

THE GOSPEL HAND

Use this lesson whenever you begin a new class. This lesson presents an excellent opportunity for you to spend a class period strictly on the subject of salvation.

When you begin a new class, you have many things to do to get acquainted with your students. You need get the children's names, addresses, phone numbers and maybe their birthdays, but most of all you need to know their spiritual condition. You need to know which ones are saved and know it, and which ones are not saved or are not sure of it. The purpose of **The Gospel Hand** lesson is to give them a clear plan of salvation and allow them the opportunity to be saved. This will help you to discover their spiritual condition, which you can use in teaching the other lessons during the year.

Lesson Memory Verse: Romans 3:23 – “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.”

Lesson Aim: To teach the children the plan of salvation and lead them to receive Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Lesson Plan: Use the KEY – HE – SEE – WE – BE plan (explained in the Introductory Notes).

KEY (for Attention): Tell the class how you were saved. In organizing your testimony, (1) tell them how you realized that you were lost and going to Hell. Maybe you can remember the verses of Scripture that God used to bring you under conviction of sin. If not, use Romans 3:23. (2) Then tell them how you discovered that Jesus Christ could save you and make it possible for you to go to Heaven. Did you discover this wonderful truth over the radio, by reading a gospel tract, through a friend, at the church, from your parents, or was it by some other means? Be sure to tell them how it happened for you. Maybe you can remember a particular verse that God used to show you how to be saved from your sins. Tell them what that verse meant to you. If you cannot remember a particular verse, use John 3:16. (3) Finally, tell when, where and how you accepted Jesus Christ as your Savior. Tell all of the important details pertaining to your salvation. You might also tell how you felt and what you thought at the time you were saved. Your testimony can be a very interesting story for your class to hear. They will be interested to hear something about their new teacher, and of course, this is the most important thing they could learn about you. However, remember, if you have younger children, keep your testimony about five minutes because their attention span is not too long. Also, beware of intricate details. If you have an object that illustrates your salvation, use it. They are attracted to objects that give them a picture in their minds, but they lose interest in facts that demand much reasoning. They do not usually get this ability to reason until they are in the fifth or sixth grade. Above all things, as you give your testimony, make Jesus Christ important. He is the one who saved you.

HE (for Authority): Help all the children memorize Romans 3:23 and the older children to memorize John 3:16 as well. If they already have memorized these verses, be sure they understand what they mean. Since these are the two main verses of the Gospel Hand, you will be teaching them how they should apply these verses to their lives.

SEE (for Apperception) and WE (for Application): PLEASE do not read these comments until you have read the Scripture for this lesson. First, let the Holy Spirit teach you directly from His Word. There is a Gospel tract entitled the Gospel Hand, but if you do not have access to this tract, it is on the worksheet for the children. But the best way to teach the Gospel Hand is to use your own hand. Point to your little finger and proceed toward the thumb as follows:

I. **Little finger** – I HAVE SINNED. “All have sinned” – Romans 3:23.

WE: We have to admit that we have sinned against God or we make Him a liar and we will see no reason to be saved from going to Hell.

II. **Ring finger** – GOD LOVES ME. “For God so loved the world” – John 3:16a.

WE: Even though we have sinned against God, He still loves us and wants to save us from going to Hell. He wants us to live with Him forever.

III. Middle finger – CHRIST DIED FOR ME. “That He gave His only begotten Son” – John 3:16b. You also can use Romans 5:8 to show that God gave His Son to die for us.

WE: The only way that we can be saved from Hell is by Jesus' death on the cross to pay the penalty for our sins. We should be thankful that Jesus was willing to do this for us.

IV. Index finger – I BELIEVE CHRIST AND RECEIVE HIM. “That whosoever believes in Him” – John 3:16c. You can use John 1:12 to show that believing in Jesus Christ is receiving Him as Savior.

WE: Even though God has done so much for us, we cannot be saved from Hell until we believe Jesus Christ died to pay the penalty for our sins and receive Him as our Savior.

V. Thumb – I HAVE EVERLASTING LIFE. “Should not perish, but have everlasting life” – John 3:16d. You also can use 1 John 5:11-13 to show that we can know that we have everlasting life when we have received Jesus Christ.

WE: We can know this very day that we have everlasting life, if we have received Jesus as our Savior, and we will not perish.

After you have gone through the whole plan, explain that there can be no short-cuts, such as going from the little finger directly to the thumb, or going from the ring finger to the thumb, or going from the middle finger to the thumb. Make sure the children understand why each finger of the Gospel Hand is important and why there can be no short-cuts. They must accept the message of each finger before they can have the good message of the thumb.

Review the gospel message by using some “why” or “how” questions. “Why” and “how” questions take a little more thought than “who,” “what,” “where” and “when” questions. Ask them, “Why do we need to be saved from Hell, if God loves us? Won't we all go to Heaven anyway?” “Why did Jesus have to die for us in order to save us?” “Why can I say that I know that I have eternal life? Isn't it bragging to say that?” “Can you give me an illustration of receiving something that would help us know how we are to receive Jesus Christ?”

Let the children practice reciting the Gospel Hand on their own fingers. They will learn even more by doing it themselves than by hearing you teach it. This will help the children see how they can believe and receive Jesus Christ as their Savior the right way.

BE (for Action): Have the children bow their heads and ask them to raise their hand if they are not sure that they have received Jesus as their Savior. This will help you to know how to help them. Encourage them to receive Christ as their Savior today. If any of them want to be saved, tell them to stay after class and you will help them understand what they need to do. Do not let anything else keep you from helping them receive Jesus as their Savior, even if you sing in the choir. Their salvation is more important than anything else.