



CONCORDIA CURRICULUM GUIDE



GRADE

1

Social Studies





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PREFACE

Ministry of Christian Schools

Parental expectations of Christian schools include

- excellent discipline;
- high academic standards;
- low teacher-student ratios;
- dedicated, conscientious teachers;

Many Christian schools offer these advantages. But the real distinction is that Christian schools proclaim Jesus Christ as the Son of God and Savior of the world. Teaching Jesus Christ, then, is “the real difference” between Christian and public schools. In Christian schools, teachers and students witness personally and publicly to their faith in Jesus Christ. Students study the Bible and worship God daily. Teachers relate Jesus Christ to all aspects of the curriculum. Teachers and students share Christian love and forgiveness.

Those who teach in Christian schools are privileged with the opportunity to

- teach the Word of God in its truth and purity;
- acknowledge the Bible as God’s infallible Word and the Confessions as the true exposition of the Word;
- identify God’s Word, Baptism, and the Lord’s Supper as the means through which God creates and sustains faith;
- emphasize Law and Gospel as the key teaching of Scripture;
- seek to apply Law and Gospel properly in daily relationships with students, parents, and other teachers;
- teach all of what Scripture teaches (including Christian doctrines) to all students, no matter what backgrounds they have;
- share with students what Jesus the Savior means to them personally;
- equip students to proclaim the Good News to others;

- encourage students to find the support and encouragement found only in the body of Christ, of which Jesus Himself is the head.

In Christian schools, Christ permeates all subjects and activities. Religion is not limited to one hour or one class. Teachers seek opportunities to witness in every class and to relate God’s Word to all aspects of life. Through this process, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, students grow in faith and in a sanctified life and view all of life, not just Sunday, as a time to serve and worship God.

In summary, it is intrinsic to ministry in a Christian school that all energies expended in the educational process lead each child to a closer relationship with the Savior and with other members of the Christian community.

How to Use This Guide

The Concordia Curriculum Guide series is designed to guide you as you plan and prepare to teach. The introductory chapters provide foundational information relevant to the teaching of social studies to students in a Christian school. But the majority of the pages in this volume focus on social studies standards and performance expectations together with ideas and activities for integrating them with various aspects of the Christian faith. This volume does not provide a curriculum plan or lesson plan for any particular period or day. Instead, it provides a wealth of ideas from which you can choose and a springboard to new ideas you may create. You may use this curriculum guide with any textbook series.

The social studies standards included in this book are informed by the standards developed by the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) (see also Chapter 3) and are provided as a compilation of the social studies standards and performance expectations adopted by the individual states. In order to offer a well-coordinated curriculum design, the social studies objectives for this grade level relate to and connect with the standards provided at other grade levels.

The standards, then, can serve you and your whole faculty in several ways. They can help you

1. plan your teaching in an organized way;
2. coordinate your teaching of a subject with the teaching in other grades in your school;
3. select textbooks and other learning or teaching materials;
4. evaluate your current instruction, materials, and objectives;
5. implement procedures for school accreditation;
6. nurture the Christian faith of your students as you teach social studies.

We assume that teachers will use materials in addition to those included in the guide, but, since many materials do not integrate the Christian faith, we have provided suggestions for specific methods to use as you teach day by day. Everyone has a different teaching style. No one will be able to use all the ideas in this volume. As you think about practices that will work for you and would be helpful in your classroom, consider these possible ways to find and use ideas from this volume:

- Read the entire volume before school starts. Highlight the ideas you think you can use.
- Write ideas in your textbooks. List the page numbers from this volume that contain suggestions you would like to use in connection with a lesson or unit.
- Throughout the year, designate periods of time, perhaps at faculty meetings, to discuss portions of this volume as you seek to improve your integration of the faith in social studies. Brainstorm, develop, and implement your ideas. Then follow up with other meetings to share your successes and challenges. Together, find ways to effectively use the suggestions in this volume.
- Plan ways to adapt ideas not closely related to specific lessons or units in your secular text-

books. Inside your plan book clip a paper with a list of suggestions from the volume that you would like to use. Or list each idea on a file card and keep the cards handy for quick review. Use those ideas between units or when extra time is available.

- Evaluate each suggestion after you have tried it. Label it as “use again” or “need to revise.” Always adapt the suggestions to fit your situation.
- Think about integrating the faith each time you plan a lesson. Set a goal for yourself (e.g., two ideas from this volume each week), and pray that God will help you to achieve it. You will find the index at the back of this volume especially helpful in finding faith-connecting activities relevant to specific topics.
- If the ideas in the Concordia Curriculum Guide series seem overwhelming, begin by concentrating on only one subject per month. Or attempt to use the suggested ideas in only two to four subjects the first year. Add two to four subjects per year after that.

Probably the most effective teaching occurs when teachers take advantage of natural opportunities that arise to integrate the faith into their teaching. In those situations, you will often use your own ideas instead of preparing a lesson plan based on teaching suggestions in this guide. Use the white space on the pages of this book to record your own ideas and activities for integrating the Christian faith. We hope this volume will be an incentive to you to create your own effective ways to integrate the Christian faith into the entire school day.

We believe that Christian schools are essential because we believe that our relationship with Jesus Christ permeates every part of our lives. That is why our Christian faith permeates our teaching. That is why we teach in a Christian school.

CHAPTER 1

A Journey: Developing Citizens through Social Studies

By

James B. Kracht

James B. Kracht, author of various social studies curriculum texts and materials in current use and advisor and board member for numerous organizations and agencies, attended Zion Lutheran School in New Palestine, Indiana, is a graduate of Concordia University, River Forest, Illinois, and began his long and productive teaching career in Lutheran schools. Dr. Kracht is a Fellow of the Grosvenor Center for Geographic Education and is a recipient of the Extraordinary Service Award from Texas A&M University and the Distinguished Service Award from the Texas Council for the Social Studies. Dr. Kracht was named director of the writing team for the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Social Studies in 1995, and in 1996 became Director of the Social Studies Center for Educator Development. He is currently Associate Dean for Academic Programs in the College of Education and Human Development at Texas A&M University, where he has been on the faculty since 1974. He also serves as a codirector of a national demonstration project for interdisciplinary curriculum development at the middle grades and as a consultant for the development of national social studies standards in the United Arab Emirates and Syria.

Our Destination

It was a family tradition. On summer Sunday afternoons we would pile into our 1948 Chevy. The first question out of my mouth would be, “Where are we going?” and my dad’s answer was always the same, “We’re going to take a little ride.” “But where?” I would ask. The answer was repeated Sunday after Sunday, “Somewhere.” “Well, how will we know how to get there?” I would insist, knowing I was pressing my luck. “We will just follow our noses,” my mom would laugh. At that point I knew I would never get an answer that would satisfy me, so I would busy myself listening to my parents’ conversation, looking out the back window, and watching the dust trail as our car bumped down the gravel roads. Sometimes those drives would last thirty minutes and sometimes three hours. Frequently we would reach an intersection and disagree on whether to go straight ahead or turn left or right. I was always amazed at the number of new routes we could take and still not know the destination.

While I enjoyed those rides and even continued the tradition with my own children on occasions,

most of the journeys I have pursued in life have had a strong sense of destination. Whether travel, education, career, home project, or office task, I approach tasks with a destination or end result in mind. I will admit that sometimes I have chosen the wrong destination and often there have been wrong turns, delays, and detours along the way, but the idea of a destination is comforting. Destinations bring a sense of accomplishment. Destinations are the result of thoughtful decisions. The journey to the destination requires planning and hard work. Wrong turns and detours demand evaluation and correction, while arrival brings a sense of success. In my view, the journey toward citizenship incorporates both the spirit of the Sunday afternoon ride and a planned journey toward a destination. While citizenship is our destination, social studies is the route we take to reach that objective.

Growing new citizens is vital to the continuation of our republican form of government and the democratic ideals embedded in the U.S. Constitution. It is a destination that demands

CHAPTER 2

Teaching and Learning Social Studies from a Christian Perspective

Social studies explores the world God made, including the universe and especially our planet, Earth, and the plants, animals, and people found in its various habitats. In the great diversity of life, we see the marvelous hand of our awesome God, who in His great love sustains and upholds our world even as He has sent His only Son to pay for the sins of all people.

Social studies and all other subjects can be taught and learned through the following overall goals, which have been the hallmark of the Christian education material prepared by Concordia Publishing House through the years. These materials aim to assist teachers and leaders so that

- through the Word of God and the work of the Holy Spirit, people of all ages may know God, especially His seeking and forgiving love in Christ, and may respond in faith and grow up into Christian maturity;
- seeing themselves as the reconciled, redeemed children of God and individual members of Christ's body, the Church, they may live happily in peace with God, themselves, and their fellow human beings;
- they may be encouraged to express their joy in worship of God and in loving service to others;
- by the grace of God they may value all of God's creative work in His world and Church and witness openly to Christ as the Savior of all people, participating actively in God's mission to the Church and the world;
- they may joyfully live in the Christian hope of new life in Christ now and in eternity.

Social Studies and God

Our loving and almighty God cares for us. He loves and desires to save all people. Any course of instruction about our world and human history

that ignores the Creator and Preserver of all things is incomplete.

For the children of God, learning Social Studies involves a developing knowledge and understanding of the following:

- God
- Ourselves
- Other Christians
- Nonbelievers
- All creation

God's Word teaches these truths:

- God created the holy angels, the universe, our planet, and all things in six days (Genesis 1).
- He created our first parents, Adam and Eve, and through them all people.
- Yielding to the temptation to abandon God's will, Adam and Eve sinned. All of creation suffered sin's devastating consequences.
- Although God made people in His image, that image was lost to our first parents and to all who would come after them through the fall into sin (Genesis 5:3).
- Strife between God and fallen humanity, among people, between people and animals, among animals, and between people and their environment continues as a result of sin (Genesis 3).
- God sent His only Son to live, die, and rise again in order to pay for the sins of all people (2 Corinthians 5:15). Jesus is the Son of God and also true man. Salvation can be found only in Him (Acts 4:12).
- As God who created all things, Jesus exerts control over the forces of nature. For example, He stilled the storm (Luke 8:22–25), and He reversed the natural decaying process when He raised Lazarus from the dead (John 11:38–44).

CHAPTER 3

Using the Ten Strands of Social Studies in Christian Education

The National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) has approved ten strands for social studies education. These ten strands provide a helpful organizing framework for the social studies standards as they are developed and implemented in our nation's schools.

1. Culture
2. Time, Continuity, and Change
3. People, Places, and Environments
4. Individual Development and Identity
5. Individuals, Groups, and Institutions
6. Power, Authority, and Governance
7. Production, Distribution, and Consumption
8. Science, Technology, and Society
9. Global Connections
10. Civic Ideals and Practices

The NCSS has given permission for the standards and performance expectations charts for students in early grades (k–3), middle grades (4–8), and high school (9–12) to be adapted to incorporate elements of the Christian faith. The adapted standards and expectations charts for each of the strands follow.

CHAPTER 4

Social Studies Curriculum Standards for Students in Grade 1

This chapter includes social studies standards that have been compiled from the individual state departments of education. They are organized, grade by grade, into the following five areas:

1. Geography 
2. History 
3. Society and Culture 
4. Citizenship and Government 
5. Economics 

The standards have been systematized according to the following numerical designations to indicate grade level, area, category, and performance objective:

The first digit indicates the grade level (e.g., the first *1* in *1.5.1.8* designates that the performance expectation is for grade 1).

The second digit indicates the area of social studies (as listed above) addressed by the standard (e.g., the *5* in *1.5.1.8* designates the standard as an economic area since *5* is the number for economics).

The third digit identifies a category within the area. These categories are the same at every grade level (e.g., the second *1* in *1.5.1.8* relates to the category *Economic systems, institutions, and incentives affect people in many aspects of life*, which is the first category of economics at every grade level).

The fourth digit indicates the number of the specific performance expectation. These expectations will vary from level to level (e.g., the *8* in *1.5.1.8*, as found in the economics area of the grade 1 standards relating to the category *Economic systems, institutions, and incentives affect people in many aspects of life*, refers to the eighth item in that category).

Chapter 5 provides faith-integration activities organized by category. These activities provide many opportunities to teach aspects of the Christian faith in conjunction with each area of the social studies curriculum. Each activity is keyed to a specific performance expectation.

A complete list of social studies standards performance expectations for this grade level is provided on the remaining pages of this chapter.

GEOGRAPHY



- 1.1 First-grade students will have the opportunity to learn geographic skills, to develop their knowledge of the Earth, and to grow in understanding and appreciation of their responsibilities as stewards of all the Earth's resources.**
- 1.1.1 Skill in using geographic tools helps people understand the world from a spatial perspective.**
 - 1.1.1.1 Observe and record daily weather.
 - 1.1.1.2 Use terms such as *far*, *near*, *away from*, *next to*, and *towards* to describe relative location.
 - 1.1.1.3 Use words that describe time; arrange units of time in order from shortest to longest.
 - 1.1.1.4 Describe the relationship of self and objects to a particular object; distinguish between natural and human characteristics of places.
 - 1.1.1.5 Identify and use the four cardinal directions (north, south, east, west).
 - 1.1.1.6 Define and explain boundaries.
 - 1.1.1.7 Position objects or structures on a simple map.
 - 1.1.1.8 Create a map using symbols and a map key.
 - 1.1.1.9 Understand the basic orientation of maps and globes.
 - 1.1.1.10 Identify land and water areas on a map and a globe; locate the students' home states on a map and a globe.
 - 1.1.1.11 Describe characteristics of large geographic areas (e.g., desert, forest, arctic areas).
 - 1.1.1.12 Name and locate the seven continents, major oceans, and North and South Poles.
 - 1.1.1.13 Brainstorm sources of information in order to answer a question.
 - 1.1.1.14 Use oral, visual, and written sources for geographic information.
 - 1.1.1.15 Prepare an oral or written presentation using pictures, maps, timelines, and graphs.
 - 1.1.1.16 Illustrate a story by creating map legends and a map.
 - 1.1.1.17 Use longitude and latitude to locate a place on the globe; understand how latitude is related to climate.
- 1.1.2 The physical characteristics of places and regions influence where and how people live and work (Physical and Human Systems).**
 - 1.1.2.1 Locate their community, state, and country on a map; relate these locations to geographic features.
 - 1.1.2.2 Describe a location's landforms, bodies of water, natural resources, and weather and how these influence human activity.
 - 1.1.2.3 Give examples of physical processes that affect the land and climate; read and discuss an example of a myth used to explain a geographic feature.
 - 1.1.2.4 Describe the types of housing and ways of making a living typical of a region or area.
 - 1.1.2.5 Identify and map types of transportation and communication in their community; tell how these link your community to other communities.
 - 1.1.2.6 Tell about the physical and cultural aspects of life in their area before the arrival of Europeans.

CHAPTER 5

Information and Activities for Integrating the Faith as Keyed to Grade 1 Standards

The social studies standards included in this chapter have been compiled from the individual state departments of education and organized, grade by grade, into the following five areas:

1. Geography 
2. History 
3. Society and Culture 
4. Citizenship and Government 
5. Economics 

The standards have been systematized according to the following numerical designations to indicate grade level, area, category, and performance objective as described on the first page of chapter 4.

Performance expectations are numbered sequentially (e.g., the 8 in 1.5.1.8 is found in the grade 1 area, relating to the category *Economic systems, institutions, and incentives affect people in many aspects of life* and is the eighth item in that category.) A complete list of social studies standards performance expectations for this grade level is provided in chapter 4.

On the pages of chapter 5, you will find an easy-to-reference two-column format for faith integration with the social studies standards. The left-hand column under the heading “Information by Topic” provides helpful teaching background information and insights relevant for integrating some aspect of the Christian faith. The number following the topic identifies the performance expectation to which the topic relates (see chapter 4). Beside each entry, in the right-hand column under the heading “Discussion Points/Activities,” you will find ideas helpful for planning and organizing student learning experiences that reinforce and expand upon these faith connections.

Be sure to consult the index at the end of this volume for a complete listing of topics and where they may be found.



- 1.1 First-grade students will have the opportunity to learn geographic skills, to develop their knowledge of the Earth, and to grow in understanding and appreciation of their responsibilities as stewards of all the Earth's resources.**
- 1.1.1 Skill in using geographic tools helps people understand the world from a spatial perspective.**

Daily Weather

When recording the day's weather on the classroom calendar, discuss how we each can be blessed by this weather. This activity can be done at the start of the school day and reviewed at the end of the day to note any changes. Emphasize that God is blessing us in all these times and situations. (1.1.1.1)

- Draw pictures of the various types of weather experienced in your area and combine the pictures into a class book. In your pictures show blessings connected with each type of weather (e.g., snowy days are good for making snowmen, for sledding, for making snow angels, for building structures out of snow). Thank God for the blessings He provides through each kind of weather. Laminate the book to put in the classroom library.
- Review the Bible story or read the Arch® Book *Jesus Stills the Storm*. Emphasize Jesus' protection for us in all weather.
- Tie in weather to the story of Noah and the ark. Make art pictures of the ark and glue on animal crackers. Discuss God's protection for us in storms today.

Relative Location (Terms Such as *Far, Near, Away From, Next To*)

Discuss the creation of the world by God. Use a globe or map and mark with sticky notes or colored dots where your class is located in the U.S. Compare the class location to other locations they know (e.g., Disney World, Statue of Liberty, grandparents' state), stating relative location as *near* or *far*. Stress that God is everywhere. Read Jeremiah 23:24. (1.1.1.2)

- Sing the piggyback song entitled "God Is Near Me" (*Little Ones Sing Praise*, p. 107).
- Make a map on poster or mural paper of the location where your school has chapel. Label where each grade sits. Compare near, far, and next to in relation to where other classes are. Answer the question, "Where is God?"
- Retell in your own words the Bible story of the children of Israel traveling away from Egypt. Tell what God did for them as they traveled toward the Promised Land. Identify places you have been that are far from your home. Remember that Jesus is with you no matter where you are.

**Time**

Read the creation story from the Bible or use the Arch® Books entitled *The World God Made* or *Adam's Story*. Talk about what happened in each day of creation. Note that days and mornings and evenings are names for time designations that God mentions in His Word (Genesis 1). Bring out how God wants us to use our time in ways that honor Him.

Make a list of the times indicated below. Brainstorm activities that can be done in that amount of time and record responses. Examples are included in parentheses.

- In a second we can . . . (blink)
- In a minute we can . . . (pray)
- In an hour we can . . . (go to church)
- In a day we have . . . (sunrise to sunset)
- In a year we have . . . (another birthday or Baptism birthday) (1.1.1.3)

- List activities in your day and discuss how God is involved in all that you do. Take a paper plate and draw lines to divide the plate into wedge shapes of varying sizes. Draw pictures inside the shapes to illustrate your activities each day. Talk about how God helps you do the things you do (e.g., gives you strength to play, provides you with parents and teachers and friends, gives you a home and bed to sleep in).
- Put masking tape on the floor to indicate start and finish lines. Use a stopwatch to time how long it takes you to hop, skip, or crawl from start to finish. Record the activity times on index cards. Arrange the activity times in order from least to greatest amount of time. Identify other ways to move and time them too. Remember that God gives you the gifts of time, your body, and the ability to move.

Relationships and Characteristics

Take pictures with a camera (digital, regular, disposable, or Polaroid) of religious objects found around your school and church. Develop the pictures, put them on cards, and laminate. Have a student pick a picture and describe the location of the object in relation to the other things found around it so others can guess the object. Talk about the natural, human, and spiritual characteristics related to the objects and sort them by traits. (1.1.1.4)

- Use descriptive and location words to give clues about an object in the room so classmates can guess what and where it is. Note that God made all things and gives humans the knowledge to make new things.

Cardinal Directions (North, South, East, and West)

On 8 x 11 blue sheets of paper print N, S, E, W and draw large grid lines. Have students pick an object (e.g., penny, eraser) to use as a marker on their paper. Have students take turns rolling a pair of number cubes to give directions to the class where to move their markers (for example, move two squares north and three squares west). Remind students that our great and loving God and Savior is everywhere. Wherever we go, God is also there. See Psalm 139:7.

- Have a treasure hunt with a friend. Hide a pocket cross somewhere in the classroom or school. Write clues using the letters N, S, E, and W. Read your clues and have your classmate follow the directions. Emphasize when the cross is found that Jesus is our greatest treasure. Carry the pocket cross with you wherever you go.
- Spread your hands to indicate how far the east is from the west. That is how far Jesus has taken our sins from us. See Psalm 103:12.



INFORMATION BY TOPIC

DISCUSSION POINTS/ACTIVITIES

Read the story of the Wise Men (Magi) traveling from a far part of the world, led by a star, to see Jesus. Show on a map where Jesus was born and approximately from where the Wise Men were traveling. Give descriptions in terms of north, south, east, and west. Discuss how even today we can use a star, the North Star, to find direction. Can you find this star's place in the sky at night? Remember that the Lord is always our guide no matter where we travel. He is the Creator of the universe, of every star and solar system. (1.1.1.5)

Boundaries

Read about the battle of Jericho in the Arch® Book entitled *The Walls Came Tumbling Down* or the story of the lost sheep in *Jon and The Lost Sheep*. Have students act out the story. Discuss boundaries and why walls and/or fences provide important protection for the people or animals inside the boundaries.

Use a map of the Holy Land to show places where the children of Israel settled. Show boundaries of areas designated for the various tribes. Check a Bible atlas. Compare this to the land at the time when Jesus was born when there were three main areas—Judea, Samaria, and Galilee. (1.1.1.6)

- Build a sheep pen with blocks. Discuss why a pen was necessary in the care of the sheep. Discuss boundaries at home and other familiar places (e.g., fencing in a backyard, a school playground) and why they are important. Review the story of Jesus the Good Shepherd. “I am the door,” Jesus says (John 10:9). “If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved.” Jesus is the gate, the opening, the way through which His followers are gathered together and enter heaven.
- Look at a map of the state in which your school is located. Outline its boundaries and talk about what is near its boundaries. Remember boundaries mark off areas to show who owns what. God is not contained by boundaries. He is always with us.

Map (Position of Objects on a)

Work with the class to create a simple map of your classroom. Show your desk, student desks, class altar, and other familiar objects by placing blocks or drawing pictures to represent them. Talk about how symbols represent things. Talk about symbols that represent Jesus and His work to save us (e.g., manger, cross, shepherd's staff, open tomb). (1.1.1.7)

- Make a simple map of your church sanctuary. Draw pictures to show the baptismal font, the pulpit, and the altar. Talk about how God's Word is received through Baptism, the Lord's Supper, and as it is heard in the pastor's sermon.
- Make a simple map on which you show the position of your home, church, and other places that are important to you (e.g., parks, grocery store, library). Talk about all the good things God gives you. Remember, we ask God to continue to give us these good things when we pray “Give us this day our daily bread” in the Lord's Prayer.



INFORMATION BY TOPIC

DISCUSSION POINTS/ACTIVITIES

year by printing the first letter of each month's name in the appropriate section (J, F, M, and so on). Decorate your calendar with a border designed to help you remember that our times are in God's hands. Use clear adhesive tape to attach the calendar to the top of your desk.

Calendars and Timelines

At the end of each month discuss major events that have occurred in the school, church, and community. Have students select one event from this class-generated list and draw a picture of the event. Put each month's page into an ongoing book of months. Review events that have occurred over the months and discuss how God was with you and blessed you.

Acknowledge each student's birthday and Baptism birthday throughout the school year with a card or small gift that celebrates God's care and blessing. Graph the number of these celebrations by month as a review of the year. (1.2.2.3)

- Make a penny book. Find a penny for the year you were born and for each year since then. In your penny book, glue or tape each penny to a page and write a sentence or draw a picture of something important that happened to you, your family, or to God's world that year. Thank God for watching over you through the years.
- As a family project make a timeline using a photograph from each of your birthdays. If photos are not available have your parents help you draw a simple picture of a significant blessing from each year. Be sure that the date of your Baptism is included on the timeline. Use this timeline of blessings for show-and-tell.

Events (Related)

Make a monthly time capsule for your classroom. Include objects from school activities and also objects from community events. Get an empty potato chip can (which is about three inches in diameter) in which to put the objects. Seal and decorate the can. Open it the next year when the new first grade makes their can. Compare activities from year to year with the class. Do a comparison of what happened in God's world from year to year in God's Church and school with God's children. (1.2.2.4)

- Draw simple pictures of major events from the life and ministry of Jesus (birth, visit by Magi, Last Supper, crucifixion, resurrection, ascension). As you practice placing these in chronological order, talk about the relationship between these events.
- Explain the relationship between the beginning of your life (your birth date) and the beginning of your new life in Baptism. Create a poster displaying the dates of both of these events.

Facts

Explain that facts are statements of truth, while opinions tell your feelings about something. Hold up an item like an apple and point out that the fact is that an apple is an apple. But opinions or feelings about apples can change from one person to the next. One person might feel that apples taste good, and another person might have the opinion

- Identify the following statements as either fact or opinion.
 1. Jesus was born in Bethlehem. (fact)
 2. The altar at church should have flowers on it each Sunday. (opinion)
 3. Christmas songs are more fun to sing than Easter songs. (opinion)



INFORMATION BY TOPIC

that apples are too sour. The opinion about the apple is not right or wrong—it just tells how one person feels about the apple.

Read sections of Scripture that discuss truth. John 8:31–32, for example, records Jesus' words, "If you abide in My word, you are truly My disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." John 17:17b, referring to God, says, "Your word is truth."

Point out that there are many people in the world who do not know the truth about Jesus Christ as true God and our Savior from sin. The Bible gives us the facts, the truth, about all that God has done for us, and it is very important that we spread God's Word to all nations, as Jesus has commanded us. (1.2.2.5)

DISCUSSION POINTS/ACTIVITIES

4. Jesus died on the cross for us and came alive again on the third day. (fact)

- Look at statement 3. It is okay if one person likes Christmas songs best and another person likes Easter songs best. These are opinions. But then look at statement 4. This is a statement of fact. To believe otherwise would be a lie. And even more significant, that lie has eternal consequences, because we are saved only by God's grace through faith in the redeeming death and resurrection of Christ Jesus.

Facts and Opinions (Differing between)

It is not helpful to argue about opinions because they are not facts, and different individuals are likely to have different opinions about the same thing. Look at a picture of a famous painting from an encyclopedia. First, list the facts that can be identified about it (e.g., it is a copy of a painting, it has/hasn't pictures of people on it, it does/doesn't use many colors). Then list possible opinions, noting that some people might like one thing about it and others may like something else about it and others may not like it at all. These are just opinions, and they do not change the fact that it is a picture of a famous painting.

When sharing opinions, be careful not to hurt someone and if someone hurts your feelings with an opinion, forgive them. Ephesians 4:32 says, "Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you." Practice giving compliments to classmates. Let each child write his/her name at the top of a page of paper, then have the children pass their paper to the child next to them. Each person should write a compliment (a kind opinion) on the line just under the name on that paper. Pass the papers to the next child who also writes a compliment. Continue in this manner for several passes or until every child has a compliment from each classmate. (1.2.2.6)

- Play a game in which you start with facts and form opinions about the facts. For example, a fact might be that the wall is white, but it would be an opinion to say the white wall is pretty (or ugly). Talk about how we sometimes might hurt others with our opinions. Pray together for God's continuing forgiveness of such sins, and consider the importance of asking forgiveness from the person you hurt. Practice stating both fact and opinions that encourage others as children of God.