



**DiscipleLand**

*Missionary Biography Questions*  
Level 3, Quarter C—John Stewart

Integrate these questions and activities into your **DiscipleLand** Missionary Biography time. Expand your children's understanding of each story segment.

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### 3C—Missionary Biography

John Stewart

#### Teacher Intro— JOHN STEWART (1786—1823)

This little-known missionary hero was born shortly after the thirteen Colonies became the United States of America. Remind your students that the “wild, wild west” at that time ended roughly at the Mississippi River. Exploration was dangerous beyond the costal colonies, and native American tribes, or “nations,” freely roamed the American mainland. Create a map of the United States, with everything west of the Mississippi left blank. On the map, draw John Stewart’s travels from Virginia westward into Ohio to help kids understand the scope of his travels on foot. If your students enjoy creating art, give them blank paper and pencils and let them sketch pictures of what you read to them each lesson.

#### Lesson 1—Colonial Life

Read the story from page 12 of the DiscipleLand Teacher Guide.

*Big Idea:* God is the light in dark places.

#### Discussion Questions:

**What do you know about the original 13 colonies that became the United States of America?** Have the children share what they know from school and history. **John Stewart lived in America right after the 13 colonies became the United States.**

**What do you think of when you hear the term “wild, wild west”?** Let the children answer. **During John Stewart’s time, the “wild west” ended right around the Mississippi River. People did not typically travel west of the Mississippi, and that land was populated by Native American tribes. Few people visited the tribes, and even fewer went to share Jesus’ love.**

**John traveled on foot from Virginia to Ohio.** Have the kids find Virginia and Ohio on a map of the United States. **How far could you walk on foot? Explain your answer.**

**What do you think drove John to share the love of Jesus with the “first nation,” the Native Americans? Explain your answer.**

**Jesus calls Himself the light of the world and as His followers, we represent His “light” to other people, just as John Stewart was a light to the Native American tribes. How can you be a light to others around you this week?**

#### Do Something About It...

*Objective:* Create a visual reminder of God’s love for all people.

Have kids make an acrostic with the word “love.” Download a free template for a US Map and print up one for each student. Have them write “l-o-v-e” down the side of the country. They should use each letter of the word to begin a sentence or words that describe something about God’s love. Pray with the children, asking God to help them enjoy His love.

#### Lesson 2—Growing Up

The story so far...**John Stewart lived in America shortly after the time the Colonies became the United States. European colonists had not explored the land past the Mississippi River, and they did not generally mix with the Native Americans.**

Read the story from page 18 of the DiscipleLand Teacher Guide.

*Big Idea:* Seeking God is the most important thing in life.

#### Discussion Questions:

**John’s family in Virginia had people from mixed heritage in his bloodline. What ethnic backgrounds were in John Stewart’s family? How do you think this affected him?**

**What were John Stewart’s parents’ beliefs about God? Did John feel the same?**

**John had many good things happen early in his life. What things did he become successful at? Do you think this made it easier or harder to serve God?**

**What things in your life make it easy or hard to serve God?**

#### Do Something About It...

*Objective:* Sing a song about seeking God.

Have children sing “Seek Ye First.” Discuss searching for God and why it is important. Sometimes people look in the wrong places, but God is faithful and brings them to the right place—Jesus Christ. Pray with the children, asking God to help them meet people who are searching for Him.

### Lesson 3—The Robbery

The story so far... **John was raised by free parents in Virginia with a mixed heritage. John excelled at reading, writing, and math. He became successful at cloth dying and made a large amount of money; but he did not see how much he needed Jesus.**

Read the story from page 24 of the DiscipleLand Teacher Guide.

*Big Idea:* God encourages and saves His people.

#### Discussion Questions:

**A highwayman attacked John and stole most of his money. How do you think this made him feel after he had worked hard to earn a great deal of money?**

**John became very upset after being robbed and was so sad he did not want to live. How did God intervene?**

**What changed in John's life after he heard the Good News of the Gospel at a Methodist church?**

**God often intervenes in our lives because He loves us. He uses people and circumstances to help us find Him. How has God intervened in your life, or the life of people around you?**

#### Do Something About It...

*Objective:* Create a visual reminder that God can give us courage.

Bring in blank note cards. Have kids write a note of encouragement. They might want to use the references Deuteronomy 31:8 and Joshua 1:9 as part of the note. After they sign their cards, collect them. Pass out envelopes and have each child address it to him- or herself. Randomly place a note in a different child's envelope and during the week mail the cards. Pray with the children and ask God to encourage them this week.

### Lesson 4—The Voices

The story so far... **John lost everything when a highwayman robbed him. In his sadness, John almost took his own life; instead God intervened. A friend took John to church where John heard the Good News! He then moved to Tennessee to attend Bible school and grow in his faith.**

Read the story from page 30 of the DiscipleLand Teacher Guide.

*Big Idea:* God has a purpose for each of His children.

#### Discussion Questions:

**John's life radically changed after he accepted Christ as the Lord of his life. He had moved to Tennessee and was learning about God and his faith and was working as a dyer. What habits did he possess that helped cultivate his relationship with God?**

**God had other plans for John, more than just going to church and working. John heard a voice saying, "Thou shalt go to the Northwest and declare my counsel plainly." How would you feel if you were him? What do you think John's response was to God's call?**

**God was calling John to share about His love to those in the Northwest. How does this fit in with the instructions Jesus left His disciples when He ascended into heaven?** Read Matthew 28:16-20 to see how God wants us to disciple others.

#### Do Something About It...

*Objective:* Create a visual reminder of God's plans for people.

Have students decorate posters with the words to Jeremiah 29:11 printed on them. Let them take their posters home to remind them of God's plans. Pray with the children, asking God to help them remember that He is in control.

### Lesson 5—First Adventures

The story so far... **John had a vivid experience in the woods calling him to share God's love with the people of the Northwest.**

Read the story from page 36 of the DiscipleLand Teacher Guide.

*Big Idea:* God equips his people to do what He calls.

#### Discussion Questions:

**God gave John a vivid call to share His “counsel” with the people of Northwest America. How did John feel at first when he thought about being a preacher?**

**John simply started walking. He didn't know where to go, but trusted that God would show him the way. What do you think John's journey was like walking Northwest from Virginia?**

**At the time, how did the American government treat Native Americans? How did the first Native American that John met treat him?**

**John finally met a family after walking for some time. What happened in the town after John sang hymns for the family? How did God use John with their neighbors?**

**We often like to have a plan and know exactly what God is going to do before we act. How does John's story inspire us to trust God?**

#### Do Something About It...

*Objective:* Create a visual reminder to have faith.

John kept walking and in faith trusted that God would show him what to do. Have the children use various crayons to completely color a paper. Then cover over the colors with a black crayon. Let the kids use a thumbtack or corner of a ruler to scratch out the words, “Have faith.” Pray with the children and ask God to help them to take steps of faith this week.

### Lesson 6—Getting Help

The story so far... **John began walking North and West, not sure where he was supposed to go. On his way west he met a family that took him in and fed him. John shared the Gospel with all their neighbors.**

Read the story from page 42 of the DiscipleLand Teacher Guide.

*Big Idea:* God leads and guides.

#### Discussion Questions:

**The Walkers were very cautious when they first met John. What did William Walker do for the government?**

**John was faithful to share his story and God's love to all who would listen. How did William Walker respond to John Stewart sharing his testimony?**

**Why do you think the Walkers were a helpful contact for John? How was John able to talk to the Wyandot tribe?**

**As John took steps of faith, God led him to the right people to help him connect with the Wyandot tribe. When have you seen God lead you or your family when you were not sure what to do next?**

#### Do Something About It...

*Objective:* Create a visual reminder to care for people's needs.

Have the students make a collage of pictures that show people caring for the needs of others. Pray with the children, asking God to help them care for others this week.

## Lesson 7—Meeting the Wyandots

The story so far... **John Stewart was now hundreds of miles into the wilderness serving the Native Americans in his area. He met a government worker, William Walker, who introduced him to a translator for the Wyandot tribe, Jonathan Pointer.**

Read the story from page 48 of the DiscipleLand Teacher Guide.

*Big Idea:* God is drawing people to Himself.

### Discussion Questions:

**Jonathan Pointer knew the language of the tribe John Stewart wanted to talk to. What was Jonathan Pointer's background? How did he know the language?**

**Jonathan knew the customs of the Wyandot. What was the first event with the tribe he took Jonathan Stewart to?**

**Jonathan Pointer was willing to be John's interpreter even though he was not interested in Christianity. God is always working in people's lives and creates opportunity for them to hear about His love.** Read John 6:44 with the kids. **How have you seen God draw other people around you to love Him?**

### Do Something About It...

*Objective:* Create a visual reminder to thank God for his love for other people.

Let kids create posters with people of all different cultures. Have them write, "Thank You, God" across the tops of their posters. Pray with the children, thanking God for loving people of all tribes and nations!

## Lesson 8—The Sermon

The story so far... **John Stewart visited a Wyandot festival with his translator Jonathan Pointer. Jonathan joined the dance and feast while John waited for a chance to share Jesus' love with the Wyandots.**

Read the story from page 54 of the DiscipleLand Teacher Guide.

*Big Idea:* God will help you be brave as you share His love.

### Discussion Questions:

**John was waiting for the right time to speak. What did Jonathan Pointer do after the dance to help John share his reason for coming?**

**How did the Wyandot respond to the invitation?**

**How do you think John felt when he was given a chance to preach his first sermon to the Wyandot men?**

Read Romans 10:12-15. **God will send Christians to share about God's love with others. Sometimes in the moment of speaking about God it is easy to be nervous and tongue-tied.** Read Luke 21:13-15. **How did Jesus promise that God would help the disciples when they needed to speak out and defend the Gospel?**

**How do you think He will help you?**

### Do Something About It...

*Objective:* Create a visual reminder to be brave.

Have children make a "Don't be afraid" poster. Set out thin tracing paper and markers. Kids can make a "stained glass" look by using bright colors and outlining with a black marker. In the center of the poster have students write "Don't be afraid" or "Be brave for God." Pray with the children, asking God to help them be brave this week.

### Lesson 9—Farewell

The story so far...**After a Wyandot festival, the translator Jonathan Pointer invited the Wyandot men to a meeting the next evening at the Walkers home. John Stewart shared why had come to visit them!**

Read the story from page 60 of the DiscipleLand Teacher Guide.

*Big Idea:* God's salvation can change anyone!

#### Discussion Questions:

**How did John teach the Wyandot? Who were the influential tribal leaders that John wanted to introduce to Jesus?**

**How did the men change after they chose to follow God?**  
(They began to develop Christian character.)

**God's forgiveness and His presence in someone's life changes him or her. How have you seen God change you or those around you?**

**In the midst of such success, opposition came. How did the men choose to ignore John's advice? How did John react? Do you truly think John's efforts were fruitless?**

#### Do Something About It...

*Objective:* Create a visual reminder of God's salvation.

Have the students make a poster, booklet or bracelet outlining God's offer of forgiveness and salvation. See **Good News for Kids** on the inside back cover of the Teacher Guide for an outline. Pray with the children, asking God to bring many people to know His Son, Jesus.

### Lesson 10—Revival

The story so far... **Many influential men in the Wyandot tribe, including the translator Jonathan Pointer, came to know Jesus. Even though many people trusted in God, John became discouraged and left the tribe after they ignored some of his advice!**

Read the story from page 66 of the DiscipleLand Teacher Guide.

*Big Idea:* God's love triumphs over opposition.

#### Discussion Questions:

**What was the Wyandot's response to John Stewart returning to their tribe? Why do you think he came back?**

**John Stewart immediately began preaching after he returned. What was their response?**

**God was drawing many people to Himself in the Wyandot tribe. Still opposition came from other people. Who was speaking out against Christianity in the area?**

**John kept going even when things went wrong and problems arose. How do you think he was able to keep preaching and serving the Wyandot in hard circumstances?**

#### Do Something About It...

*Objective:* Create a written reminder of God's blessings.

Have the kids make a journal for this week to record each time they see God blessing them. Pray with the children, asking God to help them see His blessings this week. When we see God's blessings it helps us focus on good things rather than problems.

### **Lesson 11—Approved**

The story so far...**John Stewart returned to the Wyandot and began preaching regularly to the tribe. Many people followed Jesus. Other tribesmen and “firewater” salesmen opposed Christianity, urging the people not to believe in the “white man’s god.”**

Read the story from page 72 of the DiscipleLand Teacher Guide.

*Big Idea:* God can accomplishing the impossible!

#### Discussion Questions:

**John was leading a thriving community of believers among the Wyandot. But he struggled with feeling qualified. John went home to consult with other leaders.**

**How did the church leaders see John’s ministry? How do you think John felt after the church leaders helped him?**

**God was providing a way for John to keep preaching to the Wyandot. Who else joined him as a missionary to the Native Americans?**

**Hearing John’s story and how God used his obedience and willingness to keep sharing the Gospel, how does his story encourage and inspire you?**

#### Do Something About It...

*Objective:* Create a visual reminder to follow Jesus.

Have children draw a picture that shows what they are willing to give up or where they are willing to go to follow Jesus. Pray with the children, asking God to show them how following Him is always worth it—that the rewards outweigh the sacrifices.

### **Lesson 12—Faithful**

The story so far...**John was now a licensed pastor with the Methodist church. People saw God’s hand on the ministry and wanted to join John in serving the Native Americans.**

Read the story from page 78 of the DiscipleLand Teacher Guide.

*Big Idea:* Faithfully serve God your entire life.

#### Discussion Questions:

**John became very sick with a disease, likely pneumonia. Who came to visit him?**

**Even at the end when John was so sick, he was focused on the Lord. What did he encourage those around him to do even as he was dying?**

**God wants us to faithfully serve out of His leading and power.**

Read 1 Peter 4:10-11. **How does Peter urge other believers to serve God? How was God glorified through John Stewart’s life?**

**What are some ways you can faithfully serve God this week?**

#### Do Something About It...

*Objective:* Create a visual reminder of the life of John Stewart.

Have the students draw a picture of John Stewart. Talk about some of the things he accomplished. Pray with the children, asking God to help them serve Him like John Stewart did.