

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

MODERN PARABLES FOR CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

CHAPTER ONE: DEAD END SIGN

"There is a way that appears to be right, but in the end it leads to death."
Proverbs 14:12

CHAPTER TWO: YIELD SIGN

"Submit (yield) yourselves to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." James 4:7

CHAPTER THREE: STRAIGHT AHEAD SIGN

"Do not swerve to the right or the left; keep your foot from evil." Proverbs 4:27

CHAPTER FOUR: U-TURN SIGN

"Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out..." Acts 3:19

CHAPTER FIVE: ONE-WAY SIGN

"Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'" John 14:6

CHAPTER SIX: STOP SIGN

"Stop doubting and believe." John 20:27

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Teacher Introduction

In 1980, I visited Guatemala City; it was a relatively modern place, but with one exception, there were barely any street signs or traffic signals to direct drivers! Crossing intersections was terrifying, only the brave got through; it was a lesson in survival of the fittest! It might even surprise you to learn that in the United States it wasn't until the early 1900's that the first sign, a Stop sign, was introduced to the modern world. Today, however, street signs and signals are commonplace.

Jesus taught his followers about the kingdom of Heaven by using everyday objects. And since most children look with anticipation to the day they can drive, what better way to explain the life-saving lessons of God's kingdom, than by using common objects such as street signs? That was my inspiration for writing "Signs of the Times."

Traffic signs show us the *right way to go* and *warn us of what lies ahead*. Is this not what God's Word does for us? This study looks at six street signs to help children understand the "signs" of God's kingdom. It is my hope that these *signs of the times* will keep children on the right road and strengthen their relationship to Jesus Christ in their journey through life!

Each lesson includes a craft, game, memory work, and song-time suggestions (see song titles, below). If you use both the craft and game for each session, it will take six, two-hour sessions to complete this series. However, if you split each lesson into two sessions (recommended), whereby you present the lesson, memory verse, craft and songs in the first session and the game with lesson review, memory recitation, and songs in the next session, it will take twelve, one-hour sessions to complete this series.

At the back of the book, you will find the patterns and templates to accompany the craft and game ideas.

God bless you in your ministry to children!



Sarah A. Keith

Song Time Suggestions

Available with book purchase.

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CHAPTER ONE: DEAD END

Song Time

Choose from one of our Song Time Suggestions listed in the Teacher's Introduction or from theme-related songs of your own choosing.

(Begin lesson time by asking students if they're looking forward to driving a car someday, and then show pictures of various street signs. You can download pictures of signs at SundaySchoolNetwork.com/signs.pdf)

Why are street signs and signals necessary? (Receive answers)

Can you imagine driving on the roadways without street signs or signals? In fact, when cars were first invented, street signs didn't even exist! It was dangerous to drive!

Street signs serve two main purposes, *to warn drivers of possible danger ahead* and to *point them in the right direction*. God's Word is like this too, it warns us of what lies ahead and tells us the right way to go in life.

Over the next several weeks, we will learn about six street signs to help us understand more about God's kingdom. In today's lesson we'll learn about the *Dead End* sign. (Show picture of a Dead End sign.) What do you suppose is the purpose of the Dead End sign? Is it a warning or directional sign?

The Dead End sign warns drivers that a particular street has no exit. A Dead End Street might look like the right way to go, but at the end of it, there's no way out; *it's dead*. Likewise, the Bible tells us that living life apart from God might look like the right way to go, but in the end, it leads to death—eternal death.

God's Word tells us the right way to go. We are guided by the Ten Commandments and hundreds of other commands to keep us on the right road in life. These include love one another; love your enemies; bless them that curse you; and do good to them that hate you. However, when God first created people, he gave Adam and Eve only one commandment. Do you know what it was? Listen closely now to learn what God said.

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(Retell Genesis chapters 2 and 3 in your own words or use the following enrichment idea.)



Enrichment Idea -- Skit: In the Garden

Based on Genesis chapter 2-3.

Cast: Adam, Eve, Serpent, and the Narrator (teacher).

Copy the following skit for your actors. Have them highlight their parts, and then read it one time to the class before they act it out. Videotaping the skit is a fun way to involve your students; and watching it the following week is an effective way to review your lesson. (Rather than having children act out the skit, you might use puppets and narrate it, or allow children to hold the puppets and narrate it for them.)

Narrator: When God created the heavens and the earth, it was a perfect place. God gave Adam and Eve only one commandment: *don't eat the fruit from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil*. They could eat the fruit from any of the other trees, except that one! Let's listen now to see what happened!

Eve: I am so hungry.

Serpent: Are you now? Why don't you go over there and grab sssome fruit off that tree. Look how beautiful it issss!

Eve: Yes, I've had my eyes on that fruit for some time. Eating it seems like a great idea. But the Lord God said we can't eat it or even touch it!

Serpent: Did he really sssay that?

Eve: Yes, he said we'll die if we eat it!

Serpent: (mocking) You're not going to die! God knows if you eat that fruit you'll be like him, able to tell the difference between good and evil. Don't you want to be like God?

Eve: Well, yes, yes I do! (Takes a big bite of the fruit)

The remainder of the skit is available with book purchase.

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Discussion (Receive answers from children)

Available with book purchase.

Memory Verse

"There is a way that appears to be right, but in the end it leads to death."
Proverbs 14:12

(Rather than listen to God, Eve chose a way that seemed right to her. But what happened? It led to the death of all creation!)

Pray

Craft: Dead End - Fruit in Hand Sign

Available with book purchase.

Distribute the Eye-Spy Signs card (pattern at the back of the book)

During the week, as children are driven to school and around town and they see one of the signs indicated on the card, they are to place a check mark next to it and then repeat the Bible verse.

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Lesson Review

For use when dividing the lesson into two sessions.

Song Time

If you videotaped the skit, show it now or have children tell the story of *The Fall* in their own words, and then discuss the following questions:

Discussion (Receive answers from children)

Available with book purchase.

Game: Dead End

Available with book purchase.

Review and Score Memory Verse

(As children memorize their verses, score their progress by coloring in the *Traffic Signal Memory Tracker*. You'll find the pattern at the back of the book.)

"There is a way that appears to be right, but in the end it leads to death."

Proverbs 14:12

Pray