

4  
LESSON  
SERIES

# SPOOKY LESSONS OF THE BIBLE



HELPING KIDS OVERCOME FEAR  
BY KARL BASTIAN





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## “Why Write a Spooky Bible Unit?”

Dear Teacher,

### **Welcome to *Spooky Lessons of the Bible*.**

The decision regarding whether or not to write this unit was not an easy one. I understand that the feelings surrounding Halloween and how we are to respond to it as Christians run strong on both sides. On one end, there are those who decide to completely ignore the ‘holiday’ (in quotes, for it is hardly a ‘holy day’), and on the other end are those who wish to take advantage of the opportunity to reach kids & families through outreaches & Fall events. Of course, there are also many views in between.



By providing this unit, I am in no way condoning the events and practices surrounding Halloween that Christians disagree with. The visuals used have been cautiously selected to both reflect the season while also avoiding anything that is contrary to our belief system. Therefore, I’ve focused more on bats, pumpkins, spiders, and items that exist in nature; all things that kids enjoy.

There is a part of us that enjoys being “scared” – it is one way we deal with our fears. It is why we enjoy roller coasters and scary movies. By confronting our fears, or putting ourselves into fearful situations, we can feel a sense of control – at least that way, we are scaring ourselves rather than being a victim of something beyond our control.

Our culture’s obsession with Halloween seems to grow with each passing year, with some reports claiming that it is now surpassing Christmas in retail sales and in decorating investment. My desire is not to add to that focus, but instead to acknowledge that interest and counter it by preparing our children with a biblical perspective on death.

It has always been my belief that the reason almost every culture has a “festival of death” is because of the unspoken fear of dying that those without Christ carry around with them, perhaps even so deeply that they don’t consciously acknowledge it. Movie directors often create dark films that constantly delve into death and the afterlife. Hollywood pumps out one “end of the world” scenario movie after another because at everyone’s core lies the ultimate question, “*What happens to me after I die?*”

Halloween provides our culture with a way of making light of death. We laugh at death. We mock it. We decorate with skeletons and ghosts, we dress up with blood and gore, and we put on costumes of monsters and other frightful creatures and go door-to-door asking for candy. But after it is all said and done, that piercing question goes unanswered. And quiet nagging questions remain... “What *will* happen to me after I die? Will I really just return to dust? Will it all *really* just have been for nothing? *Is there a hell?*”

This unit is an opportunity to give kids the Answer. For praise God, there IS an answer. **Jesus conquered Death.** Death is NOT the end! And there is life after death! We owe it to our children to stand up to Halloween and teach our kids that there is an alternative to mocking the fear of death. Instead, we can teach them that we know a Savior who faced death and destroyed it and can raise us up too!

*Because Jesus Loves Children,*

Karl Bastian, the Kidologist  
Kidology.org





Welcome to *Spooky Lessons from the Bible*. The purpose of this unit is to help kids learn that while the culture around us may be obsessed with Halloween during October – and all the “spooky” images may cause some fear in the hearts of children – as Christians we don’t need to be afraid of death because **Jesus has the victory over death**.

This is the key phrase you want to repeat over and over throughout the month. It is the MAIN MESSAGE you need to be conveying to your students through the lessons, the games, the Bible stories, and the worship songs you select. You almost can’t say too often, “Kids, this shows us again that **Jesus has the victory over death**.” You may modify the phrase, but whatever you decide, be consistent. Repetition is the key to learning. Repetition is the key to learning. (Yes, I repeated that intentionally!)

Your goal during October, leading up to Halloween (whether families celebrate or practice the ‘holiday’ or not), is to help kids recognize that while our world celebrates death and things that are evil, we celebrate LIFE and things that are good!

## SCARY

Each lesson follows this **S.C.A.R.Y.** outline:

<b>S</b> cary Story	Bible Story
<b>C</b> razy Fun	Game
<b>A</b> fraid? Not!	Lesson
<b>R</b> elate Time	Small Group or Discussion
<b>Y</b> es God!	Application

**R.I.P.** Respond in Prayer

Use the included PowerPoint to keep the Outline up on the screen and to help keep the children following along. It is completely customizable.

## WHAT ABOUT WORSHIP?

While this unit does not include worship music, I strongly encourage you to choose songs that talk about Jesus. This unit is all about the Power and Love and Victory of Jesus. A great addition to your worship time will be a really fun piece called **The Jesus Chant**.

# THE JESUS CHANT

At the end of this unit are the words to a really fun rap/chant that I refer to as The Jesus Chant. It is titled “Every Day in Every Way,” and it focuses on Jesus. Also included in your download was an MP3 from the author explaining how to do it – your kids will love it!

# SCARY STORY

**This is the Bible Story Time.** For the Bible Story component each week, in order to tell it like a “scary story,” consider sharing it like a campfire story. Turn out the lights and use a flashlight as you tell the story. At the “scary” parts, you can even hold the flashlight up under your chin to light up your face as a camp counselor may have done years ago when you were a camper. If you are at a smaller church, consider letting the kids sit on the floor and gather around a fake campfire made from logs stacked up around a small fan. If you cut clear red, yellow, and orange cellophane in the shape of flames and attach them to the logs, you can make a pretty neat looking fire. It should be easy to find fire sound effects online if you want to really add to the mood. Pass out marshmallows to snack on, and the effect will be complete! (*Graham crackers and chocolate will make it like S’mores, but may distract from the story...that’s up to you!*)

**NOTE:** The more *DRAMATICALLY* you tell the story, the better. Be suspenseful and use hushed tones and pause, and then suddenly be loud... it’s OK to try and scare the kids (a little!) in fun. You’ll want to tell these stories like you are really telling a spooky camp story. The more you get into it, the more they will, and the more memorable you will make it. Remember, these are **TRUE** stories. Try to imagine what it was like for the people in these stories to experience them. How can we be ho-hum about stories that involve people **COMING BACK TO LIFE**, or **WALKING OUT OF GRAVES**, or **SITTING BACK UP THAT WERE DEAD!** These kinds of stories deserve some drama and excitement when being told. Come on! Get into it! These are the stuff spooky camp stories are made of, and they **REALLY** happened for crying out loud!

## WHAT ABOUT A THEME VERSE?

If you would like to have a **THEME VERSE** for the unit that the kids can work on memorizing during the month, consider using the following passage:

*“Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?” But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. **1 Cor. 15:55, 57***

## CRAZY FUN

**This is the Game Time**, when you get crazy with the kids, for a purpose, of course. Kids love to have fun, but skillful teachers direct the fun with a purpose. *Spooky Lessons of the Bible* seeks to redirect the fun toward the Bible lesson of the week. Two options are provided.

The first game option is called:

## DARKNESS DARE

These are “glow-in-the-dark” games. You will need to be able to make your room **VERY** dark and invest in some supplies for these “dark games” to work, but it will be worth it!

The second game option is called:

## GROSS GUESSING GAME

For this game, kids who are willing walk up on stage and reach inside a box and try to guess what “body part” is inside. Yeah, it’s gross, but the kids will love it! The “Gross Guessing Game” can also be used as a Welcome activity for kids who arrive early.

Take a cardboard box and cut a hole in the side of the box big enough for a child’s hand but not big enough to see inside. Put the object (see recommendations in each lesson) into a bowl inside the box and have kids (who dare!) reach in and try to guess what it is. Admittedly, this is really gross, but kids do love gross stuff. At least one suggestion is provided with each lesson, but you can find more online. I couldn’t bear to print more than just one suggestion for most lessons, as this is a little outside my comfort zone. (YUCK!)

Make two flaps that they can lift with the answers written underneath if they give up:

1. What it feels like
2. What it really is!

Of course, if you have time, you can do both games.

## AFRAID? NOT!

**This is the Main Lesson segment.** This is when you will teach the kids WHY they don't need to be afraid. In this segment you will find different ways you can teach and reinforce the main theme of the day. It will include a spooky epitaph or "Scream Theme," which is a short memorable poem the kids can memorize that goes along with the "Spooky Bible Story."

## SCREAM THEME

- Lesson 1:** "Have No Fear, Jesus is Here!"  
(The Raising of Jairus' Daughter)
- Lesson 2:** "When Jesus Nears, You Can Wipe Your Tears!"  
(The Raising of Lazarus)
- Lesson 3:** "Death Must Run, When It Meets God's Son!"  
(The Raising of the Widow's Son)
- Lesson 4:** "Death Has No Sting, When Jesus Does His Thing!"  
(The Resurrection of Jesus)

## RELATE TIME!

**This is the Relational segment,** using small or large group discussion. If your children's church utilizes small groups, then this is when you will break into small groups for some discussion of the topic, and the questions provided will help facilitate this time. However, even if you don't use small groups, then as a large group, use the discussion questions to get the kids talking and thinking about the questions. This is an important element as it helps the children personalize the lesson. It engages the kids and gets



them thinking about the topic and how it applies to them. Kids learn best, not by being told, but by thinking and processing what they hear. Ask the questions to the group and have the kids raise their hands to answer. As the leader, be sure to share some of your own answers to these questions to get conversation going. Don't worry about small conversations that break out around the room, as long as they are on topic, it's OK at this point. You can always bring it back down when this section is over. If you have made the campfire described under the Spooky Bible Stories above, have the small groups sit in circles around it, or gather around it again for this segment.

## YES GOD!

**This is the Application segment.** This is when you will help the children respond to the lesson and determine how it will impact their lives. Be sure to review the "Scream Theme" and encourage the children to make positive choices about what they have learned as a result of this lesson.



**Application Video Clip.** Mr. Bones is a friendly skeleton that visits the kids by video and summarizes the lesson. It is a short optional video that can be used to give the lesson summary and application. It is NOT scary – it's actually rather silly, so no worries about it being scary, even for young children.

## R.I.P.

### Respond In Prayer – CLOSING TIME

As you close, have the kids say the "Scream Theme" several times together. Always give a specific and practical thing the children can pray about that relates to the lesson and provide some time for them to pray silently. Too often we TALK about prayer, and don't do it. This is a way to train them and give them experience with prayer that can then overflow into their experience and life during the week. Then close in a corporate prayer that you lead. A suggested prayer will be provided.

# BOO! EXTRA IDEAS

**Wait! There's more!** Be sure to look at the end of each lesson for additional ideas you may want to consider using. These ideas often involve more work or collecting supplies, perhaps more than usual, so I didn't put them into the regular lesson. However, if you are willing to do the work, they will have a great pay off. NOTE: Some ideas are lesson independent and are provided at the very end of the unit.

# BOO! PARENTS!

**Parent Follow-Up E-mail!** Surprise your parents with an e-mail sent home on Monday or Tuesday that gives a summary of the lesson the kids had on Sunday. This short, editable e-mail is provided to help you partner with the parents and guardians in your ministry. It summarizes the lesson and helps parents engage their children with what you are teaching on Sunday. Key questions are provided to guide them in entering into meaningful conversation, perhaps at meals or bedtime. This helps extend the impact of your teaching into the week and brings parents into the reinforcing process of your educational strategy.