages such as Psalm 23 and John 3:16.