



DiscipleLand

Missions Education

Level 3, Quarter D—Triumphant Over All

Integrate these World-missions concepts into your **DiscipleLand** lesson. Introduce your children to one missions truth each lesson.

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Teacher Intro—Jesus said that the harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few (Luke 10:2). Jesus knew that God would call workers from all walks of life to serve Him in the great harvest—the winning of souls all over the world for God’s Kingdom.

Our God is sovereign. His redemptive work in this world cannot be thwarted. He has no need of our help, yet He invites us to take part in His kingdom, His suffering, His triumph, and His glory! God calls us His fellow workers—servants to whom He assigns a task (1 Corinthians 3:5-9). As Jesus’ messengers, our task is to proclaim Jesus Christ—the good news of great joy for all people. This task cannot fail. All authority belongs to the One who sends us, and He promises to always be with us!

Lesson 1—Reaping Roles

Supplies: packet of seeds, potting soil, Styrofoam cups (enough materials for each child to plant a seed)

Give each child a cup to decorate with crayons or markers. Then put soil into each cup. **This quarter we’ll talk about sowing and reaping. This sowing isn’t the kind of sewing you do with thread and cloth—it means planting seeds. What types of seeds that have you planted or sown?** Let each child plant a seed in his or her soil cup.

Each one of you is now a sower! You have planted a seed—the very first step in reaping a harvest. Reaping a harvest means that at the end of the growing time, the seeds that have been cared for have grown and turned into plants. If planting a seed was the only step to reaping a harvest, you would all be finished with that task. What else needs to happen so your seed will grow into a plant? (They need to water it, weed it, and give it sunlight.)

In the Bible we read about two roles in reaping a harvest. Read 1 Corinthians 3:5-9. **Each Christian has a role in God’s harvest field—the people who need to hear about Jesus. What role did Paul say he had?** (Paul planted the seed.) **What was Apollos’ role?** (He watered the seed.) **What ways did Paul plant seeds?** (He preached, taught, healed, did miracles, etc.) **How do you think Apollos watered Paul’s seeds?** Discuss possibilities such as he preached, he told people what Jesus had said, he echoed things Paul said, etc. **What is God’s role in the harvest?** (Makes things grow.) Explain that the Holy Spirit convicts people of their need to believe in Jesus (John 16:8-9).

Just like Paul, you and I have roles in helping people believe in Jesus. We can plant seeds. Preachers, missionaries, and

other Christians can have conversations with people and further explain what you have told them about Jesus. Let’s pray for people who are planting seeds about Jesus and also for the people who water those seeds!

Pray: Let each child pray for the planters and waterers in God’s harvest field around the world. If a child is hesitant to pray, lead the child in repeating after you.

Lesson 2—Reaping What You Sow

Supplies: pictures of a variety of fruits and vegetables

Let’s play a game and see if you can name the kind of seed grew into the fruit or vegetable shown in the picture. Hold up one picture at a time. Example: apple—grew from an apple seed. Choose a few challenging pictures such as eggplant, kiwi fruit, etc.

In Bible times, everyone understood about seeds and harvesting plants—there weren’t grocery stores, and most people grew the food that they ate. Let’s see what the Bible says about seeds and the type of plants they grow into.

Read Job 4:8. **What seeds did Job notice people had planted?** (Evil and trouble.) **What crops did they reap?** (Evil and trouble.) Read Galatians 6:7. **What does this verse say about sowing and reaping?** (God says we will reap what we sow.)

Before someone believes in Christ, somehow the person has to first hear about Jesus—those are the seeds that were sown. Who planted seeds about Jesus in your life? Encourage children to name specific people. **What are good seeds that you could plant by telling someone about Jesus?** Let kids name truths they know about Jesus.

Sadly, some people live in countries where the government, religious leaders, and even parents plant seeds in children’s minds that say there is no God or that Jesus is not the Savior of the world. How can those children have seeds about Jesus planted in their hearts? Possible answers: missionaries go to those countries, they might read a Bible, they might hear a radio or television program about Jesus, etc. **Let’s pray for the planting of good seeds that will produce a crop of believers in Jesus Christ!**

Pray: Pray for people to speak truth about Jesus so that others will believe in Jesus as their Savior. Also pray for the people at your church who are planting seeds right now!

Lesson 3—Reaping What You Sow 2

Supplies: Missionary newsletters or pictures of missionaries

Let's imagine that we have a huge garden area. What foods would you like to plant? Encourage suggestions. **Before we can have a harvest, we need to plant seeds. If we plant one seed, we hope it will grow into one plant. In order to have enough for everyone, we need to have more than one plant. Let's estimate how many seeds we should plant.** Help the children estimate, remembering that not every seed will grow into a plant. **We need to plant many seeds if we want to have a large crop!**

The Bible gives tips on planting seeds. Read Ecclesiastes 11:4. **What does this verse tell us?** (If you don't plant, you won't get a crop.) **Imagine a farmer who stands looking at his field and never plants a seed. Will that farmer ever get a harvest?** Read 2 Corinthians 9:6. **What does this verse tell us?** (If you sow a little, you will reap a little. If you sow a lot, you reap a lot.) **Now picture the same farmer planting only three seeds in a huge field. How large will his crop be?** The Bible reminds us that *people* are the crops in God's harvest field. **Imagine a missionary who told three people about Jesus. Would that missionary see many people become Christians?** (Probably not.) **So if a missionary wants many people to become followers of Christ, what does the Bible say to do?** (Sow generously to reap generously.) **The more people a missionary tells, the more possibility of many people being saved!** Share any news of God's harvest from missionaries whom your church supports.

Each one of us can plant seeds in the harvest field of people in our neighborhoods, schools, and communities. The same principle of sowing and reaping applies to us. This week, I challenge you to plant many seeds about Jesus. Who are people you can plant seeds in? Encourage responses. **Remember, a seed takes time to grow into a plant. It is our job to plant seeds so that other people can water the seeds by telling more about Jesus. God will do His part and help the seeds grow. Someday in heaven, we might learn people are there because *we* planted seeds. So let's get busy planting lots of seeds!**

Pray: Pray specifically for missionaries your church supports—for them to plant many seeds and reap a large harvest. If you have missionary update letters or pictures of the missionaries, pass them out and let each child pray for the missionary on the letter or card he or she is holding.

Lesson 4—Reaping What You Sow 3

Supplies: multiplication table

Most third graders are learning their multiplication facts. Have the children repeat multiplication facts they know.

Did you know that God has His own multiplication table? Let the children guess what God's multiplication table might be like. Read Matthew 13:1-8. **Jesus told a story about planting seeds. What happened to the seeds that fell along the path?** (The birds ate the seeds.) **What happened to the seeds that fell among the rocks?** (There wasn't soil to hold the roots.) **What happened to the seeds that fell among thorns?** (The thorns choked the seeds.) **What happened to the seeds that fell in the good soil?** (The crop was 100, 60, or 30 times as much as was planted.)

When God is involved in our sowing—telling others about Jesus—we discover that He can multiply the harvest to be much larger than what we planted. Imagine that you tell someone about Jesus, and he or she decides to become a Christian. Maybe that person will become a preacher and lead many other people to Christ. The original seed you planted now has a huge crop because that person planted seeds also! Discuss the principle of multiplying the seeds planted in people's hearts as they plant seeds in others' hearts!

Did any of you plant seeds in God's harvest field this past week? Let children respond. **We want to remember to pray that the people you told about Jesus will become Christians and help tell others about Jesus. Just think, God's multiplication could be taking place right now in the seeds that you've sown! Let's continue to sow seeds and pray for God's multiplication to be at work.**

Pray: Pray for the children to plant seeds and reap 100 times the amount sown. Let kids pray specifically for the people they told about Jesus.

Lesson 5—Don't Give Up

Let's play a game. Guess how long it takes the following seeds to germinate—to sprout out of the ground.

- Melon (5-10 days)
- Cucumber (7-10 days)
- Tomato (10-14 days)
- Spinach (14-21 days)
- Palm seed (6-12 months for some varieties)

Can you imagine planting a seed and waiting half a year just to see a sprout come up? Sometimes missionaries plant seeds and tell people about Christ, but no one believes in Jesus. How do you think those missionaries might feel? Encourage responses.

Let's see what God's Word says about this. Read Galatians 6:9. What wonderful promise is in this verse? (We will reap a harvest if we don't give up.) When will we reap the harvest? (We reap at the proper or right time.) We don't need to worry about when the seed we plant will sprout—God knows the right time!

Waiting is never easy, but a harvest of believers will happen on God's time table. Some missionaries might become discouraged or feel like giving up because they see little or no sprouts from their seeds—no one is trusting Jesus as Lord and Savior. What can we pray for those missionaries? Possible answers: that they don't give up, that they remember God will grow the seeds at the right time, ask God to multiply the harvest of their seeds, etc. Even when you don't see results, it is important to not give up and keep serving the Lord.

Pray: Name specific missionaries that your church supports or are known to the children's families. Focus on praying for patience and perseverance for the missionaries.

Lesson 6—Reaping Daily

After Jesus returned to heaven, His followers spread out and began to tell people about Him. They preached to crowds of people. Peter preached—and guess how many people believed in Jesus in just one day? Let the children guess and then read Acts 2:41 (3,000 people believed). Wow! Imagine planting seeds about Jesus, and 3,000 people become Christians that same day! Around the world, evangelists preach to thousands of people in sports stadiums. Discuss some of the large stadiums that have hosted Billy Graham crusades or other evangelists. Ask for volunteers to pray that the evangelists preaching to thousands of people will plant seeds that will result in thousands of believers in Jesus.

Once when Peter and John preached, soldiers threw them in jail. But that didn't stop the seeds they planted from growing into a harvest of believers. Guess how many people became Christians from Peter and John's seeds? Let the children guess and then read Acts 4:4 (5,000). What countries put Christians in jail because of their faith in Jesus? Possible answers: North Korea, Saudi Arabia, Afghanistan, Somalia, Maldives, Yemen, Laos, Eritrea, Uzbekistan, Bhutan, and China (see Open Doors World Watch List open-doorsusa.org). Do you think people in those countries might become Christians because of the seeds planted by jailed believers? Let children respond.

Peter also used God's power to do miracles. Each miracle was like a seed planted. The people saw the miracles and followed Christ. Read Acts 5:12-14. Talk about some of the stories of miracles or amazing things that missionaries have seen happen that produced a harvest of believers. Pray for God to send miracles and amazing things so that missionaries will be able to explain God's power and help people want to follow Jesus.

Read Acts 2:47 and 16:5. How often did people become Christians? (Every day.) Do you think every day someone somewhere in the world becomes a Christian? Let the children respond.

Pray: Close by praying for each child by name to plant seeds that will produce a harvest of believers in Jesus Christ today.

Lesson 7—A Great Harvest in the Fields of China

Supplies: world map

Have the kids find China on a world map. **The first Protestant missionary to China was Robert Morrison. He arrived in China in 1807 and served God by planting seeds to the Chinese people for twenty-seven years. When he died, only ten Chinese people believed in Jesus and were baptized.**

When Hudson Taylor became the first missionary to go into the middle of China in 1853, he worked hard to plant seeds of Good News to the Chinese people. At the time of his death in 1905, it is estimated that 125,000 Chinese people believed in Jesus Christ as their Savior!

Today, China is officially an atheist country—a country where the government tells the people there is no God. The government does allow some churches to register and abide by the government rules. Most Christians in China choose to meet in secret house churches to avoid government rules. Guess how many churches are estimated to be in China now? (55,000+ churches!) Guess how many Christians there might be in China now? (20 million. Many missionaries to China say the number could be as high as over 100 million!) There are eighteen schools in China that train pastors, and more than 43 million Chinese Bibles have been printed! Just think about all the seeds that Chinese Christians and pastors can plant in the one billion people that make up the population of China! (Statistics are from www.za.omf.org)

Pray: Pray for the seeds planted in the hearts of the Chinese people to reap an abundant harvest of believers in Christ.

Lesson 8—A Great Harvest in the Fields of Turkey

Supplies: world map

What country do you think Mary, Jesus' mother, traveled to after His death? Let the children guess. Point to Turkey on a world map. Most biblical scholars believe Jesus' mother lived the last years of her life in Turkey. **The apostle Paul was born in Turkey and traveled several times to visit churches there. You might think Turkey would be filled with Christians—the book of Revelation mentions seven churches, all located in Turkey. Unfortunately, the strong beginnings of Christianity ended when Arab armies took control of Turkey in the 7th and 8th centuries. Islam became the religion of the Turkish people, and today 99.8% of the Turkish people are Muslims. Operation World, a group that give details about countries so Christians know how to pray, has ranked Turkey as the “largest unreached nation” in the world!**

In the 1960s, there might have been only ten or fewer Christians in the whole country of Turkey. It is estimated that there are currently about 4,500 Christians there now. So in the last fifty years, the numbers grew—but we don't want to wait another fifty years to see large numbers of Turkish believers. What can help Turkey reap a big harvest of believers? Let the children suggest answers.

One way to reap a big harvest is to pray! Some Christians from Turkey and other countries around the world gathered in Turkey for 100 solid hours of worship to God and prayer for Turkey. As a result of that time of prayer, Christian workers are noticing good changes and more Turkish people are open to listen to the Good News. Let children share anything they have learned about mission work in Turkey. Let's focus our prayers for Turkey to no longer be the largest unreached nation—but to become the largest reached nation! (Statistics from www.two-fot.org)

Pray: One possible prayer is for the Turkish people to receive dreams and visions from God (Joel 2:28). The Turkish culture places a high value on dreams and visions. Many Turks say they saw Jesus in a dream and later became Christians when they heard the Gospel.

Lesson 9—A Great Harvest in the Fields of Africa

Supplies: world map

Who can find Africa on the world map? Let kids point to Africa. Read some of the names of African countries and have children stand up if they've heard of that country before. Discuss any personal connections kids may have to Africa.

Africa is made up of many countries. Some countries' names have changed throughout history, but God has always known and loved the African people. David Livingstone and Mary Slessor were two missionaries who worked hard to tell Africa's people about Jesus and the salvation message. David Livingstone was also an explorer who made maps of the areas where he traveled. Because of his maps, many missionaries could reach tribes that had never heard about Jesus. Point to Zambia and Zimbabwe where David spent much of his time.

Mary Slessor worked with tribes in the area now known as Nigeria. The people there loved her and called her "Ma Slessor." Her bravery inspired many women to become missionaries. Help the students locate Nigeria on the map. Let the students mention anything they know about these two pioneer missionaries to Africa.

Pioneer missionaries, who go to an area to prepare the way for others, usually don't reap a large harvest for God in their lifetimes. But those first missionaries plant seeds that other missionaries can water. In the beginning of the 1900s, it is estimated that the entire continent of Africa probably had about 8-9 million Christians. One hundred years later, that number has exploded to about 335 million! In about 30 countries, more than half of their populations call Christianity their religion. Islam is also a strong religion in many African countries. In fact, some Islamic African countries don't want seeds about Jesus sown in their countries and so they persecute Christians. Note: Persecution.org lists these African countries as places of persecution: Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Sudan, Morocco, and Algeria (persecution.org).

God's enemy wants to stop seed planting about Jesus in countries in Africa. What ways can you help seed planting in Africa? Possible answers: pray for the African Christians and missionaries to have opportunities to plant seeds, give money to help missions groups working in Africa, pray for Bible translations to be completed in all the African languages, etc. (Statistics from christianhistorytimeline.com)

Pray: Bring information and prayer requests from missionaries your church supports in Africa. Encourage the kids to pray for Christians in persecuted countries in Africa to be courageous and continue to plant seeds about Jesus.

Lesson 10—A Great Harvest in the Fields of Europe

Supplies: world map

What do you think about when you hear the word Europe? Let kids respond. Discuss any personal connections kids may have to Europe. Use the map to point out all of the European countries mentioned.

Europe was once considered a very Christian continent with many Catholic and Protestant churches. Over the past 200 years, the Church began to slowly decline as Europeans became more focused on knowledge and career rather than focusing on God and His kingdom. Today, Islam is the fastest growing religion in Europe—probably only two people out of 100 Europeans follow Christ.

Although those statistics make it sound like people aren't following Jesus in Europe, the Holy Spirit is still at work in the hearts of Europeans and God's Word is still true. We have a powerful tool for reaping a harvest in Europe—our prayers! Each prayer plants a seed. Faithfully praying helps water those seeds to grow. We also need to pray for workers to go to the harvest fields. Read Luke 10:2. It may surprise you to learn that Christian workers are coming to Europe from Africa, Sri Lanka, India, Iran, Singapore, the Philippines, and Latin America! They are establishing churches that spread God's Word and His love in fresh, exciting ways to the Europeans.

Europe is an exciting harvest field because immigrants from other countries come to Europe to find jobs—and might learn about Jesus! Then when the immigrants return to their countries, they can take Jesus with them and start planting seeds about Jesus to their friends and family!

One ministry working in the harvest fields of Europe is Greater European Missions (GEM). Check out their website (www.gemission.org/Pray) and list specific prayer requests from Christian workers currently in Europe. You can also read updates on the harvest they are reaping. **Let's pray for great harvests in the fields of Europe!**

Pray: Consider printing out current prayer requests and praises from the GEM website and let the children pray specifically for these items. Also, let each child pray for a European country that he or she has a personal connection with or has a strong interest in.

Lesson 11—A Great Harvest in Islamic Countries

Supplies: world map

Picture this in your mind. People in a city see a large mosque where Muslims go to pray to their god, Allah. Five times a day they hear the Muslim call to prayer. What country do you think this describes? Let kids guess. I described what might happen in many Muslim countries around the world. Point to the countries on the map as you name them. **The scene I described is also true of people in the city of Dearborn, in the state of Michigan! Even in America, the number of followers of Islam is growing. This scares some people who want Muslims to leave their cities and their countries. But if the people who don't believe in Christ leave places where Christians are, how will they learn about Jesus?** Discuss how Christians should want to plant seeds about Jesus and not turn people away from their cities or countries.

The mission field in Muslim countries is a difficult harvest field. In many Islamic countries, they persecute Christians and severely punish people who convert from Islam to Christianity. Even though it is very difficult to hear about Jesus in these countries, God still plants seeds about Jesus through Christians, Bibles, television, radio, Internet, and other miraculous ways.

The Islamic people put a high value on dreams and visions. Some missionaries have reported that when they mention Jesus to some Muslims, the Muslims become Christ followers because God had prepared their hearts through Jesus appearing to them in a dream. Read Acts 2:17. **We can pray that God prepares the harvest fields by sending dreams and visions to the Muslim people.**

Pray: Praise God that seeds are being planted in Islamic countries! Ask God to multiply the number of sowers in these countries.

Lesson 12—Our Part in Reaping God's Harvest

Supplies: paper, pencils, scissors, small empty pot for each child (optional)

You might think the Great Commission and Jesus' command to go into all the world and preach the Good News (Mark 16:15) is only for adults—no way! Jesus doesn't look at children as weak or unable to be useful in missions. Jesus valued children (Mark 10:13-16), and God used many children in the Bible—like Samuel, David, and Josiah—in big ways. Discuss what great things each of these children accomplished for the Lord.

Even now, you can start planting seeds in people's hearts. Millions of people need to know that God is real and Jesus is the Savior of the world. Each day you have contact with many people through email, phone, and face-to-face. Make sure they know that Jesus died to forgive their sins. As you plant seeds, don't forget to pray for the people who will water that seed and tell the people more about Jesus! Who are people whom you have contact with? What ways can you tell them about Jesus? Spend time discussing these questions.

Have the children draw large seed shapes on paper and then cut them out. Encourage the children to write on each seed the name of someone they will commit to tell about Jesus. If you have small pots for the children, let the children place the seeds in the pots. Tell the children to pray for the people they tell about Jesus. When children see the person become a Christian, they can draw a plant and write the person's name on the plant. The seed can be thrown away because they now have reaped a harvest!

Pray: Have the children name people whom they have told about Jesus. Pray that other people will water their seeds and tell the people more about Jesus. Praise God for the seeds planted by the children and praise God for the harvest that will be reaped!