



Youth Resource
Join the Celebration!

BIBLE SUNDAY YOUTH RESOURCE 2012

Aim of session:

To be surprised by the Bible

To realise that the Bible exists to point us to Jesus

To realise that this is our story and we live in it, writing the missing books until Jesus returns

Activity 1: In or out?

Choose some of the stories below. The group needs to vote whether or not they think the stories come from the Bible. You could either read them out and have the group vote or print them and stick them to the walls. Give your group coloured stickers or post-it notes to put on them to indicate whether they think they are from the Bible.

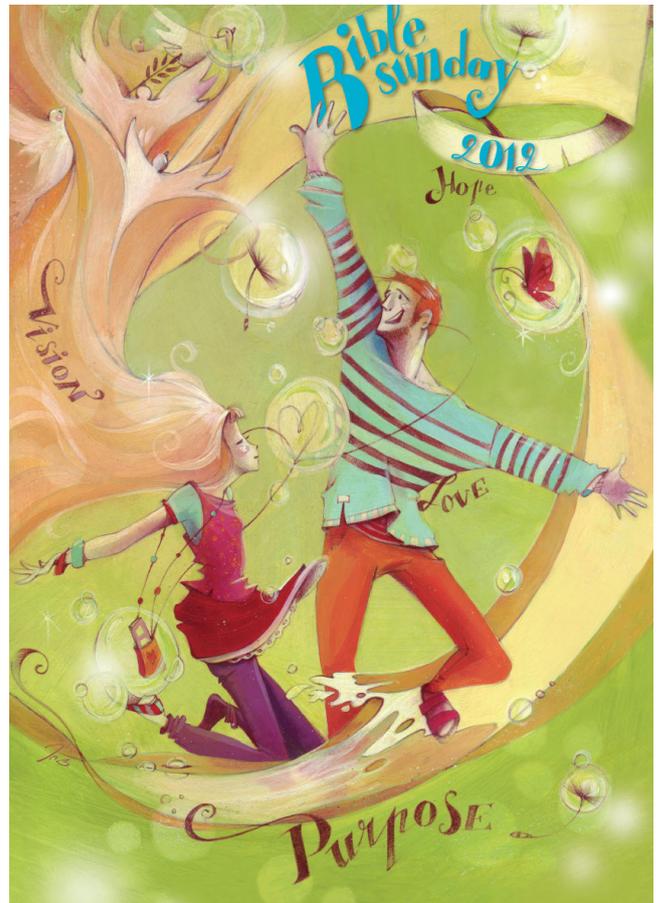
Some names have been changed to make the challenge more difficult. You may want to omit some of them depending on the age group you are working with. The surprise is that they are all in there.

[2 Kings 2.23-24](#)

Eli was getting a bit old. One day he was walking along the road when a big crowd of young people starting shouting at him. They were shouting things like 'go home baldy'. Eli was so angry that he cursed them. Suddenly two bears came out of the nearby woods and mauled loads of the young people.

[Judges 3.21-25](#)

There once was a king who attacked God's people and ruled over them. So God gave them a young guy called Evan to deliver them from the king. So one day Evan went to the king and said he had a secret message for him. As the king leaned in, Evan reached with his left hand and grabbed a small sword he had hidden. He plunged it into the king's belly. The king was so fat that his belly closed over



the sword covering the whole thing.

Genesis 38.8-10

Ivan's brother Ewan died. As was the custom for God's people, Ivan had to marry Ewan's wife, a lovely girl called Emma. They were supposed to make babies together and Ivan didn't really want kids with Emma. So every time they slept together, he would stop before the end and not finish the job.

Ruth 3.1-13

Rachel's mum wanted her to marry Bob. So she came up with a plan. There was a big party coming up and they knew that Bob would be eating, drinking and dancing and would sleep at the party, So Rachel's mum told Rachel to see where he slept and then, once he was asleep, go and lie at his feet.

1 Samuel 18.20-27

Dave fancied Michelle. But what do you buy to impress a girl? Flowers? Chocolates? Dave was in the army and he decided that the best thing to do to impress Michelle was to bring foreskins from 200 of their enemies! He did and she married him.

Acts 20.7-12

Paul was talking on and on and it got past midnight but he was still going. Eddie was fighting it but eventually fell into a deep sleep. The trouble was that he was sitting in a window, so when he fell asleep, he fell out of the third storey window and died!

Matt 21.18-19

James was walking along and fancied some fruit. He went to a fig tree but couldn't find any fruit on it. So he said to it, 'May you never bear fruit again,' and the tree immediately withered.

Ezekiel 4.1-13

Zeke was a prophet. He heard from God and he told God's people what God wanted. In order to make a point to his people, God said that Zeke would have to lie on his left side for 390 days! And then on his right side for 40 days. God also asked Zeke to make a cake to eat and to cook it using human excrement (poo) as fuel!

Numbers 22.21-31

Barry was riding on his donkey when an angel stood in the road. The donkey saw the angel and turned into a field to avoid it. Barry beat the donkey and got her back on the road. Then the angel stood in a narrow part of the road with walls on both sides. When the donkey saw the angel she went close to one wall and crushed Barry's foot. Again Barry beat the donkey. As they continued the Angel moved to a narrower place where there was no way to get passed. The donkey saw the angel and lay down. Again Barry beat her with a stick. Then the donkey asked Barry why he was hitting her? She explained to him that this wasn't normal and suddenly Barry saw the angel too.

Genesis 30.37-39

Jake persuaded Larry to pay him by giving him all the stripy or spotty animals in his flock. In order to get the animals to breed more stripy or spotty animals, he got branches from some trees and stripped them so they were stripy and put them in the animal's water. They gave birth to more and more animals that were stripy and spotty and Jake's wealth grew.

Scene Setter

Jesus was going around healing people and proclaiming that the Kingdom of God was here and that people could connect to God through him. The religious leaders started to persecute him and question everything he did and why he did it. Just before this part of John 5, Jesus healed someone on the Sabbath. The religious leaders had a real problem with this because you weren't supposed to do any work on the Sabbath, it was supposed to be a day of rest. So Jesus said the following thing to them,

'... the works that the Father has given me to finish – the very works that I am doing – testify that the Father has sent me. And the Father who sent me has himself testified concerning me. You have never heard his voice nor seen his form, nor does his word dwell in you, for you do not believe the one he sent. **You study the Scriptures diligently because you think that in them you have eternal life. These are the very Scriptures that testify about me,** yet you refuse to come to me to have life. John 5.36-40

So Jesus said to the church leaders of the day – the ones who were supposed to know about God – 'You look in the Bible and think it can save you. It can't on its own.' Somehow they managed to read the Bible and miss the one it was all about. Jesus said it's all about him, but somehow they missed it. Do we miss it?

Activity 2: Promise and fulfilment

Below are a series of promises in the Bible about the Messiah – Jesus. These are from the Old Testament and promise things to come. They promise a time when God would put his saving plan fully in play. They point to Jesus, who we learn about in the New Testament. You can get the group to look up the promises and then find where in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John these things are fulfilled. There are some notes in bold next to certain promises.

For a more interactive session you could print each of the promises on separate pieces of paper and the fulfillments on separate sheets. Hand one to each person and have them circulate to see if they can find their 'partner'.

The first mention of Jesus coming to put things back together happens right at the beginning in Genesis 3. This is called the Proto Evangelion – or the first indication of the Gospel. The excerpts below are taken from the Contemporary English Version (CEV)

Genesis 3.15 You and this woman will hate each other; your descendants and hers will always be enemies. One of hers will strike you on the head, and you will strike him on the heel.

Promise 1 – The Messiah's mother will be a virgin

Isaiah 7.14 But the LORD will still give you proof. A virgin is pregnant; she will have a son and will name him Immanuel.

FULFILLED IN LUKE 1.27

Promise 2 – The Messiah will be born in Bethlehem

Micah 5.2 Bethlehem Ephrath, you are one of the smallest towns in the nation of Judah. But the LORD will choose one of your people to rule the nation – someone whose family goes back to ancient times

FULFILLED IN LUKE 2.4

Promise 3 – He will be announced by someone

Isaiah 40.3 Someone is shouting: 'Clear a path in the desert! Make a straight road for the LORD our God.'

FULFILLED IN LUKE 3.1-6

Promise 4 – He will perform miracles

Isaiah 35.5-6 The blind will see, and the ears of the deaf will be healed. Those who were lame will leap around like deer; tongues once silent will begin to shout. Water will rush through the desert.

FULFILLED IN JOHN 2.1-11

Promise 5 – He will enter Jerusalem like a King on a donkey

Zechariah 9.9 Everyone in Jerusalem, celebrate and shout! Your king has won a victory, and he is coming to you. He is humble and rides on a donkey; he comes on the colt of a donkey.

FULFILLED IN LUKE 19.28-38

Promise 6 – A close friend will betray him

Psalm 41.9 My most trusted friend has turned against me, though he ate at my table.

FULFILLED IN MATTHEW 26.14-16

Promise 7 – For thirty pieces of silver that will be thrown into the temple

Zechariah 11.12-13 I told them, 'Pay me my wages, if you think you should; otherwise, forget it.' So they handed me my wages, a measly thirty pieces of silver.

Then the LORD said, 'Throw the money into the treasury.' So I threw the money into the treasury at the LORD's temple.

It is incredible that this prophecy was made approximately 500 years before it happened. It predicted the exact amount of money and what would happen to it. Its difficult to predict the price of a chocolate bar in 10 years but this prophecy was made 500 years before and for the exact amount.

FULFILLED IN MATTHEW 27.3-5

Promise 8 – The Messiah would be crucified

Psalm 22.16 Brutal enemies attack me like a pack of dogs, tearing at my hands and my feet.

This prophecy was made approximately 1000 years before it happened. That's like predicting the iPod in the 1850's!

FULFILLED IN MATTHEW 27.32-44

Promise 9 – He would be crucified with sinners

Isaiah 53.12 The LORD will reward him with honour and power for sacrificing his life. Others thought he was a sinner, but he suffered for our sins and asked God to forgive us.

FULFILLED IN LUKE 23.32-43

Promise 10 – He will be buried with the rich

Isaiah 53.9 He wasn't dishonest or violent, but he was buried in a tomb of cruel and rich people.

Jesus had no money. It says in the scriptures that he had nowhere to lay his head (Matthew 8.20). He

was homeless and had no money. It is incredible that a promise came that he would be buried with the rich, and a quiet follower of Jesus appears at the right time and makes it happen.

FULFILLED IN MARK 15.42-47

Promise 11 – He will be raised from the dead

Psalm 16.10 I am your chosen one. You won't leave me in the grave or let my body decay.

Isaiah 53.10-11 The LORD decided his servant would suffer as a sacrifice to take away the sin and guilt of others. Now the servant will live to see his own descendants. He did everything the LORD had planned.

By suffering, the servant will learn the true meaning of obeying the LORD. Although he is innocent, he will take the punishment for the sins of others, so that many of them will no longer be guilty.

FULFILLED IN MATTHEW 28.1-10

Summary 1

There are many other promises like this in the Scriptures. So why does the Bible exist? Why does it go into such detail with these promises about the Messiah? It's so that we see what the Bible is all about. It's all about Jesus. That is the primary reason that the Bible exists – to teach us about God's saving plan for the universe which has its focus in Jesus Christ.

'These are the very Scriptures that testify about me', Jesus says. (John 5.39b)

To read the Bible without realising this is to miss the point completely.

What is the Bible?

The Bible is full of many different styles of writing which is why it's not like any other book ever. It's more like a library of separate books. That's why it can be tricky to read sometimes if we try and read it as one book. Some of the books are poetry, some are law books, some are eye witness accounts, some are letters, some are prophecies about the future, and some are history books that tell the story. It's full of many different types of writing.

But all of this writing does tell a simple story ...

- 1 God created everything.
- 2 Humankind chose to turn its back on God and attempt to live without him.
- 3 God chose a people group to be his representatives on earth until the Saviour came. That people group was called Israel.
- 4 Jesus came – the hero stepped into the story, lived the perfect life, died a sinner's death, beat death and is now back at the right hand of God. This was the rescue plan for the universe.
- 5 The Holy Spirit fell on the followers of Jesus and the Church was born. We read about the story of the Church in much of the New Testament. The Church, through the power of the Spirit, is to model the life of the age to come.
- 6 Jesus returns and creation is renewed. Everything will be made new.

Summary 2

This is the story of the Bible. It's the story of the whole of creation from the beginning of time to the new creation to come. But it's more than that.

The last book of the Old Testament is Malachi. There is approximately 400 years between this book and the New Testament. Lots happened in that time – the Roman Empire for example.

The last book of the New Testament is the book of Revelation with its promise of the return of Jesus and of a new heavens and a new earth. What is happening between the completion of the writing of the New Testament and the return of Jesus Christ? We are 'happening'. This period is our story. We need to know what's happened already – the story thus far – and we need to know what's still to come so we can live and write our part of God's story. This is our story. We need to know who God is and how he behaves. He is our God and Jesus is our Saviour. By the power of his Spirit we realise that it's all about him. We write our part of his story as we he lives in and through us and as we live in and for him.

Response

Get the group to pray together as a whole or in smaller groups/pairs to ask God to help us write our part with him, for him and in a way that makes every part of our life about Jesus too.

You could provide pencils and paper (and/or a variety of other tools like glue and pictures) for the group to write their prayers down or create a picture of their thoughts and prayers.

Dear God, may we become little Bibles ourselves. So that as people see our lives, see who we are and the choices we make, they will realise that we are all about you too.

'These are the very Scriptures that testify about me', Jesus says. (John 5.39b)



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Scripture references from the CEV.