

Objective:

The students will be able to:

- Express that the Bible is the Word of God and that it is our guidebook to help us live united with Him now and forever.
- Explain how the Bible brings us the joyful message that Jesus has won salvation and eternal life for us.
- Sort the books of the Bible into the Old Testament and New Testament.
- Use the Bible to read and study a verse about how Jesus has won eternal salvation for us.
- Decide how they will stay close to Christ through the Bible's message of eternal joy.

Time:

Up to two 40 minute lessons

Materials:

- Bibles (enough for every 2 students)
- Chalkboard, chart paper, or white board
- Books of the Bible cards (you may choose to include more than one book on one card)
- Masking tape
- "Joy of Christ" game cards
- dice
- white construction paper with outline of a person
- glue
- round-edged scissors
- pencils
- crayons
- Bible line drawing
- Christ line drawing
- Resurrection Icon (teaching pic F10)
- Children's Bible Reader, copyright 2006 by Greek Bible Society: pg. 21 Adam & Eve turn away from God (or similar version)

The Lesson Plan:

Opening

Gather the students around the icon corner for the opening prayer:

O Lord Jesus Christ, open our hearts so we may hear thy word. Help us to understand thy teachings and do thy Holy will. Thou givest light to those who are in darkness and from thee comes every good deed and gift. Amen. Say the theme verse: ***The Bible fills us with eternal joy.*** Have the students recite the theme verse with you.

Introduction

Pair off the students in your classroom. Ask the students what they know about the Bible. Give them a minute to share their answers with their partners. Call on the students to share their answers with the entire class. Write their ideas on the board (or chart paper) under the heading, "What is the Bible?"

Content

- 1) Tell the students that in the Bible, there are two sections called testaments: the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament contains books that were written by prophets, their scribes or persons not known to us. The New Testament was written by some of the Holy

Apostles or their scribes or their disciples. The Old Testament contains the history of God's people and the foreshadowing of the coming of Jesus Christ into this world. The New Testament contains the Gospels, which tell us about Christ's life on earth, as well as the Acts of the Apostles, that is the beginning of the Church, and the letters written to the early Christian communities by some of the Apostles. These authors of the Bible were inspired by the Holy Spirit. That's why the Bible contains the Word of God.

- 2) On a piece of chart paper, make a t-chart with the headings: "Old Testament" and "New Testament". Hand each pair a Bible and have them turn to the Table of Contents. Divide the Books of the Bible cards among the pairs and give them 5 minutes to decide with their neighbor in which testament the book belongs. They can make two piles and use the table of contents to find their answers.
- 3) After they've created their piles, direct the students' attention to the board. Have each partner group come forward and tape the book cards under the appropriate heading. Ask the students who are seated to double check their classmates' answers by looking in the table of contents. Repeat with each partner group until the activity is completed.
- 4) Tell the students that within these books there are many stories and lessons for us, but one most important message. Have the partners turn to 1 John 5:11-12 (page 1703 in the Orthodox Study Bible). Assign students to read these verses. Discuss their meaning (*that Jesus has won salvation and eternal life for us! Eternal life means we will live with Christ in the heavenly kingdom. When we think about living forever because of Jesus' victory over death, we are joyful.*) Continue to read 1 John 5:13. Discuss. (*The words in the Bible bring us this joyful message and proclaim it not just to us now, but to everyone who lived, and will live also, to the end of the world.*)
- 5) Read "Adam and Eve turn away from God" from the Children's Bible Reader (pg. 21). Discuss how Adam and Eve rejected God and did not recognize their own sinfulness until they ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. What did God intend for the world originally? (*To be united to Him = Paradise*). But God loves each of His children and has offered all of us the chance to be with Him again. God sent His Son, Jesus to come into this world so that we would have eternal life through Him and with Him. Jesus suffered for us and overcame death through the Glorious Resurrection. (Show the Resurrection icon). Through Repentance (when we ask God to forgive our sins and turn to God), any of God's children can turn to Him and accept the salvation that Jesus won for us!

Activity

- 1) Clear a space in the classroom or find a larger space to play "The Joy of Christ".
- 2) At the front of the space, place the Orthodox Study Bible. Have all the students stand in a line across the back of the space.
- 3) Taking turns, allow the students to draw a "Joy of Christ" card. Read the card aloud. If the card leads us closer to God through the Bible's message of eternal joy, then the students will roll the dice and take that many normal steps forward (according to the number rolled). If the card separates us from the Bible's message of eternal joy, then the student will take one normal step back. When the students reach the Bible at the front of the space, they have been filled with the Bible's message of eternal joy!
- 4) Hand out the white construction paper copy of the person outline, scissors, glue, crayons, pencils, the Bible line drawing and Christ line drawing. Have them color and cut out the pictures of the Bible and Christ. Have the students glue each of these pictures onto the body of the person. Allow them to write one or two phrases/sentences on the body about how the Bible fills them with eternal joy or what they can do to fill themselves with eternal joy. At the top of the picture, have the students write the theme as their title: The Bible Fills us With Eternal Joy!

Closing

Ask the students to share with their partner what they learned about the Bible. Remind the students that by reading the Bible, we can continue to learn about Christ and his joyful message, allowing Him, the one

who has given us eternal life, to guide our lives through His stories and teachings! Tell the students that throughout the year, they will learn stories from various books of the Bible and will be learning how those stories give us eternal joy. Have the students' recite the CF theme with you: "The Bible fills us with eternal joy!" Close with "The Lord's Prayer" in the icon corner.