

STW LESSONS

Lesson 4

Moving Beyond STW



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Objectives

- To realize the need to share the gospel around the world
- To understand the power God has given us
- To accept the challenge to help spread the word through giving

Materials

- Bibles
- Paper/notes and envelopes
- Pens and pencils

■ **Starting the Journey [15 min.]**

Ask: *Have you ever been outside of the country?* Allow students to share where they went and briefly explain what they did there. *Do you know anyone who is from another country?* Or, if not many have traveled outside the United States,

Ask: *If you could spend a week anywhere in the world, where would you want to go? Why?*

Ask: *How does life differ in other countries?*

Ask the students to estimate how big the world is using the following categories (actual statistics are listed):



- Number of Countries in the world: 236
- Number of Languages: 6,510
- World Population: 6.7 billion¹

Share the actual statistics, and then

Say: *Despite the size of the globe, you, more than any generation before you, have the opportunity to be connected with people around the world.*

■ **Gaining Speed [10 min.]**

Say: *With that in mind, here are a few other statistics to consider:*

- Number of People Groups: 16,352
- Approximate Number of People: 6.7 billion
- Number of Unreached/Least Reached People Groups: 6,650
- Approximate Number of Unreached/Least Reached People: 2.75 billion, 40.7%
- Number of Languages with some or all of the Bible: 2,500²

Ask: *What is your reaction to these statistics?*

Say: *Billions of people around the world have never heard even the smallest piece of Scripture, much less the gospel message. What do you think life is like for them? What are they missing out on?*

All of these people have never heard the most important message in the world! Before Jesus left this world, he gave us this instruction in Matthew 28:18–20, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you to the very end of the age.”

It may sound like a daunting task, reaching all these people with the good news of Jesus Christ. And what can you do as a _____-year-old, living in city, state? But you CAN make a difference.

¹ <http://www.joshuaproject.net/great-commission-statistics.php>

² Ibid.

■ **Down the Straightaway [15 minutes]**

Say: *In light of the need, you may feel overwhelmed and wonder if you can truly make a difference, but God is a God of multiplication.*

Ask: *Did you know that the only miracle included in all four of the Gospels is the feeding of the five thousand? Why do you think that is? What is it about this story that all four writers found so important?*

Read: John 6:1–13 together.

Ask: *Do you have any new ideas about why this story is so important?*

Allow them to answer before taking a closer look at the story by asking the following questions:

- *Who are the major players? (crowd, disciples, Jesus, boy)*
- *What is the setting? (a deserted countryside in the evening)*
- *What has been happening up to this point? (Jesus has been healing and teaching the crowd)*
- *What is the problem? (dinner time but no dinner)*
- *Who notices it? (disciples)*
- *What is Jesus' response? (asks what they have)*
- *What are their supplies? (5 loaves, 2 fish)*
- *What does Jesus do? (takes it, prays over it, and feeds the people)*
- *How much is left over? (12 baskets)*
- *So what does this story teach us about Jesus? (he can make something out of nothing)*

In the other Gospels, the disciples find the loaves and fish, but in John it tells us that a young boy offers his own food. What do you think the boy was thinking?

If you had been on that hillside and heard the disciples looking for food to feed over five thousand people, do you think you would have offered your small meal to the cause? Why or why not? (too small to make a difference, afraid of going hungry, scared of being laughed at)

Do those same reasons hinder you from giving now? Are you afraid that your gift will not be enough, that you won't have enough for yourself, or that people will think you're crazy?

What was Jesus able to do with such a small offering? (multiply it)



The story of the feeding of the five thousand is not the only one in the Bible where God uses something small and unexpected to accomplish something great. Can you think of any others? (e.g., David and Goliath, Gideon and the Midianites [Judges 7], Elijah and the widow at Zarepheth [1 Kings 17])

Say: *Through the feeding of the five thousand and these other stories you have mentioned, God reveals again and again that he can use anyone, anywhere, and at any time, regardless of how small their gift seems, to accomplish his task.*

■ **Heading for the Checkered Flag [10 minutes]**

Say: *Giving to STW also gives you a chance to be a part of something bigger, to engage in the worldwide church, to see how your gift can be multiplied. However, giving to STW is about more than just buying supplies.*

Paul describes this reality in his letters:

Read: 2 Corinthians 9:6–15 and answer the following questions:

- *Why does Paul encourage the Corinthians to give? (to bring thanks and praise to God)*
- *In verse 13, Paul writes, “Men will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ” (NIV). Why do you suppose obedience brings further praise to God? (It backs up your testimony, i.e. puts your money where your mouth is.)*
- *Aside from bringing praise to God, how does Paul describe the relationship you have with those who receive your gifts? (They pray for you and their hearts go out to you.)*

Say: *Your faithfulness and generosity can be a great witness and encouragement to other Christians and provide a way for you to connect to the worldwide church. Further, your actions can be a witness even to those in your own church, though you may not feel you have the power to make a difference.*

Read: 1 Timothy 4:12 and answer the following questions:

- *What does Paul instruct Timothy to do in this verse? (set an example for those older than himself)*
- *Are you intimidated by such a challenge?*
- *Have you ever found yourself saying you’ll do something when you’re older, like “I’ll go on a missions trip when I’m older,” or, “I’ll start tithing when I’m in high school or an adult with a real job”? In what situations have you made the excuse that you are too young to do it?*



Read: 2 Timothy 1:7–8 and answer these questions:

- *What does Paul tell Timothy about the Holy Spirit in this verse? (spirit of power, love, and self-discipline)*
- *Does he make any allowances for Timothy’s young age? (no)*

Say: *The Holy Spirit is not limited by our age, social status, or gifts. He can work through you, no matter where you are or who you are. The way you live out your faith makes a difference in the lives of others.*

Read: Philemon 1:4–7 and answer the question:

What do you think Paul means by, “You have refreshed the hearts of the saints”? (encouraged other Christians)

Say: *Walking with Christ is far from easy, and many can become discouraged in their efforts to share that walk with others. You can be a reminder to pastors, missionaries, and others around the world of God’s goodness, provision, and care.*

■ **Crossing the Finish Line [10 minutes]**

Say: *STW offers you a chance to influence the world through giving.*

Review the goals you came up last week for giving to STW and make sure everyone is clear on the goal. Then take some time to pray for the people that those funds are going to help that they truly can hear and find a deep relationship with Jesus.

