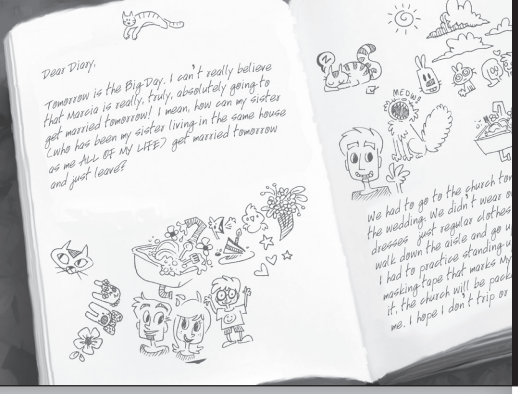


12

Dear Diary

Worship

We worship God as Lord of our lives.

POWER TEXT

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

KEY REFERENCES

- 2 Corinthians 5:17
- Colossians 2:6, 7
- James 2:14-17
- *Steps to Christ*, chap. 7, pp. 57-65
- *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 10, pp. 176-179; 196-200
- Student lesson on page 132 of this guide

OUR BELIEFS

- No. 23, Marriage and the Family
- No. 22, Christian Behavior
- No. 10, The Experience of Salvation

OBJECTIVES

The students will:

- **Know** that their worship is an expression of their faith commitment to Jesus.
- **Feel** the desire to make or renew their commitment to Jesus.
- **Respond** by learning to and committing to act on their faith.



Jesus transforms our lives when we commit our hearts to Him.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

Paul tells us that once we make a commitment to follow Jesus, we become a new creature. The old habits and way of life change into something beautiful. We become like Jesus. We live out our faith daily by our actions and thoughts, and that may mean sacrifice sometimes. In order to do this, we must depend on Jesus.

This is a lesson about worship.

We hear that we need a "relationship" with Jesus. But being a Christian involves more than a relationship. Even Satan has a relationship with God—he hates Him. We need to move beyond that and make a commitment. Once we do that we can produce beautiful acts of love.

Teacher Enrichment

"While we cannot do anything to change our hearts or to bring ourselves into harmony with God; while we must not trust at all to ourselves or our good works, our lives will reveal whether the grace of God is dwelling within us. A change will be seen in the character, the habits, the pursuits. The contrast will be clear and decided between what they have been and what they are. The character is revealed, not by occasional good deeds and occasional misdeeds, but by the tendency of the habitual words and acts" (*Steps to Christ*, p. 57).

What evidence is there that I have made a total commitment to Jesus? How has that commitment changed my life?

Welcome

Welcome students at the door and direct them to their seats. Ask them how their week has been. Encourage learners to study their Sabbath School lesson regularly, and use several minutes to debrief students on the previous week's lesson. Ask: **What was the most interesting part of the Bible story? What activity did you find the most helpful? Which activity was the most fun?** Invite students to share their experiences and/or the handiworks they created for Sabbath School during the week. (The leader should be familiar with the previous lesson to be able to direct the discussion.) This is also a good time to have students recite the power text.

Have students begin the Readiness Activity of your choice.

Program notes

LESSON SECTION	MINUTES	ACTIVITIES	MATERIALS NEEDED
Welcome	Ongoing	Greet students at the door. Ask about their week.	
1 Readiness	10-15	A. A New Creation	Bibles, modeling clay
		B. A Change for the Better	Bibles, newspapers (or preselected newspaper stories), paper, pencils
		C. The Perfect Wedding	Bibles, paper, pencils, colored markers, colored paper, glue
* Prayer & Praise	15-20	See page 127. Prayer & Praise may be used at any time during the program.	songbooks, world map, pushpins, (optional) box covered with wedding wrapping paper
2 Bible Lesson	15-20	Introducing the Bible Story	Bibles; old-looking stained shirt; clean, white shirt; adult volunteer
		Experiencing the Story	Bibles, guest couple (alternative: Bibles, paper, pencils, colored markers)
		Exploring the Bible	Bibles
3 Applying the Lesson	10-15	*Scenario*	
4 Sharing the Lesson	10-15	*Vows*	Bibles, copy of marriage vows, paper, pencils
* Closing		A. Prayer and closing comments	
		B. Reminder to parents	
		C. Coming up next week	

1

READINESS ACTIVITIES

Select the activity or activities that are most appropriate for your situation.

A

YOU NEED:
- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ modeling clay

A New Creation

Give each student a lump of modeling clay and ask them to create "something new." Encourage their active imaginations.

Debriefing

Ask: **What did you make?** Give time for sharing. **Today we'll be learning about how we become "new creations" when we make a commitment to Jesus. Let's say together the power text, 2 Corinthians 5:17:**

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

We are learning that

Jesus transforms our lives when we commit our hearts to Him.

B

YOU NEED:
- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ newspaper OR pre-selected newspaper stories
- ☐ paper
- ☐ pencils

A Change for the Better

Find a story in the newspaper/a story book about someone who did something that was un-Christlike. Have students rewrite the story as if that person had done the opposite and was acting Christlike (i.e., instead of a bank being robbed, someone brings lost money back to the bank).

Debriefing

Say: **Let's hear some good deeds being done. Read to us your version.** Give time for sharing. **Today we'll be learning about how Jesus changes our lives after we make a commitment to Him. Let's say together the power text, 2 Corinthians 5:17:**

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

We are learning that

Jesus transforms our lives when we commit our hearts to Him.

Accommodations for students with special needs

Allow students with special needs who experience difficulty with this activity to work with a partner who could assist them.

C

YOU NEED:
- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ paper
- ☐ pencils
- ☐ colored markers
- ☐ colored paper
- ☐ glue

The Perfect Wedding

Say: **Have you ever thought about what you want your wedding to be like? With the materials provided, create a picture of your perfect wedding.**

Debriefing

Ask: **Who would like to share the picture you created?** Give time for sharing. Say: **Weddings involve making a commitment. How might your life change after you make a commitment to marry someone? Today we'll be learning about how Jesus changes our lives after we make a commitment to Him. Let's say together the power text, 2 Corinthians 5:17:**

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Remember:

Jesus transforms our lives when we commit our hearts to Him.

Prayer & Praise

Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). If they have given you permission, share one or two special items from students' Bible study during the week. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special, warm greeting to all visitors.

Suggested Songs

"As for Me" (*He Is Our Song*, no. 144)
"Yes, Lord" (*He Is Our Song*, no. 145)
"I Have Decided to Follow Jesus" (*He Is Our Song*, no. 146)

Mission

Use Adventist *Mission* for youth and adult (go to www.juniorpowerpoints.org and click on MISSION) or another mission report available to you. Using a world map, have the students identify and mark with pushpins the location where the mission story is taking place.

YOU NEED:
- ☐ world map
- ☐ pushpins

Offering

Say: **We give our offerings to help others make a commitment to Christ and become "new creatures." We need to pray for people who have no knowledge of God.**

YOU NEED:
- ☐ (optional) box covered with wedding wrapping paper

Prayer

Tell the students that you are going to pray a "popcorn" prayer. This is done by beginning the prayer with one or a few words about something that is on your heart or something that you are thankful for. In random order students can add their word or words. Close, when it seems appropriate, by praying for the students' joys and sorrows, for the birthday and other special event celebrants, as well as for the visitors.

2

BIBLE LESSON

YOU NEED:
- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ adult volunteer
- ☐ old-looking stained shirt
- ☐ clean, white shirt

Introducing the Bible Story

Ask an adult volunteer to help illustrate the conversion experience. Have the person enter the room wearing an old-looking stained shirt on top of his or her regular clothes.

Say: **Picture that this is how your life looks before you make a commitment to follow Jesus.**

Ask the volunteer wearing the dirty shirt to step closer so that you could help remove it. Then help him/her to put on a clean, preferably white shirt. Ask: **How is this like your life after you make a commitment to Jesus? Can we remove sins and mistakes from our past? How does our commitment to Jesus help us start a new life with Him? Let's repeat our power text together, 2 Corinthians 5:17:**

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

YOU NEED:
- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ guest couple

Experiencing the Story

Have the students take turns reading aloud from 2 Corinthians 5:17; Colossians 2:6, 7; and James 2:14-17.

Ask a young married couple to come talk to the students. Beforehand, ask them to read the lesson story "Dear Diary" so they understand the points that the lesson is trying to make.

Say: **Making a commitment to God is something like making a commitment to a spouse. We've invited _____ to come in and talk to us about their marriage commitments.** Ask them specifically about their wedding vows, what sacrifices they've had to make in their marriage, what it feels like to make a commitment to someone for life, how they show their spouse they mean what they say, and how they keep their marriage vows renewed. Allow time for questions the students may have.

YOU NEED:
- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ paper
- ☐ pencils
- ☐ colored markers

Alternative

Ask student volunteers to read aloud 2 Corinthians 5:17; Colossians 2:6, 7; and James 2:14-17.

Say: **Imagine a completely new form of tree—a "new creation."** Give the students paper and art supplies to create a picture of a new type of tree. Ask them to make sure to draw roots for their tree that will be sufficient to maintain it. Afterward, let students share what they drew and explain how deep their roots needed to go. Ask: **Why are roots necessary for a tree?** (They give it nourishment; they keep it from falling.) **Why do we need roots in Jesus? How can we continue to "grow roots" in Jesus? ("abide in Him"; in other words, spend time reading His word and talking to Him through prayer.)**

Ask a volunteer to read James 2:14-17. Ask: **What should our response be to the nourishment we get from good roots—Jesus' grace in our lives?** (overflowing thankfulness and good deeds) Say: **Add the "fruit" of thankfulness and good deeds to your tree picture.**

Have students share and explain.

We are learning that

Jesus transforms our lives when we commit our hearts to Him.

3

APPLYING THE LESSON

YOU NEED:

□ Bibles

Exploring the Bible

Divide the class into three groups, each taking a Bible text. Say: **Let's take a look at some people in the Bible who lived their lives differently after they made a commitment to Jesus**.

1. Acts 9:1-22 (Paul)
2. John 18:15-18, 25-27; 21:15-17 (Peter)
3. Acts 16:22-34 (jailer)

Ask: **Do you need a "big" conversion experience like Paul to have Jesus make a difference in your life? What if you've grown up in the church? When did you make your commitment to Jesus? How did it change your life?** Explain to the students that any commitment needs to be renewed, or made over, regularly. If your guest couple is still visiting, you might continue the discussion with them about renewing their commitment on a regular basis.

Let's say together the power text, 2 Corinthians 5:17:

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Remember:

Jesus transforms our lives when we commit our hearts to Him.

Scenario

Read the following scenario to the students:

Sten has grown up in the church. He was baptized a few years ago and was sincere in his decision to follow Jesus. He would still say he's committed to Jesus, if you ask him. He goes to church every week. He is involved with a homeless shelter project. But some things in his life don't seem to match up. He doesn't see much wrong with cheating on a test now and then, especially when it's something like history dates that he doesn't see a need for knowing. He doesn't pay tithe on his lawn-mowing earnings, figuring he'll start paying tithe when he's an adult. He doesn't see anything wrong with listening to rock music with bad language. But lately Sten is becoming aware that something isn't right in his life. He comes to you, his friend, and tells you that.

Debriefing

Ask: **What can you say to Sten to help him? (encourage him to spend time with Jesus.) How is and isn't Sten living out his commitment to Jesus? (he doesn't appear to be growing in his understanding of Jesus and how we are to live like He did; see Philippians 4:8.) What does this tell us about making a daily commitment to Jesus? (it is VERY important.) Why is that necessary? If you were Sten, how would you go about living out your commitment?**

Jesus transforms our lives when we commit our hearts to Him.

4

SHARING THE LESSON

YOU NEED:
- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ marriage vows
- ☐ paper
- ☐ pencils

Vows

Ask students to report if they made a commitment to give their lives to Jesus. Ask: **When did you make a commitment to give your hearts to Jesus? What helped you make that decision? What do you do to maintain your relationship with Jesus daily? How can you renew your commitment to God?**

Say: **Our lesson this week compares giving our lives to Jesus to a woman and man giving their lives to each other in marriage. It talks about how you live life differently when you sacrifice to make the other person happy. It talks about defending and honoring that person. People make a vow at their wedding to love and be true to the person they are marrying.** Read a copy of the standard wedding vows to your students (or ask a student to read them).

Say: **I would like you to write out your "vows" to Jesus.**

Debriefing

Ask: **Who would like to share their "vows" with the group?** Give time for sharing. Say: **How are wedding vows the same and different than a vow you would make to God? How does God think of His church?** (Ask someone to read aloud Isaiah 62:5.) **What is there you may need to change in your life to make a total commitment to Him?**

Say: **Let's remember our power point:**

Jesus transforms our lives when we commit our hearts to Him.

Closing

Prayer and closing comments:

Say: **Dear Jesus, some of us have already made a commitment to You. Some of us want to do that now. We all need to be committed to You daily so that we can live our lives for You. We want to be changed. Thank You for transforming our lives. Amen.**

Reminder to parents:

Say: **Check out the student Bible study guide to find Parents' Pages for your use in family worship, or however you wish to use them to spiritually guide your children. You may listen to the podcast of the lesson online at www.juniorpowerpoints.org/podcast.php?channel=1.**

Coming up next week:

Say: **Jesus is coming soon! We show our love for God by sharing Jesus with others and preparing for His return.**

Notes

Student lesson

Dear Diary

Being part of a wedding is fun. The wedding ceremony and reception are great, but what does it take to lead up to that wedding? Ever wonder what it takes to make a lifelong commitment to love someone? What are the blessings that come from making a lifelong commitment to Jesus?

Dear Diary,

Tomorrow is the Big Day. I can't really believe that Marcia is really, truly, absolutely going to get married tomorrow! I mean, how can my sister (who has been my sister living in the same house as me ALL OF MY LIFE) get married tomorrow and just leave?

We had to go to the church tonight and practice for the wedding. We didn't wear our beautiful new dresses—just regular clothes. It felt funny to walk down the aisle and go up on the platform. I had to practice standing up there on a piece of masking tape that marks My Spot. Tomorrow when I do it, the church will be packed full of people looking at me. I hope I don't trip or do something awful!

I like Dom. Except that he's stealing my sister. Well, Marcia says he's not stealing her. She WANTS to go away and be his wife. We had a long talk about it. We rode our bikes to the park and lay on a blanket under a tree and talked.

Marcia told me she thinks getting married is like giving your heart to Jesus. She said that when you get married, everything is different. She said that when you get married, you belong to your husband and he belongs to you. Just like when you love Jesus, you belong to Him, and He belongs to you.

Marcia said when you get married, you do stuff that your husband or wife likes because you want to make them happy. Like learning to cook their favorite food. And listening to their favorite music. And even doing the laundry and dishes and other stuff that might not be fun. Dom even opens the car door for Marcia to get in even though she is perfectly able to do it all by herself. Marcia likes that.

She said it's just like when we do some things because we know that's what Jesus wants us to do. It might be something we really don't WANT to do, but we do it anyway because we want to make Him happy.

And she said Jesus loves to make us happy too. He gives us blessings all the time. Marcia said Dom is a blessing from Jesus.

And when you get married, you get to be on your husband's side all the time. I mean if anybody makes fun of him or something, you get to stand up for him. You say, "Hey! You can't talk about my husband like that!" Just like if somebody makes fun of Jesus, you always stand up for Him. 'Cause you're on His side. I think that's pretty cool! Your husband will always be on your side and stand up for you, too!

Marcia said that when you get married, you can't do everything anymore that you might think you want to do. She said you have to be unselfish because you love your husband. (It's too bad she didn't do THAT when she lived with ME!) I told her that if somebody loved ME like that I would want to be unselfish.

And Marcia said the best part is when you get married, you get to stay for the rest of your life with the person that you love best. She said it's exactly like when you give your heart to Jesus, you know that you will get to live with Him forever and ever. And always, ALWAYS, be happy in heaven.

Good night, Diary.

PS: People have to wait until they're older to decide who they want to marry. I'm sure glad I didn't have to wait that long to give my heart to Jesus! And that's an even more important choice!

KEY REFERENCES

- 2 Corinthians 5:17; Colossians 2:6, 7; James 2:14-17
- *Steps to Christ*, chap. 7, pp. 57-65
- *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 10, pp. 176-179; 196-200
- Our Beliefs nos. 23, 22, 10

POWER TEXT

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

POWER POINT

Jesus transforms our lives when we commit our hearts to Him.







Sabbath

DO Do the activity on page 89.

Sunday

READ Read Colossians 2:6, 7 and this week's story, "Dear Diary."

REVIEW Review the power text, 2 Corinthians 5:17.

WRITE In your Bible study journal, write about when you made your commitment to Jesus. Or if you haven't yet, perhaps you want to take that step today.

PRAY Tell Jesus that you want to renew your commitment to Him (or make a new one).

Monday

READ Read James 2:14.

WRITE In your Bible study journal or diary, write how you have become a "new creation" since you've made a commitment to God.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God to continually make you into the person He wants you to be.

Tuesday

READ Read James 2:15, 16.

WALK Take a walk and notice the size of tree roots protruding from the ground. Imagine how wide and deep the roots are.

THINK How wide and deep do your roots need to be in Jesus? As you spend time in communion with Jesus, tell Him of your need for Him to fill you with His life-giving power.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask Jesus to daily strengthen your commitment to Him.

Wednesday

READ Read James 2:17.

THINK How are you putting action into your faith? What is the evidence to others that you have made a commitment to God?

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God to show you ways to put your faith into action.

Thursday

READ Read Romans 12:1.

WRITE Write down things to which you have committed (i.e., exercising, practicing on a musical instrument, studying, helping at home).

THINK What prevents you from following through with these commitments? How do you feel when you don't? How do you feel when you do? What would your Christian life be like if you didn't make a commitment to God?

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God to make it evident to others that your life is committed to Him.

Friday

READ Read with your parents 1 Corinthians 13.

LOOK Look at your parents' wedding photos.

ASK Ask your parents about their wedding vows. What did they say? Did they write their own? How often do they think about their wedding vows?

SAY Say the power text from memory.

PRAY Ask God to help you make a wise choice of a mate and a lasting commitment to them when you are ready to marry.